

MONSIGNOR LUIS AMIGÓ Y FERRER

**COMPLETE
WORKS**

INTRODUCTIONS AND EDITION PREPARED BY

AGRIPINO GONZÁLEZ, TC

AND

JUAN ANTONIO VIVES, TC

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With brotherly love, "to the Capuchin Tertiary Sisters and Friars so that they may have greater reason to remember in the presence of God their poor Father and Founder, who loved them so much".

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PROLOGUE

LUIS Amigó has now passed over the threshold into history as an even-tempered man of religion, a devout bishop and apostle for wayward youth.

His spirituality, deeply rooted in the gospel and the theology of the cross of the Apostle Paul, serves to extend and increase the rich Franciscan-Capuchin spiritual tradition. He complements that with a profound penitential sense, a pronounced characteristic of all the Third Orders.

As a good son of the Seraph of Assisi, and imitating the attitude of the Good Shepherd, his spirituality revolves around the central figure of a merciful Christ the Redeemer and the sorrows of Our Lady the Virgin Mary at the foot of the cross. He develops this spirituality through a very specific apostolic mission: the Christian education of youth who have strayed from the path of truth and good. This is what Luis Amigó reminds his Sisters and Friars in his letter testament: “You, the young shepherds of his flock, are the ones who have to go in search of the lost sheep until it is returned to the fold of the Good Shepherd”.

These pages of his Complete Works reveal the profoundly Franciscan Luis Amigó who devoutly loves Our Lady of Sorrows, joyfully lives the brotherhood of the Minor Order, the popular missionary very attuned to social problems, experiencing the parables of mercy with the new style of the Beatitudes.

Therefore, his spirituality, the charisma and sense of mission that he conveys to the children of his two religious congregations, are profoundly ecclesiastical and perennially topical and relevant. This makes what he represents, his life and works—collected in his writings here— so highly valued and in-demand by the men and women of our time.

It only remains for us to express our gratitude to Fathers Joaquín Guillén and Mariano Ramo of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars, the compilers of the writings of Luis Amigó. We similarly extend our gratitude to the extensive number of people who carried out this first critical edition of the complete works of the Servant of God in Spanish. The Lord wants this work to inspire many readers—especially the spiritual children of Luis Amigó—to go seek the lost sheep, remembering constantly that each young person who is re-educated is a generation being saved.

The Church and the world today know very well that Luis Amigó was the prophet of the wayward youth and the apostle of their social and moral restoration.

Sister ALICIA ZEA, CT
General Mother Superior

Father JOSÉ OLTRA, CT
General Superior



CAPTION: "LUIS AMIGÓ: A LIFE THROUGH EXAMPLE".
(By the painter Miguel Vicens. Oliva-Valencia.)

INTRODUCTION

On presenting the edition of the *Complete Works of Luis Amigó y Ferrer* to the substantial readership of the Library of Christian Authors for the first time, it seems appropriate to dedicate these first pages to providing the contextual framework for the human and spiritual figure of this simple Capuchin bishop, distinguished founder and renowned Spanish educator of our times.

Historical Setting

Luis Amigó was born in the town of Massamagrell (Valencia) near the Mediterranean coast on 17 October 1854 when the 19th century was half completed. From the day of his baptism on the day after his birthday, he was known by the name of José María Amigó y Ferrer until he changed that name to Luis of Massamagrell on entering into the Capuchin Order.

In the mid-19th century, Spanish public life was characterized by great instability, the result of national decadence and internal struggles. Liberalism, with its roots in the Cádiz Constitution of 1812, had taken control of the ruling classes after having already overcome two periods of the restoration of absolute rule. The cause of the absolute monarchy, supported by the majority of the clergy and members of the religious orders, was identified with the Carlist branch of the dynasty, pretenders to the throne who would provoke three civil wars (1833-1840, 1845-1849 and 1872-1876). Defeated militarily, the Carlist or traditionalist party would still continue to embody the aspirations of Catholic integralism in political life.

Two distinct tendencies were increasingly taking shape in secular liberalism, which battled for power and alternated in holding it—a period known as the “*tortilleo*”—throughout the reign of Isabel II (1833-1866): the decidedly anticlerical radicals and the conservatives or moderates. The most significant event was undoubtedly the abolition of all religious orders (1835-1837) and subsequent disposal of all their goods and possessions. Both those liberal tendencies supported the monarchy but it did not take long for the republican party to enter the fray. Taking advantage of the crisis of the monarchy (the dethroning of Isabel II and the fleeting reign of Amadeo of Savoy), the republican party managed to achieve the establishment of the republic in 1873, although it lasted no longer than two years.

The restoration of the monarchy in January 1875 with Alfonso XII favored the conservative wing of the liberals, led by Cánovas del Castillo, who know how to win the confidence of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the majority of the Catholic voters. The premature death of the king (1885) and the regency of Maria Christina while

Alfonso XIII was a minor brought in a return of liberal or “progressive” secularism under the leadership of prime minister Sagasta. Five later, Cánovas del Castillo regained power at the head of the conservatives, but he would be assassinated in 1897. The unfortunate war of 1898 brought the 19th century to a close, one of the saddest in the history of Spain.

Childhood and Youth of José María Amigó

In this far from peaceful or encouraging historical context, “the apostle of wayward youth” was born and passed through his youthful years, the years of his education and training, and the early years of his ministry as a priest. Despite the turbulent context in which the personality of José María Amigó developed, his childhood passed relatively calmly and happily, thanks to the loving and self-sacrificing devotion of his parents. They knew to pay great attention to the Christian education of their children and created a warm, relaxed and devout family atmosphere.

José María received the religious and spiritual essentials in his family that marked the rest of his life, learned from the word and deeds of his parents and strengthened by receiving the sacraments of Confirmation, Penance and Eucharist.

His parents also directed the spiritual education of their son from the beginning. While still a small boy, they went to great trouble to send him to the first Catholic academy in Valencia so that he would receive the rudiments of a solid literary education. In addition, they also undoubtedly encouraged him to continue this education from 1866 on as a non-boarding student at the Council Seminary in the area, where he studied the Humanities, Scholastic Philosophy and possibly the first year of Sacred Theology, until he left in 1874 for Bayonne (France) where he entered the Capuchin Order.

For his part, José María Amigó actively collaborated in this education his parents offered and him and, in order to develop his faith further and channel his free time to God and his fellow man, he signed up first in the Congregation of St. Philip Neri, then the School of Christ, and finally in the lay Franciscan Third Order.

Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Capuchin friar

The calling the young Amigó felt to follow Christ closely through keeping his evangelical advice did not appear in his life suddenly but were developing progressively over time. Significant details are found in his Autobiography showing how he was experiencing an inclination towards the priesthood even in his childhood. Nevertheless, one of the main factors that enlightened him in becoming fully aware of his religious vocation was the Christian education he received at home and the schools he attended, as well as the spirit he breathed and absorbed in the devout societies he signed up for in his youth. These societies aroused in him the constant desire for greater perfection which, little by little, was leading him to the cloister.

At first, Luis Amigó wanted to enter into the Carthusians, but he realized, thought the wise advice of his spiritual directors, Francisco Pérez Montejano and Father Llopart, that it was the will of God for him to enter as a Capuchin. In 1874, it directed him to the convent of those Friars Minor—still exiled from the cloisters in Spain—on the outskirts of Bayonne (France). There he took the holy habit on 12 April 1874 with the name of Brother Luis of Massamagrell, and professed at the same convent on 18 April of the following year.

Brother Luis stayed in Bayonne for two more years studying Sacred Theology. During that period, the events occurred in Spain which he recounts with Franciscan simplicity in his account of his life, and which made the return of the Capuchin friars to their homeland possible. In the winter of 1877, Brother Luis of Massamagrell would form part of the group of the first nine friars who returned to Spain after 40 years of exile from the cloisters. He became one of the restorers, not only of the Capuchin Order but also all forms of regular religious life, in our nation.

After being one of the founders of the Capuchin convent of Antequera (Malaga), Brother Luis of Massamagrell went to reopen the old Observants convent located in Montehano (Santander) in 1879 and received his Presbyterate in that convent on 29 March of that year. In this mountainous terrain, the ministry of Luis Amigó as a priest was always directed from the beginning towards the three fields of activity he greatly valued from the spirit which always drove his ministry: *popular preaching, attention to the incarcerated, and the ministry of the youth.*

In his preaching, Luis Amigó always attempted to follow the inner impulses the Spirit aroused as rewards for the prayer and meditation with which the ministry of the word was prepared. He knew how to be a faithful instrument of the Lord through this ministry, which turned him into a true apostle of personal conversion, reform of customs and peace among men.

He had practiced his attention, care and moral uplift of the incarcerated—another prime concern of Luis Amigó—since his teenage years when he cared for, amused and taught catechism to the inmates in Valencia. As a consecrated minister of the Lord, he brought the comfort of his friendly presence and the merciful Word of the Lord to the prisoners in Santoña, a town near the convent of Montehano.

But the apostolic spirit of Luis Amigó was just as great in his dedication to the Christian education of the youth. The creation of the *Society of Our Lady of Good Books* is due to his apostolic activity. Good publications are a comfort and distraction for the sick and prison inmates and one way of counteracting the damaging effects that bad reading material can have on young people.

When he was only 26 years old, he was appointed vice-Teacher of Novices at the only Capuchin novitiate in Spain. Three years later, in 1885, he was chosen Definitor of the province when the Order converted all of Spain into a single province. From that point on, the life of Luis Amigó was full of responsibilities. For three consecutive terms starting in 1889, he was the Definitor of the Capuchin province of Toledo and, at the end of 1898 was appointed the first provincial minister of the restored Capuchin province of the Precious Blood of Christ of Valencia. Having

completed his service to the brothers in 1902, and once the period passed in which the Constitutions barred him from holding any position, he was once again elected Provincial Definitor and Guardian of the convent of Orihuela (Alicante). He was there when his appointment for the Apostolic Administration of Solsona (Lleida) surprised him on 18 April 1907.

Father Luis Amigo, founder

The foundation activity of Luis Amigó cannot be easily grasped without direct reference to his apostolic activity as director of the lay Franciscan Third Order. Two years after his ordination as a priest, the superiors transferred Luis Amigó to the convent of Massamagrell (Valencia). There he combined his ministry as vice-Teacher of Novices with the establishment of the lay Third Order in the region.

The rewards were not long in coming. "The ever-increasing progress of the lay Third Order and the desire for greater perfection of some souls who wanted to devote themselves to God" led him to the foundation of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family when he was barely 30 years old. The foundation of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows four years later was to complete the work of the sisters, "considering how much the ever-increasing progress of the Third Order was pleasing to the Lord". And from these Third Orders came the first members on whom the edifice of both congregations were built.

Luis Amigó was totally enamored of the ideal of lay Franciscanism and turned it into the backbone of his spirituality. In touch with this Third Order spirituality, he discovered a completely valid means of divine repayment was in helping man find themselves with God through full redemptive liberation. This discovery, which led him personally to become a *mystic of divine repayment* through a merciful activity in which one participated in reforming individuals and society, is the basis of his two congregations, born as the ripened fruit of his ministry among the lay Third Orders.

When Luis Amigó inaugurated the congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters under canon law, he directed them to dedicate themselves "with all their concern and effort to the assistance of the physical and spiritual needs of their fellow man in the Hospitals, Asylums and especially Orphanages". And when, on 12 April 1889, he completed the foundation of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars, he invited them to "communicate to their fellow man the fires of the love of God and be more inclined to serve them in the teaching and moral uplift of those housed in the Reform Schools and Correctional Institutes". These were the practical realizations of the offering as victim that Luis Amigó makes of himself to God in order "repay his divine justice this way".

As can easily be appreciated, this same redeeming spirit, the reformer of human and divine, restorer of man in Christ—as Luis Amigó so beautifully expressed it to His Holiness Pius X—is the one which inspires his two congregations.

Monsignor Luis Amigó, Bishop of Solsona and Segorbe

On 21 April 1907, Luis Amigó received a letter from the Apostolic Nunciature with the offer to take over the diocese as bishop. At the time, he was not expecting the letter was going to involve a radical change in his life as a Capuchin friar. The Lord, who one day long ago had expressed his will that he enter the cloisters, was letting him know then that he required a service from him 33 years later in favor of the people of God that he would have to carry out as a bishop.

On 9 June 1907, he received the summit of his priesthood in Madrid and on 4 August made his official entry in Solsona (Lleida), the church entrusted to his pastoral care in the capacity of Apostolic Administrator. Monsignor Amigó would remain in Solsona for six years, until he was proclaimed the bishop in residence of Segorbe (Castellón) on 18 July 1913.

In both dioceses, the pastoral ministry of Luis Amigó was marked by a spirit of commitment and service—symbolized now by his episcopal motto: And I lay down my life for my sheep (*Animam meam pono pro ovibus meis*)—that he was inclined to “give his life, if necessary, for each and every member of his diocese”.

The great concern that occupied all the episcopal efforts of the zealous pastor was the same one which also marked the Papacy of Pius X: “To re-establish all things in Christ” (Ephesians 1:10). In Solsona alone, he dedicated three pastoral sermons to declaring his firm conviction that man and society could only be saved from the evils they were suffering in his time by looking back to Christ the Redeemer, the Way, Truth and Life, and following Him by bringing the criteria for their actions into accordance with his example. Later, he would repeatedly insist on this idea fundamental to his apostolic ministry in Segorbe.

From this core idea central to his teachings, the various themes which Monsignor Amigó developed in his teaching acquired their true dimensions. Some of these in particular were highlighted: *love of your fellow man*, which a philanthropist just places in a “well-being” but consists of a “good-being” for the Christian; *social justice*, “which would make the world like a preview of heaven, where justice, peace, order and morality reign, the foundation of the well-being and moral and material progress of nations; *true peace*, “which can only be fully attained when you have it with God, yourself and your fellow man, through the understanding and will of God”; the *teaching of the Catechism*, “the most excellent and significant of all the works that can be done, religiously and socially considered”; the *Christian education of youth*, for the social and moral reform of society; and the *unity of the family*, with “everyone focusing closely on the Holy Family of Nazareth in order to imitate them”.

These were the main lines that marked the teaching of Monsignor Amigó starting from the Pauline theme of “re-establishing all things Christ”, which he made his own. Monsignor Luis Amigó continued this teaching, initiated shortly after he was consecrated bishop, without interruption until he died as the Bishop of Segorbe 27 years later on the verge of reaching 80 years of age.

He died on 1 October 1934 in Godella (Valencia) in the mother house of his Capuchin Tertiary Friars. Three days later, his mortal remains were buried in his birthplace of Massamagrell, where it has rested since then in the pantheon of the church of his daughters, the Capuchin Tertiary Sisters. His crypt has become a place of continuous pilgrimages by followers and admirers of the Amigonian work over time.

Luis Amigó, Spiritual Figure

Trying to define the vigorous spiritual personality of a man of God with a few brief sketches always proves to be an arduous and difficult undertaking. Of course, the most fundamental core of his teaching is justification and salvation through an unwavering faith in the Christ who died and was resurrected. His providential sense of life, devotion to the cross, priesthood and Eucharist, the sacrifice of the mass, the Virgin Mary of Our Sorrows, as well as his actions to promote teaching the Catechism and as a popular missionary only make sense with that core belief as the starting point.

Nonetheless, when forced to look for a word that in some manner synthesizes and determines not only his spirituality but also the charisma and mission the spirit provided him with for the service of the Church, there is none better than “co-redeeming”.

The mystery of the Redemption—both in its theological dimension of repayment to the divine justice and the anthropological dimension of human restoration— lies at the core of the apostolic activity of Luis Amigó. When he discovered during his existence that the Lord not only called him to collaborate in the repayment of his divine justice, as a complement to also cooperate in the restoration of man, bringing him close to the true source of freedom, which is God Himself, his spiritual personality acquires the first shadings that are specific to his *redemptive collaboration*, to which he always felt himself called. From this moment on, he would always experience as deeply integrated the two dimensions—theological and anthropological—the mystery of salvation combined, objectively and fully realized in Jesus Christ. For him, the best way to repay God would be, from then on, to “return the lost sheep to the flock of the Good Shepherd”. And the only way to profoundly make amends for the lost souls, so that they might find their full realization as people and children of God, would consist in helping them to “know the Lord so that through knowing him, they love him, serve him and learn together with Him the principle of the true wisdom and brake their unrestrained passions”.

On the other hand, Luis Amigó came to discover that this wholehearted, integrative collaboration that God asks for with the mystery of the Redemption had to be realized through the two basic activities that distinguished the same redeeming actions of Christ: *merciful love* and *the cross*.

Hence he turned into the prophet of mercy towards the most needy—prisoners, the elderly, the sick, orphans, wayward youth— because he made the teachings of

the Master his own, who “did not come to save the righteous, but rather the sinners” and dedicated himself to “searching for the one who was lost”, because the gospel of mercy was alive in him, which he would see symbolized especially in the figures of the Good Shepherd, who goes in search of the lost sheep, and the Merciful Father, who welcomes the prodigal son returning to the paternal home with the kiss of peace.

But along the same lines, he turned himself into a compassionate *Samaritan* and *Cyrenian* who helped his fellow man in their pain and sorrow, and even loaded that pain on his own cross to make it more bearable because he has accepted as part of his life, from the Spirit, that to “suffer with the other”, “for the others” and even “instead of the others” is the most sublime expressions of this merciful love.

To collaborate, then, in the redeeming work of Christ, with the full integration of perspectives between the divine and human, and at the same time assuming the invitation to love and sacrifice, constitutes the fundamental core of the co-redeeming charisma of Luis Amigó, a charisma nourished daily through devout meditation, loving and imitating the humanized and crucified Christ, and his Mother at the foot of the cross, through the Franciscan spirit that which he knew how to take on as a worthy Capuchin friar.

The Amigonian Charisma Today

One hundred years after the foundations of Luis Amigó his charisma remains alive and acting in service to the Church and present-day society. His spiritual children —the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family and the Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows— has extended its radius of action to five continents. They are present there developing their ministry in a wide-ranging variety of ways, but always imbued with the co-redeeming spirit that Luis Amigó conveyed to them.

They have turned into the transmitters of his spirit which searches for the needy mercifully, without sparing any sacrifice; his spirit that knows how to nourish the apostolic yearning in the intimacy with God to be able to love their brother through Him, in Him and for Him; his spirit that brings them to wholeheartedly collaborate in the redeeming work of the Lord *through merciful action in favor of the lost soul*.

The work in favor of the youth who “strayed from the path of truth and good”, which Luis Amigó bequeathed as a mission for his Capuchin Third Order Friars and in which his daughters, the Third Order Sisters also participate, are developed today not only through the institutions —shelters for individuals and families, specialized centers for reforming maladjusted minors— but also in open missions such as social work in marginal neighborhoods and opening of rehabilitation centers for drug addicts, where they try to offer a scientific and religious solution to one of the most pressing problems affecting young people in our times.

For their part, the Capuchin Tertiary Sisters are also keeping the Amigonian spirit alive in caring for the sick and the elderly, the education of orphaned children and the evangelization of new cultures.

These are the apostolic ministries, carried out by Capuchin Tertiary Friars and Sisters faithful to the charisma that their Founder bequeathed them, which make it possible to declare in the current historical period that the spirit of Luis Amigó y Ferrer continues to live 50 years after his death. The figure of Luis Amigó, a prophet of our time with his merciful, compassionate and self-sacrificing attitude in favor of the sick, elderly, abandoned and, above all, in favor of maladjusted youths, is a constant condemnation of those who cause these situations and those who go through life without stopping for the sorrow and need of their fellow man. They also constitute an incentive for the hopes of those who, despite everything, dream of a new world and a better society.

The Literary Work of Luis Amigó

We could not finish this introduction of Luis Amigó as the passageway to this first publication of his *Complete Works* without a brief overview of his literary production.

In the work of Luis Amigó, always following the chronological order in which they appeared during his life, we find the following genres: *epistolary* (correspondence), *legislative*, *pastoral* (sermons), and the *autobiographical*.

In the *epistolary*, to which the letters included here belong addressed to his religious superiors, friends and especially his children, the Capuchin Third Order Friars and Sisters, Luis Amigó appears as the humble, obedient Friar Minor, the servant and minister of his brothers and the loving father always watching over his children and the progress of the Work.

In the *legislative* genre, in which the two Constitutions and the Orders he left in writing during the visits under canon law to his Third Order friars belong, Luis Amigó expressed himself as the founder, who wanted to make clear in the wording of his texts the spirit he wished to inform his nuns and friars; and the teacher who, conscious of the arduous mission of re-educating young people he had entrusted to them, offered them as another reward of his personal charisma the strong regulations that formed the foundation of the characteristic teaching method of the Capuchin Third Order friars so they could carry out this service to the wayward youth with a sufficient guarantee of success.

Through the *pastoral* genre, which encompasses the pastoral sermons and circular letters he wrote, Monsignor Amigó informs the members of his diocese not only of his spiritual thinking, the fruit more of his life than studies, but also the different problems and concerns of everyday life that a Christian should know how to face with the same feelings as Christ did.

And finally through the *autobiographical* genre, the illustrious founder now expressed himself openly that as the man of God who lived and acted "not from

the flesh, but by the Spirit instead; as the man who living in the hands of divine Providence; who loved God and the brothers; and suffered and laughed with them. We could say that in this part of the work of Luis Amigó neither the theological-spiritual knowledge of his sermons, nor the thorough and detailed concern of many of his letters and circular letters, nor the spiritual and educational urgings of his legislative text make an appearance. In his Autobiography, there simply appears the self-portrait as he truly saw himself before God when he was 75 years old, and how he wanted to be remembered as family by his nuns and friars, to whom he dedicated this Franciscan account.

CHRONOLOGY

1854	17/10 17/10 8/12	José María Amigó born in Massamagrell (Valencia). José María Amigó receives Holy Baptism. His Holiness Pius IX proclaims the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.
1855	22/1 24/2	Death of maternal grandmother Blas Ferrer y Calvo. Father Ambrosio and his nuns expelled from Montiel.
1857	24/2	José María Amigó is confirmed.
1863	20/6	Foundation of Brotherhood of Holy Sacrament of Valencia.
1866	13/5 Autumn	Julio y José María Amigó receive first communion. José María enters Seminary of Valencia.
1867		Karl Marx publishes <i>Das Kapital</i> .
1868	4/6 26/9 30/9	Death of maternal grandmother Rosa Doset. Outbreak of "The Glorious" Spanish revolution Queen Isabella II goes into exile.
1869	Autumn	The Amigó-Ferrer family moves to live in Godella (Valencia).
	8/12	Opening of Vatican Council I
1870	15/9 6/11	José María Amigó attends festival of the Virgin in Puçol. Death of Gaspar Amigó Chulvi, father of José María.
1871	2/1 10/8	Amadeo of Savoy proclaimed king of Spain. Death of Genoveva Ferrer y Doset, mother of José María.
1872	21/4/ ?/?	Start of third Carlist War. José María Amigó desires to enter the Carthusian Order.
1873	7/2 11/2 ?/3	Amadeo of Savoy renounces Spanish crown. First Spanish Republic proclaimed. José María Amigó takes the habit of the Franciscan Third Order.
1874	3/1 28/3 12/4	Fall of first Spanish Republic. José María Amigó goes to Capuchin novitiate of Bayonne. José María Amigó takes the Capuchin habit in Bayonne (France).
1875	9/1 18/4	Alfonso XII arrives in Barcelona as King of Spain. First profession of Brother Luis of Massamagrell.
1876	27/2	The Carlist War ends. The defeated forces flee to France.

	10/6	Brother Luis of Massamagrell receives the tonsure and the minor orders.
1877	?/3	Brother Luis returns to Spain with the first restorers.
	19/3	Opening of Capuchin convent of Antequera (Malaga).
	30/11	Opening of Capuchin convent of Sanlúcar (Cádiz).
1878	20/2	Leo XIII elected Supreme Pontiff.
	21/4	Solemn profession of Brother Luis of Massamagrell.
	15/6	Brother Luis of Massamagrell receives subdiaconate.
	2/11	Brother Luis of Massamagrell makes the Vow of the Soul.
1879	19/1	Brother Luis transferred to Montehano (Santander).
	8/3	Brother Luis of Massamagrell receives diaconate in Santoña (Santander).
	29/3	Father Luis is ordained presbyter in Montehano (Santander).
	4/4	First Mass of Father Luis of Massamagrell.
	12/6	Father Luis of Massamagrell, appointed Capuchin preacher.
	4/10	Opening of Capuchin convent of La Magdalena (Massamagrell).
1880	16/5	Death of Father Esteban of Adoain in Sanlúcar (Cádiz).
	2/11	Death of Father Ambrosio of Benaguasil in La Magdalena.
1881	16/5	Father Luis administers first baptism to an abandoned child.
	July	Father Luis goes to Escalada (Burgos) to regain his health.
	2/8	Father Luis of Massamagrell arrives in Valencia.
	6/8	Appointment of Father Luis as Vice-Teacher of Novices.
	20/10	Father Luis of Massamagrell appointed as Commissioner of the Venerable Third Order
1882	?/?	Father Luis establishes Venerable Third Order in Valencia
1883	?/?	Republican uprisings in Badajoz and Seu d'Urgell.
	13/11	Father Luis of Massamagrell visits Venerable Third Order of Godella (Valencia)
1884	22/5	Father Luis organizes pilgrimage to Our Lady of El Puig.
1885	4/2	Abolition of Capuchin Commission of Spain.
	4/2	Father Luis appointed Provincial Definitor.
	10/3	Father Luis elected as Guardian of La Magdalena (Massamagrell).
	17/3	Request to Archbishop of Valencia for approval of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters.
	27/4	Approval by diocese of Constitutions for Capuchine Tertiary Sisters.
	11/5	Father Luis founds congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters.
	9/8	Opening of Asylum of Massamagrell.

1886	13/10	Father Luis organizes second pilgrimage to Our Lady of El Puig.
	30/10	Father Luis departs to open convent of Ollería (Valencia).
1887	2/2	Luis Amigó founds Our Lady of Good Books Society.
1888	22/4	Opening of Capuchin convent of Lecároz (Navarre).
	?/?	Arrival of first Capuchin missionaries in La Guajira.
1889	20/2	Father Luis put Constitutions of his Capuchin Tertiary Friars in the hands of Our Lady of Sorrows.
	8/4	Archbishop of Valencia approves foundation of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars.
	12/4	Foundation of Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars.
	15/7	Transfer of Novitiate of the Third Order sisters to Ollería (Valencia).
	18/9	Father Luis elected Consultant for Council of Valencia.
	29/10	Father Luis elected Examiner for the Synod.
	31/10	Capuchin Tertiary Friars move from Carthusian monastery to Torrent.
	18/12	Division of Capuchin Province of Spain into three provinces.
	12/12	Father Luis elected Provincial Definitor.
1890	11/3	First General Chapter meeting of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters.
	24/6	Father Luis receives profession of his first friars.
	29/10	Taking possession of St. Rita Reform School, Madrid.
1891	17/5	Father Luis ends visit under canon law to Mount Zion, Torrent.
	11/6	Father Luis ends visit under canon law to St. Rita School, Madrid.
1892	5/4	Father Luis attends first Masses of his Third Order friars.
	19/5	Father Luis ends visit under canon law to Mount Zion, Torrent.
	3/6	Father Luis ends visit under canon law to St. Rita School, Madrid.
	18/12	Father Luis re-elected Provincial Definitor.
	29/12	Father Luis elected Guardian of Convent of Ollería (Valencia).
1893	5/1	Transfer of Capuchin school for choir members to Ollería (Valencia).
	Autumn	Civic unrest throughout Spain.
1894	5/3	End of Spanish war in Africa.
1895	4/1	Government approves Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars.
	24/2.	Cuban separatist movement begins.

	18/12	Father Luis elected Provincial Definitor and Guardian of Ollería.
	24/12.	Father Luis elected official Visitor of the Venerable Third Order.
1896	12/4	Opening of the house-monastery of Yuste (Cáceres).
	21/9	Father Luis presides over first Provincial Chapter Meeting of Capuchin Tertiary Friars.
1897	8/8	Assassination of Prime Minister Cánovas del Castillo.
1898	30/9	Division of Capuchin province of Toledo into old provinces of Valencia and Andalusia.
	10/12	Spain loses last possessions of Empire.
	16/12	Father Luis elected first post-restoration Provincial Minister of Capuchin Province of Valencia.
1899	24/10	Father Luis presides over first Provincial Chapter Meeting of Capuchin Tertiary Friars.
	3/11	Father Luis departs for foundation of Dos Hermanas Reform School in Seville.
1900	27/9	The Holy Father receives 100 pilgrims in audience.
	23/10	Marcelo Azcárraga becomes president of Council of Ministers.
1901	28/6	The Holy See issues the "Normae" (Regulations).
	28/8	Taking possession of building of Godella (Valencia)
	19/9	Decree applying the Law of Associations.
1902	10/1	Father Luis ends term as Provincial Minister, elected General Custodian.
	25/3	Papal approval of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters.
	19/9	Papal approval of the Capuchine Tertiary Friars.
	11/11	Father Luis presides over first General Chapter Meeting of his Capuchin Tertiary Friars.
1903	14/1	Father Luis elected Vicar of convent of La Magdalena.
	4/8	Pius X elected Supreme Pontiff.
	24/8	Death of Mother Angela of Pego, Capuchine Tertiary Sister.
1904	5/1	Death of Josefa Giménez Sién.
	15/12	Father Luis once again elected Provincial Definitor.
	17/12	Father Luis assigned as Guardian to convent of Orihuela.
1905	5/2	Departure of first Capuchine Tertiary Sisters for La Guajira mission.
1906	31/5	Marriage of Alfonso XIII and Victoria Eugenie of Battenburg.
	31/5	Attack on King and Queen, leaving 20 dead and 100 injured.
1907	18/4	Father Luis appointed bishop of Tagaste and Apostolic Administrator of Solsona.

- 9/6 Father Luis consecrated as bishop by Monsignor A. Rinaldini.
- 24/6 First Pontifical Mass by Monsignor Amigó in Mount Zion, Torrent (Valencia).
- 28/7 Monsignor Luis Amigó takes possession of his diocese.
- 4/8 Monsignor Luis Amigó makes his entry into Solsona.
- 1908 28/4 Monsignor Luis Amigó named favorite son of Massamagrell.
- 1/5 Monsignor Luis Amigó consecrates parish church of Massamagrell.
- 9/5 Monsignor Luis Amigó lays cornerstone for Seminary of San José in Godella (Valencia).
- 21/11 Monsignor Luis Amigó presides over Second General Chapter Meeting of his Capuchin Tertiary Friars.
- 1909 20/5 Luis Amigó attends canonization of St. Joseph Oriol.
- 26/7 The Tragic Week of Barcelona begins. Convents are burned.
- 1910 5/7 Definitive approval of Constitutions of Capuchin Tertiary Friars.
- 23/12 Approval of *Ley del Candado* prohibiting establishment of new religious orders in Spain.
- 1911 13/6 Definitive approval of Constitutions of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters.
- 1912 24/8 Monsignor Luis Amigó protests the Law of Associations.
- 12/11 Assassination of José Canalejas, President of Spain.
- 1913 18/7 Monsignor Luis Amigó proclaimed bishop of Segorbe.
- 13/11 Monsignor Luis Amigó takes possession of new diocese.
- 30/11 Monsignor Luis Amigó makes his solemn entry into Segorbe (Castellón).
- 17/12 Monsignor Luis Amigó presides over pilgrimage of teachers to Rome.
- 1914 17/4 Monsignor Luis Amigó presides over Third General Chapter Meeting of his Capuchin Tertiary Friars.
- 23/4 Monsignor Luis Amigó takes possession of position of Senator.
- 10/8 Monsignor Luis Amigó gives new Constitutions to the Seminary.
- 22/9 Monsignor Luis Amigó inaugurates church of his Capuchine Tertiary Sisters in Altura (Castellón).
- 1915 ?/? Basic supplies become more expensive due to European war.
- 14/5 Monsignor Luis Amigó begins the pastoral visit to his diocese.

- 31/12 Monsignor Luis Amigó named adoptive son of Ador (Valencia).
- 1916 20/6 Luis Amigó writes his last will and testament for the first time.
- 30/11 Luis Amigó lays the cornerstone for church of the Asylum in Massamagrell (Valencia).
- 1917 29/4 Monsignor Luis Amigó moves remains of Brother Bonifacio Ferrer from Altura to Holy Cave.
- 9/5 Luis Amigó lays cornerstone for new church of Asylum of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of Segorbe.
- 18/5 Pilgrimage to the Virgin Pilar of Zaragoza presided over by Monsignor Luis Amigó.
- 1918 30/3 Monsignor Luis Amigó blesses new church of the Asylum of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of Segorbe (Castellón).
- 1919 18/1 Monsignor Luis Amigó consecrates the church of the Asylum of Massamagrell.
- 16/4 Luis Amigó re-elected Senator.
- 13/5 Monsignor Luis Amigó attends ceremony to consecrate Spain to Sacred Heart at Cerro de los Angeles (Madrid).
- 28/6 End of First World War. Treaty of Versailles.
- 15/7 Pilgrimage to Cerro de los Angeles by Monsignor Luis Amigó.
- 2/8 Monsignor Luis Amigó gives new Constitutions to Seminary at Segorbe.
- 1920 14/7 Monsignor Luis Amigó presides over Fourth General Chapter Meeting of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars.
- 1921 7/1 Monsignor Luis Amigó organizes archive of the diocese of Segorbe.
- 17/1 Death of his brother Julio Amigó Ferrer.
- 8/3 Assassination of Eduardo Dato, President of Spain.
- 1922 13/1 Monsignor Luis Amigó obtains Sanctuary of the Holy Cave, Altura.
- 3/4 The Carmelite Fathers take possession of Sanctuary.
- 1/9 Monsignor Luis Amigó obtains former convent of St. Dominic of Segorbe for the diocese.
- 8/9 Monsignor Luis Amigó crowns Our Lady of Montiel (Benaguasil).
- 1923 13/9 Dictatorship of Miguel Primo de Rivera begins.
- 1924 18/3 Monsignor Luis Amigo consecrates the Seminary of San Jose in Godella (Valencia).
- 1925 23/4 Father Luis Amigó writes his definitive last will and testament.
- 27/4 Death of Mother Visitación of Manises, Capuchine Tertiary Sister.

- 29/11 Monsignor Luis Amigó returns worship to church of the former convent of St. Dominic, in Segorbe.
- ?/? Luis Amigó creates the "Young Followers of St. Anthony" society.
- 1926 3/5 Letter-testament of Monsignor Luis Amigó to his children.
14/7 Monsignor Luis Amigó presides over Fifth General Chapter meeting of the Capuchine Tertiary Friars.
24/7 Monsignor Luis Amigó presides over General Chapter meeting of his Capuchin Tertiary Sisters.
- 1927 19/9 Monsignor Luis Amigó stricken by a very serious illness.
2/2/ Erection under canon law of the Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars in Italy.
14/9 Church of the Reform School of Dos Hermanas (Seville) consecrated by Monsignor Amigó.
29/12 Monsignor Luis Amigó presides over Seventh General Chapter meeting of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars.
- 1928 June First foundation of the Capuchin Tertiary Fathers in Colombia.
30/10 Death of Father José María of Sedaví, Capuchin Tertiary Friar.
- 1929 4/4 Golden anniversary of Monsignor Amigó as priest.
24/6 Death of his sister Rosa Amigó Ferrer.
17/10 Monsignor Luis Amigó finishes and signs his Autobiography.
3/11 Monsignor Amigó bids farewell to his first female missionaries to China.
- 1930 28/1 Fall of dictatorship of Miguel Primo de Rivera.
8/2 Death of his close friend José Guzmán Guallar.
14/8 Death of Mother Margarita of Massamagrell, Capuchine Tertiary Sister.
- 1931 14/4 Second Republic proclaimed. Alfonso XIII leaves Spain.
27/11 Approval of a secular Spanish Constitution.
20/12 Monsignor Luis Amigó signs the collective protest of bishops.
- 1932 ?/2 Project of Law of Associations. Secular school.
1/9 The Capuchin Tertiary Fathers make a foundation in Argentina.
- 1933 22/4 Holy See orders inspection of Spanish seminaries.
29/10 Creation of Traditionalist Spanish Falange (F.E.T.) and the National Syndicalist Offensive Committees (J.O.N.S.).
8/12 Establishment of Capuchin Tertiary Fathers novitiate in Colombia.
- 1934 6/9 Monsignor Amigó marries his nephew Luis Boada.
6/9 Monsignor Luis Amigó moves to House-Novitiate of Godella.

- 24/9 Monsignor Luis Amigó receives the last rites.
1/10 Death of Monsignor Luis Amigó in Godella (Valencia) at
1.15 a.m.
4/10 Funeral and burial of Monsignor Luis Amigó in the
Asylum House of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAS	Acta Apostolicae Sedis
AC	Analecta Capuccinorum.
Adm	St Francis of Assisi: Admonitions (Adm)
AP	Anonymous of Perugia (AP)
ASS	Actae Sanctae Sedis.
BAC	Library of Christian Authors (Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos)
B Seg	Official Bulletin of Segorbe.
B Sol	Official Bulletin of Solsona.
1C	Thomas of Celano: First Life of St. Francis of Assisi (1C)
2C	Thomas of Celano: Second Life of St. Francis of Assisi (2C)
CAB	Critical Autobiography of Luis Amigó (ABC)
DIP	Diocesan Inquiry Process (PID)
LetA	St. Francis: Letter to the Rulers of the People (CtaA)
LF	Little Flowers (<i>Floreccillas</i>) of St. Francis (Flor)
1LetF	St. Francis: Letter to the Faithful, first edition (1CtaF)
2LetF	St. Francis: Letter to the Faithful, second edition (2CtaF)
LetL	St. Francis: Letter to Brother Leo (CtaL)
LetM	Letter to a Certain Minister (CtaM)
LM	St. Bonaventure: <i>Legenda Major</i>
Lm	St. Bonaventure: <i>Legenda Minor</i>
LP	Legend of Perugia
MP	Mirror of Perfection (EP)
PG	Patrologia Graeca (published by Migne)
PL	Patrologia Latina (published by Migne)
1R	St. Francis: Rule of 1221, or Rule without Papal Bull
2R	St. Francis: Rule of 1223, or Rule with Papal Bull
RB	Roman Breviary (of Pius V, reformed by Pius X) (BR)
TC	Legend of the Three Companions (TC)

MONSIGNOR LUIS AMIGÓ Y FERRER
COMPLETE WORKS

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

INTRODUCTION

The author of this autobiography was that kind of man. This was his true portrait, as he is presented in this book. Peace was at the center of his being; humility governed his outward appearance. His life was like a gently flowing river, without steep slopes or deluges which overflowed the channel. The flowers of all the virtues bloomed when he passed by: charity, poverty, humility, obedience, austerity, sacrifice. The goodness of his beautiful soul radiated from the smile that lit up his face; a smile that not even death could erase.

He possessed, as few others do, the rare gift of an unalterably serene life, one without great highlights or dazzling moments, silenced by the purity that comes from following a profound spiritual path.

The House-Novitiate of Godella was witness to his last days, as were those of us who had the good fortune to visit him and hear words of eternal life from his lips. I will not forget the Viaticum he received from me. At that solemn moment his tongue resembled a psaltery launching its final notes of impassioned gratitude towards heaven. Afterwards, he lay motionless. He could still receive his final benediction. He joined in and, pronouncing every word of the Franciscan ritual one by one, he blessed me. Within two days he was in Heaven.

The House-Novitiate has seemed like a great medieval abbey to me since then. That room, the cell of a saint; that cadaver, the glorious body on the morning of the resurrection.

I received the greater portion of the mutual affection we professed for each other; when he spoke to me, he took my hands, squeezing them with his own and looking at me as if he wanted to transfer his entire soul to me in that gaze.

The memory of that look and those hands pressing mine now serve as my guarantee that his powerful intercession will watch over me from Heaven as much as he honored me with his friendship on Earth.

† JAVIER, Bishop of Vitoria
1 January 1941

NOTES ABOUT MY LIFE

In the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, and that of my Sacred Mother Our Lady of Sorrows and my fathers and patriarchs St. Joseph and St. Francis, I am reviewing some of the details of my life to obey the instruction of a very honorable priest—which I shall consider as the will of the Lord— and so that my children of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars and Sisters may have greater reason to remember in the presence of God their poor Father and Founder, who loved them so much.¹

¹ The priest Agustín de la Concepción, who knew and personally dealt with the Servant of God, having lived in the palace of Segorbe as family member when he was a seminary student, says: "the very distinguished priest whom he indicated might have written *Notes About My Life* possibly was his confessor Rafael Muñoz, then a retired priest in the town of Navajas. What is definitely clear is that he repeatedly heard him say to Romualdo: 'Write, bishop, write' and that Brother Serafín María of Ayelo re-read this Autobiography to the Servant of God before he signed it.

The date Luis Amigó began to write his Autobiography was, also according to the words of the priest, due to the illness he suffered in 1926. This left his strength for governing the diocese greatly reduced, and he dedicated the greater part of his time to that task.

Additionally, this first paragraph collects, in the guise of an introduction and in synthesized form, the basic pillars on which the spirituality of the Servant of God rested and the purpose of the *Autobiography*. Since it was directed towards his Capuchin Tertiary friars and sisters, it will not come as a surprise that he devotes very few pages to his life as a bishop.

PART I: *CHILDHOOD*

CHAPTER I

Parents, Place and Date of Birth

1 For the greater glory of God², and the greater confusion and humbling of my soul, I must begin this account by confessing that, although all my life I was honored by the Lord with extraordinary graces and favors³ and was granted an innate inclination for virtue, I was, unfortunately, always ungrateful for His benefits. My poor soul frequently fell victim to the enemy in the tenacious battle the spirit of evil was waging against it⁴. But all thanks be given to the Lord, who also always offered His hand to raise me up with His Divine Providence. Confirming the words of the royal prophet David, who says: "The Lord never scorns the contrite and humbled heart" (Psalm 50:18).

2 Having noted that, I now declare that the Lord in his mercy gave me two very Catholic parents named Gaspar Amigó y Chulvi, a lawyer and native of Puçol, and Genoveva Ferrer y Dosest of Valencia. As my father found himself working as a secretary in Massamagrell for some time, I was born in that village on 17 October 1854.

3 And in order that you may see the special compassion the Lord held for me, I have to declare that the towns and villages were struck by a terrible cholera epidemic in that year, and the greater part of the women who were pregnant died before or during childbirth. For that reason, the townspeople, who were very fond of my mother, were greatly pained and lamented seeing her so advanced in her pregnancy because they considered her death to be virtually certain. But the Lord

² Luis Amigó "was very enthusiastic about everything that was for the glory of God. And he could not be still about it" (cf. Proceso Informativo Diocesano. 2nd Session, ad 65).

Taking up the point of Father St. Francis, LP 108 or EP65, he insistently repeats: "I wish that you be very holy for the glory of God, the honor of our congregation and the salvation of the many souls the Lord will put under your direction and custody" (cf. 1820, 1835, 1883, 1892, 1895, 1916).

³ Among the extraordinary graces conceded to the Servant of God, as at least 18 different people testify in the Proceso Informativo Diocesano (Diocesan Inquiry Process), are: discernment of spirits, levitation, bilocation, luminous halo around his body, etc. Similarly, various persons indicated after his death they received various graces and favors through his mediation (cf. DIP, Sessions 13-14.)

⁴ This statement reflects the profound humility of Luis Amigó, who will begin his Autobiography by declaring his ingratitude for the benefits of the Lord and will end his life confessing to Monsignor J. Laurzurica: "I am nothing more than a poor sinner." On the other hand, the refined religious and spiritual training of his early years is clearly shown in the Autobiography. (cf. DIP, Session 15 and CAB).

had mercy on my virtuous mother and she gave birth to this poor creature without any problem⁵.

CHAPTER II

Baptism and Early Childhood

4 Of course, my good parents arranged without delay for me to be immersed in the waters of Holy Baptism the following day, 18 October, and put me under the protection of the Holy Virgin and the patriarch St. Joseph, giving me the name José María.

In addition to this distinction that so greatly honors me, I can claim another title of the Holy Virgin to beg for her assistance and protection, and it is this: having been born in the same year as the declaration as dogma of her Immaculate Conception, shortly before the proclamation of this mystery. May all thanks be given for everything to the Lord!

From such good parents I received a thorough religious and literary education from my earliest years in Valencia⁶, as my parents had to move there shortly after my birth. So I have no memories of my stay in Masamagrell.

5 I remember an event which in my view quite clearly showed the protection of my patron saints, the Holy Virgin and patriarch St. Joseph, in my early years. One day when we were taking our usual route to pick up children for school, we stopped in a small plaza waiting for the student teacher who had gone to look for a child, when a dairy farmer arrived with his cows. While he went to take the milk to someone's house, the children began to play toreador using coats with one of the cows which must have been a bit brave. Being the smallest child and very scared of the animal, I moved as far away from there as I could; but the animal came in my direction, knocked me on the ground and was goring me when the student teacher and milkman came running after hearing the other children crying. The milkman had to use all his strength to restrain the animal, which was completely blind. It grazed my neck several times and I consider it a miracle that it did not manage to pierce beneath my chin with its horn, which would have meant my death. Let my patron saints be blessed!

⁵ The baptism certificate indicates José María Amigó Ferrer was born on 17 October, at 8:00 p.m., and was baptized the same day.

⁶ Luis Amigó took his initial courses in an academy in Valencia located in the outskirts of the Portal de Valldigna close by the Torres de Serranos. This was the first Catholic academy established in the city and was directed by Sebastián Piedra, a Melilla native who was married to Rosa Petit (cf. RAMO, Mariano: *Mensaje de Amor y Redención*. Editorial Doménech. Valencia 1973, Vol. I, p. 12).

CHAPTER III

His Religious Education

6 The Lord gave me an inclination towards the priesthood since I was a child, so the games I usually played were making altars, saying masses and holding festivals, a habit I kept until I was quite old⁷.

Perhaps that accounts for my characterizing my good parents with a special affection. Only once can I remember my father punishing me because my playing was preventing him from resting and I saw him later crying in sorrow.

I do not believe in acting emotionally in praising the virtues of my parents, since that reflects on the glory of God. My father was characterized by a pure and compassionate heart and a very strong faith. That became readily apparent when he was dying, and how surprised he was when the priest who was helping him to die well asked him if he believed in the articles of faith. He answered with great conviction: "Well, how could we do that, not believe!". Of my mother, I can say I never knew a more uncomplaining woman; and so prudent that one never knew from her expression how upset she was or the sorrows that tormented her. She said that no one outside the family was to blame for our tribulations. The Lord so wanted the merits of both of them to be apparent to us that, on uncovering their buried remains after forty eight years in order to transfer them to the crypt of the church I built in the Asylum of Masamagrell, they found two whole bodies. The features of the corpse of my father were so perfect that the gravedigger, without knowing us, said to my sister standing at my side: "Madame, you cannot deny being the daughter of this corpse". And it took some work to reduce the remains in order to be able to introduce them into the coffin we had prepared beforehand and brought with us.

7 Such good parents would not neglect our religious education and in due time they arranged for me to receive the Holy Sacraments. My confirmation was conferred by Archbishop Pablo García Avella, in the parish church of San Lorenzo on 18 November 1857 when I was three years old; and I received my first Communion on 13 May 1866 together with my older brother Julio in the parish church of San Nicolás, where we were living at that time. We did not receive communion earlier because people had the belief then that it required a great deal of judgment and knowledge on the part of the children.

From then on, I began to receive communion with some frequency, but it became greater once I began to go to the Seminary during the 1866-1867 school year.

⁷ Salvador Escorihuela, his cousin and a priest, confirms that activity: "The Servant of God had a little altar in his bedroom with the image of the Holy Virgin of the Candelaria that I –he says—possessed until I lost it due to the revolution of 1936-1939". And immediately he adds: "He felt he had a vocation and entered the Seminary. It is only logical that this vocation grew within his soul, given the pious atmosphere he experienced in his family home". (cf., DIP, Session 15, ad 3 and 5).

CHAPTER IV

Childhood Friendships and Prayers

8 I always had very few friends and tried to have them be older than I was and inclined towards piety, so that I could continue my custom of doing festivals, saying masses and preaching with them⁸. And one of my principal prayers at that time was to St. Rita of Cascia, for being the first life of a saint I read. For that reason, my best friend José Guzmán Guallar⁹, who was a sculptor, gave me an image of the saint as a gift for which I was eternally grateful. My parents went to great trouble to dress it which only increased my devotion to the saint who I turned to for all my needs.

9 Early on I began to go to the hospital on Sundays, accompanied by José Guzman as I said before, to attend to the cleaning of the sick and for that purpose I joined the Congregation of St. Philip Neri¹⁰. Later, wishing for greater perfection, we applied for admission to the School of Christ, located in the Pious Schools¹¹, but my

⁸ Those friends were: José Guzman, Isidro Domínguez, Manuel Tomás and Vicente Vivó. From the early years of their adolescence, the five friends already had their fields of ministry teaching the catechism to the inhabitants of the thatched huts and farmhouses in the Valencia countryside. They distributed their own shares of the work by themselves. They placed special attention on teaching the catechism for children before their first communion and preparation for marriage. They also visited the Hospital and instructed the patients, and frequently went to the jail to console and instruct the inmates. (cf. *Surgam*, 2 [1950], pp. 18-19).

⁹ José Guzmán could not enter the Trappist order for health reasons. Later he was married and had sixteen children, with two of them becoming members of religious orders. He was true artist as a sculptor and one of the best and most inspired creators of religious images from the Valencia region. As a poet writing in both Castilian Spanish and Valencian, he received awards in various poetry competitions and contests.

For ten years he was president of the *Círculo Católico de Obreros* (Catholic Workers Society) of St. Vicent Ferrer, and a visitor to prisons as a member of the congregation of St. Philip Neri and the School of Christ. He died in Valencia on 9 February 1929 from an attack of apoplexy. (cf. RAMO, Mariano: *Mensaje de Amor y de Redención*. Ed. Doménech. Valencia, 1973 (Vol. 1, p. 28), and the daily newspaper *Las Provincias*, Valencia 8 February 1930).

¹⁰ The basis of this Congregation consists of charity towards the neediest of their fellow man, who they visit in the hospitals and their homes when they were sick, and always provided with aid and comfort whenever required. Other practices are preaching with simplicity and charity, including going on Missions. (cf. *Diccionario Espasa*. Hijos de J. Espasa, Editores. Barcelona 1924, Vol. XXIII, pp. 585-586).

This same spirit would undoubtedly underlie the purpose the Servant of God, Father Luis Amigó, would set for his two religious schools (cf. 2293 and 2360).

¹¹ The Schools of Christ were founded in Italy in 1646 by the Bishop of Trivento, who was Father of the chapel of the Congregation of St. Philip Neri in Messina before becoming bishop. They are religious congregations of priests and lay members. They demand of those who admitted that they must abide by living separated from vice, the dangerous pastimes and vanities of the world, observe the sacraments frequently and display a profound submission and respect for the decisions of the Church. They meet weekly in the chapel to perform acts of humility and penitence under the direction of one of the brothers, named Obedience. Among the outside practices of the School are going to the hospitals and visiting jails. (cf. *Constituciones de la C. y Escuela de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo*. Imp. S. Martínez. Valencia 1858).

admission came up against the problem that I had not yet reached the age required by the regulations, an inconvenience that was solved by the virtuous Gregorio Gea, founder of the Foundation of Valencia¹², who belonged to that committee and was very fond of me.

10 With such good examples around me, a great desire for a more perfect life by entering religion began to awaken in me. But the Religious Orders had not yet been re-established in Spain then and I had not seen any members of religious orders beyond a few Franciscans who passed through Valencia en route to the Holy Land and looked like angels descended from heaven to me.

These early years of my studies were full of great and strong emotions for me, some pleasant and others very sad.

CHAPTER V

Revolution of 1868. Fall of Isabella II

11 In 1867, we celebrated the centenary of our beloved patron saint, the Virgin of the Unprotected and in those celebrations I cannot express in words how much I enjoyed myself because there was such an ecstatic enthusiasm among the people. But the following year of 1868 was a very sad one for me, since in June I watched my maternal grandmother Rosa Doset die, whom I loved dearly. In September, on the eve of St. Michael, the revolution broke out which dethroned Her Majesty Queen Isabella II.

Being so young, I still could not understand the full scope of these events; but I can say that the military Hymn of Riego the musicians played and the cries of "Long Live..." and "Death to..." from of the demonstrators, these men and women who looked like furies from Hell made such an impression on my spirit that I do not remember ever having cried as much as on that sad night.

One thing which attracted my attention then and always strikes me very much when I remember it happened in front of my house on Caballeros Street. In the midst of the deafening shouts of "Long Live..." and "Death to..." uttered by that rabble, a man raised his voice high and said: "*Vixca la llibertat y a morir-se de fam* (Long live liberty and die of hunger)". I do not understand why those outlaws did not mistreat him. Perhaps it was God who inspired his tongue to make that prophecy, even against his will, of the misfortunes to come.

¹² Created by the humble carpenter Gregorio Gea in 1884, who met with various young people in his house and out in the country, the purpose was to pass on the scant knowledge that he possessed—in arts and trades—and serving them by example with his virtues and communicating to them the wholesome joy born of a clear conscience.

Today the Foundation has schools, country home, etc., in which they perform a true educational effort through academies, evening events, choirs, hospital visits, aid and comfort to the patients there and in other institutions. The Foundation currently has a new facility boasting well-equipped installations located in the country near Alboraya.

In October 1869, new disturbances befell our city with the order to disarm the members of the militias. Many more casualties occurred, especially in the poor army, which had to dislodge the militiamen from the homes and barricades in which they had taken cover. Protected by mattresses, they opened fire from the balconies at close range until the general ordered his forces outside the city and began to bombard Valencia, and the city suffered great destruction. Our whole family was able to free ourselves from this conflict by going away to Godella, despite the order of the militiamen not to allow the men to leave¹³.

CHAPTER VI

Exemplary Death of his Parents

12 If those years were bitter and turbulent, 1870 was one of even sadder and more terrible events for me. Although in September I had the consolation of attending the hundred year festivities of the Virgin of Pie de la Cruz en Puzol with my father, my state of despondency was already such that all my happiness was clouded by the sad presentiment of his imminent death, which befell him on 6 November of that year, when he was not even 48 years of age.

13 Such sad events contributed to loosening my bonds to earthly things and aroused in me the desire to leave society behind and enter Religion. But, how could I realize that, since my mother was undoubtedly placing her hopes in me? In one of her sad premonitions, one day she said to a woman who was speaking of me: "I shall not see the happiness of my son fulfilled". And so it was, as she fell victim to a sudden and devastating attack of typhus, infected by my sister Pepita when she was already convalescing, and aggravated, no doubt, by her moral suffering on finding herself with few resources and no human support. She left this world on 10 August 1871, nine months and four days after the death of my father, at 46 years of age.

CHAPTER VII

Providential Support of the Amigó-Ferrer Family

15 The priest Francisco Pérez Montejano, who attended to my poor mother during her final illness, and who we valued greatly for being an intimate friend of my good father, then came to be our support, in particular of my sisters. Seeing

¹³ The rebels had created strongholds with barricades around the Plaza del Mercado. General Rafael Primo de Rivera withdrew the troops, moved the fleet into the port and initiated the bombardment of the city at dawn on 16 October. After seven hours of continuous bombardment, the troops were able to take the city without any resistance (cf. *Nuestra Historia*. Mas Ivars-Editores, S.L. Valencia 1980, Vol. VI, p 206-208).

that the death of my mother was imminent, he brought my sisters and I around her deathbed so we could say our farewells to her and she might bless us; and my beloved mother, on seeing us, immediately fixed her gaze upon me and said some labored words to me that none of us could begin to understand; and then, distraught, she said clearly: "My Jesus". But I had fathomed in that glance what my mother wanted to say, which undoubtedly was that I was to be the support of my sisters. Those anguished looks and unarticulated words have never erased themselves, nor shall they be erased, from my mind or my heart¹⁴.

16 Under these sorrowful circumstances, my sisters and I were left without the necessary support of the family. But the Lord, who never abandons his own, moved the heart of that priest so that, contenting himself with the meager produce of our few properties, he committed himself to have us with him, and kept his promise until his death during the cholera epidemic of 1885. God will undoubtedly have rewarded him for his act of charity! And we shall be eternally grateful to him.

Despite the adverse circumstances that were surrounding me, my internal vocation to Religion never stopped, no matter how impossible I considered fulfilling it to be. And with the support of some good souls, I continued my studies, with my mind always set on the cloister.

CHAPTER VIII

José María Amigó and his Four Friends

17 I had four friends at that time and all of us were aspiring to enter Religion. Their names were José Guzmán, Isidro Domínguez, Manuel Tomás and Vicente Vivó. And if we did not know any Religion, for convents did not exist then in Spain¹⁵, after having read some books of the Carthusians, all five of us were inclined towards that Order. But how different from ours were the plans of the Divine Providence! Except for José Guzmán, the Lord took all of us, at different times and by different paths, to the Capuchin Order, which came about this way:

18 The first one to go away to France with the intention of becoming a member of a religious order was José Guzmán, who did his best to take me with him

¹⁴ During one of the retreats by the Carlist forces, they wanted to requisition the horse of Julio Amigó, the oldest of the children. He said "I go where my horse goes" and was away from home for seven years, given up by the family as disappeared. For that reason, he was not present at the death of his parents nor could be counted on for the care of his sisters.

¹⁵ Due to the various laws and decrees issued between 1835 and 1837, "the monasteries, convents, institutes, congregations and other religious houses for both sexes were declared extinct. The State was awarded their assets and the price for the sale of those assets was applied to payment of the public debt, and the same was done with the assets of the lay clergy" (cf. *Diccionario Espasa*. Hijos de Espasa, Editores. Barcelona, Vol. XVIII, p. 364).

For that reason, priests and members of the religious orders had to abandon Spain. The first ones to return, thanks to the Royal Order of 11/1/1877, were nine members of the Capuchin order including the Servant of God Brother Luis of Massamagrell.

but had to desist in the face of resistance from my poor mother, who was putting all her hopes in me. As the Carthusian order did not seem sufficiently strict for him, José tried to enter the Trappists but had to refrain from the taking the habit, on the advice of the Father Superior himself, for not being able to conquer his distaste for milk, the main nourishment of the Trappists. He stayed for some time in Paris working on his art as a sculptor and then returned to Valencia, where he later would take the vows of matrimony and was a model father of a family.

19 The second to go to France to become a member of the Carthusians, in late 1872, was Isidro Domínguez, who took the habit as a choir member and we knew nothing of him for a very long time.

As he succeeded in his attempt, it only increased my desire to imitate him, but this desire always came up against the difficulty of leaving my poor sisters. And that had me so upset I was shedding many tears.

CHAPTER IX

The Reasons Why He Entered Religion

20 It occurred to me then to have Father Francisco intercede on my behalf so that I might overcome the difficulties opposing my entry into the Carthusians: and to that end, I took the habit of the Third Order in the convent of the Franciscan Sisters of Purity of Valencia in March of 1873.

21 As a result, no doubt, of the intercession of the Holy Father, I overcame the difficulty opposing my vocation and in view of the fact that my time for joining the army was drawing closer and I lacked the resources to free myself from military service; and that it also did not suit me to serve a revolutionary government and even less the idea of having to fight against the Carlist cause held in high esteem by all men of the Catholic orders, and which my brother Julio was defending; understanding as well that neither my character nor physical strength was suitable for armed service; taking all this into account, both my tutor, who was the brother of my father, and our protector Francisco Pérez Montejano authorized me so I might arrange my entry into Religion. The priest Francisco committed himself to always keep my sisters with him and to care for all their needs; a commitment which he faithfully fulfilled, as I already said, until his death.

CHAPTER X

The Four Friends Turn Towards the Capuchins

22 Full of joy for having been given permission, and accompanied by my friend Manuel Tomás, as we had decided to depart together to join the Carthusians,

we went to visit the Jesuit Father Llopart, whom we had already consulted about our vocation. When we stated what was happening and expressed our resolve to him, he invited us to enter the Society (Jesuits); but on seeing that we did not feel the calling for that, he told us: "Well, do not go to the Carthusians, where you will not take your vows due the difference in character between Frenchmen and Spaniards; direct yourselves to a very observant convent of Spaniards in Bayonne (France) and there you will surely take your vows". We took his words as the will of God — which events would confirm it was— and by mutual agreement we both wrote the Guardian Father of that convent requesting our entry into the Order, and without delay, we received a favorable response to our request.

23 Now admitted for entry in the Capuchin convent of Bayonne, we received a letter from our friend Isidro Domínguez, telling us that due to an illness affecting his eyesight, he had had to leave the Carthusian monastery when he was already on the verge of taking his vows. He had entered the Capuchins of Toulouse as a lay brother on 19 October of the previous year (1873), taking the name Brother Fernando of Valencia.

Now there were three of us called by God to the Capuchin Order, an order which none of us were familiar with.

24 My fourth friend, Vicente Vivó, also following his initial vocation and left in early 1877 to enter the Carthusian monastery, where he did his entire novitiate. But when the moment came to take his vows, it seemed to him he did not feel sufficient strength or enough vocation to embrace that kind of life. Leaving the Carthusian monastery, he came to the convent in Bayonne, after we had already departed for the foundation of Antequera, and there he took the holy habit on 18 February 1878, taking the name of Brother Juan of Valencia.

Undoubtedly, we all of us came to be Capuchins through Divine Will, undoubtedly, so that we would be numbered among the restorers of our Order in Valencia, to whose religious province we all came, in time, sent by obedience.

CHAPTER XI

The Novitiate in Bayonne

25 Having already noted everything with reference to the vocation of my companions, and continuing the narration of our trip to Bayonne to enter the convent, I have to state for the record that the Divine Providence facilitated everything, not only in the issuing of the necessary documents to be able to leave Spain (so difficult during that time due to the war)¹⁶, but it also provided us with a companion, already well experienced in the voyage we were going to make by sea, who offered to accompany us to the convent. He was like an angel sent by God for us.

¹⁶ He undoubtedly is referring to the Third Carlist War which spread bloodshed across his native land for four years, 1872-1876.

Lacking the courage to say a final farewell to my poor sisters, I told them I was going to do exercises for eight days (which turned into eight years before I saw them again). Manuel Tomás and I left Valencia by boat, heading in for Bayonne, on 28 March 1874, Passion Saturday, and arrived at our destination on the 31st, Holy Tuesday.

26 It is worth noting that I had entered the Tertiary Order of Father St. Francis in March of 1873 with the aim that the saint might overcome the problems that were hindering my entry into the Carthusians; and the Holy Father heard my pleas, but it was in order that I might enter into his First Order in precisely the same month I should have taken my vows in the Third Order. May Eternal thanks be given for the favor of his love towards me!

Having completed the events of the first period of my life, I again confess, with great embarrassment, my inadequacy in matching the countless benefits received from the Lord and I am blessed by his mercy and compassion towards me.

May infinite thanks be given for everything!

PART II: MEMBER OF THE CAPUCHIN ORDER

CHAPTER I

The Capuchin Convent in Bayonne

27 On beginning to narrate the most salient facts of my religious life, I want to say something of the convent in Bayonne, my mother-house, which the Reverend General Minister Brother Nicholas called “the gem of the Order” and was the breeding ground from which the Lord took the first restorers of the Order in Spain¹⁷.

The founder of this convent was the Reverend Father Brother Fidel of Vera, who proposed by building it only to provide their brothers, the members of religious orders exiled from their cloisters, with an asylum where they could continue their religious life¹⁸.

28 To search for a solution to the problem of removing the convent from the jurisdiction of the provincial minister of Toulouse, to which the territory of Bayonne belongs, so it might be exclusively founded by Spaniards and for Spaniards, Father Fidel of Vera, together with his companion Brother Fermín of Ecay, on foot and wearing the holy habit, set off in the direction of Rome to present themselves to the Supreme Pontiff and the Reverend General Minister.

Having obtained an audience with the Holy Father, and after Father Fidel explained his thoughts to him, the Pope approved and gave the plan his blessing. But he added: “Do not limit yourself to welcoming the Fathers exiled from their cloisters, you will not be able to do anything for them due to their age. Establish a Novitiate there and admit the young Spaniards who come to you”.

¹⁷ The rescript of foundation was published as follows: “Ex audientia Ssmi. die 2 Decembris 1852 Ssmus., auditis precibus R. P. FIDELIS a VERA, Ord. Capp. et attento voto Rmi. P. Venantii a Taurino, ejusdem Ordinis Ministri Generalis, benigne excepti ejusdem preces et concessit ut orator possit erigere in dioecesi Bayonensi sui Ordinis Conventum, in quo necessario et absolute Regula et Constitutiones stricte observentur, in eoque etiam ecipere Religiosos Hispanos ejusdem Ord. quicumque ii sint, qui velint strictam regularum observantiam sequi. Ac si per tempora ac circumstantias fieri poterit etiam Novitiatum instituere. Jussit insuper S. Sua praedictum Conventum ac Novitiatum debere esse omnino immediate subjectum P. Ministro Generale pro tempore ejusdem Ord.; dependenter tamen ab Ordinationibus Cardenalis Protectoris. Contrariis quibuscumque non obstantibus.

Hac die 6 Decembris 1852. RAPHAEL CARD. FORNARIO, Ord. Capucc. Protector”.

¹⁸ Father Fidel de Vera published a set of Regulations, thinking that some exiled members of the religious orders would flock to the new convent in time, in order to prevent the evil that might be caused by the unpleasant memories of that century. This set of regulations determines and lists certain details to those who were not subject to the Rules and Constitutions, and expresses the form that these details are to be applied in particular cases. The austerity of those Regulations was such that some members of the religious orders succumbed to their severity.

Satisfied with this authorization, father Fidel appeared before the Reverend General Minister, who also granted him sufficient authority for establishing the Convent and Novitiate of Bayonne, submitting it to his immediate jurisdiction and declaring it a Provincial Convent. He only granted to the Provincial Minister of Toulouse the authority to visit it in the capacity of representative of the General Minister.

CHAPTER II

Reception and problems for his admission

29 Thus Manuel Tomás and I arrived at the convent on 31 March, as I stated before. When I knocked on the door and the doorman Brother Fermín of Ecay¹⁹, the colleague of the now-deceased founder, opened it for us, the impression I received on seeing him wearing such a patched and mended habit was so negative that I even thought of not staying. It was a temptation that disappeared upon seeing and receiving the warm treatment of the Guardian Father and other members of the order, which gave me a very different impression. And the fact is I still did not know the merits of holy poverty, a virtue which characterized that venerable member of the order, who was considered a Saint by everyone.

We were very warmly welcomed and our companion, his mission now accomplished, went on his way, offering to bring the news of our happy arrival to the family and to return to visit us the following year, when we would have taken our vows. He did fulfill that promise, to the immense satisfaction of our families.

Later we took an examination of Latin and the subjects we had studied, and the next day we followed the acts of the Community with the novices.

30 Much later, I came to know (through my Teacher Father Brother Antonio of Toulouse) about the problem concerning my admission. The Guardian Father, Brother Marcial of Alza, after seeing me so exhausted since I was still convalescing from some intermittent fevers I had for three consecutive months, did not want to give me the holy habit, fearing that I might not be able to stand up to the austerity of the Capuchin life. The Advisor Fathers, who were the Teacher Father Antonio of Toulouse and the Lector Father Bernabé of Astorga, even though they shared that opinion, convinced him that it was prudent that I persuade myself of the impossibility of embracing this life and I would accept it better that way. The Guardian Father followed that opinion and everything was made available to us

¹⁹ The reputation for saintliness of Brother Fermín de Ecay was such in Bayonne that the general public approached him to ask for advice and kiss his habit. He served as the shoemaker and doorman and took advantage of every opportunity that presented itself to give advice to laymen. And there were many, many people who went to the Capuchin convent, even though it was far from the city, to hear his sermons. He had a gift for prayer. He spent long periods of time in deep meditation without being aware of what was happening next to him (cf. CIAURRIZ, P. Idefondo de: *Capuchinos ilustres*. Imp. Viuda de R. García. Pamplona, 1926, pp. 300-301.)

for our taking of the habit on 12 April 1874, Dominica in Albis (Low Sunday), exchanging my name of José María for Luis, while Manuel Tomás became Francisco.

And seeing clearly that I was called by God to Religion, therefore, contrary to the opinions of others, I was there for the entire period of my novitiate, and then later for the taking of the vows, without any health problems or the need to be excused from the rigors of observance.

CHAPTER III

Novitiate and Taking of Religious Vows

31 The time of the novitiate passed happily and for me very rapidly, without experiencing any more temptation than wondering if I should have followed my initial thoughts of entering the Carthusians; an idea I discarded with the help of my Teacher Father, who made me see clearly the cunning nature of the enemy who was trying to take me away from Religion.

As the year of probation was now finished, the Fathers arranged for us to take our religious vows on 18 April 1875, the third Sunday after Easter Sunday²⁰.

32 My Teacher Father, who was very fond of me, wanted to keep me in the Novitiate in the position of Angel of the Novitiate, the name we gave for a professed choir member who helped the Teacher Father in leading the choir. But the Lector Father, whose jurisdiction I came under after taking vows, opposed that based on his feeling the position would take too much time away from my studies. Thus I had to go away from the Novitiate with great feeling for both²¹.

²⁰ The act of profession reads: "I, Brother Luis of Masamagrell, choir member called in this century José María Amigó Ferrer, legitimate son of Gaspar Amigó and Genoveva Ferrer, having been summoned in freedom to profess and knowing this is binding on me and being in my sound judgment and reason which God has given me and with the permission of the Most Reverend General Minister of the Capuchin Order, being 20 and one half years and one day of age, I took my vows in the presence of the Community, freely and spontaneously, not from fear, nor forced, nor urged, nor threatened, by the hands of the Reverend Father Antonio of Toulouse, Vicar and Teacher of Novices, in this Convent of Bayonne especially delegated by the Reverend Guardian Brother Marcial of Alza, at 9.30 in the morning of the 18th day of the year of our Lord 1865. And for being true, and for the record I sign this profession with my own hand, with witnesses being those named above, the Guardian Father and Vicar and Reverend Lector Father Brother Bernabé of Astorga. Signed, Brother Luis of Massamagrell" (cf. Provincial Archive. Capuchins of Navarre).

²¹ "The atmosphere which surrounded the young choir member Brother Luis could not have been more suitable for his religious education. An austere atmosphere of warm spiritual life breathed everywhere in that mansion of seraphic peace, full of the fragrance of the virtues of those heroic Spanish Capuchins, who conserved the sacred fire of life in the cloisters following the exile from the cloisters of 1835.

Outstanding among them was the great figure of the venerable Father Esteban of Adoain and other exemplary Capuchins, whom exerted a powerful influence on the spiritual and scientific education of the youthful Brother Luis. In such exemplary members of the order, all

It was something admirable, and something that greatly struck me, to see how, in that little convent of Bayonne ignored by everyone in Spain, the Lord recruited people from all parts of the country using extraordinary means. This happened to me and my companions, as I said before. In this, the plan of the Divine Providence for the restoration of the Order in Spain could be discerned.

CHAPTER IV

Father Ambrosio of Benaguasil

33 One of the principal acquisitions our convent had then was the coming of Reverend Father Ambrosio of Benaguasil²².

I had spoken several times to my Lector Father of the apostolic zeal of Father Ambrosio and of the great good it would do to our convent if we could manage to arrange that he come there. During that time, Father Ambrosio was in northern Spain serving as Chaplain of the Carlist forces, whose cause he supported for the full duration of the war. One day when I was in my cell, my Lector Father came in to tell me: "The Father Ambrosio of whom you have spoken to me many times is downstairs in the visiting room. You can go see him". I rushed down the stairs and, on seeing him, embraced and greeted him in Valencian, which greatly pleased Father Ambrosio, who looked like he had seen the heavens open. He had withdraw from the north and entered France on seeing the failure of the Carlist cause; and having heard people say that there was a convent of Spanish Capuchins in Bayonne, he headed there with the intention of staying there. That was what he asked of the superiors; but the poor father happened to come there under the unfortunate circumstance that, due to some Fathers in exile who had returned to secular life after being admitted to the convent and wearing the habit, the Provincial Minister

kinds of virtues and austerities stood out, and our Brother Luis knew how to take advantage of such good examples to mold his soul".

For the rest, the austerities and mortifications of the Rule were so strong, and the Regulations with their prescriptions sufficiently severe to discourage a spirit that was not well tested and determined (cf . RAMO, Mariano: *Mensaje de Amor y de Redención*. Ed. Doménech. Valencia 1973, Vol. I, pp. 38-39).

²² Ambrosio Roda Ramada, born in 1812 in the town of Benaguasil in the Valencia region, took the Capuchin habit in La Magdalena, Massamagrell (Valencia) on 21 October 1828. He was exiled from the cloisters in 1835 and was ordained a priest three years later.

In 1851, he took possession of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Montiel in Benaguasil (Valencia), where he managed to bring together a small group of penitent souls for services and custody of the Convent. Four years later, he was expelled and the group of penitents dispersed.

He died in Massamagrell on 2 November 1880, without having been able to once again bring together his penitents in the Sanctuary, which his fellow Capuchin Brother Lorenzo Mollino would achieve on 20 January 1880. Father Ambrosio of Benaguasil, a tireless missionary and eloquent preacher, received the Grand Cross of the Order of Isabella the Catholic and was proposed for the diocese of Santiago de Cuba from a short list including the Blessed Diego José of Cádiz and St. Antonio María Claret.

of Toulouse had categorically prohibited that any other exiles from the cloisters be admitted. For that reason, the Guardian Father told him he could not accede to his request, but he authorized Father Ambrosio to stay in the convent for as long as he wanted. We all felt sorry for this setback, Father Ambrosio just as much as my Lector Father and I; but an idea occurred to me that I explained to the Lector Father that, since the Community had to do the Spiritual Exercises during those days, why not put Father Ambrosio in charge of leading those Exercises? I was convinced that, if he did lead them, that the Community would request his admission to the convent from the Provincial Minister. That thought seemed like a good idea to the Lector Father, who proposed it as his own to the Guardian Father and the Community, both of whom gladly accepted it. I warned Father Ambrosio beforehand that if they were to ask him to give those Exercises not to refuse, since I was confident that his admission would depend on it. And all that came about, since the Community was so enthused by the preaching of the Father that by acclamation they requested and obtained his admission into the convent from the Provisional Minister.

34 Father Ambrosio, undoubtedly impressed by the interest I took in him, was very fond of me and I remember that on two occasions he said these words to me: "*Chiquet, tú te encargarás de les meues monchetes*" (Young man, you will take charge of my beloved nuns). Father Ambrosio had brought together some young women in Montiel with a religious vocation, who wore the Capuchine habit and were living the monastic life with the intention of forming a religious Institute, but still did not have any approval nor anything more of a Rule than the instructions of the Father²³.

Some of these Sisters accompanied Father Ambrosio in the expedition he made to Guinea, swept up by his zeal for converting those unbelievers. Others followed him later on, when the Father enlisted as Chaplain in the Carlist ranks in the Valencia region, with the women serving as nurses at a hospital in Chelva.

But when Father Ambrosio had to march with the troops to the north, they stayed behind and, as they had already been expelled from the sanctuary of Montiel, all the women went back home.

35 Father Ambrosio was alluding to these Sisters when he told me "Young man, you will take charge of my beloved nuns". But as I was unaware that he had that foundation, I did not comprehend the scope of those words at that time: I understood them later on when, as I was trying to found the Congregation of my

²³ This was a small group of women whom Father Ambrosio had brought together in the convent adjacent to the Sanctuary of Montiel. They lived a hermitic and monastic life attending to the Sanctuary. Officially it was a *Beaterio* (sanctuary of devout women) which had no other Rule except for the instructions Father Ambrosio gave them, nor any other purpose beyond that already described.

Some of the women, spontaneously gathered in Montiel in 1881, were those Father Luis would give some Constitutions, a purpose and new ministry, a different habit and also a new name. They would constitute the foundation of the new Congregation of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family which the Servant of God would found on 11 May 1885 (cf. BENISSA, Mother Isabel of: Colección de Fuentes, pp. 251ss).

Tertiary Sisters, some of those Sisters appeared before me, asking me on their knees to be allowed to form a part of that congregation since they were once again together in Montiel. They persuaded me that the words of Father Ambrosio had been prophetic.

CHAPTER V

Theological Studies and Minor Orders

36 Our theological studies were proceeding with great intensity since the Fathers, due to their determination to return to Spain to found congregations, did not want us to waste any time, even prohibiting us from studying French. I had a great love for the language and but only learned anything from speaking and reading it.

For the same purpose, the Superiors arranged for my classmates and I to receive the Tonsure and the Minor Orders, which were bestowed on us by the Bishop of Bayonne Monsignor Francisco Lacroix on 10 June 1876, in the Ember Days of Pentecost.

CHAPTER VI

The Royal Order Authorizing the Restoration

37 Due to the great desire of the friars to go to Spain, the Fathers took many steps directed towards obtaining permission to enter into Navarre. But it was all in vain because it was, apparently, necessary for the glory of God, and so that his Holy Will could be more clearly seen, which nothing or no one can resist, for a more humble element to manage to open the doors to Spain that had been closed to the religious orders for so long. Thus, it was the Brother who begged alms for our convent in Bayonne, Brother Félix of Azcoitia, an exemplary and greatly appreciated member of the order. A marquis who was very fond of Brother Felix was an intimate friend of Cánovas del Castillo, the president of the Council of Ministers at that time, and provided him with lodging at his home when Cánovas passed through Bayonne. Thus, Brother Félix asked this gentleman to do what he could to obtain permission from the president to found in the north of Spain, where they were offering us a foundation. The marquis made clear to him how difficult the matter would be, but said he would try. And, in fact, on one occasion when the President was staying at his home, the marquis asked him for the favor of authorizing the Capuchins of Bayonne to accept a foundation they were being offered in Navarre. On hearing the proposal and Navarre, the president laughed and told the marquis:

“Sir, in Navarre, where they all are Carlists, not a chance; but it would be a different matter if it was a question of founding in Andalusia”.

Having received this answer, the marquis called Brother Félix and, after telling him of the conversation, entrusted him to see if the Fathers could manage to obtain a foundation in Andalusia. And as everything is undoubtedly a work of Divine Providence, the arrangements soon produced happy results, as we were given the opportunity to found in our old convent of Antequera. The authorities and principal families of that town were greatly interested in the, especially the engaged young woman who later became the wife of Romero Robledo, the minister of Pardons and Justice and the key figure in this matter.

38 With this excellent result in hand, the marquis appeared at that Ministry to deal with the matter with the President. Finding him absent, he informed the sub-secretary of what he had spoken of with Cánovas and his favorable reply to authorizing a foundation of the Capuchins of Bayonne in Andalusia; and as they were offering to found in Antequera, to proceed to request the reports from the authorities of the town. The sub-secretary did so and without delay the favorable reports were dispatched and arrived from all the authorities: ecclesiastical, civil and military. Having received them, and with the President still not in Madrid, the sub-secretary called the marquis to tell him everything was in order, but that he did not have news of nor any order from the President regarding the matter, so the decision would have to await his return. The marquis replied that he had already said that he was in accord with the foundation of the Capuchins in Andalusia and therefore he could proceed to issue the Royal Order. The sub-secretary did so and it was signed by the King, with the authorization to Father Bernabé of Astorga and the Capuchins of Bayonne to found in Antequera appearing in the official state “Gazette” (Entry convent of Antequera).

The then-minister of Pardons and Justice, Romero Robledo, took an active interest in the entire matter in order to please his fiancée, and directed all the businesses although without figuring in any of them.

The other ministers, on reading of the Royal Order in the “Gazette”, as they did not have the slightest news of the matter²⁴, went in protest to the President, and the

²⁴ The Royal Order was published as follows: “The Minister of Pardons and Justice announces on this date to the Bishop of Malaga the following:

His Majesty the King (may God protect him), having heard an official request presented to this Ministry by Brother Bernabé of Astorga, member of the Franciscan Minor Order commonly called the Capuchins, for himself and in the name of other Spanish members of the same religious order resident in Bayonne, in which they request that they be permitted to reside in Antequera, living in accordance with their Institute, without any burden for the State; and in view of the favorable report of Your Excellency and the Civil Governor of the Province, His Majesty has resolved and informs Your Excellency that on behalf of the Civil Power there is no problem in the appellants residing in the city of Antequera, living a religious life in accordance with the Constitutions of their Order.

By Royal Order, communicated to the indicated Minister, who is transferring it to you for your knowledge and appropriate comments. May God protect you for many years.

Madrid, 11 January 1877.—The Subsecretary, Víctor Arnán.

President in turn went to the sub-secretary and the marquis, whom the President told that his words about "In Andalusia, it would be a different matter" when the marquis requested the authorization of him, did not constitute an authorization of that nature.

39 Thus, the argument began among the ministers of what should be done with the Royal Order which opened the doors of Spain to all the religious orders, and the majority expressed the opinion it should be revoked. But Romero Robledo calmed them and changed their perspective with the following observation: 'You are all well aware that the King has only been on the throne for a short time, and the opinion of the people is that he reigns, but does not govern. Therefore, if we now revoke a Royal Order that the King just signed, we are only providing fuel to confirm that opinion among the people. I consider, therefore, that the Royal Order should be respected, and if there are new petitions in the future, to do what is most advisable'. Everyone adopted that opinion and the Royal Order remained in effect.

That is the story of the entry of our Order into Spain, the starting point which laid the foundation for the other orders to establish themselves there. And I wanted to put this account on the record in my biographical notes so that the news of this accomplishment, both for the glory of God and honorable for our Capuchin Order, did not get lost. There now remains no one else able to testify about this event as I can, as I heard it from the lips of the same members of the order who negotiated it. All glory be to the Lord!

CHAPTER VII

The First Restorers Return to Spain

40 With the Royal Order now obtained, our Superior began to occupy themselves with the question of the people they should send to the foundation; and, in agreement with the Reverend Father José Llerena, the Apostolic Commissioner for the religious orders exiled from Spain, who resided in Rome, they designated the following members: Reverend Father Esteban of Adoain, as Guardian; Father Bernabé of Astorga, our Lector, and Father Bernardino of Velliza; and among the choir members were Brother Fermín of Velilla, Brother Angel of Velliza, Brother Francisco of Valencia and I, Brother Luis of Massamagrell; and the lay brothers Brother Fermín de Ecay and Brother León de la Naja.

41 We left Bayonne in three expeditions and on different days, in order to not call too much attention to ourselves. The Guardian Father, Esteban of Adoain, and the Reverend Commissioner Father, José de Llerena, went in the first expedition to take possession of the convent. My turn came in the second expedition with my Lector Father Bernabé de Astorga; and we were all reunited again in Antequera in the days leading up to the festival of St. Joseph in 1877. The inauguration of the

convent was performed with all due solemnity on the day of St. Joseph, with the Reverend Father Esteban preaching the mass.

42 We made the trip dressed in our holy habit, which seemed like a rash act to everyone, since we had to cross almost all of Spain and spend the night in Madrid. No one knew that we were members of a religious order on the long journey. Some said we were Moors; others that we were Jews and, in the end, there were a thousand blunders like that. When the members of the expedition arrived in Cordoba, some lads who were observing us began to say to one another: "Hey, what weird guys they are! Do you want to go over and stab them?" And the Lector Father said when he returned to me: "It was a good thing I made a general confession before leaving, because I believe we will not make it to Antequera alive".

CHAPTER VIII

Initial Difficulties in the Foundation of Antequera

43 With everyone finally reunited at our destination, we had to gain ground very slowly since the people generally looked at us with suspicion or even fear²⁵. And for us to capture their sympathies, the fervent and apostolic preaching of Father Esteban, our Guardian, and the friendly and loving behavior of the members of the order toward those who approached us played no small part. But in addition the Fathers made the wise decisions to find out who was the master bricklayer with the worst ideas in the town, and called on him to take charge of supervising the works that had to be done to adapt the part of the old convent that was assigned for our bedroom. If the man was flattered by the confidence the members of the order placed in him, he nevertheless did not stop regarding us with suspicion; until, at last, we gained his sympathies to such a degree that he said to the Fathers completely spontaneously: "When you called me, I came with prejudices about many things we had heard against the friars, depicting them as inquisitors and bullies; but what I have seen in you is the complete opposite. You are all kindness and charity towards others and for that reason, I am saying that you do not have fear anything or anyone, since my team of workers and I are ready to defend you,

²⁵ Father Esteban of Adoain, on taking possession of the convent, wrote to his brother: "All the municipal councils have received us very well and offered us total protection. On the day of St. Joseph, we celebrated a solemn act to take possession of the church and convent and begin our restoration. The musicians came from the city; four Capuchins occupied the altar and pulpit after forty years of expulsion. For the time being, there are twelve of us; and there are many others who are hoping to wear the habit. If there is peace, we will not lack for anything. We are asking the Lord to provide us with everything that is in His interest" (cf. ESTELLA, Father Gumersindo of: *Historia del Siervo de Dios P. Esteban de Adoain*. Ed. Aramburu. Pamplona 1944, p. 345).

even with our lives"²⁶. And so it was, because in the casinos and everywhere else the bricklayers were singing the praises of the friars.

44 In this way we were gaining the sympathies of the entire town, which ended up being enthusiastic about the friars.

From the good name of the friars spreading everywhere and the preaching of Father Esteban capturing the attention of the people, we were all becoming known and respected within and outside the province²⁷. And this happened to such a degree that the people of Sanlúcar de Barrameda immediately moved to request a foundation from our Superiors.

45 And now that there was a Royal Order, the foundation was obtained, something that became easy to achieve after the first one was granted. The Reverend Commissioner Father designated Father Esteban to found that convent, appointing him its Guardian, and replacing him in that post in Antequera with Father Bernabé of Astorga. The new foundation of Sanlúcar was carried out at the end of 1877.

²⁶ "Spain had come out of an eminently revolutionary period, and the masses were not offering them any security. In Andalusia, in particular, the elements which took part in the deplorable events which occurred in those periods enjoyed great freedom. In 1877, the government of His Majesty Alfonso XII did not believe itself secure and strong against the conspiring of the parties which desired power. There were frequent insults against the faithful who organized processions and festivals in the various dioceses following the episcopal consecration of Pius IX. The singing of religious hymns outside of the churches was punished with fines by some mayors, and there were governors who wanted to lock up the faithful en masse". (cf. *ibid.*)

²⁷ Such was the power of Father Esteban of Adoain to draw people that, having come to Antequera shortly before the festival of St. Joseph, the town attended en masse to listen to him in the mission given from 5 to 15 April of that same year. As Father Gumersindo of Estella relates:

"The audience for the first talk was so obviously pleased that the next day at two in the afternoon, numerous groups were seen already occupying their seats in the church, even though they knew the act of the mission would not begin until seven. By mid-afternoon each day, the three naves, chapels, choir stall, corridors and galleries were often filled, with the people overflowing into the streets immediately outside.

The last day the sermon was in the plaza. In the plaza and neighboring streets some fifteen thousand people gathered to listen to the illustrious missionary with such profound respect that not even a cough could be heard. He gave the Papal Benediction there and then taking the image of the Good Shepherd, the procession formed heading towards the convent located on the outskirts of the city. The bells were ringing ceaselessly; the salvos and rockets were echoing in the space; the musicians were playing hymns of a martial nature; the clergy and singers were intoning the sacred hymn of *Ave Maris Stella*. The windows, balconies and doors were decorated with damasks and flags. The streets were very high-spirited and lively, filled with joyful people. And they saw in the procession cantonal meaning as, their eyes brimming with tears, they cheered the Capuchins, the Clergy and the Pope.

The entire new Capuchin Community was part of that memorable procession: Fathers Esteban of Adoain, Guardian; Bernabé of Astorga, Vicar; Saturnino of Artajona; Carlos of Antequera; Bernardino of Belliza; Pedro of Castejón. The Choir members Brother Fermín of Vellilla; Angel of Velliza; Francisco of Valencia; Luis of Massamagrell. The Lay Brothers: Brother León of La Naja, Fermín of Ecay, Manuel of Cabra. The Apostolic Commissioner Father José of Llerena was also there" (cf. ESTELLA, Father Gumersindo of: *Hermanos del Siervo de Dios Padre Esteban de Adoain*. Ed. Aramburu. Pamplona 1944, p 438-439).

The choir members continued our studies of Theology, and the Superiors now thought we should receive the subdiaconate; and, to that end, they sent us to Malaga, where the Bishop of the Diocese, Esteban José Pérez, and Martínez Fernández conferred that Order on us on 15 June, in the Ember Days of the Holy Trinity, of the year 1878.

CHAPTER IX

Foundation of the Convent of Montehano, Santander

46 His Excellency the Bishop of Santander, Vicente Calvo y Valero, a great admirer of the Capuchin Order, also made a very determined request and obtained a foundation for his Diocese²⁸ from the Superiors in a convent previously belonging to the Alcantarines in Montehano, a village in Escalante²⁹. I was one of those designated for that foundation and we arrived at the convent on the afternoon of 19 January 1879, where we were welcomed by the Bishop, who had already been there two or three months supervising the restoration works for the convent. As the festival of St. Sebastian, the namesake of the church in this convent, was being celebrated the next day, the Bishop wanted us to solemnly sing the Matins in the choir under his direction after we had rested a bit from the journey.

CHAPTER X

Receiving the Diaconate and Presbyterate

47 The Prelate remained with us for a long period as the works continued; and during that time he wanted to ordain me into the Diaconate and Presbyterate. The Diaconate was conferred on me in Santoña, where the general ordinations were

²⁸ The Prelate of the Diocese, Vicente Calvo y Valero, a great admirer of the Capuchin Order, not wanting to deprive his diocese of the spiritual benefits the good example and preaching of the children of St. Francis could offer, made a request with great determination and the Superiors accepted this foundation in Montehano (cf. *Los Capuchinos en Montehano*. Ed. Sever-Cuesta. Valladolid 1954, p. 12).

²⁹ Montehano was previously a small island in the inlet which penetrates between Santoña and Laredo (Santander). Various geological phenomena have changed its form and structure somewhat. In turn, while building the road between Santoña and Cicero, Montehano was joined to Hano, forming a peninsula adjacent to it.

The convent was built in 1421 by Beltrán Ladrón de Guevara, the Lord of Escalante and Count Zahalú, for the Observant Fathers of the Order of Friars Minor, who held it until the exile from the cloisters of 1835. The convent was buried deep in the municipal areas and parish of Villa de Escalante, a port that was relatively important during the Middle Ages and our own Golden Age. Finally, Francisca de la Puente y Bustamente, the widowed Marquise of Vilurna, acquired it with Christian eyes and donated the convent to the Prelate of the Diocese, Vicente Calvo y Valero, who in turn gave it to the Capuchin Fathers. (cf. *The Capuchins in Montehano*. Ed. Sever-Cuesta. Valladolid 1954, p. 8ss).

given, on 8 March 1879, in the Ember Days of Lent, and I was ordained in the Presbyterate by myself, in the church of our convent of Montehano, in the fifth week of Lent on 29 March 1879³⁰.

48 On the eve of my ordination, I found myself without even a belt to tie my hands in the consecration, and the Guardian Father, as there was no time to request one from Santander, sent me to the convent of the Order of St. Clare in Escalante, to see if the sisters there could provide me with something. But the poor sisters did not have anything that was suitable, either. All they could find was a silk bow the color of coffee which was hanging from a branch; and that was what served for my consecration. I have mentioned this for people to see that even in such a solemn act that the Lord wanted to practice poverty.

But poverty was no less conspicuous the day of my first mass, which I said on 4 April, the day of our Virgin Mary, with no other gift beyond the attendance of the Bishop, for whose attention I was very grateful.

CHAPTER XI

Practicing his Ministry in the Mountains

49 The Prelate, of course, wanted to begin performing the ministries immediately and I already had begun to hear confessions before celebrating my first mass. He also made me responsible for preaching two sermons, one on Holy Thursday in the village of Isla, and the other in Soana on the second day of Easter, in the main celebration of the village to the Holy Virgin³¹. And it happened in that sermon that I completely forgot the written, well-practiced material I brought with me but I continued preaching, drawing inspiration from the Lord; and while I was confused and ashamed, I understood that the people were content since when leaving the church, an old woman burst out with praise for me, saying among other things: "Blessed is the womb which conceived you". A blessing for which I was grateful for referring to my virtuous mother. Another effect of the sermon was that

³⁰ One account, written seventy five years later with the characteristic simplicity and openness of the Franciscans, recorded the event this way: "The Servant of God Father Luis Amigó, bishop of Segorbe, held his first mass here. On 4 April 1879, two months after the inauguration of the convent, he raised up to the Lord in his trembling hands a Saint who shall smile down from Heaven gazing upon this nest of his priestly vocation, when they hold, assisted by the angels, the 60th anniversary of his priesthood here" (cf. *ibid.*, p. 15).

³¹ In this way Luis of Massamagrell began his apostolic life as the Capuchins were initiating their ministry then at Montehano, which had been at all times: "a forge of souls, where the souls of apostles were molded by silence and study".

"Since then, the apostolic activities of the Fathers of Montehano are those characteristic of the Capuchins, especially the preaching. Every path in Santander province bears the traces of the sandals of the Capuchins, and among the faithful the figure of the friar, likable in his austerity, who brings words of peace and evangelical messages for the souls" (cf. p. 14 and 17).

a great sinner appeared for confession, and said he had been moved by some words that I did not remember saying.

50 All the little mountain villages began to call me to preach; but the one in which I exercised the ministry most often was in Escalante, where our convent was located. With the consent of the priest, I established two Congregations in the parish church, one of Sisters of Mary for young women, and the other of Luises for the young men.

Through the members of these associations I proposed to banish the indecent pastime of the dance called the waltz, which was replacing the old plaza dance, much more innocent and virtuous, in all the villages. The young people took this very badly and began to say that I was proposing that the girls might enter the religious orders. To deny this false accusation, I took advantage of the occasion of a marriage between a young man from the Luises and a daughter of María; I made both Congregations make a gift for each of them and attend the wedding as groups with their insignias, with the Luises in two rows on the side of the Gospel and the Sisters of Mary on the side of the Epistle, arranged the same way. The bride and groom also wore the belt and medal of the Congregation on their formal dress, and when the wedding mass was over, they all sang a "Hail" to the Holy Virgin and then each spouse gave their medal to the president of the Congregation and said farewell to their brethren with the embrace of peace.

Such an instructive and moving ceremony caused a radical change in the opinion of the young people and made a very good impression in the village. Both congregations enjoyed a great increase in their ranks, especially the Daughters of Mary.

51 Another event happened during that time, a very meaningful one for me. I was giving some Exercises in the parish church of Escalante to the Congregations mentioned before, and a friar from the convent came very early one day to alert the authorities that a recently born baby had been left, inside a basket, at the door of the church in the convent. So the mayor went up to the convent along with the priest and a woman who was nursing if it was necessary to breastfeed the baby; and when they brought it to the village, after taking the baby from the basket and searching the rags it was wrapped in, they found a note which said: "He is not baptized; please give him the name Jesus, Mary and Joseph". Both the priest and mayor were determined that I should be the one to perform the baptism; and no matter how much I tried to excuse myself by claiming lack of practice since I had never performed this Sacrament, they insisted, saying the baby had to be the first one that I baptized. I did not want to object any more and baptized the baby with the greatest solemnity possible; and then they took it to the Santander Orphanage³².

³² The baptismal act is recorded as follows:

"JESÚS, MARÍA Y JOSÉ.-- 16 May 1881.

In Santa Cruz, the parish church of this Town of Escalante, on 16 May 1881, I, Brother Luis of Massamagrell, member of the Capuchin religious order, of the convent of San Sebastian of Montehano, in the jurisdiction of Escalante, baptized conditionally with the permission of the priest of this parish, Mr. Pantaleón Mier Santelices, a child which appeared at the door of that convent in the morning of this day. The friars of that convent took in the baby, born at 11.00

I thought at the time there was nothing special in giving the names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph to the first child I baptized, nor in the fact that he was an abandoned newborn child, but in time I understood it was like an announcement of the foundation of the Congregation of the Holy Family I did later on. One of the purposes of that congregation was to dedicate itself to the protection and education of orphaned and homeless girls³³.

52 When the Reverend Father Brother Esteban of Adoain had to leave for Rome after being appointed Vice-Commissioner in 1879 by the Reverend Father Llerena, the Apostolic Commissioner, he honored me with the title of Preacher on 12 June 1879. This position was later ratified by the Reverend General Minister of the Order, Brother Egidio of Cortona, on 21 May 1881.

the previous night, in order that I conditionally baptize the child; the members of the order advised the authorities of Escalante and the Deputy Mayor, Mr. Pantaleón Mier, the City Council Secretary Mr. Ramón Aya and a nursing woman Josefa del Castillo appeared there. The friars gave them the baby, which I baptized as soon as it arrived in the parish church, under condition, as I said before. Mr. Ramón Aya and Mrs. Irene de Diego were the godparents, and I advised them of that relationship and obligations, etc.

Signed, Pantaleón Mier, Priest, and Brother Luis of Massamagrell" (cf. parish archive of Escalante, Santander).

³³ During the period that Padre Luis lived in Montehano he visited the prison of Santoña several times and exercised his ministry there by confessing, instructing and consoling the prisoners. The first visit he made to that penitentiary coincided with the time the inmates were listening to Holy Mass. The chaplain celebrated the Holy Sacrifice inside a cabin as a precaution and the prisoners, who attended in limited numbers, were closely watched by numerous guards.

The zealous missionary felt very strongly the coldness he had been warned of in that jail. That scene, and above all the limited number of prisoners who were attending mass, made a sorrowful impression on the Servant of God. From that day on, he repeated his visits to do good for those unfortunate souls.

With the appropriate permissions of his superiors and the authorities he arrived at the prison, and with great love and charity speaking to them of God and the truths of religion. The prisoners began to look on this Capuchin friar sympathetically and little by little they let themselves be influenced by him. They began attending mass in greater numbers and received the Penance and Communion more often. When Easter arrived, the majority of the prisoners fulfilled their Christian duties thanks to the kindness and concern of Father Luis.

Those visits to the Santoña prison and the ministry the Servant of God exercised in his adolescent years in Valencia confirm what were and are now the aspirations he felt in favor of the most morally needy souls.

We can take this as the starting point of the religious foundations of the Servant of God and the ministry to be devoted to them, which he would represent in living and perennial redemption: The Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows and the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family (cf. RAMO, Mariano: *Mensaje de Amor y Redención*. Ed. Doménech. Valencia 1973, Vol. I, p. 59).

CHAPTER XII

The Transfer of Father Luis to Valencia

53 On 4 October 1879, in the holy day of our Seraphic Father St. Francis, the convent of St. Mary Magdalene in Massamagrell was opened again and several of the exiled Fathers were reunited. The Superiors sent Father Francisco of Valencia, my co-novice who had stayed behind in Antequera when I was sent to the foundation of Santander, to that festival to say his first mass. Another one of my co-novices, Father Lorenzo Mollina, was also assigned to the convent of the Magdalene, who hoped for my transfer there and wrote me so that I might request it; but I did not even think of that, let alone take any active steps to make it come to pass.

54 The re-founded convent of the Magdalene was visited on 15 October by the Reverend Father Vice-Commissioner, Brother Esteban of Adoain, and on that occasion the Fathers pleaded with great insistence for my transfer to the convent, basing their request in the lack of younger Fathers they had for the work. I knew nothing of this until the Father Vice-Commissioner came to visit our convent of Montehano a few days after leaving the Magdalene, and while I was washing his feet, he said to me: "I have been in the convent of the Magdalene and everyone there was asking the Vice-Commissioner to send you, but you will not go in my lifetime". And that, in fact, was what happened, since the life left to the Reverend Padre Esteban was already very short, as he died on 7 October of the following year, 1880. The Reverend Father Joaquín of Llevaneras³⁴ was appointed to replace Father Llerena as Apostolic Commissioner by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regular Clergy on 8 March 1881. Father Joaquín was living with me in the convent of Montehano and held a special affection for me since I was his confessor. Seeing that my physical condition was deteriorating greatly, perhaps due to excessive work, he sent me with a family of benefactors of the convent to Escalada, a village in Burgos province, where they had properties and were going to spend the summer

³⁴ Joaquín Vives y Tutó was born in San Andrés de Llevaneras, Barcelona. He was an orphan and joined the Capuchins at 17 years old. Once the Order was restored in Spain, Father Joaquín of Llevaneras was the fourth Apostolic Commissioner (1881-1885) and when the Commission was abolished and the province of the Sacred Heart founded in all Spain, he was the first Provincial Minister.

Years later, he got rid of all his positions and established his residence in Rome, at the side of his brother Cardinal Vives y Tutó. He was an adviser to the Holy Office and member of the Cardinals Commission for the Preservation of the Faith. He was highly esteemed and a friend of Pope Pius X and Pope Benedict XV, by whose mandate he was still living in Rome after the death of his brother the Cardinal.

At different times, he received commissions from the Holy See reserved for matters of interest to Spain. He journeyed to the Philippines and the Caroline Islands, where he founded the missions when Leon XIII resolved the conflict between the Spanish and German governments over those territories in favor of Spain. On 13 June 1923, he died in the Capuchin convent of Sarriá, Barcelona (cf. *Floretillos de San Francisco*, 24 [1923], pp. 164-165 and 187-192).

to see if I could recover my strength; and indicating to me that he was expecting my obedience there in order to transfer me to another convent.

Therefore I had to say farewell to the Congregations of the Sisters of Mary and the Luises, and I gathered them in the church to preach a sermon, in which I gave them some advice that they might keep forever. It was then I understood how much those good people appreciated me, because there was so much sobbing that it prevented me from being able to finish my sermon since I myself was also greatly affected.

55 So I went away to Escalada, as I said before, and when I had been there for about a month and recovered enough of my strength, I received the call to obedience from the Reverend Father Commissioner, in which he ordered me to leave as soon as possible for the convent of the Magdalene. The Father Commissioner had consulted with the doctor about my health, who had told him he considered it advisable to transfer me to my native land to see if the air and waters there would help; and my transfer to the convent of the Magdalene was due to that reason.

56 I left Escalada on 1 August, reaching Valencia the next day; my old friend Guzmán, who did not have the patience to wait for me in Valencia, came out to welcome me a few stops earlier. In Valencia, I was greeted by my brother Julio and Francisco Pérez Montejano³⁵, together with many other relatives and friends. Our reunion was very emotional, but nothing to compare with the scene that unfolded when I arrived home and saw my poor sisters. I did not even recognize the two youngest ones, standing among all the women there, and had to ask which ones they were; and that was not particularly strange, since they were still girls when I left them and went away to France and now I was seeing them as grown women after the eight years of my absence.

57 I shall always consider it to be a providence of the Lord (perhaps at the request of my good mother) that my transfer close to Valencia occurred precisely in the critical period in the lives of my sisters since, as I already said, I understood very well in the words my mother directed to me as she was dying, even though they were unintelligible, that she was entrusting them to me and put them under my custody. Thus, it was a cause of great satisfaction for me not only to attend their weddings, but also to be able marry the three of them myself, and see that God had blessed them by granting them very religious husbands of excellent social standing, who have brought them happiness. May all thanks be given to the Lord!

³⁵ Of Francisco Pérez Monejano, we have only been able to discover that he was the Coadjutant of the church of San Juan del Hospital, Valencia. He would die of cholera on 27 June 1885 (cf. *Boletín Eclesiástico del Arzobispado de Valencia*, 23 [1885], p. 686).

CHAPTER XIII

Father Luis in the convent of the Magdalene

58 The day following my arrival, I celebrated mass in the small chapel of the Virgin of the Unprotected, being the first one I said in Valencia and that my family heard³⁶. And, once I was finished, I had the satisfaction of climbing up and kissing the hand of the Holy Virgin.

I stayed at the family home for two days with the permission of the Superior, and then went away to the Magdalene where the Reverend Father Commissioner, Friar Joaquín of Llevaneras, was awaiting me. He was organizing that Community, which until then had been governed by two elderly Fathers who had returned to the cloisters. The poor fathers lacked the experience of the regular clergy life, having left the convent when they were very young and lived outside the cloister with secular habits and customs. They were not the poor ones now, but rather those to be served and cared for, and therefore not for leading the Community. For that purpose, the Reverend Father brought in several members of the order from other convents and from them appointed: Guardian, Reverend Father Estanislao of Reus, and as Vicar and Teacher of Novices, Father Tomás de la Piña, both exiled friars from the Americas; and designated me as Vice Teacher of Novices, a title he delivered when I appeared before him on 6 August 1881³⁷.

59 This Novitiate of the Magdalene came to be one for all of Spain, as novices from various provinces flocked there, eventually reaching over thirty in number. They left there having taken their vows and very well educated in the seraphic spirit, which served later as the basis for many other foundations.

CHAPTER XIV

Commissioner of the Venerable Third Order

60 The Reverend Guardian Father showed great wisdom when he thought to establish the venerable Third Order in the church of our convent, as was the

³⁶ A title given to the Virgin, and the name under which the Virgin has been recognized in canon law as the patron saint of Valencia since 1885. It became an object of worship and devotion through an image nearly two meters high sculpted in 1410. According to tradition, the origin of the image is miraculous.

Construction on the basilica in which the image is located, leading directly to Caballeros Street where the Amigó-Ferrer family lived and the Capuchins as well, who supplied the chaplains for the basilica, began on 15 June 1652 and was finished in 1667. The festival for the Virgin is celebrated on the second Sunday of May. (cf. *Diccionario Espasa*. Hijos de J. Espasa, Editores. Barcelona, t. XVIII, p. 371).

³⁷ The Reverend Father Melchor of Benissa, former Superior General of the Capuchins, in his deposition in the Diocesan Inquiry Process of the Servant of God, says in this regard: "The Superiors, already at this time, had a very good impression of Father Luis. Only a very short time had passed since he first said mass and they already were judging him worthy of being responsible for the Novices. This indicates he had uncommon gifts of sound judgment and administration" (cf. PID. Session 2, ad 30).

case in almost all of our convents; but there was no precedent for a Third Order having existed in this convent of the Magdalene. On the other hand, there was an altar dedicated to Father St. Francis in the parish church of Massamagrell, with a beautiful life-size image of the saint, and lateral niches of the church have two canvases depicting St. Louis, King of France, and St. Elisabeth, Queen of Hungary, patrons of the Third Order, a clear indication that the Third Order had existed there. The Guardian Father trusted in me to carry out this undertaking, appointing me as Commissioner with all the required authority, on 20 October 1881³⁸.

I began my preparatory work as soon as possible, to comply with the order of my Superior and soon everything was ready for the inauguration of the Third Order and the taking of the habit of the first novices; a ceremony which took place on 30 October of that year.

61 Soon this newly-formed Congregation, like any leafy tree, extended its branches in the villages close by the convent, from which came such a multitude of lay members every fourth Sunday to attend the Third Order exercise that it resembled a true pilgrimage. Such was the fervor and enthusiasm of the lay members, with many of them supporting my desire that they wear the robe and rope of the full habit while performing their duties that eventually a considerable number of Brothers and Sisters were wearing them in the exercises.

Seeing the increase in the Third Order brought to mind the need to go on founding new Congregations as well as visiting and organizing the old ones which had declined so badly.

With the help of God, I began the work they had entrusted to me, visiting and reorganizing the old Congregations of Valencia, Castellón, Alzira, Benaguasil, Ollería and Alboraya, and I re-founded the Congregations of Rafelbuñol, Albalat dels Sorells, Meliana, Vinalesa, Manises, the Point of Ruzafa district and the Ador distinct in Gandia; all towns which then were part of the district of the convent of the Magdalene, since there was no other convent of our Order in the entire Valencia region³⁹.

³⁸ Father Joaquín of Llevaneras, General Commissioner of the Spanish Capuchins, expressed it as follows: "The undertaking was enormous; in Massamagrell and the surrounding areas, no one knew of the Third Order. In Alzira and other cities the order led a listless life.

These vicissitudes and ignorance, the after effects of the exile from the cloisters, etc., were the cause of more than a few incidents of abuses contrary to the life of the Third Order itself. We have seen a Congregation whose members, including the Minister of the Council and Teacher of Novices, were ignoring that there was a Rule for the Third Orders. There were directors who were giving out the scapular and the rope without any ceremony, or only the rope without the scapular. There were others who were taking the habit and taking the vows at the same time; others who were delegating tasks without having the authority under canon law. Finally the majority of the Congregations were unfamiliar with the official visitors or had never known what a visit is, ever". (cf. *Mensajero Seráfico*, 1 [1883], p. 3).

³⁹ The Reverend Father Melchor of Benissa says in this regard: "You saw in Father Luis a great zeal for the propagation of the Venerable Third Order. He had a great skill and clinical eye for knowing the people who wished to enter the order, and he was recommending to them not to make policy, but rather to be extremely seraphic, as they were the right arm of the parish priest in the parish churches, helping them in teaching the Catechism to the children".

62 The enthusiasm of the lay members was such then that when celebrating the visit or re-founding of a Congregation, all the Congregations in the area came in procession with their standards to attend. You may say that then the lay members were in constant motion and always wishing for new demonstrations⁴⁰.

CHAPTER XV

First Pilgrimage to the Virgin of El Puig

63 Taking advantage, therefore, of this fervor and enthusiasm, I thought of organizing a pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of the Virgin of El Puig, with the aim of increasing the devotion to the Holy Virgin who, despite being the Patron Saint of the Valencia Region, was so overlooked by the natives of Valencia. I expressed my thoughts to the Congregations and all of them welcomed the idea with great joy and offering their full support. From there, we began the organizational works; and, having obtained the licenses from the ecclesiastical and civil authorities, the pilgrimage took place on 22 May 1884, the day of the Ascension of the Lord.

The pilgrimage departed from the parish church of Massamagrell after the pilgrims had received communion there, and it was calculated there were close to five thousand; this Holy Communion lasted over an hour, even though five priests were giving it at once. All the Congregations I mentioned before attended, with their standards and as many ribbons were hanging from the standard of the Congregation of St. Mary Magdalene – considered the mother church of the others – as there were Congregations taking part in the pilgrimage. Each ribbon bore the name of a Congregation engraved on it and had been brought by their respective Minister Brothers.

“He valued the Third Orders he founded for the villages and directed them with great skill to bring them to God. All the brotherhoods respected him as a holy man and followed his instruction diligently and joyously. It was enough that Father Luis said something or gave some advice for everyone to submit to it. The spiritual life of those groups was flourishing and there was an extraordinary fervor. His influence was such that he managed to achieve truly extraordinary things”.

“I have seen him direct a few Third Orders, and I have heard it said of those that I have not seen, that he had an influence and a skill that has not been equaled, that I know of, by any other Director. His persona came to be something like that of an imam. He communicated an extraordinary fervor which those groups of lay members experienced. Everyone came punctually and with pleasure. And it reached the point where they were wearing the full habit in the meetings. I have not seen anything like it since that time.” (cf. RAMO, Mariano: *Mensaje de Amor y de Redención*. Ed. Doménech. Valencia 1973, Vol. I, p. 74 and PID, Session 2, ad 28).

⁴⁰ The explosion of the Venerable Third Order during the first years of the restoration was such that in 1893 there were 17,864 lay members under the jurisdiction of the single Capuchin province of Toledo, of which the Servant of God was the Provincial Definito (cf. *Mensajero Seráfico*, 11 [1893], p. 279).

64 As a keepsake of the pilgrimage we gave the Holy Virgin a flag as a gift that I carried for most of the journey, which took over two hours as we arrived at the sanctuary a little past 12.30. Despite my delicate condition, I was still able—with the help of the Holy Virgin—to say mass and conduct from the pulpit the farewell of the pilgrimage to the Lady in the afternoon. This pilgrimage left an indelible memory among the lay members, only increasing their enthusiasm and fervor⁴¹.

CHAPTER XVI

How He Reconciled The Mayor And Parish Priest Of Alboraya

65 I believe two events that should be recorded for the glory of God that happened to me in that period in preaching in parish churches where the Third Order was established: one of them was in Alboraya, where I went for the monthly exercise of the lay members. I arrived in the afternoon the day before and, while attending a function being held in the church with a public discussion, I felt a strong impulse to speak on pardoning your enemies in the sermon the following day. It should be noted that the priest and mayor had been irreconcilable enemies for a long time and hated each other to the death, with great feeling and outrage among the inhabitants; persons of great prestige and social status had intervened to try to make peace between them without achieving anything, and the population was divided in support of one or the other. So I formed my plan and requested both authorities if they would be so kind as to attend the function of the Third Order the following day in their respective seats, which they did. While preaching to them about pardoning your enemies, it was undoubtedly the Lord, who put such words in my mouth and aroused such a powerful feeling of pardon in my audience that the contrite priest and remorseful mayor, as if moved by an impulse from within, rose from their seats and, each going to greet the other, embraced in the presence of

⁴¹ A chronicler of the period relates the events the following way: "Father Luis set the pilgrimage to El Puig for 22 May, the festival of the Ascension, but it could not be held that day due to the constant rain.

"As the storm eased on the day of the Ascension itself, he set the following Sunday, 25 May, as the date for the pilgrimage, and that was the day it took place. The different Congregations which were taking part gathered in Massamagrell and the pious procession proceeded from there. Holy Mass was held in the parish church of Massamagrell as the first act of the pilgrimage and during the Mass some five thousand pilgrims received Holy Communion from the hands of five priests. When the pilgrims reached the Sanctuary, Father Luis celebrated Holy Mass with all due solemnity. During the afternoon, a solemn act venerating the Virgin Mary took place in which Father Luis went up to the pulpit and, after thanking the faithful for having so splendidly supported the efforts of the Fathers who initiated the pilgrimage, demanded from all those present a formal act of faith and formal promise to strictly observe the Rules of the Third Order. At that point, an enthusiastic YES burst from the chests of all those present which drowned out the voice of the fervent Capuchin and forced him to step down from the Holy Chair, as it would have been impossible to continue his sermon in view of that electrified multitude" (cf. *Mensajero Seráfico*, 11 [1884], p. 345).

Jesus of the Blessed Sacrament. It is not possible to describe the scene that unfolded in the church at that moment. Many people followed the example of their leaders and so great an uproar was raised and so intense was the sobbing that the exercise had to be suspended for some time⁴².

That night, many people went searching for their enemies in order to reconcile with them, so you could truthfully say that it was a day of general pardon. Praise be to God, from whom all good comes!

The following day, when the festival of St. Vincent Ferrer was celebrated, in order that the entire village would have the satisfaction of seeing their authorities united, we walked through the streets of the town accompanied by the members of the Clergy, City Council and Council of the Third Order and attended the presentation of the miracles of the saint in an altar built in one of the streets, as is the custom in Valencia⁴³.

CHAPTER XVII

On What Happened in Punta de Ruzafa

66 The other memorable event, in which the presence of the Lord was no less visible, and I refer to His glory, happened in the Point of Ruzafa district, where I had founded the Congregation of the Third Order. I was called there to preach the main celebration of the Departure of the Immaculate Conception, the title of its church, and I was lodged in the home of the Capuchin brother and Minister of the Third Order, Francisco Conejos. In the midst of a conversation with the family after eating dinner, they told me that the people were enjoying themselves at that

⁴² Several witnesses refer to this event. The parish priest referred to was named Manuel Soler, who had previously been a military chaplain. He often attended the theater in Valencia and gambled in Bétera at night, dressed in secular clothing. He invited others to go with him, among them the doctor José Llistar, who refers to all these activities. The mayor was named Antonio Martí, who was somewhat carefree and involved in the business of exporting onions to England. He prevented the celebration of the street procession of the Rosary of the Dawn.

Father Luis –always according to José Llistar– visited the village of Alboraya quite frequently and was considered as a guardian angel and a saint. He made some people responsible for bringing about harmony and peace between the priest and the mayor, but they never achieved it. The Third Order –says José Llistar– had more than seven hundred members in Alboraya between men and women (cf. RAMO, Mariano: *Mensaje de Amor y de Redención*. Ed. Doménech. Valencia, 1973, Vol. I, pp. 80-82).

⁴³ The visits of Father Luis to Alboraya and other villages, as was said before, were quite frequent due to his ministry. Father Melchor of Benissa says in this regard: "Given his psychology, it was morally impossible that his ministry be a pretext for unjustified absences; his conduct as far as submitting to discipline was irrefragable. He did not like to deviate from his obligation at all and was very intent on observance. It was obvious right away to anyone who dealt with him that he was not a man capable of looking for excuses for not being in the convent" (cf. PID. Session 2, ad 24, and Session 3, ad 113).

hour in the plaza watching the dance of Torrent⁴⁴ and listening to what were called *els coloquis* (colloquial songs). As I had heard news of the indecencies that were performed and sung in those entertainments, full of indignation and zeal (maybe I was not prudent enough), I said to the owner of the house and his children: "Come with me to the church and I will take a Crucifix and you get two lanterns from there and we shall go to the plaza, where I will preach to the village in front of the comedians' stage in order to prevent such immoral entertainment". Perhaps more prudent than I was, they dissuaded me from acting on my thought, fearing some kind of trouble; but I resolved to go away at daybreak and leave them without a sermon, another thought which I had to abandon since they made me see the great displeasure and disruption this decision would bring with it. So I preached in the celebration; but I attacked and reproached the abuse of mixing entertainments that offend the Lord with the giving of gifts to the Virgin so strongly, and made what they had celebrated the night appear so ugly, that the gentlemen running the festival did not dare appear before me. They only did so when accompanied by the Minister of the Third Order to show me that they did not think the entertainment was immoral, that on the contrary, they would not have not done it, but they promised me they would not have any more of it in the their district.

This was not the only benefit the Divine Grace caused on this occasion, as the performers of the show were offended at first over what I said in the sermon and wanted to summon me before the courts. They ended up coming to ask forgiveness of me and show their resolve to no longer perform shows of that nature. Blessed be the Lord who moves the hearts of men in such ways, finding worth in even the most base instruments.

⁴⁴ A popular Valencia choreographed pantomime, in which the six dances being performed during the development of the dramatic action play the principal role. They show the comic episodes which befall some gentlemen –the viceroy and his wife, with their entourage– during a visit to their estate. The dramatic action concludes by denouncing to the magistrate that the gypsies have cheated a resident of the village on something they sold to him. The magistrate tries to capture them, thus setting the stage for a phenomenal competition between the gypsies and patrol which brings the dance to an end. This is the source of the saying: "It will end like the dance of Torrent" (cf. *Gran Enciclopedia de la Region Valenciana*. Valencia, 1973, Vol. II, pp. 273-274).

PART III: *THE FOUNDER*

CHAPTER I

The Multiplication of Bread in “The Magdalene”

67 I want to put on record now the episode of the multiplication of the bread, which occurred during the Guardianship of Father Estanislao of Reus and shows the special Providence with which the Lord looked after the needs of the convent of the Magdalene.

So it came about that one day, already close to the afternoon meal, the steward warned the Guardian Father that he did not have enough bread for the Community, and that day the brothers who begged for alms had gone far away and would not be back until nighttime. The Father replied: “I will go down to the dining hall now with Father Luis and we will divide up the bread there is at each place at the table”; we did so by serving a small piece of bread for each one. According to the customs of the Order, the only thing we can ask for, if we do not have enough, is bread and water, and since most of that Community are young men, many of them always asked for more bread despite being served a substantial portion. Thus it was to be expected that shortly after beginning to eat they would begin getting up to ask for bread. That was why the Guardian Father said to me: “What will happen in the dining hall today is going to be a laugh”; but how great was our admiration seeing that all of them were eating and no one was asking for bread! We judged that they would have taken responsibility for the lack of bread and not asked for more for that reason; but we walked around the dining hall after the meal was done and we still found some stale piece of leftover bread at many of the places. Blessed be the providence and compassion of the Lord!⁴⁵

CHAPTER II

Meeting with the Sisters of Father Ambrosio

68 The increasing progress of the lay Third Order, and the desire for greater perfection of some souls who wanted to dedicate themselves to God, drove me for a long time to attempt the foundation of a Congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters. Believing it was the will of God, I began to write some Constitutions for this purpose, appealing for divine assistance to accomplish the task⁴⁶.

⁴⁵ Various witnesses refer to this event, including in the Diocesan Process.

⁴⁶ These brief, concise words are sufficiently explicit to clearly show the Servant of God in his facet as Founder, since we find in them: *a)* the idea of foundation: “...drove me for a long

69 I was finishing this work when, one day when I was in Valencia in the house of my sisters, I was introduced to the Mother Superior Sister María of Montiel of Benaguasil, Sister Carmen of Alboraya and Sister Angela of Pego, accompanied by Ignacio Guillén, the incumbent of the parish church of the Santos Juanes. Kneeling at my feet, they said to me: "We know that you are writing some Constitutions for the Foundation of a Congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters. As we are among the women founded by the Reverend Padre Ambrosio de Benaguasil in the convent of Montiel, and we have no legal identity, nor a Rule, nor Constitutions that govern us, we came to beg you to take us under your protection and let us be the basis and foundation of the Congregation you are attempting to found"⁴⁷. On hearing their plea, I immediately remembered the words the Reverend Father Ambrosio said to me in Bayonne: "Young man, you will take care of my beloved nuns", and admiring the secret decrees of the Divine Providence, I offered, of course, to use them in the foundation of the Congregation I was planning.

CHAPTER III

Difficulties of the Sisters of Father Ambrosio

70 These three lay sisters were the only ones who, after so many years apart, re-entered Montiel on the occasion of a Mission given in Benaguasil by my co-novice Father Lorenzo de Molina on 20 January 1881; and the following sisters in addition took the habit on that date at the hands of the aforementioned Father: Sister Verónica of Benimaclet, Sister Bernarda of Valencia, Sister Francisca of Llagas of Alcalá and Sister Serafina of Benaguasil. With these, the Community of

time to attempt the foundation of a Congregation..."; b) the dual and holy motivation: "The ever growing progress of the lay Third Order and the desire for greater perfection of some souls who wanted to dedicate themselves to God..."; c) the execution: "...I began to write some Constitutions for this purpose...; d) the name of the Congregation: "Capuchine Tertiary Sisters".

It contributes, in addition, to clarifying the fact that the Founder had written the Constitutions prior to the actual foundation itself, something quite unusual among the founders of the period.

⁴⁷ Sister Manuela of Almoines says in this regard: "Before leaving Spain, Father Ambrosio of Benaguasil spiritually aided a group of women who formed a house of devout woman next to the Sanctuary of Montiel. Father Ambrosio recommended to the Servant of God to look after that institution of penitent souls. That is the root of the Congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters, which the Servant of God would later found" (cf. PID, Session 48, ad 6-18).

In turn, Father Leonard of Picassent, of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin, states: "The lay sisters of Father Ambrosio constituted a house of devout women for the care of the Sanctuary of the Our Lady of Montiel, in the style of other sanctuaries, such as St. Michael in Llíria not far from Montiel. Father Ambrosio did not think of forming a religious congregation, strictly speaking, but rather just for the care of the Sanctuary" (cf. Archivo P. Vicepostulador).

This group of women, whom Padre Luis organized into a Congregation by giving them a Rule, some Constitutions, a new purpose, new name and new habit, would constitute the foundation and basis of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family (cf. ROCA, Tomás: *El Santuario de Montiel y las Terciarias Capuchinas*. Imp. Doménech. Valencia 1968).

the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters in Montiel was again formed, and Mother María of Montiel was appointed Mother Superior.

71 The Lord did not grant the Reverend Father Ambrosio of Benaguasil the satisfaction of seeing his Community reunited once again, since he took him from this world on 2 November 1880 from the convent of the Magdalene.

But without any doubt, he would witness it from Heaven, and perhaps it was he who obtained this grace of the Lord for his great virtues⁴⁸.

72 Since the date of re-entry of the Community in Montiel until 1885, when I did the foundation under canon law of the Congregation of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters, only Sister Isabel of Benissa, Sister Inés of Manises, Sister Clara of El Grao and Sister Concepción of Benaguasil had entered the Community. And during this entire time, the Community was ruled and governed by priests of the lay Clergy, since Father Molina was transferred from the convent shortly after the return of the lay sisters and the Order did not concern itself at all with that Community. In that way, despite being responsible for the Third Order, I scarcely had any news of them until, as I said before, they appeared before me to plead that I take them under my protection.

CHAPTER IV

Foundation under Canon Law of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters

73 With the editing of the Constitutions therefore completed, in fulfillment of what I offered to the Sisters María of Montiel, Carmen of Alboraya and Angela of Pego, I placed the official request before Cardinal Monescillo for his approval in the name of the Mother Superior of Montiel on 17 March 1885, and they were approved by that Prelate on 27 April of the same year⁴⁹.

⁴⁸ Father Ambrosio of Benaguasil made his last will before the lawyer José Hernández Cebollada in Chelva on 3 December 1874, five years before his death. In turn, Luis Amigó dictated his own will in Valencia, before Salvador Romero Rendón on 20 June 1916, and then again on 23 April 1925. It will be enough to compare them to note who was the true founder. While Father Ambrosio did not have a single world for his nuns, Luis Amigó calls his nuns daughters on many occasions, making them the object of bequests of the various houses.

⁴⁹ At the end of the Constitutions presented to the Cardinal Archbishop of Valencia for his approval, the signature of the Servant of God and Founder appears this way: Brother Luis de Massamagrell, Def. Prov. y Guardián. There is a seal which reads as follow: Sig. FF. MM. Cap. Conv. S. M. Magdalенаe-Massamagrell.

The Congregation appears in the Constitutions as mixed life in nature and the final purpose shall be "aiding the bodily and spiritual needs of their fellow man in the Hospitals, Asylums and educational institutions, particularly Orphanages; and Missions among the non-believers, if the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith requests it of them at any time".

The non-differentiation of classes between the lay members of the new Congregation appears as a very novel, original idea of the Founder: "There shall be no distinctions among the members of the order: all of them shall occupy themselves with the tasks in which holy obedience places them, welcoming with the same equality of spirit the honorable post of Professor or the humble

Once this approval was obtained, the preparations for the establishment of the Congregation under canon law and alteration of the habit for the lay members were set in motion.

74 To the three veteran Mothers: María, Carmen and Angela, I gave the taking of perpetual vows in our convent of the Magdalene on 1 May 1885, with the aim that they would have already taken them before the establishment under canon law on 11 May in Montiel, where the mass was said with great solemnity, as was the sermon preached by Father Antonio of Orihuela.

75 I then gave the taking of vows of the Novices who had worn the habit of the years 1881 and 1884, respectively and had now completed their year of Novitiate: Sister Verónica of Benimaclet, Sister Bernarda of Valencia, Sister Francisca of Llagas of Alcalá and Sister Serafina of Benaguasil, Sister Isabel of Benissa, Sister Inés of Manises, Sister Clara of El Grao and Sister Concepción of Benaguasil.

76 I also conferred the habit with all due solemnity upon Sister Patrocinio of Benissa, Sister Desamparados of Suera, Sister María Luisa of Valencia and Sister Margarita of Massamagrell.

I then solemnly sang "Te Deum" in praise of The Almighty for his benefits and that was the manner in which the Congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters⁵⁰ was established under canon law, with the Reverend Mother María of Montiel responsible for governing the Congregation.

CHAPTER V

Spain, from Capuchin Commission to Province

77 1885 was very fertile year for events for me since, beyond the establishment of the Congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters, which I have already mentioned, the following took place.

I had desired and worked to achieve the abolition of the Apostolic Commission for a long time, since it was nothing but a royal prerogative which, in a certain sense, made Spanish members of the order independent of the General Rule of the Order, as we had to reach an understanding with the Commissioner Father⁵¹ over everything.

one of Cook, to bear in mind that God does not distinguish his children for the grandeur of their ministries but rather for the greatness of their works" (cf. 2293, 2294).

⁵⁰ That was the manner in which the Congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family was established under canon law, as they already had the Constitutions written by their Founder, Father Luis of Massamagrell; had received approval of the Constitutions from the Ordinary with jurisdiction over the Diocese, Cardinal Monescillo; it had its own purpose and particular character as mixed life, and it had a Mother Superior in the person of Mother María de Montiel. It was 11 May 1885, the day of foundation and a great day for the daughters of the Servant of God.

⁵¹ Since 1804, the Religious Orders in Spain formed a national hierarchy virtually independent of the General Superiors in Rome. It was a demand of King Charles IV, who presented the idea to Pope Pius VII based on the serious deficiencies that were said to exist in

Therefore, after the Reverend Father Joaquín of Llevaneras was appointed for this post by Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regular Clergy on 8 March 1881, it had already been taken into account that Father Joaquín, influenced by his brother Father Calasanz of Llevaneras, then the Guardian and Director of the Seraphic School of Igualada, would facilitate the abolition of that position, thus tightening the union of the Spanish Capuchins with the headquarters of the Order: and that is what happened. On 4 February 1885, the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regular Clergy abolished the Apostolic Commissioner of Spain, forming a single Religious Province of the entire nation named the Sacred Heart of Jesus⁵². And as the first Provincial Leader, ex-Commissioner Joaquín of Llevaneras was appointed; and I was appointed (although undeservedly) Provincial Definitor⁵³.

78 In the first Defining meeting, which took place in the Magdalene on 10 March of that year, I was elected Guardian of the convent of the Magdalene by a secret vote, with my co-novice Father Pedro of Usún serving as Vicar and Teacher of Novices.

CHAPTER VI

The Cholera Epidemic of 1885 in Valencia

79 But as the ordinary providence of God often mixes the favors and graces He bestows upon us with sorrows and tribulations, in order that we neither grow conceited by the former nor depressed and angered by the latter, the Lord provided that a cholera plague was sent to us in the year 1885 which wreaked havoc all over Spain. It also invaded our convent of the Magdalene, where a day arrived when

the Religious Orders. The Ministers of Charles IV embraced the idea, outlined by Floridablanca, of separating the Religious Orders from Rome. And, in effect, the king went to Pope Pius VII requesting to give them Spanish Apostolic Vicars. As a result, the Pope issued the papal bull *Inter graviores* of 15 May 1804, which granted that each Religious Order could have their Apostolic Vicar which would govern them independently of the General Superior.

The lamentable period of the 1835 revolution arrived in Spain and, with the members of the orders dispersed and the convents outlawed, the Vatican, by decree of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regular Clergy of 13 March 1838, declared that the Spanish Capuchins were to be governed by a Spanish Apostolic Commissioner, who would always be appointed by the Sacred Congregation (cf. ESTELLA, Father Gumersindo of: *Hermana del Siervo de Dios P. Esteban de Adoain*. Ed. Armburu. Pamplona, 1944, pp. 469-471).

⁵² Cf. 1527-1536.

⁵³ Among those who worked hardest to achieve this long-awaited union Father José Calasanz of Llevaneras, later Cardinal Vives y Tutó, stands in the forefront followed by Father Esteban of Adoain. The first contributed with the urgent administrative proceedings before the Vatican; the second with his insistent letters to the highest authority of the Order and many pertinent works carried out in Spain, which got around the difficulties that were facing them and left the path clear for achieving it. (cf. *ibid.*, p. 473 and BARCELONA, Father Antonio of: *El Cardenal Vives y Tutó*. Ed. Poncell. Igualada 1916, p. 120ss).

the greater part of the Community was bedridden. Four members of the order died during that epidemic⁵⁴.

80 The last victim of the cholera we had was a Novice Priest who, a few days before dying, said to me: "Guardian Father, I am asking the Lord that if another member of the order has to die from this Community, let it be me, so that I shall have not served for nothing in the Order". Words that showed clearly his profound humility and heroic charity; words that must have appealed greatly to God, for in a few days He took him as a victim of that illness, the last one who died of cholera in the Magdalene.

I did not have the consolation of being present at his death because I myself was also taken ill; but Father Francisco of Orihuela who was attending me, told me the following: Just before dying, he became enraptured, with his eyes fixed on Heaven and after some time he came back to himself and said these words: "She will save me! She is saving me! Without her it would be like throwing yourself into the sea without knowing how to swim!" With that said, he delivered his soul to God. How noble is the death of the righteous in the presence of the Lord!⁵⁵

CHAPTER VII

Providence of God Towards "The Magdalene"

81 I cannot explain in any way what my spirit suffered through during that period since, in addition to the confusion I felt for being so young and in charge of a Community so numerous and respectable (there were more than eighty of us, and many of them were elderly venerables), the great ravages of the cholera epidemic only increased my distress. All of these things affected my spirits, and I completely lost my appetite from the great nervous agitation and was so deeply disturbed by everything I saw and heard that I nearly fainted. While I was in that condition, an officer of the Civil Guard appeared one day to tell me they were going

⁵⁴ Facing such a tribulation Father Luis Amigó, in addition to turning to Heaven for help and mercy, took very much into consideration whatever sanitary and preventive measures were necessary. He even turned to Dr. Jamie Ferrán, inventor of the anti-cholera vaccine, which had provided such good results in Valencia and its surrounding communities that Father Luis sent him a heartfelt letter.

The humanitarian and kind-hearted Dr. Jaime Ferrán attended to the plea of Father Luis with great concern and sent one of his assistants to the convent of the Magdalene in Massamagrell (Valencia) to vaccinate the members of the order there, as the Servant of God had pleaded for in his letter to the doctor (cf. 1541-1542).

⁵⁵ The novice priest was Father Segismundo of Herrera. The other three members of the order who died of cholera were lay members of the order: Brother Serafín of Coria, 31 years old; Brother Serafín of Villafranca, 26 years old, and Brother Modesto of Cela de Núñez, 29 years old. (cf. VALENCIA, Father Eugenio of: *Necrologio de los Frailes Menores Capuchinos de la Provincia of the Preciosísima Sangre de Cristo, de Valencia*. Imp. Semana Gráfica, S.A. Valencia 1947, n. 504, 547, 581 and 534).

to cordon off the towns of Massamagrell, Museros and Pobla de Farnals⁵⁶ and we could not leave them. Shocked by the news, I asked him: "But don't you know that we live from alms and in this house there are currently more than eighty of us in the Community?"⁵⁷ He replied: "What do you want me to say, Father? We are only following the orders we are given". As I heard that, I raised my eyes to Heaven and said: "Then God will provide!" And so it was, because when the news that the friars of the convent of the Magdalene were suffering from hunger spread like wildfire through the towns of the region, people came from everywhere loaded with bread and other food, despite the great lengths the poor souls had to go to in order to evade the Civil Guard.

82 And the abundance of food that the Divine Providence gave us in those circumstances was such that there were days when all the tables in the dining hall were full of bread; and for that reason I had to tell the doorman to thank the faithful for their alms but tell them that we could not accept any more bread, since we had so much it was impossible to eat it all or even give it to the poor, since the Civil Guard was not allowing them to reach the convent. The doorman began by carrying out my orders, but he soon came to me saying: "Father, it is impossible to stop receiving the alms, since the people get upset and cry, explaining to me the great efforts it had required for them to avoid the surveillance of the Civil Guard". In view of this, I decided to accept the alms and arranged for the bread to be cut up, as if for bread soup, and toasted on the fire; several sacks of bread were filled in that way and later used for meals of the Community and the stew for the poor. I never saw the convent so well provided for with everything as I did during that time when the scarcity was so great.

A miracle of the Divine Providence that must be recorded in the Accounts of the convent of the Magdalene for the glory of the Lord!

CHAPTER VIII

The Capuchin Tertiary Friars

83 In this sorrowful situation, and considering how much the ever-growing progress of the Third Order must please the Lord, a pleasure increased only a short time before with the founding of the Congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters, I offered to the Lord, to satisfy his judgment and halt the cholera epidemic, to

⁵⁶ While Massamagrell, Museros and Puebla de Farnals are three towns totally independent of each other, they form a single urban nucleus since the dividing line between them is only the street. This explains why the three were jointly cordoned off to avoid the possible spread of cholera to other population centers from the coming and going of people.

⁵⁷ The Capuchin convent of the Magdalene of Massamagrell was then functioning as the centre for aspirants and the novitiate for all of Spain. That explains the high number of members of the Community (over eighty) and the relative scarcity of friars who had taken the vows (cf. 1532 and 1542).

redouble my efforts and work to expand the venerable Third Order of Penance⁵⁸. And the idea immediately crossed my mind (I do not know if it was through divine inspiration): to complete the work with the foundation of a congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars who would dedicate themselves to the care and moral uplift of the prisoners in penitentiaries⁵⁹. I considered this to be the will of God and, of course, began to occupy myself in writing some Constitutions which addressed the indicated purpose. But I was not able to carry out a matter of such great importance until 1889, as I will relate later.

CHAPTER IX

The cholera epidemic of 1885 and the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters

84 During the cholera epidemic, my Capuchine Tertiary Sisters had already provided excellent services to the cholera sufferers in Benaguasil; and the Massamagrell City Council also asked me with great insistence to send them some of the Sisters to care for those struck down by that plague, as even their own family members were abandoning them for fear of becoming infected. Since this was a heroic act, I limited myself to telling the Sisters of the City Council's request and if any of them were inclined to carry out this act of charity, to tell me by letter; and as all of them were animated by such a good spirit, there was not a single one who did not offer herself to the Sacrifice. Four sisters were designated to come to Massamagrell for that purpose and these were Mother Angela of Pego as the Mother Superior, Sister Francisca of Llagas de Alcalá, Sister Seraphina of Benaguasil, and Sister Clara of El Grao of Valencia⁶⁰.

⁵⁸ The priest Vicente Galmés describes the mission of the Venerable Third Order in these words: "The Third Order was the means Father Luis valued for the rebirth of the towns. It was very comforting to see the large number of men who frequented the sacraments. Father Luis inspired a profound Christian spirit in these groups. Everyone venerated him and were disposed to support his calls and advice" (cf. PID., Session 2nd, ad 28).

⁵⁹ The idea of moralization or re-socialization of the prisoners in jails was inherent in the spirit of Father Luis. As a very young man, he dedicated himself in the School of Christ to visiting the jails. Later in his life, as a recently ordained priest, he visited the prison of Santoña (Santander). He experienced a burning sensation in his soul about the need to spiritually aid the inmates who, as people infected by the vices, needed to be inoculated with the fear and love of God. And that was the comparison: as cholera was for the body, vice was the cholera of the spirit. For that reason, Father Luis offered to the Lord, to satisfy his judgment, to complete the work of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters with the foundation of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars. (cf. above, 9 and 51 footnotes)

⁶⁰ The following texts should be enough to show the fervor and spirit animating the newly-formed Congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters:

"The conduct observed in the Tertiary Sisters in these tragic times is praiseworthy, in the assistance they are offering to those suffering from cholera wherever they are sent. It is to be hoped that these heroic women, who in the interest of charity run to the most dangerous places

85 Regarding Sister Clara, her Confessor Father Francisco Payá, then the priest in El Grao and later a member of the Franciscan order, told me that she was the most extraordinary soul he had supervised. While going from Beanaguasil to Massamagrell, she wanted to go by El Grao to see her Confessor and, when he appeared in the confessional, she told him: "Father, I am going to confess to you for the last time, since I am going to Massamagrell to care for those suffering from cholera and I will die there". And that was what happened, because the Sisters were attacked by the cholera shortly after they arrived and the three youngest died, leaving the Mother Superior as the only survivor, even though she was older.

CHAPTER X

Foundation of the Asylum of Massamagrell

86 With this new tribulation, the Lord wanted me to drink down to the dregs from the chalice of bitterness. May He be blessed for everything! But undoubtedly, in his grand designs, these victims were the precious, firm stones upon which He later wanted to build the Refuge of Massamagrell. Because, in fact, once the epidemic had passed, we saw that many children were left without shelter due to the death of their parents, and moved by compassion, I thought that we could take them in. I asked Mother Angela, although the poor soul was still very weak, if she had the enthusiasm to care for those children if we took them into a house; and full of zeal and moved by charity, she gladly offered to do it. I consulted the Councils of the Third Order about the plan, and they very gladly approved it; without delay, we rented the house in Massamagrell named the Castillo to convert it into an asylum where we would shelter the orphaned children⁶¹. We went out through the town to collect pieces of furniture people offered us, and with various alms people gave me, we bought some straw mattresses, sheets, blankets and other utensils. Without any other resources but trusting in the Divine Providence which sustains even the birds in the sky, we opened the Asylum on the 9th day of August 1885.

to cure the cholera sufferers, take as many preventive measures against the epidemia as possible" (cf. *Las Provincias* daily newspaper. Valencia, 4/6/1885).

"A simple invitation made by the residents of Massamagrell to the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Sanctuary of Montiel in Benaguasil was enough for the entire Community to offer to care for those suffering from cholera. It was the Mother Superior herself who restrained their fervor, and only some of the Sisters went there". (cf. *Las Provincias* daily newspaper, Valencia 21/6/1885).

⁶¹ The same local newspaper announced the foundation of the asylum in these laudatory terms: "Owing to the initiative of the Guardian Father of the Capuchin Convent of the Magdalene, Father Luis of Massamagrell, has founded an Asylum and School for children in that town. The object is to shelter and educate the children of both sexes left orphaned as a result of the epidemic that so viciously attacked that area, under the care and supervision of the Tertiary Sisters of the Convent of Montiel, which was also founded by the Guardian Father mentioned before" (cf. *Las Provincias* daily newspaper. Valencia, 7/10/1885).

87 But the work for poor Mother Angela was unbearable, since she could not rest in caring for the children in the asylum even at night. Lacking enough sisters who had taken the vows in Montiel to care for both houses, I looked into the subject and, being properly authorized, gave the profession of vows to three Novices, Sister Patrocinio of Benissa, Sister María Luisa of Valencia and Sister Margarita of Massamagrell, who had taken three months of their novitiate. The Asylum was properly cared for after their arrival.

88 Although it did not have a prosperous life, the Asylum was sustained by the alms of the faithful, and in time the Sisters even dared to purchase the house they were renting, even though they had to make unspeakable sacrifices to pay for it, and it became their property. The house in question, known as the Castillo until then, and a small house next to it that was given to them by the then-Vicar of Massamagrell, José Moliner, who later entered the Tertiary Friars in the Congregation I founded and took the name Father Francisco of Sueras. Some adjoining land that his father bought from Sister Margarita of Massamagrell were the basis and plot for the existing building and its orchard. Blessed be the Lord and His Divine Providence!⁶²

CHAPTER XI

Pilgrimage to El Puig and Purchase of “La Montañeta”

89 The Lord gave me two great reasons for consolation and satisfaction in 1886.

The first was on 13 October, on the occasion of being able to take a second pilgrimage to the feet of the Holy Virgin at El Puig that showed no decrease in either the solemnity of the act or the number of pilgrims from the first one we celebrated on 22 May 1884⁶³. The second reason, which brought me great satisfaction, was the purchase of the land adjacent to the convent which we called the “Montañeta. We

⁶² Cf. 1741, 1742.

⁶³ As a testament to the great spirit which animated the members of the order and their Commissioner, Father Luis, the following texts taken from accounts of the period referring to both pilgrimages should be sufficient:

“At dawn members of the orders from Manises, Godella, Vinalesa, Rafelbuñol, Masarrochos, Museros and numerous groups from the same Third Order of Sagunto Street were gathering in the spacious church in Massamagrell. The friars and priests of the surrounding villages had been alerted beforehand, and were seated to hear the confessions of the faithful up to the ceremony of the solemn Mass of General Communion, in which the Bread of the Eucharist was given to approximately one thousand, eight hundred people. After a short rest, the procession was organized to go to Puig, about one hour in distance from Massamagrell. (cf. *El Mensajero Seráfico*, 2 [1884], pp. 343-349).

Thirteen of the previously invited Third Order Congregations founded or re-formed by the virtuous Father Luis were present with their respective standards, forming a total of five thousand members of the order and numerous priests. The Reverend Father Pedro of Usún said the Communion mass, and it took five priests nearly one hour to give out the bread to these strong men of the Franciscan militia. Close to sixty selected professors graciously came

acquired it in the following manner: One day Father Vicent of Elche came to visit the convent and his brothers from the days of exile. Known in the secular world as Vicente Gironés, he was one of those Fathers exiled from the cloisters who didn't dare to return to the convent and wear the holy habit again; but while I was taking a walk with him around the 'Montañeta', he was reminiscing with great emotion and telling me what had been there years ago and how delightful that place was. I took advantage of the opportunity and said to him: "Well, Father, if we could acquire it, my wish would be to return it to its original state". And he replied: "See if they want to sell it, and I'll buy it". The owner, José García, happened to be working there and I called him over to talk with the Father; fortunately, an agreement was reached for the sale, and the deed was registered on 28 December 1886, putting the property for the time being in the name of five laymen who were great benefactors of the convent and therefore completely trustworthy.

90 Very satisfied with this acquisition and aided, of course, by Brother Roque de la Nava, I began to lay out the pathways that are currently there, the planting of pine and cypress trees, and the restoration of the old chapel of St. Mary Magdalene, with a new and very lovely image of the Saint. Later, at the expense of several devout believers and some of the Third Order Congregations, the Stations of the Cross were able to be built and a well dug for the highest part of the land, with a large pool for irrigating the plants. All glory be given for everything to the Lord, the giver of all good!⁶⁴

CHAPTER XII

How the Lord Watched Over "The Magdalene"

91 Continuing the account of the special bonds and providence of the Lord towards our convent of the Magdalene, I am going to relate, for His glory, the following events.

One day around the time for the midday meal, the cook told me he did not have any oil to begin frying the food. I reprimanded him for not have noticed and advised me before, and said: "Send someone with a cruet right away to the home of a benefactor in Massamagrell and ask if he might help us solve our need right away by giving him a little bit of oil". When the cook was preparing to carry out his instructions, there was a knock on the door and the doorman came to tell me: "Father, a man has arrived bringing two wineskins of oil as alms". As the timing was

from Valencia, and led by the inspired and pious maestro Salvador Giner, sang a solemn Rosary through the streets of the town" (cf. *El Mensajero Seráfico*, 4 [1886], pp. 79-82).

⁶⁴ The "Montañeta" continues to be active in the present day (1985) as part of the old Magdalene convent. The superb St. Lorenzo of Brindisi school for General Basic Education and Unified and Multi-Purpose secondary school was installed on its grounds. Around one thousand students from Massamagrell and surrounding towns attend the school.

so fortunate, I wanted to know who the benefactor was in order to thank him and I asked the doorman to find out, but the man answered that he was under orders not to say who sent it.

92 The other notable event occurred when we found ourselves without bread one day due to a lengthy rainstorm which prevented the Brother who begged for alms to go out and collect alms from the villages. A benefactor of the convent, a resident of Punta de Ruzafa district who was in the flour business and owned an oven next to his house, was reading the newspaper early one morning and the idea became fixed in his mind that the Capuchins of the Magdalene must be lacking bread. He immediately took a sack of flour and ordered the baker to knead and bake it right away; he got in his cart and, without a second thought of how impassable the roads were, came to the convent, arriving precisely at the time the Community had to go into the dining hall. For such a timely arrival of alms, we blessed the Lord for being so attentive to our well-being and we gave our most sincere thanks to our benefactor.

There are many other similar acts besides these two that we could mention for the greater glory of God. May He be blessed by all His children!

CHAPTER XIII

Restoration of the Capuchin Convent of Ollería

93 At the end of 1886, the residents of the town of Ollería (Valencia) requested with great interest the restoration of the old Capuchin convent there; but the Provincial Minister, Reverend Father Joaquín of Llevaneras was reluctant to agree to their request, thinking that the poverty afflicting the village would not be able to support the members of the Order well. The inhabitants then enlisted me as mediator, and after making the Father see the advisability of the foundation, he authorized it; but on condition, he told, that I had to be responsible for carrying it out.

Thus I went off to Ollería on the eve of All Saints Day that year to deal with the authorities and they executed the deed ceding the convent to me on 7 November 1886⁶⁵.

94 Now owners of the convent, we began the repair works right away. The townspeople helped me greatly as the works lasted for over three months and I was fully involved in them the entire time. I want to put on the record, for the honor of the village, that while the works were underway, they did not allow us

⁶⁵ "This convent was the sixth one founded by the Capuchin Fathers of the province of the Precious Blood of Christ, of Valencia. It was founded by a hermit who had lived outside the village and took possession of it on 27 May 1601. The friars were forced to abandon it in the year the members of the religious orders were driven from the cloisters....Father Luis had to suffer a great deal in opening this convent. Referring to the miseries he had to endure on this occasion, he once said to someone: "Ollería has been an ordeal for me" (cf. RAMO, Mariano: *Mensaje de Amor y de Redención*. Ed. J. Doménech. Valencia 1973, Vol. I, pp. 129-131).

to cook meals, and each day one home was responsible for sending us food at the convent. When the convent was finally in acceptable condition, the Community was established under canon law, and, the Reverend Father Provincial Minister came to take possession of it on 7 November, with Father Pedro of Usún, and León de Ubago and the Brother Friar Roque of Nava del Rey, who remained with me throughout the works. The enthusiasm in the village that day was very high.

95 On 28 August 1888, the body of the Blessed Inés of Benigánim was transferred from the grave where she had laid (in her own cell) since the last recognition of her remains, to the altar where they would receive the veneration of the faithful in the future. I had the great fortune to be one of the Priests who brought her on our shoulders to the altar.

CHAPTER XIV

A Hard Test for the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters

96 The work of the founding of my Capuchine Tertiary Sisters were proceeding full speed ahead, without the slightest setback or opposition; but those could not and should not be lacking since they characterize the works of God. And, in fact, suddenly they were striking both the nuns and myself and not just a few of them.

On the one hand, the sisters who were occupying the convent of Montiel before the foundation of the Congregation under canon law, accustomed as they were to the almost hermitical life of the cloisters (the Priests who had supervised them until then instilled that spirit in them), encountered an obstacle to their way of life in the expansion of the Congregation. They wished to limit their activities to the convent of Montiel⁶⁶ and therefore received the new foundation of the Asylum of Massamagrell⁶⁷ unfavorably⁶⁸.

⁶⁶ This occurred in the year 1889. The Mother Superior Cruz refers to it this way: "Six sisters from Montiel went one day to the Palace of the Archbishop to request the life of the cloisters from the Cardinal Archbishop. Father José of Sedaví happened to be there then and Cardinal Monescillo told him to deal with the sisters. Without delay, Father José went to the residence of the Tertiary Sisters in Valencia, met with Mother Superior Luisa there and advised her what had happened. Mother Luisa went to Montiel right away, arriving there before the six sisters returned with Sister Mercedes. When the six fugitive sisters came in and found Mother Luisa there, it made such an impression that one sister fainted and fell to the ground. Two others later left the Congregation and Sister Mercedes as well. I also wanted them to win me over. This occurred in 1899, that is, the first year of my taking of the vows. From then on, the Archbishop of Valencia entrusted the supervision of the sisters to Father José of Sedaví (cf. *Archivo de la Vicepostulación. Coleccion de Fuentes*, p. 300).

⁶⁷ Cf. above, 86-88.

⁶⁸ It is clearly evident here how the previously mentioned sisters of Father Ambrosio who had asked Father Luis for entry into the Congregation of the Servant of God did not have the slightest idea of leaving the Sanctuary of Montiel to dedicate themselves to other ministries, not even in mixed life but rather remain solely in the hermitical life, attending to the Sanctuary and the life in the cloisters there in the same style of neighboring sanctuaries. Therefore it would be

On the other, the infernal enemy who must have foreseen the good the members of the order would do, was making use of lay persons and even Priests to advise members of the orders to abandon a Congregation which, according to them, lacking a base and approval, and could do nothing less than dissolve itself, since its founder was mentally unbalanced.

On top of that was added the great hardships which the members of the order suffered from being founded in such great poverty. All of these were more than sufficient reasons to have destroyed the Congregation if it had only been the work of human hands. But the ruses of the devil did not leave any mark on the sisters and their plans were spoiled; everyone was able to convince themselves the founding of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters was a work of God.

97 These trials and tribulations followed another one that was no less serious for me. The Reverend Father Provincial Minister Joaquín of Llevaneras, undoubtedly considering that it would be better for the Sisters if he himself supervised them), must have given them some order or warning that they should only deal with him, = without saying a word to me (perhaps for fear of upsetting me: and it happened that on going to Montiel one day to give some order to the Sisters, the Mother Superiors were not only reluctant but even disobedient without telling me the reason. I thought at the time it could be an effect of the opposition the older members of the order (who governed the convent) had for anything that did not relate to the convent of Montiel and, in view of such a serious act (in my judgment), I informed the Prelate, Cardinal Monescillo, of what had happened. He gave me the extremely severe order of removing the habit of those who were refusing to obey. I feared taking such a radical measure, which could have brought terrible consequences; and judging the situation more accurately, I thought the attitude of the sisters perhaps came from obeying orders of the Provincial Minister and thus I thought it more prudent to withdraw from supervising them in the future. This decision could certainly be understood as the correct one, as the Father Provincial Minister continued governing the Congregation very much to own satisfaction, it seems. The Father Provincial Minister must have dealt with the matter in the Palace because the jurisdiction over the Sisters, which until then was entrusted to me, was given to the Provincial Superior, and he would not have become involved in their supervision any other way. That was confirmed by the commission I was given in the convent of Orihuela in 1890. The Provincial Administrator then, Father Fermín of Velilla, gave me that commission so that I could visit the sisters as an authorized Visitor of the Archbishop and provide for their needs, making the appointments that I judged were advisable.

very difficult for them to serve Father Luis "as the base and foundation of the Congregation", as they indicated when requesting that he take them as such, in a congregation which altered their wishes and previous customs.

Father Luis continues by saying that "they received the foundation of the Asylum of Massamagrell unfavorably". It was, in effect, the first house of the new Congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters after the one in Montiel, fulfilling the purpose indicated by the Founder in its Constitutions.

This did not diminish in the least my interest in the Congregation which the Lord wanted to found for my ministry, and I continued offering the members of the order all my support and giving them advice whenever they asked me for it.

CHAPTER XV

Foundation of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars

98 I had not forgotten the work of founding a Congregation of Tertiary Friars dedicated to the moral uplift of convicts; on the contrary, it was very much present in my mind and heart as a work that I must do to answer a promise made to the Lord during the cholera epidemic, as I said before. But the many things demanding my attention since that time and the importance of such a major work, which required a great deal of prayer, meditation and consultation to reach the correct decision, were the reasons why realizing it was being postponed.

99 With somewhat more freedom from those demands on my attention in 1887 and 1888, I could more regularly dedicate myself to writing the Constitutions for governing the Congregation to be governed and make the necessary consultations for that purpose. Serving as my advisor in everything was the Reverend Father Calasanz of Llevaneras⁶⁹, who encouraged me greatly in carrying out this major work. Whenever I consulted the Reverend Father about anything, he was very satisfied with what I was arranging, albeit less so with the form of the Habit I wanted them to wear. Assuming that the Congregation was dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows, I thought the scapular and hood should be black while the brown tunic and rope of our own Third Order should be used for the Habit. As I said, the Reverend Father Calasanz did not agree and advised me that the color and cloth for the Habit of our Order should be complete and, to satisfy my devotion and desire, it would be enough to place the coat of arms of Our Lady of Sorrows on the scapular on the chest. I took this as the will of the Lord, and arranged it that way in the Constitutions. And if I believed initially that the opinion of the Father was only obeying the natural desire to try to bring honor to our Order, if any were to come from this work, I

⁶⁹ José Vives y Tutó, known as José Calasanz of Llevaneras as a Capuchin, was born in San Andrés de Llevaneras, Barcelona on 15 February 1854. As a priest he was appointed director of the convent of Perpignan of Igualada (Barcelona), and in Rome was named Visitor of the Spanish Provinces beginning in 1885.

Named General Definitor and consultant of various Congregations in Rome, he worked tirelessly in the Latin American Plenary Council. On 19 June 1899 he was appointed Cardinal and from that point on, his life followed the shifting fortunes of the papacies of Leo XIII and Pius X. Appointed Prefect for Religious Orders, he made great efforts in favor of the Seminaries.

A man of profound inner life and prayer, a devout believer in the Eucharist and the Virgin, with a very modest heart, he left behind countless writings fully imbued with his inner life.

He died peacefully in Monte Porzio Catone in the countryside outside Rome and his body was buried in the Campo di Verano cemetery in Rome (cf. BARCELONA, Father Antonio of: *El Cardenal Vives y Tutó*. Imp. Porcell. Igualada 1916).

understood later on reflection that his reason for supporting it would be to avoid any arguments that might originate over time between our Order and the Servite Order over jurisdiction issues regarding the Congregation.

100 Without any publicizing of the idea and project on my part, very soon the news spread and young people began to arrive, requesting to be admitted as part of the new Congregation, undoubtedly attracted by the purpose of being involved in the instruction and moral uplift of the convicts, an idea which greatly appealed to everyone⁷⁰. This, and the approval and encouragement I received from all the people of authority and prestige to whom I explained my thinking, were great incentives for me, since that support seemed like a clear indication of the will of God to me.

Every time I went to Valencia from our convent, the young applicants came looking for me at our Residence there, eager for news relating to the foundation and anxious to work on anything that might speed up the process.

Among those applying for entry into the new Congregation were two priests, José Moliner, the Vicar of Massamagrell, and Faustino Roda, of Benaguasil⁷¹.

CHAPTER XVI

Difficulties of the Newly Formed Congregation

101 I was very content with this acquisition, because I considered it a good base for the foundation; but Faustino must have thought differently and, perhaps to avoid the commitment, appeared one day and began to question me on the means I was counting on for the sustenance of the members of the Order. I answered that I was only counting on Divine Providence, the only means of support our Seraphic Father St. Francis placed his faith in when founding the Order. As he heard that, he began to criticize me in strong terms, declaring that what I was proposing was reckless, and would put those who entered the Congregation in a compromising position and exposed to ridicule. I was so disturbed by these criticisms I might have fallen to the floor in a dead faint had he not stopped speaking to me. I became aware later, from how upset I was by the incident, that it was a ruse of the devil so that I would give up my attempt. And I remembered then that the enemy also tried

⁷⁰ The purpose of the Congregation itself, according to the Constitutions written in 1889 by the Servant of God, is: "The instruction of adults and young children in Arts and Sciences; service to the sick, especially in their home, and the regimen and direction of jails and prisons. (cf. below, 2760).

Based on the Regulations of the Sacred Congregation, dated 28/6/1901, the purpose was defined this way: "The correctional education, moral uplift and education in arts and sciences of those housed in the Reform schools and other similar establishments, both public and private".

⁷¹ Faustino Roda, the nephew of both Father Ambrosio of Benaguasil and Mother Superior María of Montiel, appears to be one of the boys whom Father Ambrosio took to Cuenca in the nine years he spent doing missions there. Of course, once he became a priest, Faustino lived and died in the diocese of Valencia (cf. ROCA, Tomás: *El Santuario de Montiel*. Imp. J. Doménech. Valencia 1968, p. 91).

to upset Father St. Francis with the idea of having founded the Order in so poverty, that if the members of the Order could live from begging alms at first, they could not keep it up when the Order grew much larger. When the Holy Father became upset over this consideration, the Lord calmed him by saying: "Insignificant man, do you believe you are so much the father of your children that I might forget them? Look, if at some time there are no more than two loaves of bread remaining in the world, one would be for your children, and if there is no more than one, half of it would be for them".

That memory calmed me down completely and confirmed me even more in my idea that the foundation was a work of God, and I received fresh encouragement from that to carry it out.

102 The other applicant to form part of the Congregation was a young man from high society who was among the most prominent young people in Valencia in that time; he was the Consul and his name was José Valenciano⁷². He was very interested and enthusiastic about the foundation and after finding out about his intention, the town was leaning in favor of the foundation, in admiration and astonishment, and they began to call it the foundation of Valenciano.

The Lord undoubtedly used this means to create a favorable impression of the foundation in their eyes to provide the necessary resources for carrying out the work. And, in fact, the donations were sufficient to purchase the coarse woolen cloth for the Habits, other fabrics, pieces of furniture and other needed utensils. But let us admire the plans of God! This young man, whom everyone considered the soul of the foundation, undoubtedly did not have any greater mission from God than to give the work an impetus and renown since, as we shall see later, when the time to establish the Congregation arrived, he did not have the strength to go ahead and withdrew.

CHAPTER XVII

Authorizations and Approvals of the Congregation

103 The Divine Providence also resolved the question of finding a site where we could establish the Community for us. The owner of the Carthusian monastery of El Puig looked favorably on my request and loaned it to us free of charge for as long as we wanted to live in it, with the only condition being that any improvements we made to the building were to remain there in her behalf⁷³.

⁷² Aside from José Moliner, Faustino Roda and Consul José Valenciano, the new congregation boasted the help and support of Doctor Pedro Fuster, a distinguished liberal, "and a young marquis whose name was not recorded by the first historians of the Congregation" (cf. ROCA, Tomás: *Historia de la Congregación de Religiosos Terciario Capuchinos*. Gráficas Lersi. Torrente, Valencia, 1968, Vol. I, p. 42).

⁷³ Also located in the territory of El Puig (Valencia) is a monastery dedicated to St. Mary that it is not to be confused with the Carthusian monastery of Ara Christi. The Monastery of

104 Having finished writing the Constitutions, and with everything now ready to celebrate the inauguration of the Congregation on the day of Our Lady of Sorrows (if the required authorizations were received in time), I turned as my duty⁷⁴ to the Reverend General Minister of our Order, Bernard of Andermatt, on 11 January 1889 in order that he might deign to bless this work and receive into the Order anyone who would enter into the Congregation at any time and authorizing them to be invested with the Holy Habit. He replied to my contest on the 31st of that month, blessing the new Congregation in the name of Father St. Francis and granting the requested authorization⁷⁵.

105 On 2 February of that year, the celebration of the Purification of the Virgin, I celebrated Mass at the altar which was then dedicated to the image of Jesus Christ which today is worshipped in the vestry. I placed the Constitutions in the hands of the image of Our Lady of Sorrows at the foot of the Cross, and she held them during the Mass in which I asked the Virgin to bless them and grant her protection and support to the foundation that was going to be created in her honor⁷⁶.

106 Having carried out this dedication and consecration, the following day I appeared before the Archbishop, Cardinal Monescillo, who was now informed of the issue, to deliver the Constitutions to him for approval. The Constitutions were examined at length by the attorney for the Archdiocese and in agreement with him, they were approved by his Excellency the Reverend Archbishop on 8 April 1889, and on the 10th the illustrious ecclesiastic governor issued the certification of the Constitutions⁷⁷.

107 The foundation was also approved and applauded on 5 February by the Bishop of Segorbe, Francisco de Aguilar, to whom I had shown my project for his attention and reaction⁷⁸; I had done the same with other civil and judicial authorities

St. Mary dates from the 13th century, is located inside the town and is run by the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mercy. It is the only parish church in the town, an architectural jewel and constitutes the centre and main altar of the Valencia region.

The Carthusian monastery of Ara Christi, by contrast, is set apart from the town and owes its origin to the Carthusian monks of Porta Coeli in the 16th century. The monastery, which was almost reduced to a pile of ruins beginning with the confiscation of 1835, was the birthplace and site of the new congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Fathers from 14 April 1889 until 31 October 1889. The monastery is currently privately owned (cf. *Gran Enciclopedia de la Región Valenciana*. Ed. Graphic, S. A., Valencia 1973, Vol. IX, p. 196ss).

⁷⁴ Cf. 1543.

⁷⁵ The General Minister granted the requested authorization with the following letter:

"Rome, 31 January 1889.

We grant what you ask for in the present request, except for the right under canon law with regard to the decrees of the Holy See, principally the one which prohibits that the Regular Third Order members have a habit the same as those of the Capuchins. We bless the new Congregation in the name of Our Father St. Francis, asking the Holy Patriarch to receive it as his own, and we inform its members that they are taking part in the merits of our Holy Capuchin Religion.

Brother Bernard of Andermatt, Min. Gen. Cap."

⁷⁶ Cf. 1883, 1900.

⁷⁷ Cf. pp. 853-854.

⁷⁸ Here is the text of the approval:

"In the Episcopal Palace of Segorbe, on 5 February 1889.

with the aim of proceeding with the agreement of everyone for such a significant work. All of them enthusiastically applauded the idea and even promised to be patrons of the new members of the order in their taking of the Habit.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Defection of José Valenciano

108 Ten days before the festival of Our Lady of Sorrows on 12 April 1889, and coinciding with the anniversary of my taking the Habit in the Capuchin Order, the young applicants went away to our convent of the Magdalene to do Exercises, in order to be prepared for the taking of the habit and inauguration of the Congregation that we wanted to take place on the Friday of Sorrow.

109 Everyone was gathered there, with the Presbyter José Moliner presiding, but José Valenciano did not appear until the afternoon of the third day of the Exercises, which everyone noticed but he apologized for his tardiness and attended the final act of the afternoon to the great satisfaction of the other young men there. But at ten that night, when everyone was resting, he appeared in our cell completely terrified and told me that he could not continue and was leaving; it seemed to him that his mother was dying from sorrow and he could not live with the shame. I gave him a thousand reflections, making him see this could be a temptation of the devil but it was useless. I finally managed to tell him to wait until the next morning, as there was no possible way for getting him to Valencia at that hour. But he replied to have them open the door for him, that he did not need a carriage and would make his way on foot; and that was what he did.

110 Early the next morning, I informed José Moliner of what happened in order to prepare him to deal with the spirits of the youths, since I feared they might become discouraged for having placed all their hopes in Valenciano. But I was convinced, once again, that the foundation was a work of God since this unpleasant news had no impact on them. I took another lesson from this event. As everyone was pinning their hopes for the success of the foundation on young Valenciano, the Lord undoubtedly wanted to make them see this foundation was not the work of men, but rather His work, and for that reason he permitted the support that everyone was counting on to be missing.

May the Lord be blessed for everything!

Knowing from experience the need for Christian order to be introduced and become established in jails and other penal institutions, we approve and applaud the thought of forming a Congregation of pious men dedicating themselves to console, assist and reconcile with God and society the imprisoned prisoners, who many times are waiting for nothing more than a message of love to abandon the road of evil and enter on to the paths of virtue.

Francis of Assisi, Bishop of Segorbe".

Difficult Days in the Carthusian Monastery of El Puig

111 Finally we reached the anxiously awaited day of the festival of Our Lady of Sorrows, the day when the Congregation would be inaugurated under canon law. In the morning we held a solemn Mass attended by all the candidates. In the afternoon, with her Divine Majesty displayed, a solemn Trisagion (*Ter Sanctus*) and sermon was performed, saving the Lord for later, and I proceeded to dress the fourteen new members of the Order in the Holy Habit⁷⁹. The first to receive the Habit was the Presbyter José Moliner, who took for his name Father Francisco of Sueras and was sponsored by the illustrious priest Luis Badal representing the Archbishop. His Excellency, Army General Marcelo de Azcárraga acted as patron for the second. His Excellency, the Civil Governor acted as sponsor for the third; and the mayors of Valencia, the President of the Courts and other distinguished gentlemen and local authorities of the neighboring towns acted as sponsors for the rest. This pleasant and impressive ceremony ended with the singing of a solemn *Te Deum* giving thanks to the Lord for such a unique benefit. Afterwards, we also gave our thanks to the dignified authorities and distinguished gentlemen who had honored us with their attendance and favored us with their support; thus leaving the Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Fathers of Our Lady of Sorrows officially founded under canon law. *Laus Deo, Mariae et Francisco!*

112 The new Community remained in our monastery of the Magdalene until the afternoon of Palm Sunday, when a solemn procession with several Third Order Congregations from neighboring villages with their standards taking and the two Communities holding palm branches, moved the convent to the Carthusian monastery of Ara Christi in El Puig, bearing the image of Our Lady of Sorrows on their shoulders. The illustrious Priest Luis Badal welcomed them from the pulpit on their arrival with a fervent address and the Community was now established in its house⁸⁰.

113 The new members of the Order, as the Novices they were, needed someone to lead them and shape their spirits, instructing them in the practices of the Religion, and I could not be there with them continuously due to my post as Guardian Father of the Magdalene. I appointed Father Serafin of Benissa for the

⁷⁹ Of these first fourteen members, only Father Francisco María of Suera and Father Antonio María of Massamagrell would persevere in the Order.

⁸⁰ Under the heading 'New Religious Order', the *Las Provincias* almanac for 1899 declared: "A Religious Order was born this year in Valencia in a very modest, humble manner to offer excellent very good services to humanity if the noble intentions of their founders are realized.

Its mission is the care of convicts and those incarcerated in those establishments, taking care of the sick, especially during epidemics, and basic instruction in elementary schools, that is, the sacrifice of your life for your fellow man, charity exercised with the child to make him a man, with the sick to return them to health, and with the criminal to secure their redemption" (cf. almanaque *Las Provincias*. Valencia, 1889, pp. 354-356).

short term and later Father Luis of León to act as Father Superiors for the novices and lecture them on the religious life⁸¹.

114 Many young men were applying for entry into the Congregation in its early stages, and thus several ceremonies of the taking of the habits were required in a short time. The first one took place in the Carthusian monastery on 19 May 1889, the second on 21 June, the day of my Saint, and the third on 22 September of that year. Although many youths were entering the Order, nevertheless there were also several who withdrew from the path they had embarked upon, or said goodbye on realizing that they were not among those called by God. The austerity of the religious life was oppressive and the effects of holy poverty very hard on them, since the Congregation had to sustain itself in its early days from the alms the members of the Order received from begging, as they could not earn their sustenance with their work.

CHAPTER XX

Three Important Events of 1889

115 Even though it interrupts the narrative to follow the order of events, I shall say that in this time the Reverend Father Joaquín of Llevaneras, who as Provincial Minister was governing the Congregation of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters, as I said before, decided to move the Novitiate of Montiel to the village of Ollería⁸². The sisters left for that village on 15 July 1889, with Sister Mercedes of

⁸¹ The Lord gave Father Serafin of Benissa uncommon oratorical gifts, and he dedicated himself to preaching to general acclaim and great effect. He was the director of the Seraphic Seminary of the Province of the Precious Blood of Christ, of Valencia while he was in Orihuela and Ollería. Purified by a long and painful illness, his soul was delivered to God after receiving the sacraments on 29 October 1900. He was 32 years old, with 16 years in the religious life.

In the task of educating the initial Capuchin Tertiary Fathers, he carried out his ministry within the short time they were based in the Carthusian monastery of El Puig, Valencia (cf. VALENCIA, Father Antonio of: *Necrologio de los Frailes Menores Capuchines of the Provincia de la Preciosísimo Sangre de Cristo*. Ed. Semana Gráfica. Valenciana, 1947, p 71. Also *Florejillas de San Francisco*, I [1900], p. 368.

Father Luis of León (Frutos Alvarez Sánchez) would later carry out his ministry for several years in the missions on the Caroline and Marianas Islands. On 1 December 1924, he arrived in the Caroni (Venezuela) River basin and carried out his ministry in Upata and then, as parish priest, in Tumeremo. In April 1925 he was appointed administrative vicar and Father Superior of the first missionary center of Araguaimujo. He died in Maracaibo on 19/5/1929. (cf. POBLADURA, Brother Pacífico of: *Héroes*. Gráficas, S.A. Leon, 1976, p. 246.

⁸² It is not surprising that whoever was the Father Provincial Minister, or his envoy, would govern and visit the congregations of lay members of the Order, for included in the ten chapters that state the Rule of Leo X for the members of the Third Orders, the eighth specifically refers to that in its entirety. It declares: "The Provincial Minister of the Friars Minor or the Visitor of this Order appointed by the Provincial Minister shall visit each of the Houses just once each year, accompanied by the eldest...etc." (*Regla de León X*, Chapter. 8, n. 18)

Sobremazas going as Mother Superior, Sister Margarita of Massamagrell as Vicar and Teacher of Novices, two other teachers and the eleven novices who were there.

In Ollería, they stayed in the house of a woman named Pepita Mateu and remained there for the entire time the Novitiate was in the village, which was up until March 1890, as I shall relate later.

116 During this time, the Reverend General Minister Bernard of Andermatt also visited the convents in Spain, accompanied by the Reverend Father José Calasanz of Llevaneras. When he came to the Magdalene, he also went to see the friars and sisters of the Third Order in their respective houses at the Carthusian monastery and the Asylum of Massamagrell. For this reason, the Provincial Minister Father Joaquín of Llevaneras wanted the General Minister to see the enthusiasm and organization of the lay Third Order Congregations and entrusted me with summoning them for the coming Sunday (this being Friday). Despite the limited time to notify them, several Congregations and such a great number of members of the Third Order came together that it resembled a true pilgrimage. And the General Minister was filled with such enthusiasm that he wanted to speak to them, albeit in Italian, at the summit of the “Montañeta”, exhorting them to preserve their faith and religious enthusiasm, with Father Calasanz of Llevaneras then expressing his words in Spanish.

117 On 18 September of 1889, his Eminence Cardinal Antolín Monescillo, Archbishop of Valencia, honored me by appointing me as a Consultant for the Council to be held in Valencia. And his Excellency Francisco de Asís Aguilar, Bishop of Segorbe, honored me by appointed me as Examiner for the Synod on 29 October of that year. Both positions that were undeserved on my part, and therefore I accepted them for the honor which they brought to my Order.

CHAPTER XXI

From the Carthusian monastery of El Puig to Mount Zion of Torrent

118 During September of 1889, the Lord wanted to subject the members of these newborn Third Orders to the hard test of ill health, since the fevers of malaria endemic to that region due to the proximity of the rice fields intensified so much that year it became a true epidemic. This illness attacked the Community with such force that very few escaped it; it was the reason why some friars had to leave the Habit behind and for the members to grow discouraged. That prompted the idea of searching for a healthier place where the Community could be moved in order to escape the outbreak of the disease⁸³.

⁸³ Father Juan Bautista Ardales, referring to the difficult times at the Carthusian monastery, says: “Those were heroic times for the Congregation. Everything was in short supply during that time of solitude: food, clothing, furniture and equipment, But nothing was sufficient to discourage or depress them in spite of their extreme poverty and they suffered hardships of all

119 The residents of Torrent (Valencia) were aware of the situation and moved by the fondness they felt for their Vicar José Méndez, who entered the Congregation under the name of Father José María de Sedaví, they offered us the church and convent of the Alcantarines in their village, putting the friars in charge of the hospital in the building⁸⁴. We of course accepted such a generous and timely offer, and mayor Francisco Carratalá, as President of the town council and representative for the village, signed the deed of assignment for the convent.

120 Having now obtained the necessary site for the transfer of the Community, the Community left the Carthusian monastery in El Puig to move into the convent of Torrent and I accompanied them there on 31 October 1889. We were received by the town of Torrent with great demonstrations of affection and rejoicing, which the people there have always unequivocally displayed towards us and for which we shall be eternally grateful.

CHAPTER XXII

Division of the Capuchin province of the Sacred Heart

121 As our Capuchin Order was, thanks to God, growing considerably in Spain and the number of its convents multiplying by spreading to several provinces it became very difficult to govern the order with a single Provincial Superior. As the most Reverend General Minister observed that state of affairs on his visit, he requested authorization from the Holy Office to divide the Province of Spain of the Sacred Heart into three other Capuchin provinces. Having been granted that authorization on 7 December 1889, the most Reverend General Minister issued a decree on 18 December creating the Provinces of Aragon, which incorporated the old Capuchin provinces of Aragon, Catalonia and Navarre; Toledo, incorporating Valencia and Andalusia, and the province of Castile.

122 As Provincial Minister of our Toledo province, the General Minister appointed Father Fermín de Velilla, with residence in Orihuela, and appointed me as Provincial Definitor, Lector of Theology and Vicar of the Convent of Orihuela⁸⁵.

kinds. Father Luis, a man of unshakeable faith, told them: "These hardships are the signs that God loves and blesses us" (cf. *El Adalid Seráfico*, 984 [1934], p. 319).

⁸⁴ "With the praiseworthy approval of the Patriarch Archbishop of Valencia Juan de Ribera –canonized today– the Alcantarine friars took possession on 23 April 1597 of a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Zion, ceded by the commander of Torrent, Martín de Herrerra. They immediately started work on building a larger church, with an annex to use as a residence for the members of the order. The new church was consecrated on 17 July 1605 by the new bishop of Minervino and auxiliary bishop of Valencia, Brother Lorenzo Palatino". The convent belonged to the Alcantarine Franciscans until 1835, when ownership passed to the town of Torrent (cf. ROCA, Tomás: *Historia de la Congregación de Terciarios Capuchinos*. Gráficas Lersi, S.L. Torrent [Valencia] 1968, p. 59ss).

⁸⁵ The germination process of the Capuchins in Spain was as follows: Expelled in 1835, they returned in March of 1877, creating an Apostolic Commission for the entire nation. With the

I begged to be relieved of the position of Lector, which I did not consider myself suited for and obtained that release from Father Calasanz of Llevaneras after carrying out that duty for some time and took charge of the supervision of the Third Order of the convent⁸⁶.

CHAPTER XXIII

Transfer of Father Luis to Orihuela

123 Naturally, my transfer was a terrible test sent by the Divine Providence for both the friars and sisters of my Third Orders, and many tears were shed⁸⁷. The members of the orders who were still novices were left without anyone to who could lead them right away, and therefore I had to put Father José of Sedaví in charge of the Community, as his talents were the best suited for supervising it. The sisters were supervised by the Father Provincial Minister but, as they always asked my opinion in and for everything, as you would your Father, they were inconsolable for the difficulty they envisioned they would have consulting me about their doubts and needs in the future⁸⁸.

124 For my part, although my heart was torn apart for leaving without support these institutions that I believe give great glory to God, but considering that He would protect them as His work and that everything would result in a greater benefit for these Congregations, I was not only resigned but happy with the arrangement of my Superiors. Some of the elderly Fathers of the Magdalene were amazed to see me smile when I said farewell to them, while they were in tears from feeling the prospect of my separation from them so strongly.

Commission abolished as of 4/2/1885, a single religious province for all Spain was created and named the Sacred Heart. The first provincial minister was Father Joaquín de Llevaneras.

Subsequently, by the decree of the Holy See of 18/12/1889, this single province was divided into three: Aragon (Catalonia and Navarre), whose first provincial minister was Father Javier María de Arenys de Mar; Castile, whose first provincial minister had held the same position for all of Spain, Father Joaquín de Llevaneras; and Toledo (Valencia and Andalusia) whose first provincial minister was Father Fermín de Velilla.

Finally, the province of Toledo was divided by the decree of the Holy See of 30/9/1898 into two more provinces: Andalusia, whose first provincial minister was Father Ambrosio of Valencina, and Valencia which, under the name of the Precious Blood, had Father Luis of Massamagrell as its first provincial minister.

⁸⁶ Cf. 1545.

⁸⁷ The move of Luis Amigó to Orihuela (Alicante) has to be understood in the context of the blind obedience of that period, together with the shortage of people with skills in training others that the recently founded province of Toledo had at its disposal after the breakup of the province of the Sacred Heart, which included all of Spain, into three provinces. In addition, the Father Provincial Minister established his residence in Orihuela and brought Father Luis there as a trusted adviser, a clear indication of the friendship and brotherhood he held for him. (cf.

1550-1552)

⁸⁸ Cf. 1732.

125 Just one thing upset me somewhat, and it was wondering if separating me from my Congregations was a response to complaints by some members of the Order, for judging that I might be acting in detriment to my Order by depriving it of vocations and alms in order to favor the Congregations. I was always far removed from committing this offence (by the mercy of God), since any interest in them would deprive me of the benefit I owed to my beloved mother, the Capuchin Order.

And proof of that were the improvements I carried out and works I executed in the convents I governed as Guardian.

126 Therefore, I was at peace and happily accepted the hard test the Lord was subjecting me to by separating me from the governing and direction of my children, the Third Order friars and sisters, convinced that these institutions would not be lacking His protection as part of His work.

CHAPTER XXIV

Jesuit Interference in the Community of Torrent

127 And, in fact, I could clearly appreciate how the Lord was watching over their support and growth, because in these critical circumstances a Father of a certain Religious Order (which all of us always held a great affection for, and in turn it was quite partial towards our Congregation), believing that our Order had completely abandoned this institution and, perhaps moved by zeal but an indiscreet zeal, was frequently visiting our Third Order friars in Torrent. He was giving them talks and directing them, and even told them that they were now seeing that the Capuchins had abandoned them, but his order would not leave them; they could exchange the Habit for a cassock and tippet, and they would give them new Constitutions and thus they would have life, something they would never have with the Capuchins.

128 I suppose that all this activity was just a project of that particular Father and his Order was not even aware of it. But the Lord made the friars recognize these were all cunning ruses of the devil, concealed by a veneer of zeal, and they firmly answered this Father that they had taken the Habit of the Seraphic Father and had to take the vows in his Order.

129 All this was happening without my being aware of it, and I came to find out about it on a trip that I had to make to Valencia, which I took advantage of to go visit my Congregations⁸⁹. It happened that in a talk I gave to the members of the Order, I set out to undo the negative effect that was caused by the abandonment they had been subjected to; undoubtedly, it was the Lord who spoke through me, expressing the gratitude they should have for their mother, the Capuchin Order, from whom they had received their identity as members of a Religious order. And my words were so effective that Father José de Sedaví, who presided over the

⁸⁹ On this visit, Luis Amigó left his friars and sisters two regulations which throw into relief the profoundly Franciscan spirit he wanted for his Congregation (cf. 1974 and 1978)

Community, made a public and solemn oath of adhesion and loyalty to the Order. In private, he told me later it was fortunate that I had spoken to them in that way, and told me of what happened with Father N.N. that I mentioned before⁹⁰.

Thanks be given to the Lord for his kindness!

CHAPTER XXV

Capuchin interference in the Third Order Congregation

130 The trials and tribulations for my Third Order sisters was just as great. As the new arrangement of provinces left them subject to the Provincial Minister of Toledo, Father Joaquín of Llevaneras, who had been transferred to serve as Provincial Minister of Aragon, tried to accomplish his project of moving the Novitiate of the Capuchine sisters to northern Spain. To that end, he called Mother Sister Mercedes of Sobremazas to Lecároz⁹¹, who went there without giving notice of her trip to either the Provincial Minister or the sisters. The sisters already had some idea of what the Father was planning, since Sister Mercedes had been admitted, taken the vows in a very short time and then appointed Mother Superior with that in mind. When she was late in returning and no one knew anything of her whereabouts, they became alarmed and two sisters came to Orihuela to inform the Father Provincial Minister of what has happening, so that he could arrange what he deemed advisable in this case. After thinking the matter over and in view of the circumstances, the Provincial Minister called me and gave me an official letter, dated 7 March, in which he authorized me to visit the Congregation in his name and take charge of their needs in accordance with what I believed advisable and make the appointments I considered necessary myself. The Archbishop, through his Vicar-General, ratified the authorization on 10 March.

131 Without delay and aware of how critical the situation was, I met at Montiel on the 11th with the sisters who had taken the vows in a general Chapter meeting to appoint a General Superior, which fell to Mother Sister María Luisa of Valencia. And similarly, the Chapter chose the Councilors by vote, and then the Council chose the local mother Superiors since I did not want to make those

⁹⁰ This undoubtedly is speaking of the Jesuit Father Mariano Ripoll who was the rector of the school of St. Joseph in Valencia from 1886-1890 and was very active in his apostolic labor of giving spiritual exercises. Proof of his love for the Capuchin Tertiary Friars – despite the incident described here – was that on 7 November 1902, he was called on to preach on the first day of the famed Trisagion organized in the Mother House of Mount Zion of Torrent and “his sermon was among the most notable preached in the three days” (cf. *Little Flowers of St. Francis*, 3 [1902], pp. 372-376).

⁹¹ It should be noted that Father Joaquín of Llevaneras was never the provincial superior of Aragon, but of Castile instead, even if “he was always superior of the Territorial District which was composed of the Residence of Madrid, the El Pardo Convent and the Lecároz (Navarre) school, of which he was founder and organizer”. He would hold that position until that district disappeared on 7 August 1907 (cf. *Little Flowers of St. Francis*, 24 [1923], pp. 164-165).

appointments myself although I was authorized to do so. Then the transfer of the Novitiate from Ollería to Massamagrell was discussed and agreed on, which was carried out immediately with Teacher Mother Margarita of Massamagrell, who had come to Montiel for the Chapter meeting, going to Ollería to bring the Novices. The governing body of the Congregation was renewed by the Chapter and all the plans spoiled which would have been the cause of division and ruin in the Congregation.

After some time passed, Sister Mercedes appeared at Ollería and, on discovering the change and realizing that she could not put her plans into effect, disappeared immediately and nothing more was known of her⁹². That was how the conflict ended that the enemy was preparing, undoubtedly, to destroy the Congregation. Blessed be God for everything!

CHAPTER XXVI

St. Rita, Madrid, the first Reform School

132 On 24 June of that year, the Lord granted me a great joy and satisfaction of being able to receive the profession of the first nineteen friars, who took their vows at my hand in the convent of Torrent⁹³. With that act, our Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars was now definitively established and consolidated. *Laus Deo, Mariae et Francisco!*

In the following days, I made the canonical visit and appointed the Superiors. As they were all novices until that point, those who were carrying out the duties were only acting on an interim basis in the absence of the Capuchin Fathers who had initially directed them. Once that was done, my spirit could rest peacefully and bless the Lord for everything.

133 After finding out about the recently founded congregation, the Bishop of Madrid, His Excellency Ciriaco Sancha y Hervás, called us concerning our friars taking charge of the direction of the St. Rita Reform School, a foundation which had been in the hands of the lawyer Francisco Lastres for some time and was struggling to being entrusted to laymen. Therefore, I went in the company of one of our friars to deal with that Prelate and we agreed that once the new friars had taken their vows, of course some of them would go take charge of the foundation. To fulfill the agreement, Father José de Sedaví and Brother Francisco Javier of Valencia were given responsibility for this delicate matter which was so important for the Congregation.

⁹² Father Luis is drawing a pious veil in the future over Mother Mercedes of Sobremazas. However, we do know that once she left the Congregation, she returned to Lecároz where, supported by Father Joaquín of Llevaneras and together with María Teresa Rodón, she tried to found the congregation of Franciscan Tertiary Sisters of Our Lady of Good Counsel. They achieved that after countless ups and downs but, due to differences of opinion, Mother Mercedes left the new Congregation and went to France, where she lost her memory. (cf. ELCID, Daniel: *María Teresa Rodón*. Ed. Gráficas Meri. Madrid, 1981.

⁹³ Cf. 1548.

They left from Torrent for Madrid on 24 October 1890 and took possession of the house of St. Rita on the final days of the month⁹⁴. Nevertheless, it still took even more time for this house to reach normal operation, as it was not possible to admit the students who needed correction until the lay element there was removed. But eventually it was and this house has always been the most important foundation of the Congregation.

CHAPTER XXVII

The Lord Dispels the Doubts of Father Luis

134 In the time I lived in the convent of Orihuela as Vicar, the Lord permitted the infernal enemy to afflict me with thoughts against the faith and doubts about my ordination. But the same Lord, in his kindness, put me at peace in an extraordinary manner in the following case: I was going on Sundays and holy days to confess and celebrate Mass in a chapel in the countryside named Cabello. On the day of the Immaculate Conception of 1891, at the end of the Communion mass, the sacristan told me to go immediately to the confessional since they were urgently calling for me there. I went there and on sitting down in the confessional, a 12 or 13-year-old girl approached me and, trembling so much it made the confessional move, said: "Oh, Father, I called you to tell you that when you raised your hands to God in the Mass, I saw in your hands a Child so beautiful that I have never seen another one equal to it". Stunned and amazed, I tried to urge her to give thanks to God for such a unique benefit and to love Him with all her heart; and unable to doubt the truth of what that angel had declared, I was convinced that it was a sign and grace for me and thus recovered my sense of peace and my faith was aroused to an even higher degree.

135 Another event happened to me around that time which I have never been able to explain. I was saying the Conventual mass in our convent of Orihuela when a few scattered drops of a clear transparent liquid fell on the offertory between the corporal and the mantle; stunned and amazed, I looked upward and to both sides without being able to glimpse anything. I even had the curiosity to wet my finger in one of those drops and bring it to my lips to see I could perceive some taste, but I could not find anything to trace the cause of such an unusual and

⁹⁴ Possession of the house was officially taken on 29/10/1890 and the first Community was made up of: Father Fernando María of Torrent (Director); Father Ramón Viñeta (Buenaventura de Talavera); Brother Pablo María of Bañeras; Brother Javier María of Valencia; Brother Francisco de Sales María of Valencia; Brother Rafael María of Ontinyent; Brother Gabriel María of Benifaíó; Brother Leonardo María of Otos; Brother Bernardo María of Morella; Brother Angel María of Pobra de Farnals; and Brother Gaspar María of Eslida (cf. ROCA, Tomás: *Historia de la Congregación de Terciarios Capuchinos*. Ed. Gráficas Lersi, S.L. Torrente (Valencia) 1968, p. 126ss).

extraordinary event, which prompted a thousand conjectures on my part and filled me with frightful suspicions.

136 It also happened to me during this time that, after being called to attend a dying man, after we all believed him to be dead and said a prayer for the dead over him, I was exhorting and consoling the family. And suddenly he opened his eyes and began to speak in a clear, strong voice and gave us a very lovely description of Heaven, where he said he was going. Then turning to me, he told me: "You, Father, shall also go there"; and then directing his words to his family, he urged them to practice the virtues and do penance in order to merit going to heaven. Having said those words, he closed his eyes on this world to open them in eternity. All of us, and myself in particular, were amazed by his action and also that an ignorant man (since he was a poor weaver) could give us such a beautiful and eloquent description of the glory, which assured us of his eternal salvation and made us envious of such a holy death.

CHAPTER XXVIII

First Mass of the First Capuchin Tertiary Friars

137 In April of 1892, the Lord also granted me the comfort of being able to attend the celebration of the first Mass of four of my Third Order friars, the very first who were ordained in the Congregation. The mass was celebrated with all four praying together in the convent of Torrent, but although they were reciting it, they were very solemn, because each one had two Presbyters assisting dressed in the cope, and on the Elevation, two acolytes with incense burners and another two with small baskets of flowers, spreading the fragrant incense and throwing flowers at the Lord. May God be blessed for his many mercies!⁹⁵

CHAPTER XXIX

Provincial Definitor and Guardian of Ollería

138 At the close of the three-year period from 1889 to 1892, during which I served as Vicar at the convent of Orihuela, the Provincial Chapter met on 18 December 1892 in the convent of the Magdalene, and I was again re-elected as Provincial Definitor. In the first meeting of the Defining Council on 29 December, I was appointed Guardian of the convent of Ollería, where they had decided to

⁹⁵ The four neophyte priests ordained by Monsignor Francisco of Assisi Aguilar were: Brother Carlos María of Quart de las Valls, Brother Ignacio María of Torrent, Brother Manuel María of Alcalalí and Brother Ambrosio María of Torrent. The Capuchin Father Fidel of Alzira preached at this, their first mass, and a great gathering of the faithful attended.

transfer the Seraphic School that was located in Orihuela, for health reasons and the purpose of reducing the number of people at the latter convent, which also housed the school for Choir members.

139 I went to my destination of Ollería to prepare for the arrival of the Seraphic school students, who arrived at the convent on 5 January 1893. As the Provincial Minister could not help me defray the major expenses created by the move of the Seraphic School, I had to ask for the alms of the benefactors to help me. I have to confess, for the glory of God, that His Divine Providence moved the hearts of our benefactors so much that we never lacked anything that we needed. Blessed be God for everything!

140 I continued experiencing this Providence in the two three-year periods I served as Guardian in Ollería, a time when I not only ensured the needs of the Community were attended to but I was able to make even more improvements and undertake various works in the convent. I built the Stations of the Cross that ran from the village to the Convent, as the original one was totally destroyed. I restored various auxiliary buildings of the convent and its small plaza. I had the satisfaction of introducing great improvements in the church, as the entire building was surfaced and coated with stucco and the canvases were hung in the vault. The images of Father St. Francis, paid for by the Third Order, and the Blessed Juan of Ribera, the founder of the convent, to whom we also built an altar, were acquired. Brother Juan of Benissa also built a new tabernacle for displaying the Holy Sacrament; a beautiful pulpit, confessionals and railings, all the work of the exemplary member of the order Brother Miguel of Benisanó. A white suit embroidered with silks made in the factory of the Llana brothers, was purchased and many other items. All these works resulted from the charity of the faithful; but the greatest part was due to the zeal and largesse of the elderly woman Josefa Giménez Sién (may she have holy glory), the sister of the deceased Mariano Giménez Sién, priest of Ollería, who always told me: "Father, I only want to be rich in order to be able to give a great deal to you, so that you may do whatever your zeal dictates". I believed it was just to mention this great benefactor in order that everyone may commend her to God, although it is to be expected that the Lord will have already rewarded her for her great charity⁹⁶.

141 On 18 December 1895, having completed the three-year term of positions in the Province, the Provincial Chapter met in the convent of the Magdalene, and I was again re-elected as Provincial Definitor. Later, the Defining Council also confirmed me for another three year period in the position of Guardian of Ollería.

142 Shortly thereafter, on 24 December 1895, the Provincial Father appointed me as Provincial Visitor of the Third Order, for the purpose of attending to the Congregations established in the territories of the convents of the Magdalene and Ollería. I received this position with great satisfaction since it so closely coincided

⁹⁶ Josefa Giménez Sién, supervised by Father Luis, greatly helped the Servant of God who, as a sign of his gratitude, arranged that her remains should also rest in the crypt at the Asylum of Massamagrell (cf. 225).

with my inclinations, because I knew from experience the great good the Third Order produced for the people and villages, and for that reason I worked with great interest in carrying out those duties over the entire three-year period.

CHAPTER XXX

Father Luis, the First Provincial Superior

143 The restoration of the old Capuchin Provinces of Andalusia and Valencia were always an aspiration for both the Andalusian members of the order and those from Valencia; it was something which could not be done when the most reverend General Minister divided Spain into three provinces of the Order for they still did not have a sufficient number of personnel and convents. And this division was highly advisable for the satisfaction and peace of mind of those members of the Order, since they were always the ones most annoyed by having to reside in convents outside their territory, because the customs and different characters of each region were regularly the cause of trouble if they did not have a great spirit of mortification.⁹⁷

144 As the number of convents and members of the order had now increased sufficiently, the most Reverend General Minister, heeding the petitions of his friars, obtained from the Holy Office of Bishops and Regular Clergy on 30 September 1898 the authorization to reconstitute the old provinces of Andalusia and Valencia. By virtue of that authorization, on 16 December of that year the Province of the Precious Blood of Christ of Valencia was created, and the province of Andalusia as well.

145 For our Province of Valencia, on the indicated date of 16 December of 1898, the most Reverend General Minister decided to appoint me its first Provincial Minister, and as Definitors the Reverend Fathers Fermín of Velilla, Melchor of Benissa, Francisco of Orihuela and Fidel of Alzira⁹⁸.

146 The letter which brought this notice to us at the convent of Ollería arrived when it was already night, but when the members of the Order found out, they were unable to contain their enthusiasm and with without making amends for the late hour and began to ring the bells with such uncommon force that it stirred up the entire village. Thinking the members of the Order were signaling for help, several armed men climbed up to the convent immediately, where they joined in

⁹⁷ The Servant of God took a very active part in the division of the Capuchin Province into the two ancient ones of Andalusia and Valencia. The proof of that is the extensive letter he wrote, together with Father José de Monóvar, to Father José Calasanz of Llevaneras requesting him to make that division; the activity undertaken in the foundation of the convents of Orito (Alicante), Alcoy (Alicante) and Ollería (Valencia) was for the purpose of facilitating the division; and the paragraphs of gratitude he dedicated to his High Superiors for having carried it out following the division (cf. 1571-1595).

⁹⁸ Cf. 1597, 1598.

the joy of the friars once they found out the reason. Enough of them were there so that the entire village found out about the new development right away and shared in the satisfaction of the Community, albeit while feeling that, I might have to leave for this very reason.

CHAPTER XXXI

Father Luis Visits the St. Rita Reform School

147 My Capuchin Tertiary friars and sisters were no less satisfied and joyful about my appointment as Provincial Minister. The poor souls had been very isolated from me and deprived of my immediate direction for several years (the Lord permitting that in order to prove their perseverance and to make everyone see the foundation was His work); as I now would enjoy greater freedom of action, I could pay more attention to them and they had an undertaking that I would visit in the St. Rita Reform School in Madrid, so I could see and appreciate the great progress it had made, as their efforts had given it public notoriety and renown everywhere⁹⁹.

148 When it was possible for me to please them I went to Madrid, and the reception they gave me there was enthusiastic and then some. Even though I arrived in the morning, they did not want to go to St. Rita until the afternoon, and kept me in the residence in Madrid where they were presenting Commissions of the various sections of pupils from the school, accompanied by their leaders. In the afternoon, at the time they had undoubtedly arranged, they drove me out to St. Rita in a magnificent carriage; it surprised me greatly to see, close to Carabanchel, a lovely procession made up by the pupils of the school, mounted on spirited and well-harnessed horses, dressed in luxurious suits in the old Spanish style. That was how the carriage arrived, with the horses parading in front in orderly formation until we entered the grounds of the orchard of St. Rita. When I got out of the carriage I was enthusiastically greeted by the members of the orders and pupils at the school with cheers and applause, and the boys spreading flowers in my path to lead me towards the chapel. All these displays of veneration and affection only served to fill me with great confusion, remembering my many miseries and infidelities towards God. But as I considered those honors were not directed at me personally but rather to God (whom I was representing to them) I welcomed them with pleasure. I also remembered on that occasion that my Father St. Francis (a model of humility), for how much he always shied away from the applause of the world, on a certain occasion accepted the cheers and applauses he received in one city with signs of pleasure. He said to the friar who was accompanying him and

⁹⁹ Luis Amigó could not realize the visit until May of 1899, when he carried out the visit under canon law on the 25th, 26th and 27th of that month, leaving wise written regulations (cf. 1777 and 2075).

admiring the behavior of his Father on that occasion: "My son, these people are still not doing what they should, because it is not Francis who they are paying tribute to with these honors, but rather God".

These were the ideas and feelings I presented to my friars and the pupils at the school when thanking them for their displays of veneration and affection. May all His creatures bless the Lord!

CHAPTER XXXII

Capuchin Mission of La Guajira

149 During my time as Provincial Minister, I had great reasons for consolation but I was also not lacking for troubles that spoiled them. The situation of our Mission of La Guajira made it absolutely necessary that a visit was made there to attend to its needs. For this purpose, and since it did not strike the Definitors as a good idea that I leave the Province for such a long time, it was decided that the Provincial Definitor, the Reverend Father Melchor of Benissa, should go as the official Visitor, accompanied by the Reverend Father Laureano of Massamagrell as Secretary. They left for the Mission in early June of 1899.

The visit did a great deal of good for the Mission, due to the well-directed orders of the Visitor, both to establish the proper order in the Houses and to bring together opinions and resolve questions among the members of the Order which, although motivated by zeal, nevertheless were having negative effects and disastrous consequences.

150 Nonetheless, that did not change the obvious need to send a Guardian of great prestige in the Province to the Mission whom everyone would pay attention to and obey due to his authority. Taking advantage of the fact that the most Reverend Father Antonio of Valencia was adamant in his rejection of being Guardian, for preventing him from dedicating himself to the apostolic works he felt strongly inclined towards, it was decided to accept his resignation and appoint a successor. However, the Defining Council did not consider that anyone had the requisite skills for the position, and for my part, I did not dare impose the position on any of the Definitors, the only ones whom I recognized had the suitable talents for it. Therefore, to resolve the matter, I offered to the Defining Council to go myself as Guardian of the Mission, resigning the position of Provincial Minister to take it if they deemed it appropriate. After hearing that proposal, the most Reverend Francisco of Orihuela said: "There is no way we can accept that plan, for you will be missed far more in the Province than the Mission; if you like, I shall return to La Guajira again". We all gratefully accepted his offer and he was appointed Guardian of the La Guajira Mission on 23 April 1900. The Reverend Father Atansio of Manises was designated as his Secretary¹⁰⁰.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. 1672.

151 I had to make a true sacrifice with these appointments, perhaps as great as the one they made themselves, since those two fathers were very useful in the Province for their fine qualities and as examples of observance, so I looked on them with favor and felt a special fondness for them.

The fact that this selection greatly pleased the Lord became clear with time, since on the death of Monsignor Celedón, the Bishop of Santa Marta, Father Francisco was nominated to succeed him in the government of the church and Father Atanasio was later named Apostolic Vicar of the La Guajira Mission. Blessed be the Lord for everything!

CHAPTER XXXIII

End of Father Luis' Term as Provincial Minister

152 Before completing my term as Provincial Minister, and as a remembrance of that time, I thought of doing a statistical study of the province since it was founded by the Blessed Juan of Ribera in October 1596; putting on the record the convents that were then found in the Province, with the details and dates of their foundation, and all members of the order who joined from the beginning until they were driven from the cloisters in 1835. Additionally, I thought of recording the details since the restoration of the Province on 16 December 1898 until October of 1901.

An enormous effort had to be made to carry out this task, but I was able to see it completed with the help and grace of God and to give a copy to each member of the Order when my government term concluded¹⁰¹.

153 With that three-year period completed, I called a meeting of the Provincial Chapter in the convent of the Magdalene on 10 January 1902¹⁰², and the most Reverend Father Provincial Minister and the Definers were chosen. I was also chosen to serve as the General Guardian, free from any other position for the length of time stipulated in our Constitutions. I gave thanks to God for that, since I was anxious to not have to take care of anything else apart from my soul and to obey¹⁰³.

¹⁰¹ Cf. *Estadística General de la Seráfica Provincia de Menores Capuchinos de Valencia, denominada de la Preciosísimo Sangre*. Imp. Tipografía M. Gimeno. Avellanas, 11, Valencia 1901 (one hundred fifty pages and seven pages of photographs).

¹⁰² Cf. 1708.

¹⁰³ The second Defining Council of the province of the Precious Blood of Christ of Valencia, beginning from the re-entry following the exile from the cloisters, was made up of: Provincial Minister: Father Melchor of Benissa. Definitors: Father Laureano of Massamagrell, Father Fermín of Velilla, Father Querubín of Carcaixent and Father Lucas of Benissa; General Guardians: Father José of Monóvar and Father Luis of Massamagrell. The General Guardians were the representatives of the province in the General Chapter meeting, if there were any in the three-year period.

CHAPTER XXXIV

Papal Approval of the Institutions

154 In the same year of 1902, I had the very great satisfaction of seeing the institution and the Constitutions of my two Congregations of Capuchin Tertiary Friars and Sisters approved by His Holiness Leo XIII. The Constitutions of the Sisters was approved on the day of the Incarnation, 25 March, and those of the Friars on 19 September of the same year¹⁰⁴.

CHAPTER XXXV

Jesuit Interference in the St. Rita Reform School

155 As the Lord had granted me such great satisfaction and joy, some kind of tribulation must follow in keeping with the ordinary providence of the Lord. And that, in fact, is what happened at the end of 1902 in the course of some Exercises being given to my friars in the house of St. Rita in Madrid. A member of another order (the same order, by the way, as the one who proposed the transformation of our Congregation to my friars in Torrent) also tried to persuade them of the advisability of changing jurisdiction and renovating the Habit and the Constitutions for the greater progress of the Congregation¹⁰⁵. As on the previous occasion, the Lord wanted my friars to not allow themselves be seduced by the reasons presented to them by this Father¹⁰⁶, who, no matter how good the purpose or intention he might have had, was only supporting, without understanding it, the cunning plans of the enemy to destroy the Congregation.

156 But I was ignorant of all that, since it took place behind my back, and I did not know until afterwards when I was told by one of the friars with the greatest

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Decretum n. 4878/15 and 5274c/15, respectively.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. 1732-1736.

¹⁰⁶ This undoubtedly refers to Father José Manuel Aicardo, S.J. Father Tomás Roca, C.T. in his *History of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars* dedicated four pages to this illustrious Jesuit Father and concludes with the following judicious criticism: "But while the two groups of Exercises took place, Father Aicardo could easily grasp the atmosphere of uncertainty that existed among the teachers from the order. It is not surprising, then – and by this I am not attempting to justify the intervention of Father Aicardo; we are limiting ourselves to doing a historical review –, that the Jesuit father might try with the best of intentions to solve this anomalous situation by sounding out the friars with a view to securing the life of an institution that in his opinion could improve its educational methods and consequently its results.

The Founder Father never ceased to assume a certain good intention in Father Aicardo, and the Jesuit, we have confirmed, had his sights set too high for us to attribute twisted aims to his intervention" (cf. ROCA, Tomás: *Historia de la Congregación de Religiosos Terciarios Capuchinos*. Imp. Lersi, S.L. Torrente [Valencia], 1968, Vol. I, pp. 270-274).

love for his mother, the Congregation¹⁰⁷, who showed the greatest courage among them as he opposed and took a stand against this terrible proposal which certainly would have been the death of the Congregation for opposing the designs of God¹⁰⁸. This made me recognize even more clearly to be a work of God, since he watched over us with such concern and freed us from all the ambushes the enemy was preparing to destroy it. May He be blessed forever!

CHAPTER XXXVI

Father Luis on a Pilgrimage to Rome

157 I inadvertently overlooked recording the following in its proper place: As I was the Provincial Minister, on the occasion of a Jubilee the Pope Leo XIII was giving to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of his Papacy¹⁰⁹, I went to Rome with the Provincial Minister of Catalonia, Father Javier of Arenys, in a pilgrimage organized by the Third Order of Father St. Francis. Cardinal Vives¹¹⁰, for the affection he held for Father Javier and I, honored us by providing us with lodging in his own rooms, and for that reason we were favored in all acts of the pilgrimage. We were also part of the group of one hundred chosen from among all the pilgrims to attend the Papal Audiences, since the doctors would not agree to let the Pope welcome the entire pilgrimage, fearing that some accident might befall him due to his advanced age.

¹⁰⁷ This refers to Father Javier María of Valencia who, over time, would become the General Superior of the Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars and one of the most steadfast pillars of the Institution (cf. *ibidem*, p. 270).

¹⁰⁸ It seems, therefore, beyond doubt that the intervention of Father Aicardo was a unique and exclusively personal initiative of the Jesuit priest. Father Edmond Lamalle, Director and General Archivist of the Jesuits, confirms this point when, after being asked about the incident and then making a detailed study of the case, he came to the following conclusion: "In the case of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars, the lack of documentary references makes one think that they were solely initiatives or verbal indiscretions by one (or a few) Jesuits without any mandate and a bit greedy. And as the question refers to the name of Father Aicardo, whose character fits that description to some degree, I reviewed all the correspondence referring to him, without finding anything" (cf. Archivo Father Vicepostulador. Letter from Father Edmond Lamalle, S.J., 23/12/1978, c/ 177/78).

As for other Jesuit Fathers called on to reform some Order or Congregation—and there have been several—they have never felt inclined to absorb them "because the Society of Jesuits does not have a Third Order, nor dependent or affiliated Congregations. This would be an absolute novelty, and that much more implausible when dealing with a Congregation at the head of a religious tradition significantly different from our own and in full force, the Franciscan-Capuchin line" (cf. *ibidem*).

¹⁰⁹ This journey to Rome was for the International Congress of Third Orders during the solemn acts of the Holy Year of 1900, not on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the papacy of Leo XIII, which occurred in 1898. The audience took place on 27 September 1900.

¹¹⁰ Cardinal Vives y Tutó is the Capuchin Father José Calasanz of Llevaneras. For more information, cf. BARCELONA, Father Antonio of: *El Cardinal Vives y Tutó*. Imp. N. Porcell. Igualada [Barcelona], 1916.

158 The Pope was seated on his throne at the audience, with the Cardinals Gotti and Vives at his side. The latter was introducing all the pilgrims, indicating to His Holiness who each one was and where he was from. After all of us had kissed the hand and ring of the Pope, he deigned to speak to us and we heard from his lips the greatest eulogy that could ever be made to Cardinal Vives, saying, more or less these words: Throughout time, the Lord has sent great men to the world in accordance with the need of each period; in the 13th century He sent St. Francis, who also gloried in being His child, as he received the Habit of the Third Order and took the vows in Assisi. In the present, he continued saying, He sent us Cardinal Vives to represent Father St. Francis. On hearing these words, the Cardinal blushed and said to the Pope: "Holy Father, I am nothing more than a poor sinner"; to which the Pontiff replied: "Yes, Cardinal, yes; but the Saints also said that".

159 Such a great and authorized eulogy only confirmed the opinion I always had of our beloved Cardinal Vives. On returning to the house, full of enthusiasm, I reverently kissed his ring and with his permission embraced him.

Who knows (if God so wills it) if this notice may serve some day in the process I hope they have to open to deal with his beatification!¹¹¹.

CHAPTER XXXVII

Father Luis, Troubled by the Temptations of Arrogance

160 With the year now completed in which, according to the Constitutions, I should not hold any position after the three-year term as Provincial Minister, I was appointed Vicar of the convent of the Magdalene in the meeting held by the Defining Council on 14 January 1903. I had to accept the position and carried out that duty until the end of the three-year period in December of 1904.

161 During this time, I found myself troubled by the enemy with the temptation of arrogance; he wanted to make me see that I would be elevated to a higher dignity; such thoughts mortified me greatly and I rejected them as sins against humility. And it happened one day, to my even greater mortification, that while passing along a corridor an elderly Father, Antonio of Orihuela¹¹², was coming in the other direction and on seeing me, he stopped and moved up against the wall. I had to tell him: "Father, you always are one to play jokes"; and he replied: "No, Father, no; it is that I see something very great in you". He said nothing more to me, but it was sufficient to increase my confusion and humiliation since I was well

¹¹¹ Cf. 1795.

¹¹² It should be noted that Father Antonio of Orihuela died in the convent of St. Mary Magdalene on 15/8/1895, so this indisputably cannot be that particular Father but rather another member of the order in a Community that was quite numerous (cf. VALENCIA, Father Eugenio of: *Necrologio de los Frailes Menores Capuchinos*. Ed. Semana Gráfica, S.A. Valencia, 1947, p. 263, n. 2007)

familiar, thanks to God, with my great wretchedness and shortcomings, which made me incapable and unworthy of any distinction and honor; so I saw in all this a ruse of the enemy to disturb me.

162 On 5 January 1904, the aged Josefa Giménez Sién died in Valencia, whom I directed since I was the Guardian of the convent of Ollería and whose charity and zeal I have previously mentioned. This woman had such a great interest in supporting and helping me in my projects and businesses for the glory of God that many times she told me, even in Ollería: “Father, as I have no one in this world, I want to leave the little I possess to you for your needs and works for God”. I answered her on those occasions by saying: “Don’t do that, madam, since I cannot possess or need anything, thanks to God”. And she said to me: “You may not need anything now, but there shall come a time when you will have great needs, and I want you to have something at your disposal for them”. However, ignoring my refusals and without my being aware of it, this lady made her will, named my brother-in-law Salvador Escorihuela Renau and my sister Emilia Amigó Ferrer as executors and, even though she recorded in her will that, for not having any compulsory heir apparent, she was naming her soul as her heir. She told her executors of record that her wish was that, after the Masses she wanted to be celebrated for her soul, that her remaining assets be saved so they could be used to attend to my needs, “since you shall see (she said in secret to my sister) that the Father will be made a Bishop and then he shall need them”. My sister did not tell me this until after my Consecration as a bishop, thus seeing the prediction of Josefa fulfilled.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

The Capuchine Tertiary Sisters, to the Mission of La Guajira

163 In December of 1904, the three-year period for which I was appointed Vicar of the convent of the Magdalene was completed and on 15 December, the Provincial Chapter met for the election of the High Superiors. I was again chosen Provincial Definitor and when the new Defining Council met on the next two days, the 16th and 17th, I was appointed Guardian of the convent of Orihuela¹¹³.

164 The friars of the La Guajira Mission were requesting with great insistence that our Capuchin Tertiary Sisters should go to the Mission to share with them the tasks more appropriate for women, such as the instruction and education of young girls. They became even more insistent as they were proposing to found orphanages, and the sisters were needed to take charge of the young girls, the meals and cleaning, and making and mending of clothes.

¹¹³ The Provincial Defining Council was made up as follows: Provincial Minister: Father Laureano of Massamagrell; Definitors: Father Querubin of Carcaixent, Father Casimiro of Alzira, Father Luis of Massamagrell and Father Lucas of Benissa; Guardians: Father Fidel of Alzira and Father Melchor of Benissa.

165 The Superiors of the Order and the Mother Superiors of the Congregation of the sisters reached an agreement and it was decided to send five Sisters, Mother Isabel of Benissa as Commissioner; Mother Visitación of Manises, Sister Clara of Beniarjó, Sister Purificación of Navarrés and Sister Elena of Barranquilla. They left the Mother House for the Americas on 5 February 1905.

I wanted to record the name of these sisters for being the first woman missionaries who went out from the Congregation.

CHAPTER XXXIX

Father Luis Proposed for Vicar of the Mission

166 For some time, the Superiors had desired and were working to secure the elevation of the Mission of La Guajira to an Apostolic Vicariate, a project that was viewed favorably by the Government and ecclesiastical authorities of the republic of Colombia and in 1905 it was approved to the satisfaction of everyone.

167 In order to designate the person to place in this position the Reverend General Minister requested that the Fathers, from the Province and well as the Mission, send him a sealed short list of those who, in their judgment, could be chosen. I was one of those proposed in one of them, along with Father Antonio of Valencia and Atansio of Manises (according to what was said publicly) and it even appears there was a strong effort that I would be the designated one. My Third Order friars and sisters, who had already felt the difficulty of coming to me with their needs when I moved to Orihuela, were greatly saddened when they found out about it, and I suspect they must have gone to Cardinal Vives and the Nuncio Ritalin, who loved them greatly in order to prevent my selection¹⁴. The position fell to Father Atansio, for good reason as he was younger and already acclimated to those countries and more suited to it. His appointment was made on 31 July of 1905, even though it was not then Episcopal in nature; but on 31 December of the following year he was proclaimed the incumbent Bishop of Citation. May thanks be given to the Lord for everything!

168 I am concluding here the account of the second period of my religious life, since the events that came to pass later would change it completely.

May infinite thanks be given to the Lord for His compassion towards me because, in spite of my infidelities, sins and ingratitude, He always fulfilled me with blessings and graces. May all his creatures give praise unto Him!

¹⁴ Father Mariano Ramo, C.T., confirms that suspicion was well-founded in these words: "After hearing the rumors going around about the designation of their Founder for the Apostolic Vicariate of the Mission of La Guajira, and thinking of the difficulty this would involve in communicating with him, the Capuchin Tertiary Friars and Sisters went to Cardinal Vives and the distinguished Nuncio in Spain, Rinaldini, who valued them greatly, in order to prevent the selection" (cf. RAMO, Mariano: *Mensaje de Amor y de Redención*. Ed. Doménech. Valencia, 1973, Vol. I, p. 325).

PART IV: THE BISHOP

CHAPTER I

Proposed for Apostolic Administrator of Solsona

169 I continued to peacefully carry out my duties as the Guardian of the convent of Orihuela when on 21 March 1907, the eve of the holy day of Our Lady of Sorrows, I received a certified letter sealed with the seal of the Nunciature in the night mail (the members of the Community were in the recreation area); being unaccustomed to received letters of that nature, I feared it was about an unpleasant matter. I opened it and how greatly surprised I was to see that the distinguished Nuncio was telling me: "I have propose you to His Holiness and the King, and you have been accepted for the Apostolic Administration of Solsona¹¹⁵ and you will be appointed the incumbent Bishop. I expect you to answer me with your acceptance without delay". The impact of this news on my mood was so great that the friars knew that something extraordinary had occurred from my countenance, as the Vicar Father told me when I had to give vent to my emotions and ask his opinion after the recreation time was over. I feared they might have sent me the letter by accident, and I trusted him to keep the news in the strictest confidence¹¹⁶.

170 The next morning, I went to the parish church of Santiago, where I had a commitment to say Mass in the celebration of the Brotherhood of the Sorrows; and, once the Mass was over and I was eating breaking in the house of the priest,

¹¹⁵ Solsona was a fortress city in Lleida province of great importance during the long centuries of the Middle Ages, and even almost up to start of the 20th century. In the 19th century it was the focus of intense battles during the war of Independence (1808) and the first Carlist war. It was so devastated by the fighting that it was reduced to seventy houses by 1837 and only eight or ten of those buildings were completely unscathed.

A 1910 census listed 2,481 inhabitants and in 1920 there were 2,687 residents. Presently it barely doubles those figures and has the appearance of a medieval city. The site of an episcopal see since 1593, it is a subordinate diocese of the Tarragona diocese and encompasses the northwestern part of Barcelona province and the eastern central region of Lleida province, as well as a parish of Girona province. It occupied a surface area of 4,000 square kilometers in 1926 with 118,000 inhabitants, 150 parish churches, 13 convents for men and 35 for women.

From 1851 to 1895, the diocese was administered by the Bishop of Vic and Catalan is the mother language. (cf. *Diccionario Espasa*. Imp. Hijos de J. Espasa, Editors. Madrid 1928, Vol. LVII, p. 206ss).

¹¹⁶ Father Luis Amigo undoubtedly knew nothing about his potential appointment as bishop, since the initially Father José María of Sedaví was proposed. Only after Father José declined the position, as well as the intervention of Father Domingo of Alboraya before the then-president of the Council of Ministers and the Nuncio turned the appointment in favor of Father Luis. Father Serafín María of Ayelo, who accompanied Father Domingo María of Alboraya on both visits, confirms this point (cf. DIP, Session 9, ad 66, and 1753).

the doorman of the convent entered completely embarrassed. Breaking down in tears, he told me to go home right away, because there were people waiting for me. I thought the Father Vicar had been unable to keep the secret and people had found out about it. But that was not the case, for the distinguished Nuncio had also written the most reverend General Father of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars, Brother José María of Sedaví, informing him of the news at the same time he wrote me, designating him to come to Orihuela immediately to force me to accept, although, on the contrary, the Holy Father would command me to accept through obedience.

171 Without delay, the General Father took the train in order to arrive at Orihuela in the early morning hours and went directly to the convent where it struck him how everything was so peaceful and silent. Asking for me, he said to the doorman: "Tell me, how can this convent be so lifeless for such a great event?" The doorman replied: "But, Father, what is happening?" Now even more surprised, the Father told him: "Don't you know your Guardian Father has been named Bishop?" After hearing that, the Brother, beside himself with happiness, went running off to find me at the Parish church. When I left the priest's home, I already heard the bells of the convent ringing and when I arrived, I found all the friars excited and not really knowing how to express their satisfaction and joy for me. The happiness in the town itself was just as strong, especially in our district of Capuchins, who immediately hung tapestries on the balconies and did a musical procession through the streets in my honor and later gave me a serenade that night.

172 In the midst of so much rejoicing and happiness, a feeling of such fear, confusion and stupefaction seized me that I cannot explain it with words; what I can say is I spent many days without being able to get to sleep or having any appetite, to the degree that the doctor had to tell me: "Do something to calm yourself down and take heart, because if you don't, you won't make it to be consecrated".

CHAPTER II

Preparations for Consecration as Bishop

173 Many people and committees came to congratulate me, among them Pedro Soto, one of the most distinguished gentlemen of Orihuela, who valued me greatly and was one of the great benefactors of the convent. After he congratulated me, this gentleman said to me: "Father, you will have many needs now and I want to help you. What do you need most urgently?" After thanking him for his offer, I replied: "I shall certainly need many things but I believe the most urgent one is the payment of the Bulls required for my Consecration, for if I have to pay for them since my Diocese is not of this nation, but rather held *in partibus* (non-Christian lands), you already know that I have no resources for this". "Well, don't trouble yourself over that," said Pedro Soto, "this will be at my expense. I will write to Rome to send the bulls and put them on my account". I was extremely grateful for his

kindness, and I have never forgotten nor shall ever forget him in my poor prayers and the bidding prayer of the Holy Mass, so that the Lord may fully reward his charity.

174 To see and speak with me after receiving my agreement, the distinguished Nuncio arranged that I go to Madrid, taking advantage of the festival of St. Joseph the section of Older Pupils were celebrating at St. Rita on the second day of Easter. In compliance with his order, I arrived on the morning of the festival and found the distinguished Nuncio waiting for me there. After greeting him and kissing his ring, I said to him: "But sir, why has Your Excellency decided to raise me to such a high position?" He replied: "I have committed a sin, then? Well, look here, I am not regretting it". Later, he indicated that he wanted to consecrate me himself, which I was very grateful for, and indicated that was also my desire, but that perhaps I would never have dared to ask for so much.

175 I had to return to Orihuela right away to make my final arrangements there and turn over the Guardianship, for the purpose of going to Valencia as soon as possible to make the preparations for my consecration.

176 My Third Order friars, whose satisfaction and joy over the event knew no limits, put two members of the order at my service from the very start, to accompany and assist me in everything, and they had come from Madrid to Orihuela and Valencia with me.

177 The experience of going away from Orihuela, leaving the convent and the Order behind, made a tremendous impression on me and upset me greatly. During the trip one of the friars, Father Ignacio of Torrent, asked me if I knew what day it was, and I replied that I did not remember the month or day of the week it was. He then said to me: "Well, Reverend Father, just so you know, it is 12 April, the date on which you took the Holy habit in Bayonne thirty three years ago". This reminder made me admire the great designs of the Divine Providence, which arranged that I should receive the news of my appointment as bishop on the holy day of Our Lady of Sorrows and that I leave the convent on the same day I entered the Order, thirty three years after wearing the Holy habit for the first time. May all His creatures bless the Lord for His infinite mercies!

178 As neither the poverty of my Order, nor that of my Capuchin Tertiary friars and sisters, nor the economic situation of my family, would allow them to be able to defray the substantial expense I had to make to acquire the pectoral cross and ring, clothing, books and other necessary items, and remembering what Josefa Giménez Sién had said to me several times, I saw it was necessary (in spite of having received some gifts) to approach my brother-in-law and sister, the executors of her estate, so that they might give me what I required in that situation, in accordance with the instructions they had from her. I received it as alms from the deceased woman, with the desire and intention of later investing everything I might receive from her to support the construction of a church I was then planning in the Asylum of Massamagrell. By the mercy of God, the church is now built and this lady has her

final resting place inside it, together with my parents, as a great benefactor of the project.

179 On this occasion I told my sister what Josefa Giménez had said, that is: that once the Masses she requested were said, she wanted what remained of her assets to be saved, because they would appoint me Bishop and then I would need everything I could. Blessed be the Lord, for having attended to the needs I would have with such anticipation and reward Josefa for her charity with an abounding glory!

CHAPTER III

Consecration of Father Luis as Bishop

180 With all the arrangements in Valencia completed, I went away to Madrid at the end of May to deal with the distinguished Nuncio and arrange the details regarding my Consecration to his convenience.

The Nuncio favored having the Consecration in the chapel of St. Rita; but understanding that the small size of the chapel made that impossible, he agreed that the site for it would be the chapel of the Asylum for the Disabled in Vista-Alegre. And with respect to the date, it was set for 9 June, the third Sunday after Pentecost, when the Diocese of Madrid was holding the festival of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

181 My friars at St. Rita had already spoken to His Excellency Antonio Maura so that either he or his son Gabriel would sponsor me at my Consecration. I was very pleased that Gabriel agreed to be my sponsor, who gave me the ring to consecrate me as a gift and gave presents to all those invited to the act once it was finished. For my part, I invited to serve as assistant bishops in the Madrid ceremony his Excellency José María Salvador Barrera of Madrid and his Excellency Juan Belloch of Urgel, whom I was going to replace at Solsona, and they honored me with their acceptance.

182 When the day came, I had the pleasure of seeing myself accompanied in this solemn act by many members of various Orders, particularly my Brothers of my own Province and others, all of them Superiors; more than a few of my children from the Capuchin Tertiary Fathers and Sisters, especially the Superiors and General Councilors of both Congregations; my brothers and in-laws and some of my nephews and nieces, and a large audience of friends and acquaintances. I was extremely grateful to all of them for their display of affection and charity.

At midday, my friars of St. Rita presented the Prelates and guests with a great banquet as the complement to the festival, and everyone was extremely pleased. Blessed be the Lord for everything!

183 After my consecration, I stayed in Madrid for three days to visit the royal family, authorities and committed people; then leaving for Orihuela where I had

a commitment to officiate the Pontifical mass the next Sunday at the festival of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The reception I received from the people there was both extremely affectionate and very solemn.

184 As a gesture of affection and gratitude towards Bishop Juan Maura, as it had been several years since I had been confirmed due to being in delicate health, I wanted to be confirmed with his consent in the church of Montserrat, where more than one thousand people had been confirmed. But the day before this Confirmation, I was to administer this same sacrament in the convent of the Salesians to a sister of that Community and a Franciscan friar who had to be ordained. To begin exercising this ministry with a friar and a sister was very meaningful and comforting to me. Blessed be God for everything!

CHAPTER IV

Taking Possession and Entry in Solsona

185 During the delay before being able to go take possessions of my See, I was able to please the Communities and villages of Ollería, Torrent and Massamagrell, as all of them displayed great determination in seeing me and that I might confirm and pontificate in events that had been arranged for that purpose.

186 When I entered the parish church in Massamagrell, the mayor presented me with a staff, a gift from the village and my brothers in the Orders; a token of affection for which I was very grateful.

187 With everything now arranged, and having taken possession of the See, the Apostolic Administration of Solsona, through the Dean of that council, I left to make my entry into that town on 4 August, the holy day of Father St. Dominic, resulting in an impressive and very solemn act.

CHAPTER V

Actions Carried Out by Monsignor Luis Amigó in 1908-1909

188 The following year of 1908, I proposed to consecrate the parish church of Massamagrell in which I was baptized. I would also liked to have been consecrated there, but as it was not possible for fear of the distinguished Nuncio passing through Valencia, which during that time was very unstable from the continuous bloody battles in the streets between the republican followers of the Blasco Ibáñez and Soriano factions. Therefore I expressed my wishes to the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of the town, who received the idea with great pleasure; as proof of that, the City Council wanted to give me tokens of gratitude and in the session of 28 April 1908, they agreed to name me a favorite son of Massamagrell and dedicate a

street in my name. With this approval and the consent of the Prelate of the Diocese, I had the great satisfaction of consecrating that parish church on 1 May 1908, the holy day of the Holy Apostles St. Philip and St. John. *Laus Deo!*

189 1909 was also a year of great satisfactions for me, since on 1 May I was able to put into effect the arrangement of the parish, which my predecessor, his Excellency Juan Benlloch approved but was unable to put into practice. I also had the comfort of filling the positions in all the vacant parish churches through a selection process and apparently to the satisfaction of everyone, never an easy thing to do. Thanks to God!

190 I was able to attend in Rome, with other Prelates from Catalonia, the very impressive and solemn ceremony of the canonization of St. Joseph Oriol, which took place on 20 May of that year. For that reason, we were authorized to make the *Ad Limina* visit and due to that object, I had the honor and great fortune of being received in an individual audience by the Supreme Pontiff.¹¹⁷

CHAPTER VI

Father Javier María of Valencia

191 On this occasion, as advised by Cardinal Vives, after I informed the Holy Father of the state of the Diocese, I asked him about my steward, Father Javier of Valencia. Since he had been approved years before in philosophy, I asked whether I could ordain him with just two years of Moral Theology and a review of Latin, in view of his great talents and at his age. Having heard my proposal, and as he undoubtedly must have been provided with details on the subject by Cardinal Vives and was aware that I was going to bring it up, the Holy Pontiff answered: "Do whatever you want; I leave it to your conscience." After leaving the audience, I mentioned to Cardinal Vives what the Pope had said and he told me: "So now you have the permission granted. There is nothing more to do than to record in the Dimissory when you may ordain him and the dispensation from higher studies, which the Pope conceded it by means of V.I."

192 There still remained the question of the Novitiate, which he had to do again to pass to the status of priest; and the Cardinal even arranged for him to do that at my side in Solsona so that he would not leave my service. The General appointed a Father who was his Teacher of Novices and the Reverend Father Juan of Ayelo came for that purpose.

193 The grace which the Supreme Pontiff Pius X granted to Father Javier was of great use to the Congregation, since until then he had provided great services as an attorney in the St. Rita Reform School, a position he held from its foundation until he came with me as steward after the Presbyter. And whenever the Congregation

¹¹⁷ Cf. 1760, 2126, 2129.

needed to entrust him with some position, he discharged his duties so much to their satisfaction that he was selected as the General of the Congregation. He was even re-elected for a second six-year term during which it pleased the Lord to take him from this world (R.I.P.).

CHAPTER VII

Other Actions as Apostolic Administrator of Solsona

194 As part of my interest in preserving the historical and artistic artifacts of the Diocese, I organized a Museum of the Diocese, appointed a priest to be in charge of it, and did some necessary works in the Palace for that purpose. We could collect only a few objects in my time there, however, for the lack of resources to repay in some way the parish churches where the artifacts were taken from, and also because during the time the Diocese was under the administration of the Bishop of Vic, he acquired as many as objects from these parishes as possible for their Museum¹¹⁸.

195 In spite of this, and without publicizing it since it deal with something still in its beginning stages and therefore unimportant, the Tourist Center of Lleida and the Artistic-Archaeological Association of Barcelona found about it. The former, on 18 February 1910, and the latter, on 6 March of that year, sent to my attention official letters of congratulation for the restoration and preservation of the artistic monuments of the Diocese and establishing the Archaeological Museum of the Diocese.

196 Also understanding that having the Seminary students divided between two buildings (and there were not that many of them) was a disadvantage to the unity of their instruction, not to mention economically; and since the new Seminary was healthier, better ventilated and capable of housing all the students, I decided to bring them all together there and established a parish school in the old building, previously a convent of Dominican Fathers¹¹⁹.

197 Some time later, the Divine Providence wanted the Dominican Fathers who, having been divided into two Provinces needed a convent for the province of Valencia, knew that the convent their Order had in the city of Valencia was unoccupied to ask me to establish an Evangelical or Postulant school of their Order in it. I believed it was only right to grant their request and I did so, with the condition that they continue running the Parish School.

198 During my stay in Solsona as Apostolic Administrator, following the church of Massamagrell I mentioned before, I consecrated an altar in the church of the convent of Capuchins in Igualada: the church of the Colony of Luis Pons

¹¹⁸ Cf. 2155-2157.

¹¹⁹ Cf. 2106-2110.

in Puig-reig on 25 September 1912 and the church of Our Lady of Pompeii of the Capuchin Friars, on the Diagonal in Barcelona.

CHAPTER VIII

Transfer of Monsignor Luis Amigó to Segorbe

199 In the middle of 1913, I was invited and my acceptance requested for transferring me to the Diocese of Segorbe, a position left vacant by the death of Bishop Masanet.

As my episcopal family were all natives of the Valencia region and uncomfortable being so far removed from their native land, and the members of both my Congregations wished for and were still trying to bring me closer to their Houses, in spite of being content in Solsona, I accepted the proposal¹²⁰. And, presented for this See, I was pronounced Bishop of Segorbe¹²¹ on 18 July 1913.

200 I still extended my stay in Solsona until November while the Papal Bulls were issued and the distinguished Nuncio arranged the form the government of that Diocese should take. After receiving the Bulls, and the distinguished Nuncio ordered that the Vicar of the Chapter Council be appointed, I turned over everything to him and left on 6 November for Valencia with the aim of making the necessary preparations for my entry into Segorbe.

¹²⁰ Father Luis Amigó always felt indifferent about his possible transfer to the diocese of Segorbe (cf. 1787).

His relative Brother Serafín María of Ayelo also confirms this point by saying: "I know the Servant of God was indifferent so that the Superiors would decide. The Capuchin Tertiary Friars were the ones, along with Navarro Reverter Gomis, who supported, pushed for and secured the transfer. The Servant of God always told me it was in the hands of his Superiors". (cf. DIP, Session 10, ad 88).

¹²¹ Segorbe is a city in Castellón province, located in the lowlands of Palancia 54 kilometers from the city of Valencia on the Sagunto-Burgos road. Segóbrica was a very ancient pre-Roman city. From the year 22 A.D. on, it was minting small and medium-sized bronze coins to Tiberius. It preserved its importance in the Gothic period with its prosperous diocese headquarters, under the jurisdiction of the Toledo diocese, and almost apostolic in origin.

The city of Segorbe, according to the 1910 census, had 7,321 inhabitants but only reached 6,748 residents in the 1920 census, with the diocese showing a census of 90,000 souls on the latter date. The current population of the city has hardly varied, with some 7,540 residents living there now.

In the diocese, the first bishop known for certain was Prócuro, prior to 589, even though he undoubtedly was not the first name in the list of Bishops of Segorbe. From 1245 until 1571, the diocese was united to the diocese of Albarracín, and separated from it as of the latter date.

Presently the diocese, in accordance with the last re-structuring in 1957, is known as Segorbe-Castellón. It occupies the majority of this civil province and its bishop resides primarily in the city of Castellón.

The state of the diocese, according to 1966 figures, is as follows: territorial area, 4,643 square kilometers; population, 285,000 inhabitants. Active priests, 164; Houses of Religious Orders, 54 (cf. *Diccionario Espasa*. Imp. H. de J. Espasa, Editors. Madrid, Vol. LIV, p. 1459ss, and LLORENS, Father Luis: *Episcopologio de la Diócesis de Segorbe-Castellón*. Ed. C.S.I.C. Madrid, 1973.

201 The taking possession of the Diocese of Segorbe was on 13 November by the representative, who was the illustrious archpriest of the Chapter, as the Dean had died a few days before.

I made my entry in Segorbe on the 30th of that month, the day of the Apostle St. Andrew, and the act turned out to be so solemn that, according to the testimony of the distinguished gentleman Gonzalo Valero, attending his seventh entry of Bishops, who said that he had never seen such a great turnout of people nor greater solemnity in the ceremony. May God be blessed!

CHAPTER IX

Three Major Works in Segorbe

202 I planned to do three things primarily on taking charge of this Diocese, namely: the plastering with stucco and gilding of the Cathedral, as its walls were blackish from neglect; the acquisition of the church of the former convent of St. Dominic, converted into an inn and stables, to return it to worship, and make the Sanctuary of the Holy Cave the responsibility of a Religious Community for the greater worship of the Holy Virgin. All these things were extremely difficult and a near-miracle was needed to carry out some of them¹²², but the Divine Providence wanted to grant me the grace of seeing all of them accomplished, as I will relate below. May the Lord be blessed and praised for everything!

CHAPTER X

Pilgrimage to Rome with Spanish Teachers

203 Shortly after taking possession of Segorbe, his Excellency the Archbishop of Valencia, my Metropolitan superior Victoriano Guisasola, called me and asked me if I could preside over the first pilgrimage of Spanish teachers to Rome departing from Valencia. He asked me as a favor and with great interest that I represent him in leading the pilgrimage, since having been appointed Cardinal just a few days before and thus having to go to Rome shortly for that reason, he felt he should not go on this occasion. I tried to excuse myself the best I could, offers several reasons to him, among them my unfitness to represent him and being the newest of his subordinate bishops: but he paid no attention to any of them and, albeit with great loathing, I had to please him by acceding to his wishes. So I left with the pilgrimage heading to Rome a few days before Christmas of 1912 to pass the Christmas holidays in the Eternal City. On the day set by the Holy Father, I had to make the

¹²² Cf. 231.

introductions of the pilgrimage to His Holiness, an impressive act in which I cannot explain what I suffered internally¹²³. The Supreme Pontiff then spoke to us, grateful for the demonstrations of religious spirit and veneration towards the Holy See by the Spanish teachers, and he bid us farewell full of blessings and graces, extending to the Royal Family, the Archbishop and our respective families. So we returned from Rome greatly pleased and fully satisfied¹²⁴.

CHAPTER XI

Actions of Monsignor Luis Amigó in 1914

204 In April 1914, with the advent of a new legislature, there were elections for senators, and I was chosen to represent this Ecclesiastical Province, taking possession of the position on the 23rd of that month.

205 Signed on 10 August of 1913, I gave the Seminary some modifications to its Constitutions, based on the older ones but introducing some variations in them that I considered not only advisable but necessary for the Order and its forward progress¹²⁵.

206 On 22 September 1914, I also had the great satisfaction of being able to inaugurate the church of my Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of Altura, a work which had already been started on my arrival in Segorbe, but was stopped for lack of resources and had to be completed at my own expense. May thanks be given to the Lord!

207 Although it inadvertently upsets the chronological order of the dates, I want to record here that on 12 April 1914, at the request of the authorities and village of Altura, I brought the Virgin of the Holy Cave down myself in rogation to beg for the benefit of rain from the Virgin, which the land desperately needed. And something admirable and touching happened in that, without any sign of rain that morning since the sky was very peaceful, some clouds appeared as we started our descent down the slope to Ribas that very quickly grew larger and larger. By the time we were halfway down the hill, it had already begun to rain. The enthusiasm of the townspeople at that moment was indescribable; every one of us was crying with joy and even among the cheers and applause of the faithful, the music of the Royal

¹²³ Cf. 2448.

¹²⁴ The pilgrimage, according to the visual evidence recorded in St. Peter's Square, was made up of close to four hundred teachers. And while the audience was being celebrated on 26 December 1913, the Servant of God delivered to the Holy Father an album with the signatures of support from another 13,000 teachers. (cf. RAMO, Mariano: *Mensaje de Amor y de Redención*. Ed. J. Doménech. Valencia 1977, Vol. II, pp. 117-119).

¹²⁵ The great interest in the intellectual, religious and moral education of the members of his orders and seminary students was a constant in Luis Amigó. For the education of the former, apart from the wise structuring of studies printed in the Constitutions, he left numerous well-directed orders on the Holy Visit. His interest for the seminary student can be seen in the modification he carried out in the Seminary on 17/9/1907 and 2/8/1919 (cf. 2106-2110, 2195-2197, and 1968-2104).

March could be heard; and that was the way, raining and with everyone getting wet but with great pleasure, the Virgin entered Altura. May She be blessed forever!

CHAPTER XII

The Remains of Brother Bonifacio Ferrer

208 In the month of June 1915 I made the official visit to the parish church of Altura, and found out that the venerated remains of Brother Bonifacio Ferrer, the brother of St. Vincent, were guarded in the Archive of the parish church. Since I was told nothing about them, I asked the Priest to show me the coffin which contained them so he went up with us to the Archive in the Town Hall. Because the closet where those remains were guarded was open, and the coffin open to view, I declared to the authorities that it was not acceptable to preserve the remains of such an eminent man of science and virtue that way and that I did not want discover them breaking the seals that my predecessor Bishop Aguilar had put there. In my opinion, and I thought of recording it in the minutes of the visit that way, the remains should be placed in the Church with a commemorative stone plaque, or even better, brought to the Holy Cave, given that according to the tradition, it was Brother Bonifacio who made the sacred image and delivered it to the shepherd of the Carthusian monastery so that it might be venerated in the Cave.

209 The idea was well received by everyone and of course I indicated to them a subscription campaign would be announced in the Official Bulletin, which I would lead, to see if it was possible to collect enough resources to be able to build a fine mausoleum in the Communion chapel of that sanctuary to guard those venerated remains¹²⁶.

My thinking was to build a life-size statute of Brother Bonifacio Ferrer, in the act of delivering to the Shepherd the image of the Holy Virgin who would receive it kneeling.

The work was very costly and as the subscription campaign did not yield the results I was hoping for, since Valencia did not help us, I had to limit myself to making a sarcophagus of reinforced concrete in the shape of a large chest, placing beneath it a commemorative stone plaque.

210 A few months passed (providentially, no doubt) while the subscription was being collected and the sarcophagus produced, and the transfer of the remains was done on the 100th anniversary of the death of the notable gentleman, on 29 April 1917, as I will relate below¹²⁷.

¹²⁶ Cf. 2185, 2186.

¹²⁷ Later, and during the Spanish Civil War of 1936-1939, the remains of Brother Bonifacio Ferrer were burned in the plaza of the Sanctuary. The Carmelite Fathers, on returning to the Sanctuary in 1939, found the tomb desecrated, broken and empty. In the present day a statue has been raised to the great patrician of Valencia with a magnificent panorama that combines

CHAPTER XIII

Monsignor Luis Amigó, adopted son of Ador

211 On 31 December of 1915, the town of Ador (en Gandia), which honored me so much in their enthusiasm for the works I did as a Capuchin missionary in their parish, wanted to give me a new proof of their appreciation and esteem through their worthy Town Council declaring me an adopted son of the town and naming one of their main streets after me. It was an undeserved and unexpected honor which I was very grateful for, as a sign of reciprocity for the enthusiasm and affection I always professed for that very Catholic town¹²⁸.

CHAPTER XIV

Temple of the Holy Family in Massamagrell

212 It was my very great and longstanding desire to be able to build a temple to the Holy Family in the Asylum of Massamagrell, and I spoke of it many times (even before my Consecration as Bishop) with the then-General Mother Superior Patrocinio of Benissa. It appeared as if I was hoping against all hope, because neither did the Congregation have the resources for, since it lived from begging for alms¹²⁹, nor did I, who had nothing and could have nothing as a poor member of the order; nevertheless we went ahead giving form to our illusions, taking pleasure in outlining our designs and taking measurements of land, as if we might, of course, be able to carry out our plans.

213 And it happened on day that I was shown an illustration of the Holy Family, in which the Child Jesus was embracing the Cross tightly in his arms and the Holy Virgin and St. Joseph were gazing sadly on him; the Virgin, with her heart pierced by seven swords. I was captivated by this illustration and handed it to Mother Patrocinio, saying: "Guard this carefully, because if the Lord wants the church to be built one day, the image of the Holy Family must be like this, because our two Congregations are symbolized in it." All that happened several years before my selection as Bishop, when I could not even imagine that appointment might happen; but the unexpected event of my consecration as bishop revived in me the desire to build the church, and now with the intention of building it (when possible) at my expense.

the view of the ruins of the far-off Carthusian monastery of Vall de Cristo and the buildings of the nearby monastery. (cf. MORRO, Pedro: *Dom Bonifacio Ferrer*. Tip. M. Tenas. Segorbe, 1995. Appendix XI, pp. 141-142).

¹²⁸ Cf. 61, above.

¹²⁹ Cf. 2299.

214 As I said elsewhere¹³⁰, I had to approach my sister and brother-in-law, the executors for Josefa Giménez, to cover the substantial expenses that occurred in connection with my consecration as bishop, so that they might help me (in accordance with the wishes of the deceased) using what she left them to take care of my needs. However, it was always my intention to collect that amount to use later to build the church of the Holy Family, as suffrage for the soul of that devout lady, as I finally did, thank God.

215 When the year 1916 arrived, I thought now I would be able to begin to realize my intention; first I reached an understanding with a member of the Franciscan Order named Brother Maseo, who was very knowledgeable about architecture, to conceive and supervise the work, and then with a master bricklayer from Godella named Rafael Sancho to take charge of executing it. The latter was well-off and agreed to advance the payment of daily wages and material which I would pay off later, little by little; it was the only way to carry out the work, as we lacked the necessary capital for its execution.

216 With everything agreed on and prepared, the date designated for the blessing and laying of the cornerstone of the church was 30 November 1916, the holy day of the Apostle St. Andrew, in commemoration of my entry in Segorbe.

With full solemnity and myself officiating the Pontifical mass, the ceremony was performed, although it appears that the devil was furious and wanted to prevent it. When we were blessing the ground, there was a horrendous downpour of rain, thunder and lightning, and three lightning bolts struck nearby: one hit the lightning rod on the parish church tower, another on the siding of the railroad tracks, and the last one, farther away, on the track itself. However, this inferno could not terrify us and as best we could, holding umbrellas and standing in the mud, we continued the ceremony, leaving the ground blessed and the cornerstone of the church laid, where work began in early December of that year. *Laus Deo!* (Church of Massamagrell, official record).

CHAPTER XV

Transfer of the Remains of Brother Bonifacio Ferrer

217 The sarcophagus for holding the remains of Brother Bonifacio Ferrer was completed in 1917, and I arranged and announced in the official *Bulletin* that the transfer of the venerated remains from the Parish church of Altura to the Holy Cave¹³¹ would take place on 29 April.

Provisionally, this date coincided with the 500th anniversary of the death of this holy and wise friar, and for that reason I wanted to give the greatest solemnity possible to this ceremony.

¹³⁰ Cf. 178, above.

¹³¹ Cf. 2185, 2186.

218 To that end, I prayed to his brother St. Vincent Ferrer that I might reach the Lord so that the towns would respond to my invitation in order that such an eminent man (whose virtues, talents and great works, done for the good of our native land, had not been appreciated for their true value and his memory was going unnoticed), might now begin to be received in the world the honors for so many deserving accomplishments.

And the Lord in his mercy granted me what I asked, for the pilgrimage I organized among the towns of the Diocese for moving the remains was so solemn, orderly, and numerous that a larger crowd had never been seen in the Holy Cave, and it was not expected to be seen again. Glory to God and honor to his servant Brother Bonifacio Ferrer, in the hope that the Lord may reward his merits one day by canonizing him!

219 As for me, I can say and I consider it one of the greatest graces the Lord has given me to be able to contribute to the glorification of his great servant, whose surname I am honored with, being a native of Valencia as he was and having a special fondness for the Carthusian Order, which I asked to enter, but the Lord, through my Director, guided me to my beloved Capuchin Order. Blessed be His mysterious designs!

CHAPTER XVI

The Asylum of Our Lady of the Resurrection of Segorbe

220 The 9th of May 1917 was a day of great satisfaction of and jubilation for my children the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters and the young girls of the Asylum of Our Lady of the Resurrection of Segorbe, because that day I myself blessed and laid the cornerstone of the new church of the Asylum. This work was paid for by the virtuous Gonzalo Valero and his wife Vicenta Valenciano at their own expense, and their parents gave the Congregation the houses for its foundation. For this reason, I tried to obtain permission for both them and their parents to be buried in the church, as an expression of gratitude.

CHAPTER XVII

Restoration of the Cathedral of Segorbe

221 1917 was also a year when the pilgrimage the Ecclesiastical Provinces of Zaragoza often made to our own in Valencia took place and, with both the Metropolitan Bishop and Bishop of Orihuela, I had the great satisfaction of attending this pilgrimage on 18 May. It was very edifying and comforting.

222 That same year I also saw with great satisfaction that the Lord was beginning to grant me one of things I most desired and planned to achieve on my entry in Segorbe, the restoration of the Church-Cathedral.

The Lord moved the hearts of Gonzalo Valero and Vicenta Valenciano, very devout and wealthy residents of Segorbe who offered to the Council to pay half the cost of the daily wages and materials for the work; the project was to coat the walls with stucco and gild the Church-Cathedral. Of course, the Council accepted the offer with great gratitude and, although it involved a great sacrifice for the Council, they did not concern themselves with that and began the work immediately in order not lose such a spontaneous and generous alms. This work lasted for some six years. *Laus Deo!*

CHAPTER XVIII

Blessing of the Church of the Asylum of Segorbe

223 The work on the Asylum of Our Lady of the Resurrection of Segorbe which, as I said before, began in May of the previous year, was completed in March of 1918 and I had the great satisfaction of being able to bless the church on the 30th of that month; a ceremony performed with full solemnity, great attendance of the faithful and the rejoicing of its worthy founders Gonzalo Valero and Vicenta Valenciano, whom the Lord shall reward for their great sacrifice and inexhaustible zeal.

CHAPTER XIX

The Church of the Asylum of Massamagrell

224 At the end of 1918, the works on the church of the Asylum of Massamagrell were approaching completion, and judging it to be the correct time to commission the image of the Holy Family that was to be the principal image of the main altar (and for which the most Reverend General Minister of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars had pledged to bear the cost), I asked the General Mother Superior, Sister Patrocinio of Benissa, for the illustration I gave her to keep so it could serve as the model for creating that image. But how great was my surprise and displeasure when the Mother Superior told me she did not have it and believed that I was saving it! I thought, therefore, of commissioning the image and giving the sculptor an idea of what I wished; but when I was planning to do that, the Mother Superior Patrocinio delivered an illustration to me that was either the same one or identical to the one that had been lost. It had been found this way: Sister Encarnación of Torrent was sweeping one of the rooms in the house, saw a printed paper lying in the trash, picked it up from curiosity and, after seeing the front was an illustration of the Holy Family which she liked very much, she brought it to the Mother Superior.

When Mother Patrocinio saw it, she said quite happily and joyfully: "This is exactly the illustration the Bishop was longing for so much". And she gave it to me to serve as the model with great satisfaction.

I wanted to put all this on the record because I will consider it an exceptional case, for it showed the Lord to be pleased by the construction of the statue of the Holy Family in the form that I wished and how, thanks to God, it was carried out. Blessed be the Lord for everything!¹³².

225 Once the works of the church of the Asylum of Massamagrell were completed, in which I built a crypt for the burial of my parents and grandparents, and with all the appropriate licenses in order, on 16 January 1919 I moved the remains of my family members and those of Josefa Giménez Sién, the distinguished benefactor of this work, from the cemetery of Valencia where they were buried in niches to the crypt for reburial. I suffered the emotion of not being able to find the remains of my paternal grandmother, who was buried in the Puçol cemetery, so I placed (once the required time passed) those of my brother Julio, who died in Massamagrell, in the niche in the crypt destined for her.

226 Two days before this transfer, the 18th of January, I consecrated with all solemnity that church and celebrated the first Mass in it, acts which filled my heart with emotion and happiness, for which I offer the thanks due to God.

The next day, praying then for the Holy Family, a solemn Mass was said, with myself officiating the Pontifical, and with that the long-desired church was now inaugurated. *Ad multos annos!*

227 In the *trasagrario* behind the altar of the church, I also built a pantheon where I wish my mortal remains might rest when the Lord decides to take me from this world, so that the members of the Order and the pupils may have me more present in their prayers¹³³.

CHAPTER XX

Organization of the Seminary and Archive in Segorbe

228 In the same year, on 16 June 1919, I was chosen Senator of the Ecclesiastical Province of Valencia for the second time.

229 In spite of the modification introduced into the Constitutions of the Seminary in 1914, at the beginning of my government in this Diocese, I judged it necessary, in view of the new Code of Canon Law, to give the Seminary new Constitutions based on the regulations contained in it. And written they were, and I enacted them on 2 August 1919¹³⁴.

230 It was necessary to undertake another work of great importance and significance in this Diocese, to wit: putting the Diocesan Archive in order. My

¹³² Cf. 213, above.

¹³³ Cf. 2451.

¹³⁴ Cf. 2195-2197.

predecessors had not attempted this colossal task and it had become essential to carry it out, since it was little short of impossible to find a document you might be searching for among the mountains of unordered papers, some of them now half-ruined and others eaten away by moths. To carry out my plan, I used a Priest of the Diocese named Rafael Pérez, who I knew had the skills and a liking for this kind of work; and he began that titanic task on 7 January 1921. In order to stimulate his enthusiasm, I gave him the title of Archivist and Director of the Museum, and also began depositing an annual, although reasonable, pension for him. With time and his diligent work, our Archive reached the point of being admired by all those who visited it. May thanks be given to the Lord!¹³⁵

CHAPTER XXI

The Sanctuary of the Holy Cave

231 I also wanted the Lord, in his mercy, to grant me what I yearned for so much, to be able to give the Holy Cave to a Religious Community. I had no doubt this was a miracle of the Holy Virgin so nothing less than that was required to carry out this work, as anyone familiar with the character of Altura and its claims on the Holy Cave will well understand. I had to fight quite a bit for it but, finally, the townspeople understood they could not value their right to it higher than the right of the Prelate and they had to agree to sign a contract before a Notary recognizing the Prelate as the only Patron of the sanctuary and its grounds, granting to them, as a grace, some privileges on certain days. This document was signed on 13 January 1922.

232 While the papers for this matter was being processed, I looked for a Community that might want to be responsible for the sanctuary and after several attempts and offers to different orders, the Carmelites finally accepted, who still had only a few convents at that time. We stipulated the basis of the agreement with them and they signed on the same date as the contract with the Town Council, that is, 13 January 1922. The Friars took possession of the sanctuary on 3 April of that year¹³⁶.

May God and the Holy Virgin be blessed, who granted me the grace of seeing my desire from the time I entered the Diocese come true!

¹³⁵ The Archive of the Diocese of Segorbe was completely destroyed during the Spanish Civil War of 1936-1939. The same fate befell the Museum, even though its works passed into the hands of individuals and for the most part, and thanks to the Carthusian determination and patience of Romualdo Amigó, a great and very knowledgeable art lover, the works were recovered and returned to the Museum, today a jewel of the city of Segorbe.

¹³⁶ The Carmelite Fathers governed the Sanctuary of the Sacred Cave until a short time ago when it once again passed to the jurisdiction of the Council of Altura. Currently, a family lovingly attends to the cleaning and worship of the Sanctuary.

CHAPTER XXII

Restoration of the Church of St. Mary in Segorbe

233 But that was not the only grace the Lord granted me in the year 1922, because I also wanted to satisfy my constant and much longed-for desire to acquire the church of the ex-convent of St. Dominic, which was converted into an inn and stables and therefore was my continual nightmare.

Fortunately, the owner of that ex-convent then belonged to the Foundation of Valencia, whose governing Board was mainly composed of priests, which made the acquisition of the church easier for me. But the rent that they received from the inn was the main support of that institution, and I did not want to harm it in any way, so I attempted to collect enough resources to buy it from the Foundation. The Divine Providence wanted me achieve my goal, albeit with great sacrifice, and the deed of purchase of the church was granted in my name, as the Prelate of the Diocese, on 1 September 1922. *Laus Deo!*

234 With that step taken, many problems arose, including the secret war the people who rented the rooms in the church waged against me, supported by some of the townspeople who looked at the opening of a new church with evil eyes, which delayed them in vacating their rooms and the delivery of the keys for over a year.

With possession of the church finally taken and trusting in the Divine Providence, I began to tear down the works that had been done to adapt the church to the various uses for which it had been employed. And in early 1924, I undertook the magnum opus of its restoration for returning it to worship, with the idea of moving the parish church of St. Mary of the Cathedral, where for various reasons it was not thriving, into the church.

235 Considering that some people would want to help me in such an important work, I went to those I thought could do so; but the alms I received were very few and insignificant, with the exception of several sums that the illustrious Rafael Romero, the Secretary of Bishop Canubio, sent me from Jerez. Nevertheless, the Lord wanted the work to be completed, and on 29 November 1925, I had the great comfort of performing, with all solemnity, the reconciliation of the church which had been profaned by the uses it was subjected to, and then celebrated the first Mass.

236 On the afternoon of that day, we carried the Lord under a canopy, in an extremely solemn procession in which most of the residents took part, from the chapel of the cloisters of the Cathedral to the new church of St. Mary, no longer the parish church of the Cathedral.

The next day, the holy day of the Apostle St. Andrew and the anniversary of my entry in Segorbe, I celebrated the solemn Pontifical Mass in the church, with the church now open for worship which had been profaned for so many years. May we all bless the Lord for his mercies!

CHAPTER XXIII

General Chapters of 1926 and the Illness of Monsignor Amigó

237 In the month of July 1926, my Third Order friars and sisters held their General Chapter meetings for the election of the High Superiors, over which I had the satisfaction of presiding¹³⁷. Various Mother Superiors came from the Houses in the Americas for the chapter of the Sister, and delayed their return until September. When they were about to leave, I went to the House of Massamagrell to bid them farewell, and I suffered a serious attack of uremia there, and was immediately moved to the Palace. But the illness only became worse, to the degree that they had to administer the holy sacraments because the doctors were predicting the final result would be fatal¹³⁸. Many prayers were raised to the Lord everywhere for my health and the Lord undoubtedly paid attention to them, because the improvement soon began and I was recovering my health until I was back to full strength. May thanks be given to the Lord for everything! And that this extension of my life be employed to better serve Him¹³⁹.

CHAPTER XXIV

Golden Anniversary of the First Mass

238 The 4th of April 1929 marked the 50th anniversary of the celebration of my first Mass, an event that aroused great enthusiasm amongst the faithful of my diocese and my Third Order Congregations, all of whom presented me with valuable gifts. But above all, I was grateful and satisfied with a handwritten note the Pope deigned to send me, congratulating me and joining in the rejoicing of the faithful of my diocese and the religious orders, whom he authorized me to bless in his name¹⁴⁰. I used this grace in the solemn functions being celebrated in the Mother Houses of both congregations in honor of the anniversary and the extremely solemn Pontifical Mass held in the Cathedral on the day of the anniversary itself, with a great number

¹³⁷ Cf. 1828-1835.

¹³⁸ Cf. 1264, 1838, 1843, 1878.

¹³⁹ Cf. In the episcopal history of the Segorbe-Castellón diocese, in the review which the author Pelegrín Luis Llorens makes of the tenure as bishop of Monsignor Luis Amigó, he says in reference to this illness: "For one full month, our venerable bishop was engaged in a battle between life and death" (cf. LLORENS, P.L.: *Episcopologio de la Diócesis de Segorbe-Castellón*. Ed. C.S.I.C. Madrid 1973, Vol. II, p. 548).

Similarly, in the letter from the then-General Superior Reverend Father Javier María of Valencia to Father José María Pérez of Alba dated 8/10/1926, he states that the Servant of God "was unconscious for eleven hours". From this date on, and undoubtedly as a consequence of the uremia, the strength of Father Luis was greatly reduced.

¹⁴⁰ The handwritten note of His Holiness Pius XI was done in Rome in St. Peter's, and is dated 31 March 1929, the eighth year of our Papacy (cf. ABC, 238, note 108).

of clergy from the Diocese in attendance as well as a substantial turnout of the civil authorities, societies and people. In the afternoon the priests and seminary students presented me with an exceptional literary-musical evening in the events hall of the Seminary. The audience was extremely pleased and I was very grateful for the undeserved gifts they gave me¹⁴¹.

CHAPTER XXV

Final plea

239 Oh, Lord, giver of all good, I beg of you: that these gifts do not serve as reward for the little good that I may have done, because it all is your work and may all your creatures in heaven and on earth bless you for it.

With this, I consider that this narration of the main facts of my life that I was requested to do is now finished.

Now I implore those who read this to beg before the Lord for me, since I have acted so wrongly and been so ungrateful to his benefits and favors, with my sins and infidelities, that I rightly fear his harsh judgments; although I trust in obtaining mercy through the very valuable intercession of my Holy Mother the Virgin Mary, who, as I ask her, shall present her sorrowful heart and tears before her Holy Son, in order to gain forgiveness and my eternal salvation through them.

I sign this narrative on the day of my 75th birthday, in my Episcopal Palace of Segorbe, on 17 October of 1929¹⁴².

Brother Luis, Bishop

This is an authentic copy of the original held in the Archive of the Mother House of the Congregation of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family.

Massamagrell, 20 December 1934.

Sister Genoveva María of Valencia
Superior General

P.M.D.L.M.R.M.G.
Sister Ana Josefa of Dabajuro
General Secretary

¹⁴¹ Cf. 1870-1874.

¹⁴² The original manuscript of the Autobiography of Luis Amigó was lost during the 1936-1939 conflict and it has not been possible to find it up to the present day. The text we present corresponds to one of the three or four typewritten copies made from the original before its disappearance and was found by Vicente Torrent Navarro in 1939. It is the only authenticated copy preserved and is located in the General Archive of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars in Rome.

EPILOGUE

A HOLY DEATH

(By Father Juan Bautista Ardales)

240 Exhausted from eighty years of life, full of works, penances, and concerns, the Bishop felt sick during the summer. To see if he would improve, he moved to Massamagrell, living in the rooms his sisters had prepared for him in the Mother House. But the Tertiary Friars, the most Reverend General Father among them, were convinced that the light of life of the Holy Founder was unfortunately growing dimmer and decided to bring him with them to Godella, the provincial mother church of the Congregation, to have the comfort of being cared for by his religious brethren in the final days of his existence. The ailing bishop had lost his sight and begged them to ask the Holy See for permission to be able to say the Votive mass of the Virgin, because it was extremely painful for him to let a single day pass without celebrating it.

241 Recognizing the end of his life was at hand with the security that he had acted for good, he received the news with the equanimity that characterized him. "DO THE WILL OF GOD" he said, and began to pray. This devout saint who spent his entire life preparing to die well could not fear the last moments of his life; the Holy Founder who was a school of perfection for the members of his orders and had prepared next to his deathbed the coffin and clothing he was to be shrouded in could not shudder at the arrival of those agitated moments; the great Bishop who won the affection of his entire flock, who one hundred times a day knelt before a Crucifix, kissing its feet and crying, exclaiming: "*RECORDARE, JESU PIE, QUOD SUM CAUSA TUAE VIAE, NE ME PERDAS ILLA DIE*" could not tremble at the hour of death. For that reason, facing the fatal notice, with Christian fortitude and the faith of one who has the game won, said: "I WANT TO RECEIVE THE HOLY VIATICUM TO GO ON TO A BETTER LIFE".

242 This was a moving and sublime act. Her Divine Majesty was carried under a canopy by Doctor Lauzurica, the Auxiliary Bishop of Valencia; numerous members of the two Congregations founded by the ailing bishop, presided over by the General Superior, Father Ildefonso of La Vall d'Uixo and the Mother Superior, Sister Genoveva of Valencia attended bearing lighted candles; the Vicar-General and Secretary of the Diocesan Chamber of Segorbe, the illustrious Marcelino Blasco and Romualdo Amigó; the parish priests of Godella and the surrounding towns, the family and various close friends of the patient and delegations from the Communities of Capuchin Friars of Valencia and Massamagrell.

243 The Viaticum itself was moving. The Bishop of Segorbe was seated on a chair, wearing a rochet and stole. Firstly, he did the profession of faith with great fervor and full consciousness and again requested sacramental absolution, and with tears in his eyes and signs of great emotion he forgave and asked for forgiveness

from everyone, and blessed them on finishing the heartfelt act. The Vicar-General of Segorbe administered the Sacrament of extreme unction to the ailing bishop. In the midst of tears and profound devotion, this moving act of everlasting memory concluded.

244 When the Auxiliary Bishop said farewell, he offered him words of comfort and strength, since his good works had already prepared the way for a great reward in the glory.

The venerable and ailing Bishop of Segorbe, took his hands and thanking him for charity, kissed them and said: "BISHOP, I AM NOTHING MORE THAN A SINNER".

"You are," replied the Auxiliary Bishop, "what God knows you are, and we do as well."

And visibly moved, he kissed the hands of the dying man and stepped back saying: "He is a saint, he is a saint".

245 On 1 October, the telegraph announced that Father Luis Amigó, the bishop of Segorbe, had died peacefully in the Residence of Godella, surrounded by his children the Third Order friars, who were grief-stricken by such an irreplaceable loss.

The body, wearing the pontifical vestments and members of the Religious Orders holding vigil, was viewed in the church.

The Archbishop of Valencia and his Auxiliary Bishop came immediately, praying over the deceased, expressing his condolences to the Community and offering to conduct the funeral rites they were organizing himself. The other ecclesiastical and civil authorities, like most of the population, passed through the Residence visibly upset by the misfortune. His Excellency, the distinguished Nuncio of His Holiness, many prelates and organizations sent telegrams offering their deepest sympathies and praising the merits of the deceased.

246 The first funeral was held the days, with the Most Reverend General Minister of the Capuchin Tertiary Fathers officiating. The corpse was moved to the priory church of Massamagrell, where it was received by the Auxiliary Bishop, the parish clergy and the Communities of Capuchins of the Magdalene, the Third Order Friars and the town en masse, weeping over their illustrious countryman.

247 On 3 October, the funeral rites of the Pontifical mass were said by the Most Reverend Archbishop of Valencia and ministered by his chapel priests. Various delegations of religious orders and civil authorities attended, too many to list in detail; but among them must be mentioned the Community of Capuchin Friars of the Magdalene and the most Reverend Provincial Ministers of the Capuchins of Valencia and Andalusia; the entire General Government of the Third Order Friars, over thirty friars; the General Mother Superior of the Third Order Sisters, accompanied by some forty sisters.

Immediately afterwards, the body was moved to the church of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters, where it would find its final resting place.

248 On 4 October, the most Reverend Provincial Minister of the Capuchins of Andalusia celebrated the burial funeral with the Auxiliary Bishop presiding. The burial procession followed immediately thereafter.

The faithful argued over the flowers covering the coffin as a precious relic; the Capuchin Tertiary Friars and the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters surrounded the body in tears, said farewell to their Holy Patriarch, and the casket, as if in triumph, appeared over the heads of the mixed crowd. Among praises and moans, it disappeared into the grave in a few brief moments, leaves the souls there filled with sadness but saturated in consolations and religious unction. It was a very tender moment, which recalled the passing of St. Francis and the sense of being orphaned that affected the Franciscans, St. Claire and her children.

249 On 5 October, the very solemn funeral rites were held in the Segorbe Cathedral, where the Auxiliary Bishop of Valencia said the Pontifical Mass, with the council, social organizations and the populace of Segorbe, which gave unmistakable signs of the remorse produced by the loss of their beloved Prelate, all in attendance.

250 The ecclesiastical authorities, the Capuchin Friars, the two Third Order congregations founded by the deceased and the town which knew him had responded by offering a warm tribute worthy of the man who gave everything for Christ and the moral uplift of young people.

And his homeland also owed a debt of gratitude to this illustrious Spaniard who had saved and will save millions of youths with his Reform schools. His work is requested and sought-after with envy by the civilized world. Spain will not condemn to obscurity this holy and great educator of the modern era.

Brother J. B.

PASTORAL SERMONS

INTRODUCTION

In the twenty-six long years in which Luis Amigó exercised his episcopal ministry, he published forty-eight pastoral sermons, among other writings. The first dozen came during his tenure in Solsona (Lleida) while the remainder appeared in the Official Bulletin of Segorbe (Castellón), the diocese he led from September of 1913 until his death.

The pastoral sermons of Father Luis —without equaling the value, in terms of knowledge of his spiritual personality, of the Autobiography where “the roots and sources of his deep spirituality are laid bare”¹—constitute an essential element for delving deeply into this subject, inasmuch as they contain the principal lines of his spiritual thinking.

These pastoral writings, described in some of their pages as “genuine master lessons saturated with the most exalted spiritualism”², are more the fruit of a spiritual experience of life than an intellectual discourse. In them, Father Luis develops the theological vision he had acquired over the years. A vision centered in the loving contemplation of Christ the Redeemer; interwoven in unison with Merciful Love and the Cross; and complemented by the figures of the Virgin Mary and St. Francis of Assisi.

Christ the Redeemer

The living comprehension of Christ the Redeemer which Luis Amigó reveals in his sermons is profoundly Franciscan. The Christ of Luis Amigó, like that of St. Francis, is a Christ the Redeemer, contemplated and worshipped through the complementary mysteries of the Incarnation and Passion, which demonstrate the humble love and sacrifice of God for mankind.

For that, Luis Amigó emphasizes in these writings the fact that Christ, from the mystery of the Incarnation itself, constitutes the Model and Example, the Way, Truth and Life for those who, as men and children of God, are called to discover in Him the original image in which they were created. And he also records in writing that Christ, from the mystery of the Passion, from the Cross, offers mankind the most exquisite proof of his love and consequently invites those who may want to follow his exemplary footsteps bearing the cross.

¹ Cf. ABF, p. 5.

² Cf. LLORENS, P.L.: *Episcopologio de la Diócesis de Segorbe-Castellón*, Vol. II. Madrid 1973, p. 541.

Nevertheless, Christ the Redeemer, the Christ who becomes incarnate and dies to save, to free mankind, frequently finds in the teaching of Luis Amigó its most complete expression in the figure of a Good Shepherd who in “going after the lost sheep” with the intention of “even giving his life for it” constantly evokes the mission of those who “came to save those who were lost”³.

For Luis Amigó, taking part in the redeeming work of Christ, which should mark the existence of every Christian, is realized by collaborating with the Good Shepherd to make the “lost sheep” return to the fold. And this task, entrusted in the sermons to the priests⁴ in particular, is also what he wanted to distinguish his own work as a “shepherd”⁵.

Merciful Love

The first great theme that stands out in the teaching of Luis Amigó around the figure of Christ the Redeemer is that of merciful love.

The Redemption brought about by Christ is presented above all as the work of a love which, by transcending the limits of mere justice and cloaking itself in the fidelity of which only God is capable, is transformed into merciful love.

The merciful love that God shows to mankind in Christ constitutes for Luis Amigó the definitive argument by which man is called on to reciprocate to God, loving Him in turn in a preferential way with all his heart, unconditionally.

In Solsona, Bishop Amigó dedicated two pastoral sermons exclusively to the theme of love of mankind for God⁶ and his second diocese published two other texts which again have charity as their central theme⁷.

However, it is worth noting as well that this preferential love that man must have for God, to reciprocate the indescribable benefit of the Creation and to the even more extraordinary benefit of the Redemption, appears in the thinking of Luis Amigó closely and inherently tied to the love they must have for their fellow man.

Man can only be deeply loved by man himself –thinks Luis Amigó –when he is loved “in God, through God and for God”⁸ and one cannot pretend to love God “without also loving man through God, His favorite work”, since “both loves are like rays emanating from the same light or flowers from the same stem”⁹.

The Cross

Christ the Redeemer, who, with his example of merciful love brings to mankind an incomparable lesson of love towards God and his fellow man, also constitutes the

³ Cf. 666, 811, 889, 940; and Luke 19:10.

⁴ Cf. 1136.

⁵ Cf. 251.

⁶ Cf. 331-352 and 506-554.

⁷ Cf. 1041-1066 and 1149-1170.

⁸ Cf. 351, 524, 1056, 1151, 1195 and 1307.

⁹ Cf. 1044.

central point in which, always within the pastoral teachings of Luis Amigó, the second great theme which forms his theological vision, the Cross, is established.

From the example of Christ Himself who, hung from the Cross, "gave the greatest proofs of his love"¹⁰, Luis Amigó understands in his own mystical life and later explains to the members of his diocese the sense of suffering related to Holy Week.

Consequently, just as the love of God and his fellow man appear emphasized as a single reality in his teaching, it presents Love and the Cross as inherently united. It is not possible to love without suffering, just as one cannot suffer profoundly when one is incapable of loving.

The theme of the Cross, of self-denial, of internal emptying, thus reaches a position as prominent as that of charity in his writings as Pastor.

The Cross, accepted as penance, mortification, renunciation of self, and specifically performed as loving obedience to the will of God and the complete and joyful offering in favor of the brothers, constitute, then, the other great constant of the doctrine which Monsignor Luis Amigó y Ferrer¹¹ leaves as bishop.

The Virgin Mary and St. Francis

Next to the central figure of Christ the Redeemer, who from the example of His own life invites the individual man to the Christian adventure of a radically experienced love by happily accepting the Cross, the pastoral teachings of Luis Amigó are not lacking in references to the Virgin Mary and St. Francis, the two other loves of his personal spiritual life.

Bishop Amigó, in addition to showing Mary as the closest and most personal collaborator of Christ the Redeemer¹², specifically goes into the area of devotion and teaches his parishioners the way they must show and increase their love of the Mother of God and mankind¹³.

On the other hand, when dealing with the figure of Francis, he dedicates two very well-prepared and profound sermons¹⁴ which present him fundamentally as "the most perfect copy of Christ" and as a "reformer of society". The passionate figure of Francis who, like any other Good Shepherd, "was searching with more than fatherly diligence for the poor sinners so that his sermons and, above all, the tenderness of his love could lead them to the path of salvation"¹⁵ enabled Luis Amigó to once again show the redeeming, restoring and reforming spirit which underlies all his theological thinking and whose only and sovereign center is Christ the Redeemer, Christ the Good Shepherd.

¹⁰ Cf. 1990.

¹¹ Cf. 376-399, 607-636, 687-690, 827-868, 1189-1212 and 1506-1517.

¹² Cf. 829, 923, 1474-1486.

¹³ Cf. 317-330.

¹⁴ Cf. 1008-1040, 1264-1296.

¹⁵ Cf. 1020.

On Entry in Solsona
(B. Sol 42 [1907], p. 216-268)

“But the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the strong. And the base things of the world, and the things that are contemptible, hath God chosen, and things that are not, that he might bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his sight. (1 Corinthians 1:27-29)

Brother Luis Amigó y Ferrer, by the grace of God and the apostolic see, bishop of Sagaste and apostolic administrator of Solsona¹, to the most illustrious Council, venerable priests, members of religious orders and the faithful.

251 On having the honor of speaking to you for the first time, beloved children, above all we want to make clear the love we profess to you through Jesus Christ. A love for which we are ready to give our life, if necessary, for each and every one of you, in imitation of the apostle St. John, whose words we have chosen as the motto of our shield: *And I lay down my life for the sheep* (John 10:15).

252 We greet you with the greeting of peace that the holy angels gave to the world in the coming of the Messiah². The Seraphic Father St. Francis used this same greeting, telling the people: “May the Lord gives you peace”; and he recommended its practice to his children³. Peace, desired and sought after even by the ungodly without being able to find it, for peace is the reward and testament of the good conscience and the gift of heaven for men of good will.

253 Having fulfilled this duty first, we will not hide, beloved children, the confusion and fear which seized us from the moment we knew that we had been proposed by His Eminence the Nuncio, and selected by His Holiness for the honorable but difficult position of incumbent Bishop of Tagaste and the Apostolic Administrator of this diocese⁴.

254 Only one idea comforted us and encouraged us not to falter in consideration of our lack of merit and inadequacy to bear such a heavy load; that, as

¹ The diocese of Solsona had been abolished, as a see in its own right, in the concordat between Spain and the Holy See signed on 9 September 1851. From that date on, the diocese was administered by an incumbent bishop (cf. A.C., 23 [1907], p. 140).

² Cf. Luke 2:14.

³ ST. FRANCIS: 1R 14:2 in *St. Francis of Assisi* (BAC, Madrid 1978) p. 101; and Test 23, in works cited, p. 123.

⁴ Cf. 172 above.

we were told, it was the express will of God that we accepted it, He would therefore grant us the necessary grace to endure it because, according to St. Bernardino of Siena, when the Lord chooses someone for a position, He grants them the graces and powers necessary for them, as seen in the Apostles and other Saints⁵. In order that even if we are unable to do anything ourselves, as the Apostle assured the Corinthians, we can do everything when comforted with the grace of the Lord, as he himself said to the Philippians: “*I can do all these things in Him who strengtheneth me*” (Philippians 4:13).

255 And it is to advise you, beloved children, that the Lord Our God, who, loving it necessarily as a full and infinite Good, created everything so it might exist for His Glory, *The Lord hath made all things for himself* (Proverbs 16:4). In that way, He wants to be glorified by his creatures, and will not share his glory with them, as He says in Isaiah: *I will not give my glory to another*, (Isaiah 42:8), nor shall He consent to it being diminished by his creatures attributing to themselves what is purely His gift and grace. And see why it is normal behavior for him to make use of unfit and contemptible instruments for great works, so that the positive result of his actions cannot be attributed to them, in order that no one may glorify himself in His presence. *That no flesh should glory in his sight* (1 Corinthians 1:29).

256 This is why the Lord transmits his divine light to the ignorant and humble, confusing those who presume of a vain science: His strength to the weak and waifs, to confront those who call themselves strong spirits, and He exalts the humble and small ones to bring down the arrogant and proud.

257 Possessed of this truth, the Seraphic Father St. Francis said to one of his children who was surprised at the enthusiasm they encountered in the villages: “The reason for this is because God has not found a creature more vile than I, who cannot diminish His glory”⁶. And we say the same thing to you today, beloved children. Certainly our own insignificance is the pedestal on which this Lord exalts us; He takes pleasure in uplifting the humble, as he raised the little shepherd David on to the throne of Israel. And certainly in no one better than us can the power and wisdom of the Lord, whom all the generations bless, be magnified and glorified.

* * *

258 Beloved children, the duties inherent to the pastoral position bestowed on us are many and great, and all can be summarized in these words of the divine Master: *You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world* (Matthew 5:13-14), by which he orders us to instruct and lead by example and the doctrine the portion of His flock entrusted to us. When the Divine Wisdom puts the example before instruction in the guidance and governing of the souls, our own nature indicates that to us with its innate tendency to focus on and believe more in the

⁵ ST. BERNARDINO OF SIENA: *1st Sermon of St. Joseph*, in RB of Pius V, reformed by Pius X. 4th reading of the fourth fair of the second week after the eight holy days of Easter. Cf. 584.

⁶ Cf. LF 10 in works cited, p. 818

example of life we are urging them towards than in words. The sovereign Master, the perfect model for those preaching in his name, began his greatest mission of saving humankind by providing practical, living examples of the virtues, something which these people of the flesh knew nothing of before spreading the seed of his divine doctrine through preaching: *“Of all things which Jesus began to do and teach (Acts 1:1).* And the Apostles, whom he chose as the base and foundation of his Church, he instructed them first practically, shaping and arranging their hearts as a preparation for filling them afterwards with the lights and graces of the Holy Spirit, which made them teachers and learned men who might enlighten everyone.

259 Therefore, beloved children, we must constitute ourselves both in the regulations and your conduct as paragons in the practice of all the virtues, as the Apostle teaches Timothy⁷ the only means by which man can achieve his worldly and eternal happiness, because only they resemble the Divine Model of the predestined, and shall be demanded on Judgment Day by the Holy Father of all the chosen ones in order to recognize them as His own. An even greater duty today as the perversity in the hearts of people increases, the result of bad customs and uncontrolled passions stimulated by bad examples.

260 It is also our duty to watch, like any attentive shepherd, over you, our beloved flock, to prevent the voracious wolves which, as the Apostle St. Peter says, surround us eagerly looking for anyone to devour⁸, so they can make you their prey by drawing you away from the fold of the Good Shepherd separatist doctrines, presented the majority of times with lovely appearances to better deceive you; now infiltrating your spirit with the insubordination and rebelliousness through which we lost our first parents, now inciting the passions which cloud reason and harden the heart using the worst ravings. Following the advice of the Apostle and with the grace of God, we shall argue and refute the error wherever it may occur⁹, showing it so that by knowing it, you are saved from it and will not follow a path other than the one marked out by those the Holy Spirit has provided to govern its Church.

261 We will also urge you affectionately, as much beloved children whose salvation we so intently long for, when you depart from the path of salvation. But if you stubbornly do not listen to the loving voices and exhortations of your good father, rejecting our warnings and follow the paths leading to damnation, we shall know how to use the staff of justice the Lord has put in our hands to straighten you out, in exchange for you not having to experience the severity of the eternal justice of the Lord.

262 To carry out these very serious duties, we trust, beloved children, in the extremely valuable support our very Illustrious Council and the Reverend Parish and Beneficial priest offered us with their learning and recognized piety. They have always shown so many examples of their zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of your souls and of their mission and respect of their Prelate. And we expect now

⁷ Cf. I Timothy 3:1-7.

⁸ Cf. I Peter 5:8 and Acts 20:28

⁹ Cf. II Timothy 4:2-5 and I Timothy 4:7.

of the apostolic works and fervent prayers of the Communities of religious orders, who are our worthy collaborators in the holy ministry.

* * *

263 However, the obligations the pastoral position imposes on us related to you, beloved children, imply and indicate the obligations that you also reciprocally have with your prelate, to whom you owe, as your Father, love, respect, obedience and submission. So if we as prelates are commissioned by God to watch over and try to achieve the salvation of souls we have been entrusted with, for which He will ask a strict account from us: *But I will require his blood at thy hand* (Ezekiel 3:20), no less do we have to demand of you the submission and respect towards those with whom the Lord has wanted to share His authority and identified by saying: *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me*¹⁰.

264 This obligation becomes even more vital and holy the more these modern doctrines spread which teach equality and independence and induce people to shake off the yoke of conscience and the principle of authority, the reason why one can see society marching with giant strides towards its ruin and damnation.

265 Take note, my children, that, as the Apostle says, all authority comes from God¹¹, and by investing man with that, He wants men to respect that He takes as his own the slanders they will make of him, and said to Samuel: *They have not rejected thee, but me*, (I Kings 8:7) but never lets them go unpunished and always punishes them severely.

266 No, do not focus on the defects and imperfections that your Prelates may have as men, for no one is exempt from them. Nor listen to the modern Pharisees who, full of miseries and filth, pretend to be scandalized and consider the flaws of the Superiors to deflect your affection from them so that, looking at them with prejudice, you do not listen to their teachings and reprimands. Weakness is one thing, inseparable from the human condition and the sad result of the original sin, and the truth that everyone feels within themselves and we see stated by that ancient and great philosopher who said: *I am a human being, so nothing human is strange to me* (*Quia ego homo cum sum, nihil humanum a me alienum puto*)¹². Authority is another thing, the sinew of all discipline, the persevering salt that conserves from all corruption: *quid divinum*, and thus holy, intangible and adorable whose presence and respect is life and whose absence, omission or demolition is death; *quid divinum*, essential in all society, but more eminently in the most important, most perfect and most necessary of all, in religious society, in the holy Church instituted by Christ. However defective the Prelate may be, it is always your

¹⁰ Luke 10:16.

¹¹ Cf. Romans 13:1.

¹² Cf. TERENCE (TERENCE), *Heauton Timorumenos* (*The Self-Tormentor*), 77 (Act I, Scene 1). The exact phrase is: *Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto*.

Father who has to answer before God for you, and that is why you shall never be taught any doctrine contrary to your salvation.

267 So, my beloved children, insofar as it touches on us, lacking the virtue and those skills this high pastoral position requires, we confess naively that you will have much to forgive. More to comfort ourselves and also for your consolation, we can assure you we are prepared, resolved to not act even a single time if the assistance of God may aid us, forgetting the true concept, fundamental notion and the high purpose the holy Authority which has placed its confidence in us is looking for; also willing, with the same divine assistance which we ceaselessly beg of you with moaning hearts, to make any necessary sacrifice to lead you through the path of self-denial and example, though it may be dark and humble, trusting in your sincere cooperation and the positive, effective participation of everyone, each one according to his means and abilities, and especially your fervent prayers. For all that, we will not hesitate for one moment in coming to you with the testimony of our devoted gratitude, and lifting higher than ever our heart and our pleading arms before the throne of the Almighty, we ask for each and every one of you the most precious gifts and all sorts of charismas, and as guarantee of that, with all the feeling in our soul, we give you our pastoral blessing in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Solsona on the day of St. Augustine, 28 August 1907.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP AD. AP.

2

On the Imitation of Christ
(B. Sol 42 [1907], pp. 357-363)

“Look and make it according to the pattern that was shewn thee in the mount” (Exodus 25:40)

Most illustrious Council, venerable clergy, religious communities and the faithful.

268 The Almighty, beloved children, whose judgments are incomprehensible and his paths incapable of being investigated¹³, took pity on man, who had broken his rule from weakness, and using mercy with Him, he *promises* a Redeemer to reinstate the lost right to the Glory for which he was created.

269 But with his intelligence having been left more obscured, his heart depraved and his *nature* inclined toward evil as the result of the *sin*, and thus with ignorance and great difficulty for practicing *virtue* and his tendency towards to

¹³ Cf. Romans 11:33.

sin and vice, it was necessary that this Savior of humankind would be established as his *example and model*, teaching him through practice the path to Heaven into which, even after the Redeemer opened the doors for him, man could not enter except by the path of *penance* and the other virtues that brought credit to him, in the same way that his divine liberator also had to enter in his glory along the path of unheard-of *mortification* and *suffering* until His death on the cross. *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?* (Luke 24:26).

270 See here the reason why, among the infinite number of means known to the divine Wisdom for this purpose, he decides to send the eternal Word which, made flesh and taking the human form, is not only our Savior but the Leader whom we must follow and imitate, because in his *imitation* lies our eternal salvation. That is why the Holy Father tells us, through the figure of *Moses*: Look carefully and work according to the example that was shown to you. *And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shown thee in the mount* (Exodus 25:40).

271 This Word incarnate is, in effect, the true *Light* which shines on all men who come to this world to straighten their path on the way to salvation. *That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world* (John 1:9). Light, because his doctrine and examples of eternal life dissipate the dense darkness of our ignorance, saying Himself: *He that followeth me, walketh not in darkness* (John 8:12). And light of such heat that inflames and warms our heart in divine *love*, making us bravely overcome the obstacles facing us on the path of virtue and completely transforms us into the object of our love, which is God.

272 He is truly the divine *model* of the predestined, with his practical teaching of the virtues, unknown and rejected in the world, shows us the path we must follow if we wish to achieve the eternal happiness He won for us with his infinite merits. And therefore, in each and every act of His life among us, we have to imagine that He is repeating for us the divine instruction He gave his Apostles after washing their feet on the night of His Passion. I have done this to give you an *example*, so that you may act as I have acted. *For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also* (John 13:15)¹⁴.

273 Admire here, beloved children, the indescribable wisdom, kindness and mercy of the Lord, who takes as the means for saving man the same thing that had been the cause of his damnation. Because if wanting to be as Gods, as the serpent said to them: *You shall be as Gods*¹⁵, was the cause of their ruin, today the *imitation* of the living God is so necessary it is the only means for their salvation.

* * *

274 However, to the degree that the individuals, *peoples* and nations have been governed by the divine precepts and adapted the rule of their behavior to the practical instructions of this divine model He gave us in his holy life, they have

¹⁴ Cf. 1172, 1237.

¹⁵ Genesis 3:5.

flourished in virtues and all sorts of blessings. Therefore, learning from Him to humble and abase oneself, they have been honored and exalted because the road to exaltation is precisely that of *humiliation*. *He that humbleth himself, shall be exalted* (Luke 14:11). If in imitating the *obedience* which as God he subjected his creatures to, they have submitted to and complied with the *authority* of whatever person might represent Him, they have become victorious in all their endeavors because it is written that the obedient man shall sing of triumphs: *An obedient man shall speak of victory* (Proverbs 21:28). If following the example by which, as the Lord of everything, *He does not have* a place where he can lay his head and taught man not to hoard treasures on earth¹⁶, they only aspired to heavenly goods and freely gave plentiful lands to the needy, He has made them prosper and rich in everything, this Lord who promises one hundred for one in this world and eternal life thereafter: ... *shall receive an hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting* (Matthew 19:29). And if imitating the God of *love*, who gave his life for us and forgave us before his father on the altar of the cross by saying that we knew not what we did¹⁷, they had been generous in forgiving the offenses of their fellow man, returning good for evil, they have been shown favor in everything and showered with blessings by the God of kindness, who says the merciful are to be blessed because through them mercy shall be attained: *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.* (Matthew 5:7).

275 That is to say, beloved children, that individuals, peoples and nations have *progressed* morally and materially, and have had a more exuberant and prosperous life the more they have adapted to the spirit of Jesus Christ, the only one who gives life to the world with his doctrine and *example*¹⁸.

276 While on the other hand, those who have distanced themselves from Him, have moved rapidly to their ruin and damnation, because closing their eyes in order not to see the *examples* of the true light have made them fall unforgivably into the abyss of *ignorance* and *error*. Wishing to be free and fleeing from the doctrine of the divine Master for that reason, as if from an ominous and unbearable yoke, they remain slaves of their own passions and the common enemy that tyrannizes them.

277 And it is that Jesus Christ, beloved children, as well as being the path of salvation for the good people who want to follow Him as a model of the predestined, in the same way his life is the repudiation of all those who have not wanted to imitate him. *Behold this child is set for the fall, and for the resurrection of many* (Luke 2:34).

* * *

278 Therefore, beloved children, this *imitation* of Jesus Christ is so necessary for our salvation, a duty we are not only forgetting but still perhaps try to evade with the excuse that is impossible for us to copy his infinite perfection. The Lord

¹⁶ Cf. Luke 9:58; Matthew 8:20.

¹⁷ Cf. Luke 23:34.

¹⁸ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 1R 1,2, in works cited, p. 91. Also Cf: 1C 84, in works cited, p. 192.

presents us all the time with models and examples for our consideration, in our own form and nature, the *saints*, so they may serve to stimulate and encourage us; in spite of having to conquer the same problems as we do, they knew how to copy this Divine Model in themselves. And He also makes his Ministers constantly remind the faithful of this essential obligation, preaching as the Apostle St. Paul says: *We preach Christ crucified* (I Corinthians 1:23).

279 However, if it has been necessary to remind mankind of this obligation at all times, placing the words and works of everlasting life of the Living God in their sight, with the aim of drawing them away from the path to damnation they are rushing down, it is undoubtedly greater in these times, when *ignorance* of these religious subjects on the one hand, *pride* and the spirit of *independence* on the other, and uncontrolled passions fostered by the spirit of evil makes peoples run forlorn to their ruin and damnation.

280 The *Roman Pontiff*, the Supreme Shepherd of the Church, whom the Lord has entrusted with looking after his entire flock, taking pity on the ruin and damnation of so many souls and wanting to slow the dizzying speed of the people in their march to evil, reminds and proposes to them this *imitation* of Jesus Christ, to which the *salvation* of the world, in which he trusts, is necessarily linked and he intends to restore it all. *To re-establish all things in Christ* (Ephesians 1:10)¹⁹.

281 And we who find ourselves, albeit without any merit on our part, at the front of this small flock, by the will and command of the Supreme Pontiff, supporting his wishes and intentions, also raise our voices in this holy time of *Advent*, when we prepare to commemorate the coming of the Redeemer to warn and admonish you, beloved children, that outside the spirit of Jesus Christ there is no possible moral or material *progress*, but only confusion, disorder and eternal death.

282 This is also what you should instill in the faithful, venerable *Priests*, and not grow tired of *preaching to them* of this truth with the example and the word so that they are persuaded that the doctrine and life of Jesus Christ can be imitated, and this *imitation* is such a strict obligation that our everlasting salvation is linked to it.

283 So we focus our sight, beloved children, on this Divine Model in order to adapt all the acts of our life to it, so that all of them may result in greater honor and glory to God. And afterwards we have entitled ourselves to the blessings of Heaven, the Eternal Father acknowledging us on the day of our death for the resemblance to the life of the Divine Redeemer so that we may be happy for all eternity in his sight.

This is what your Prelate so ardently desires, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Solsona on the holy day of the Apostle St. Andrew, in the year 1907.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SOLSONA

¹⁹ Cf. Pius X: *E supremi apostolatus*: ASS 36 (1903 / 1904), p. 131. Cf. 461, 1780, 2155.

3
Jesus Christ, the Way, Truth and Life
 (B. Sol 43 [1908], pp. 81-94)

“I am the way, and the truth and the life (John 14:6)

Most illustrious Council, venerable clergy, religious communities and the faithful²⁰.

284 Beloved children, to perpetuate his teachings of eternal life in the world and to ensure that the brilliance of the divine light that came to enlighten him might never be eclipsed, The Divine Master chose and established his apostles as *guides* and teachers who would teach the people the way of salvation; now practically by exercising the evangelical virtues, as the salt of earth; now by preaching the divine Word, entrusted with informing and spreading the true light in the world: *You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world* (Matthew 5:13-14).

285 The Apostles, pervaded with this divine mission and filled with that *spirit* of life which transformed them from imperfect beings into saints and models of all virtue, from ignorant men into wise men and teachers of the true science, and from timid, weak men to strong men capable of defying the rages of the world and Hell, preached and announced the crucifixion of Jesus Christ everywhere: *We preach Christ crucified* (I Corinthians 1:23). But they were not intimidated by the fear of provoking the fury of the Jews and Gentiles against them, for a doctrine so strange that it scandalized some and was taken by others for madness: *“unto the Jews indeed a stumbling block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness* (I Corinthians 1:23).

286 As the Bishops and Priests carry on this very high and noble *mission* of the Apostles, we have to also insist, beloved children, on preaching and instilling among the peoples that only in Jesus Christ and through Jesus Christ shall we be able to attain our *salvation*. By showing them by the word and example that His doctrine can be practiced and his examples can be imitated, and as He was formed by the Eternal Father both as our Savior and our *model* and example²¹, as we were telling you in the last pastoral sermon, we must fix our attention in his worlds and instructions which are of eternal life.

287 Hear how He Himself declares what his divine mission is to us, saying: *I am the way, the truth and the life* (John, 14:6). With these words, he points out to us that not only has he come to rescue us from the power of the darkness, giving his blood of infinite value as the price, but also as the leader who guides us on the way to Heaven, teaching us how to conquer the difficulties and remove the obstacles that the lust²² of our rebellious flesh raises against us in the practice of virtue. The Sovereign Master who, as he gave us clear knowledge of the infallible truth, drawing our sight away from the false shine with which the *lust* of our eyes

²⁰ Cf. Leon XIII: *Tametsi Futura*: ASS 33 (1900), pp. 273-285.

²¹ Cf. LM 8:3, in works cited, p. 429.

²² John 2:16.

represent the miserable and false goods of the world as good and true, and the spring of eternal life that he teaches us to search for only in Him and his grace, the life of the soul through the practice of the virtues and the setting aside of the most terrible of our lusts, which is the pride of life. *I am the way, the truth and the life*²³.

JESUS CHRIST IS THE WAY

288 What happiness, beloved children, man has in the state of *innocence*! A summary of the wonders of creation, and even though created in the image and likeness of God²⁴, he was the object of his love in such a way that He himself says that his delights came from being with the children of mankind. *And my delights were to be with the children of men* (Proverbs 8:31). He treated Him with the familiarity of a son towards his father, whose love and promises he could be sure of receiving as long as he was obedient to his rule. All the creatures worshipped and obeyed him submissively, acknowledging Him as their king for whose service, after the glory of God, they had been created. The calamities and misfortunes were far away from him, so he could be *happy* in time and fortunate for all of eternity. God was the magnet of his powers in whom they were always absorbed. He did not feel the lack of order and rebellion in his body produced by the passions or the imbalance of his moods, and how much he saw and treated everything incited the love of his Maker. What *happiness*, I repeat, man has in the state of innocence! But how ephemeral and fleeting it was, and to our great misfortune!

289 *Deceived* by the common enemy who infiltrated the virus of *pride* into the soul of man, he disobeyed the command of his good Father, whose promises made to man rested on fulfillment of His commands. With the Lord freed from obligation for that reason, man was left deprived of His friendship and grace, stripped of supernatural gifts and reduced even more to those of his earthly nature; subject to all sorts of calamities, illnesses and death itself; stripped of the sovereignty he held over creation and himself, enslaved to his passions and his victorious tyrant; cast out from the paradise given by the Lord himself as a gift to man, to whom He had entrusted its care²⁵, and what was infinitely worse, also disinherited and exiled from that heavenly land which had been created for him. How horrible and appalling must be the evil, beloved children, which wreaked such havoc on humanity!

290 Driven from the paternal home, condemned as a reprobate to feel, his intelligence clouded, feeling within himself the sting of the passions and constantly incited to rebellion by the devil, *the Natural Law* the Lord engraved on his soul was forgotten when his very *salvation* rested on fulfillment of that Law and faith in the promised Redeemer. And so he rushed to his damnation and ruin, and soon could affirm that all flesh had corrupted the way, as the sacred text says: *For all flesh had*

²³ John 14:6.

²⁴ Genesis 1:27.

²⁵ Cf. Genesis 3:1-20.

corrupted its way (Genesis 6:12), reaching the point where his own Maker regretted having him: *It repented him that he had made man on the earth* (Genesis 6:6). And thus He rid the earth of that entire perverse generation with a *flood* that covered all the land, with the exception of the one righteous family He found, the family of Noah.

291 Who might not believe, beloved children, that the memory of such a strong punishment remained permanently in man, and might force him to straighten his ways in accordance with the divine commandments? Nevertheless, the Holy Scripture attests that this was not what happened. And because man is inclined towards evil for the appeal of the sin and attracted by *lust*, he needed the hand of benefactor to steer him from the path of damnation and direct him by the path of his eternal salvation.

292 This great *mercy* was carried out by the Lord sending his only Son as a guide²⁶ that they might straighten their footsteps, reminding them of the need for fulfillment of their duties towards God and as an example, showing them the path they must follow to return to the friendship of the Creator. A truth that Jesus Christ himself declared, saying: *I am the way... No man cometh to the Father, but by me*²⁷.

293 How that proves to us, beloved children, this great *mercy* of God, his express will that all men be saved and come to know the truth!²⁸ Because without this divine guide, few men would have correctly found the way to salvation, leaving many more frustrated in realizing the reward of redemption.

294 Jesus Christ is, therefore, our *way*. A supernatural and divine path like God because only He, with his infinite merits, could lead us along a natural and sensitive path to salvation, like the man that we not only can but must follow and imitate.

295 For this reason, the life of Jesus Christ must be the rule for our own at all times and under any circumstances. Seeing him humble in the manger, in the house of Nazareth facing the courts and dying on a cross as if he was a criminal, we must learn to look at the virtue of *humility* as the foundation of the others, the true greatness, which men search in vain for in *pride*, pomp and ostentation. On viewing the extreme *poverty* the Lord of heaven and earth says: *"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests: but the son of man hath not where to lay his head"* (Matthew 8:20), we must renounce worldly goods in our hearts, which He calls thorns that pierce the heart²⁹. In admiring the unvanquished patience as He suffered in silence the most outrageous slanders, insults, and torments, we must force ourselves to endure the hardships of this life in the same way, as necessary for the purification of our soul. When focusing on his infinite love for us, which obligated him to give

²⁶ Cf. Luke 1:77-79; Galatians 4:4.

²⁷ Cf. John 14:6.

²⁸ Cf. I Timothy 2:4.

²⁹ Cf. Matthew 13: 7 and 22; Luke 12:34; I Timothy 6:10; Romans 8:13.

himself entirely to us through the Holy Sacrament, we understand that we must live only for Him, rejecting our lives and the rest of the world for Him³⁰.

296 This is the path the *Saints* have always followed. To imitate Jesus Christ, they wanted to live hidden from and even despised by the world; considered worldly riches as rubbish; loved solitude, silence and retreat; submitted with pleasure to the satires, disdain and mistreatment of a world not worthy of holding them close to its heart; *loved* their fellow man to the point of sacrifice, and God to the point of giving their blood and life for Him. So many and such beautiful flowers, beloved children, are sown along this way!

297 How happy would the people be if men walked along this path following the tracks of their Divine Master! All the terrible problems which concern society so much today would then have a natural and easy solution, because the poor would then see their needs aided by the munificence of the rich, who would consider themselves as administrators of the goods the Divine Providence has provided, and the need to account for their investment. From here, a mutual and perfect *union* and harmony between them would follow: the rich man loving his brother the poor man, and even more when he sees him more in need, and the poor man respecting and honoring the rich man as his father and benefactor. This would reduce the distances separating them today and would eliminate the scorn and contempt of one and the hate and resentment of the other. The peoples would live in *peace* and thus would progress morally and materially, and men would achieve the happiness they are so anxious for if the spirit of Jesus Christ animates and informs all their acts, because only He, beloved children, is the way we have to take to be *happy* both temporally and eternally. *I am the way* (John 14:6).

JESUS CHRIST IS THE TRUTH

298 As long as mankind remained in the state of *innocence* in which God created him, dealt with and knew God, with the supernatural intelligence he had been provided with, knew all the creatures with such perfection that he could give each one their name³¹; the laws of nature were evident to him and he penetrated its secrets; all the things he saw and understood how they were in themselves, with the supernatural light that the Lord granted him of the full truth that could neither deceive him nor deceive us. He was, then, man in possession of the *truth*.

299 In the way that as the sunlight increases it allows one to see and know the objects with greater perfection and at full intensity one discovers what they are in their entirety, as the light decreases our vision also is reduced, and lacking light completely we do not perceive even the largest objects. In the same way, beloved children, to the degree that we approach God, the unfailing light, it increases our

³⁰ Cf. Romans 6:1-11; Galatians 5:24-25; 2 Timothy 2:11; 2 Corinthians 5:15, 1 Thessalonians 5:10.

³¹ Cf. Genesis 2:19-20.

knowledge of Him and his divine works and inflames the heart even more with the fire of his love. Whereas on the path that takes us farther away from Him, our *understanding* becomes enveloped in dense clouds until it is obscured from everything by the thick darkness of *error*.

300 This was the effect that followed the loss of the original justice.

With man separated from the true light, his *understanding* was so obscured that he came to fall into the most absurd *errors*, even reaching the point of losing the notion of virtue and vice to the extent that he enthroned this one and deferred that one, and men forgot their God and the worship and love they owed Him so much they came to kneel down and pay to worship their own irrational beings and even the works of their hands.

301 Who would be powerful enough to extract humankind from the painful state of error, ignorance and degradation it was submerged in? Only Jesus Christ, our God, A.H., whose merciful nature moved him to come from the highest heavens, as Zechariah says, to enlighten those who were sitting in the darkness and shadows of death: *To enlighten them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death* (Luke 1:79), to direct our feet to the path of peace: *to direct our feet into the way of peace* (Luke 1:79).

302 In effect, as St. John says, He was the true *light* who enlightens every man who comes to this world: *That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world.* (John 1:9). He was the only one who could make them see the abyss their errors had launched them into with the brilliance of his divine *light* and understand the truth of his admirable doctrine, the only one that could save them, and with the invincible force of his divine grace prepares his heart for the practice of the virtues, the source of true happiness³².

303 Jesus Christ himself testified to this divine mission his eternal Father entrusted to him when he said to Pilate: *For this was I born, and for this came I into the world; that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice* (John 18:37). And to the Jews who believed in Him, he said: *If you continue in my word, you shall be my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free* (John 8:31 and 32). On the contrary, while complaining of the skeptics, he told them: *If I say the truth to you, why do you not believe me?* (John 8:46). And from here, he argued they were not of God because (John 8:47): *He that is of God, heareth the words of God. Therefore you hear them not, because you are not of God.* Jesus Christ is, therefore, this *Word of God made flesh* as St. John said, and *dwelt among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth* (John 1:14).

304 Beloved children, this eternal *Truth* is the solid and unbreakable foundation of our sacrosanct religion, whose sacred dogmas and doctrines are based on the truth of the word of the Son of God, which can neither deceive him nor deceive us, which says: *Heaven and earth shall pass, but my words shall not pass*

³² Cf. James 1:25; 1 Peter 3:10-12.

(Matthew 24:35). Because if Jesus Christ had been able to deceive Himself or his words did not have full and total fulfillment, our religion would be futile and the hope in Him and his promises failed.

305 Jesus Christ, the eternal Truth, is the one who has inspired and enlightened wise men in all times and the inexhaustible fountain where they drank deeply from those torrents of wisdom which illustrated and amazed the world, as the seraphic doctor *St. Bonaventure* meant when, questioned by the angelic doctor *St. Thomas* as to where he found such a sublime doctrine, showed him the image of a crucifix as his full response.

306 The *faith* in the *truth* of the promises of Jesus Christ filled the martyrs with strength to endure with joy the greatest tortures, and bravery for not fearing the tyrants, who they confused with their arguments and words inspired by the Lord Himself, who said: *And you shall be brought before governors, and before kings for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they shall deliver you up, take no thought how or what to speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what to speak. For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you* (Matthew 10:18-20).

307 Who populated the deserts with hermits and the monasteries with monks? Who inspired the fleeing of the virgins from the pomp and vanities of the world to consecrate their virginity in God? Who armed the arm of the penitents for the severe treatment they gave to their own bodies and encouraged them to continue their regimens of austerity that stun the world? Who, finally, makes us bravely face all the troubles and hardships of this life with acceptance and patience but the security with which we await the fulfillment of the promises of eternal happiness made to us by He who is the infallible *Truth*, Jesus Christ, of whom the eternal Father has given testimony saying: *This is my most beloved son; hear ye him* (Mark 9:7)?

308 With how much reason does this divine Lord complain that men have such a heavy and hard heart they still love vanity and chase after the lie, even after He outlined the way to Heaven for them and gave such clear testimony of the *truth* of his teachings, when they could not save themselves without that doctrine? Because no one goes to the Father except through Him, who is the way, nor know him except those who He, who is the truth Himself, wants to reveal: *I am the way and the truth* (John 14:6)

JESUS CHRIST IS THE LIFE

309 Beloved children, Jesus Christ is the creator of being and the existence of all creatures, by whom and in whom they were made: *All things were made by him: and without him was made nothing that was made.* (John 1:3). Because as the Word of God was there from the beginning and all life, both spiritual and material, is owed to Him: *In him was life* (John 1:4). Our life depends on Him to such a degree

that not only would we not exist without Him, but He is giving us life at every moment, as our existence is like a continuous creation. And we would cease to exist, returning to the void from which he took us from at the very instant his *Divine Providence* stops cooperating in our existence.

310 But if he is the Creator of our being and natural life, he is no less the author of the supernatural element of our soul.

Just as our material life is the result of the union of the soul with the body and man necessarily dies when this link is broken because the soul gives it life, the supernatural life consists of the union of the soul with grace, and that dies when it loses that priceless gift of grace through sin, as the prophet Ezekiel declares saying: *The soul that sinneth, the same shall die* (Ezekiel 18:4). However, if raising someone from the dead is a miracle that only the Divine Omnipotence can work, by Himself or through His Saints, it is no less important to bring back life to the soul after its death by sin, an act that only belongs to God.

311 There was not sufficient virtue in human nature, even joining together the merits of all men, to appease the Divine Justice offended by sin and to recover the life of grace lost by him. However many merits there were, there would always be an infinite disparity between them and the seriousness of the offense, which has to be measured by the dignity of the offended, who is God. Only God, then, can give this satisfaction to Himself and in fact He did so by sending us His own Son who gave the life of grace to us through his death. *He that spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all* (Romans 8:32).

312 But Jesus Christ is also our life for his *doctrine*. He teaches man to have a low opinion of himself and, considering himself inferior to everyone, always look for the last place, leaving the first and most honored for his brothers³³, eliminating in this way the cardinal sin of pride and enlivening our spirit through *humility*, which is the best inclination for grace. He makes people see the vanity and life of earthly goods, in order not to covet them and be more extravagant with his brothers, and with that kills greed in men, which hardens the heart towards our fellow man and enables him to redeem his sins and deserve grace through asking for alms. He instructs them that man was not created for material pleasures for the purpose of eliminating the lust in his soul, which reduces man to the level of the beasts, and stipulates *chastity* so that it may be a worthy temple for the Holy Spirit. And finally, his doctrine destroys the seed of all the cardinal sins in the soul, the cause of its death, at the rate He instills in man the conviction and love of the truth, teaching him the practice at the same time, and therefore he has to be *happy* in the world and enjoy eternal life.

313 Our Lord Jesus Christ likewise gives us life in the Sacraments He instituted in his Church, as fountains from which that grace flows in abundance that we acquired with the infinite merits of his precious blood. Because in the *Baptism*, he takes us from death to life, returning to us the title of sons of God and

³³ Cf. Luke 14:7-11.

the inheritance of grace lost through sin. In the *Confirmation*, he invigorates and strengthens us to fight the Lord's battles against the enemies of our salvation, who intend to kill our soul, seizing the faith and the life of the grace. In the sacrament of Penance, he returns us this same grace, lost by mortal sin, and makes the soul more beautiful, washing it with his precious blood. In the Eucharist, not only does he pass the grace on to us but gives himself to us as nourishment, he who is the creator of grace and life. In the same way, through the sacraments of *Order* and *Matrimony*, he gives material and moral life to society and his grace to those who call for those states, so that they may be sanctified in them and be the cause of salvation for many of them. And, finally, in the last moments of the life of man, when the battle with the enemies who intend to take it grows stronger, he gives his grace in the Extreme Unction, so that, man may be comforted by it and happily pass from this exile to the Beatified Land. Rightly, then, does Jesus Christ say He is the life, in the same way that He is the way and the truth: *I am the way, the truth and the life* (John 1:4).

314 Beloved children, how happy we would be if we never departed from the path that He traced for us with his doctrine and example! How free from the danger of committing a mistake if we consulted and followed the truth of his teachings in everything! How sure we would be of achieving eternal life if His *life* informed our own!

315 But, unfortunately the *world* is moving ever farther away from Jesus Christ; and that is the starting point for those who fall from abyss to abyss until their complete ruin. Closing their eyes so that the clarity and truth of His doctrine does not force them to give their consent, and they become enveloped in the most vulgar *errors*. They regard as unhappiness and social death the obscure life of those who follow Jesus Christ and find His death in the same elements He places his happiness and good fortune.

316 At least, beloved children, we who pride ourselves on being disciples of Jesus Christ follow his steps, listen meekly to the truths He teaches us and realize He is our life to such a degree that we desire nothing more than to love and serve him.

Beloved children, we desire this intensely and ceaselessly request it of the Lord, so that, comforted by the spirit of Jesus Christ, all of us may attain our *salvation*. And as proof of the love you profess in Him, we give you our pastoral blessing in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Solsona on the first Sunday of Lent, in the year 1907.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP AD. AP.

4

Devotion of the Rosary

(B. Sol 43 [1908], pp. 342-346)

317 The sad situation which our Holy Mother the Church is going through, today more than ever under fire everywhere and in every possible way, now not only comes from its enemies but rather, and most painfully, from the very ones who pride themselves on being His children, to the point no nation does not contribute to tormenting its loving heart in its own way. This forces us, beloved children, to lift our pleas to the Almighty to request that these days of tribulation be shortened and give our Mother the comfort of seeing all her children closely united to her, and all her most bitter enemies on their knees at her feet.

318 The truth is that nothing can make us fear for the Church, for the gates of Hell³⁴ shall never prevail over it. A comforting hope, that even if it was not already supported by the word of the Son of God, then the experience of so many centuries when the enemies of the Church have battled against it relentlessly in every possible way would be enough to assure us of it. In their conceit, these enemies believed it defeated and destroyed to the point of rejoicing at being able to attend its funeral, while the Church was watching thousands of adversaries fall ignominiously left and right without being able to come close enough to damage it, nor prevent its triumphal march over the remains and corpses of its enemies.

319 This tree is planted by the hand of the Almighty, and the more it is purged, the healthier it looks and produces greater fruits; and the storms and hurricanes of persecution not only do not damage it, but rather serve to deepen and extend its roots.

320 But if we neither can nor should fear for the Church, beloved children, by contrast we have to worry very much about the fate of so many unfortunate people who, dazzled by flattering sophisms and pernicious doctrines, are distancing themselves from the lap of their loving mother the Catholic Church and becoming her implacable and cruel executioners. Because of them, yes, we must cry out to the Lord to shorten the days of the test, because there are so many desertions that it seems those times have arrived of which our Divine Redeemer spoke when he said that even the chosen ones would be induced to error if they were not cut short.

321 Because of them, therefore, the Roman Pontiffs and Prelates of the Church have cried out and raised their pleas to the Almighty at all times, and urged the faithful children to eagerly pray to request the lights of the high and divine mercy. Among the prayers which have always been most recommended for this, beloved children, the Holy Rosary has the first place, a devotion taught to St. Dominic of Guzman by the Queen of Heaven herself³⁵. It was given to St. Dominic to destroy all the heresies, to finish off the Albigensian heresy during that time and through it the Holy Church later obtained many notable victories against

³⁴ Cf. Matthew 16:18

³⁵ Cf. in RB 4th reading of 7 October.

its enemies. The Holy Pontiffs St. Pius V and Clement XI attributed the victories achieved over the Turks, in that the pleas of the faithful for the assistance of the Holy Virgin in favor of the Christian army coincided with the prayer of the Holy Rosary³⁶.

322 Therefore, this devotion which the immortal Pontiff Leo XIII³⁷ repeatedly recommended to us, has always been, beloved children, the preferred one in our nation, the one practiced with more constancy and zeal in all time, publicly and privately, by our ancestors. There is perhaps no village where it has not been said in the streets during the holidays, nor a family that does not pray it daily.

323 But could we say as much of our own times? Through the mercy of God, some towns still conserve the holy custom of going out in procession, at dawn or during the afternoon, saying these divine praises to the Holy Virgin; there are even fewer towns now that require the faithful to make a small sacrifice or overcome their human fear to partake of this display of Catholic faith. Even sadder, how many families can be found today that never or rarely pray the Holy Rosary!

324 So in reference to our own diocese, beloved children, we want there to be a great increase in the practice of this devotion which attracts so many graces and blessings to towns and families. For that purpose, we have tried to re-establish in this city, the see of our diocese, the old practice, interrupted for many years, of going out in procession through the streets saying the Holy Rosary on Sunday mornings; it is our wish that, from this example, it also becomes re-established in the towns where it was practiced before and introduced into as many other communities as possible. Primarily, we beg the family men not to stop praying the Rosary with their children and household servants daily, as well as setting them the good example that we inherited from our parents, that they may attract to you and your children the divine mercy and the necessary graces for their sanctification and salvation, of which the Holy Virgin is the depositary and dispenser.

325 We ask for the zeal and interest of the priests who make use of the occasion to speak to the faithful to instill them with the importance of this devotion.

326 We would hope, venerable priests and beloved members of the diocese, that the work of encouraging the practice of this devotion might be the tribute of gratitude all of us offer to the Lord this year for having granted our Holy Father Pius X the ability to celebrate the 50th anniversary of his first mass. He has given us the no less important grace of having a Pontiff who unites an eminent saintliness to an admirable wisdom and an enchanting prudence and appeal, the most appropriate qualities that could serve as a rule and lead a society so materialistic, egotistical and ignorant of religious concerns as our own on to the good path.

³⁶ Cf. in RB 5th and 6th readings of 7 October.

³⁷ Cf., among others, the following encyclicals of Leo XIII: *Supremi Apostolatus* of 1 September 1883; *Superiore Anno* of 30 August 1884; *Laetitiae sanctae* of 8 September 1893; *Iucunda Semper* of 8 September 1894; *Adiutricem Populi* of 5 September 1895; *Augustissimae Virginis* of 12 September 1897; *Diuturni Temporis* of 5 September 1898.

327 But our zeal would still not be satisfied by this alone, beloved children. To perpetuate this memory, we would also like to establish some Eucharistic congregation, such as the Wake or another one, in the main towns of our diocese to develop among the men the frequent communion so strongly recommended by the Holy Father; and another congregation of women who would watch over the decency of the house of the Lord, carry out the cleaning and tidying up and making ornaments which could be distributed annually among the poorer churches of our Diocese.

328 Beloved children, we trust that our wishes directed towards securing your spiritual good will not be frustrated, and we shall work relentlessly and without rest to fulfill that duty of our ministry.

329 Let us persuade ourselves that, today more than ever, it is necessary to redouble our efforts so that our spirit of fervor does not decline nor become infected by the general virus of religious impiety and indifference that can be observed everywhere in these unfortunate times. For that, there is nothing is more appropriate than our devotion to the Holy Eucharist, a fountain of love and grace, and the Holy Virgin, an aqueduct of this same divine grace. What Jesus Christ our Lord and his Immaculate Mother appear to want to teach us in the multitude of miracles they work daily in the sanctuary of Lourdes, for the conversion of this unbelieving society, is that the majority of the miracles take place in the procession of the Holy Eucharist, by blessing the sick with Him. As if to show us that, in the sacrament of his love and as the creator of grace, He is the sovereign doctor who can cure all the ailments of our body and soul. And He wants to cure them through his Mother Mary, whom He has established as the dispenser of all His graces.

330 Let us approach Jesus Christ through the August Sacrament, and our beloved Mother the Holy Virgin through praying the Holy Rosary. Let us wait confidently, beloved children, and we shall manage to shorten the time for the triumph of the holy Church, the conversion of all its enemies and the sanctification of our souls. That is the longing of your Prelate and Father, who blesses you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Solsona, in the celebration of Nativity of Our Lady in the year 1908.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP AD. AP

5

On the Love of God

(B. Sol 42 [1909], pp. 1-8)

God is charity: and he that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him. (1 John 4:16)

Most illustrious Council, venerable clergy, religious communities and the faithful.

331 Love: see here, beloved children, the motive that drives man in all his acts. Selfless, honest and rational in most occasions: egotistical, sensual and accommodating his animal appetites on many others. But it always turns out that the axis around which all his desires, affections and operations revolve is love; because man was created to love and love is the necessary function of his heart, which cannot live without loving. Because God, who made him in the living images of his beauty and perfections (Genesis 1:26), *Let us make man to our image and likeness*, wanted man to partake of his own life, which is love (I John 4:16): “*God is charity*”.

332 In fact, all the works of God, whether “*ad intra*” or “*ad extra*”, show us that His life is love.

The Eternal Father breeds the Word, his beloved Son in whom he has his satisfaction, God like Him, the living image, correct and perfect in his substance and the splendor of his glory (Hebrews 1:3): *Who being the brightness of his glory, and the figure of his substance*; and Father and Son loving with an infinite and substantial love, and from this love comes the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity, inherent and equal to the Father and Son; for that is where you can see that love is the life of God.

333 But as love tends to spread and is passed on, the Lord was not content with loving Himself, in which consists his essential happiness and Beatitude but rather He wanted to make the infinite number of beings that he created, angels and men, participants in that love so they might increase their accidental glory, fulfilling the holy will of their Maker in heaven and on earth; and through living in total identification with Him, they might also participate in His own life of love (I John 4:16): “*And he that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him*”.

334 This reveals to us the divine plan of the creation in which, from his eternal decree in the mind of God through the “It is consummated”³⁸ spoken by the Redeemer of the human race awaiting a cross on Mount Calvary, the Creator does not appear to have proposed anything other than to establish and engrave the law of love in his creatures.

335 In fact, after creating the angelic spirits, he tested their submission and the love they owed Him as their Creator and in the worship of the Word incarnate, which reveals his divine plan (Hebrews 1:6): *And let all the angels of God adore him*. This law of love and obedience is the cause of those who remain faithful being confirmed in grace and the state of Beatitude, while the rebels are condemned for eternity.

336 And man, a creature inferior to the angel³⁹, but fashioned by God the king of creation to whom all things are subordinate and formed in his image and likeness⁴⁰, was also joined to Him with bonds of love. So we can call what He gave the law of love, for all of it is based on love with charity being its complement

³⁸ Cf. John 19:30.

³⁹ Cf. Psalms 8:6.

⁴⁰ Cf. Genesis 1:27.

(Romans 13:10): *Love therefore is the fulfilling of the law.* Its precepts are adapted to this virtue, to the degree that the Apostle St. Paul says that "He who loves has fulfilled all the law" (Romans 13:8), *For he that loveth his neighbour, hath fulfilled the law.*

337 In addition, the virtues the Lord commands man to exercise to achieve his eternal Beatitude and thereby increase his glory are all arranged in relation to charity, which informs them and gives life to them to the degree that without charity, they would lack an object and could not survive. Nor would it be easy many times to practice them if charity and the love of God did not soften their rough edges and ease the repugnance that our nature offers against carrying them out. All the virtues also have their object in time and end within that time, with the merit for having practiced them passing only to eternity; however, the same cannot be said for love and charity since time does not limit them and eternity is where they primarily have their object and where it will be in its full glory⁴¹.

338 Beloved children, everything, in one word, that the Lord carried out and provided for in the Creation, both in the order of nature and the order of grace, clearly shows his determination for us to take part in His life of love. Because charity and the love of God is the soul, without which man is dead (1 John 3:14): *He that loveth not, abideth in death.*

339 But what this truth demonstrates to us even more is that the Lord wants to restore to man the life of grace lost through sin by sending to the world his Only Son so that we might live through Him (1 John 4:9): *By this hath the charity of God appeared towards us, because God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we may live by him;* because only He can be the suitable price for our rescue and bring us back to the life of love, the life of God himself (1 John 4:16): *God is charity: and he that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him.*

340 See here, beloved children, the mission of the Word incarnate of the Living God.

The sin committed through the instigation of the infernal spirit had opened a bottomless abyss between God and His creation; what a furious hurricane had violently seized man and left him separated from God by an infinite distance, impossible for him to cross; the Creator of his being, who always treated him as any loving father does, had become his irreconcilable enemy and after losing the grace and love of God, which was his life, he was dead; so says the apostle St. John, he who does not love is dead: *He that loveth not, abideth in death* (1 John 3:14).

341 However, it was not advisable that death take possession forever of the world, nor that Hell be able to boast of having snatched away from God the glory that he had given his creations. The divine plan of the creation of man should not remain frustrated; man did not have to remain eternally enslaved by Satan; and to this end, miracle of love, the eternal Word was offered as a guarantee of man. The Holy Trinity decreed his incarnation so that, having recovered our nature, man

⁴¹ Cf. 1 Corinthians 13:8-13.

might not only regain the lost rights of divine kinship and glory but rather with our merits more proven and our nature refined up to the point of placing it on the throne of the Holy Trinity, and being able to say from the moment of his entry in the world: "Oh death, I shall be your death; Hell, I shall snatch away your victims!" (Hosea 13:14): *O death, I will be thy death; O hell, I will be thy bite.*

342 See here, beloved children, the august mystery that the Church, our Mother, reminds us of and commemorates in these days. A mystery that we could call of love, since it shows us the infinite love the Lord has for us when, taking pity on us, He has wanted to redeem us at his expense: *Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore have I drawn thee, taking pity on thee* (Jeremiah 31:3).

343 It is characteristic of love to attempt to identify itself completely with the loved one, by uplifting it to its own condition if necessary, or the lover descending from his own to try to secure a perfect union between both of them. And this is what our lover Jesus does, therefore, to unite us to Him. He humbles himself to the extent of taking our nature and appears among us and uplifts us and refines a dignity as great as we may call our own and be true sons of God: *That we should be called, and should be the sons of God* (I John 3:1).

344 But this divine Lord not only hid the brilliance of His divinity beneath the veil of his holy humanity, so that we might approach Him and come to Him more freely and with less fear, but instead maximized his love, embracing the miseries of our humanity itself and choosing the status of the poorest and most downtrodden of men⁴².

345 Observe, beloved children, how the Messiah the Jews were waiting for with the pomp and magnificence of a great king, was born in a miserable stable as his Holy Mother could not find a place in any inn due to her poverty. Look at Him wrapped in poor swaddling clothes and laid on straw in a manger, He who dressed the heavens and earth with such great variety, and has his seat there above the angels.. See Him subject to inclement weather, He whom all of nature obeys as its Creator. And when focusing on such great humiliation and despondency, you shall understand that the God of Love wanted to force man to imitate Him and uplift him to identify with Him.

346 It is also characteristic of love not to forgive sacrifices by the loved one before taking pleasure in suffering for him, to give him a greater proof of your affection. And the deserved love, Jesus our Good, for that reason did not content Himself with humbling himself for us by taking the form of a sinner and embracing the sorrows and hardships resulting from sin: poverty, hunger, thirst, pains, fatigue and up to death itself. He also wanted his death to be the most cruel and insulting, on an infamous gallows and spilling his precious blood to the very last drop, the blood which He began to spill just eight days after his birth, in the circumcision, as a demonstration and testimony of his will.

⁴² Cf. Philippians 2:6-7.

347 Beloved children, how rightly we could exclaim here with the Apostle: Oh, the nobility of the wisdom and science of God, how incomprehensible are his judgments and mysterious his ways! (Romans 11:33) *O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways!*

348 What intelligence, not even angelic, could ever have imagined that the God of Majesty would humble himself in that way, that the infinite would be contained in the human nature, that the Lord of those who dominate would submit to his creatures, that He who is the Beatitude and eternal happiness might suffer and abide pain and finally die, He who is the Creator of life? And all this to win over man, that miserable creature, and capture his love. How strange that the saints, my seraphic St. Francis among them, were beside themselves from the enthusiasm and joy that the contemplation of such admirable mysteries caused them!⁴³

349 But look, beloved children, and see how love wants to be reciprocated, which is another of its characteristics; and if this is what the human heart asks of the creatures whom it loves, by the law its Maker has engraved, shall not this Lord demand of us the same reciprocation? Why, if not for that, was the need to love put in the human heart, without which he cannot live? Not what other object he also made naturally grateful by loving, but rather he who feels the need to love and reciprocate it towards his Creator, Redeemer and his Father?

350 But, the sorrow! How little we men focus on or understand this obligation! As simple and affectionate as we are and show ourselves with the creatures and so reluctant and indifferent in the love we owe to God! The Seraph of Assisi rightly lamented this when, sobbing, said to those who questioned the cause of his pain: "I cry because Love is not loved!"⁴⁴

351 How great is our need when, reversing the law and order of love, we focus on it as the final aim in the creatures, who should only love themselves in God, through God and for God⁴⁵, and we place the Lord in the second position, if we do not completely forget Him! Do we not have too much experience of the emptiness and restlessness we feel in our hearts when we spread our affection indiscriminately and the bitter deceptions the Lord allows us to receive from them with the aim of attracting us to Him? It is because, beloved children, God made us for Himself, so that we might glorify Him on earth and in heaven, being happy and fortunate in time and eternity with Him. Hence our heart cannot find its fullness and satisfaction apart from God, as St. Augustine says: "*You made us, Lord, for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in You*"⁴⁶.

352 We love God to reciprocate the infinite and eternal love that He has for us. And our divine Redeemer says he has come to light the fire of charity in the world and wishes it to burn in Him (Luke 12:49). *I am come to cast fire on the earth;*

⁴³ Cf. LM 10:7, in works cited, p. 446

⁴⁴ Cf. TC 14, in works cited, p. 540, chiefly 525, 1272.

⁴⁵ Cf. 524, 1056, 1151, 1195, 1307.

⁴⁶ St. Augustine: *Confessions*, 1.1: PL 32,661, Cf. 478, 521, 663, 966.

and what will I, but that it be kindled? Dispose your hearts so that understanding this divine fire we may live the life of God, which is love, and remain always in Him: *God is charity: and he that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him*⁴⁷.

In proof of which I bless you, with all the feeling of your soul, your loving Prelate, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Solsona on the day of the Nativity of the Lord in the year 1908.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP AD. AP.

6

Teaching the Catechism

(B. Sol 44 [1909], pp. 377-387)

“This is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith” (I John 5:4).

Most illustrious Council, venerable clergy, religious communities and the faithful.

353 Beloved children, the condition that society has come to find itself in now is lamentable, and it saddens and frightens us to think of its future. The modern doctrines which teach man that his mission is over and done with in this world, without the idea that there might be another one beyond it for him; that whatever exists on earth belongs to everyone and therefore property is robbery; that love is free and no restrictions should be placed on it; that man does not need an authority that governs and dominates him, because he is free and independent; that there is no other morality than the universal; that Religion is a myth and invention in order to intimidate the meek. These and other errors in that vein has managed to disturb the intelligence of people so that it does not just seem, but is a fact that many have people lost the notion, innate in man, of good and evil, virtue and vice, and in their blindness reached the point of singing the praises of this and rejecting that, and still look to and proclaim as redeemers of humankind the leaders of these ideas that separate men⁴⁸.

354 The result of the propagation of such vile doctrines are: the hatred with which the disinherited classes look at the rich and the glacial indifference of the rich at the sight of the needs of their brothers, the poor; the unleashing of passions and eagerness in seeking to satisfy them; the dissolution of the marital union and destruction of the family; the rejection of all authority and the insistence on shaking off its yoke; the denial of the supernatural order and the revealed truths, and from there the lack of balance and unrest that is evident in society, which

⁴⁷ I John 4:16.

⁴⁸ Cf. PIUS X: *Pascendi Dominici gregis*: ASS 40 (1907), pp. 593-650.

foresees its retreat back to barbarity if the Divine Providence does not support its forward progress and men do not welcome and declare themselves in the faith and doctrine of the Savior, the only who can channel society correctly and save the individuals in time and for eternity. *This is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith* (I John 5:4).

355 Become sad, beloved children, at the sight of a century that presumes to know everything, to weigh everything on the scales of its poor reason and having unearthed great secrets of nature, against such ignorance and disdainful neglect of the most transcendent truths as the truths of Religion area, the only ones capable of making us happy by teaching us our duties and relations towards God, our fellow man and towards the society in which we live. How rightly did an eminent cardinal⁴⁹ say of our times that the present-day society needed "bread and the pages of the Catechism"! So that, in fact, if you are trying to improve the condition of the poor and attempt to have all social classes well instructed in Christian doctrine and instructed in their religious duties, we would see society transformed and distance itself from its missteps and errors.

356 What a change was carried out in the Roman Empire and the entire world when the doctrine of Jesus Christ was being announced by the Apostles! They repudiated their idols, in which they trusted until then; reformed the corrupt and depraved customs of that sensual society; the ones who had previously only rejected the poor and looked on them as inferior beings opened their hearts to feelings of charity; they abandoned their petty hatreds and desires for vengeance and the world enjoyed that peace for men of good will the angels announced when the Savior was born.

357 Nevertheless, nothing favored the spread of this strange new religion. It was preached by some unknown men who were taken as rude and ignorant; they proclaimed it without subtle words and uplifting concepts, but rather simply and directly, talking in the language of the heart, in imitation of the divine Master and being poor, they did not have gold, silver or any means that might encourage the public to pay attention to them. All the powers in the world were against them because the doctrine was not only new, but it completely opposed and condemned the customs and vices that were so deeply rooted in the society and they confessed through God to a Man who died crucified on the cross. In spite of having the entire nature and power of Hell against it, so to speak, it made its own way and introduced itself everywhere. People from all social classes professed it, the poor as well as the rich, the learned as well as the ignorant, in such a way that Tertuliano could rightly say: "We are so new and now we are filling everything, the palace, the senate and the forum"⁵⁰.

358 But what is there to be surprised about if the divine Spirit was speaking through the mouths of those men, with all the vitality and grace that no one can

⁴⁹ This refers to Cardinal Monescillo (cf. en ROCA, T., *Historia de la Congregación of RR.Terciarios Capuchinos*, Vol. I (Madrid, 1968), p. 103.

⁵⁰ Cf. TERTULIANO: *Apologética Contra Gentiles*, 37: PL 1:525.

resist, and were being sent from the Lord himself, who says to the confessors of his faith: "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist and gainsay." (Luke 21:15), which confirmed and gave credit to its doctrine for a multitude of blessings and miracles?

359 We priests have also received the same mission of teaching the people the Law of God; the doctrine we proclaim is nothing other than what the Apostles preached; the power of the divine grace had not been abridged nor the Lord shown Himself more hesitant in granting it. What then is the reason, beloved priests, that today they do not see the same results in preaching the doctrine of Jesus Christ? If it undoubtedly depends in large part on the unwillingness of the people, because some have become unworthy of the grace through resisting its calls and others, engrossed in their vain science, reject as outdated the truths of Religion; and more than a few who call themselves Christians are true apostates of the Catholic Church and the more indifferent they show themselves in matters relating to Religion; although it pains us, we must confess we are partly responsible, by not being animated by the same spirit of fervor and zeal which the Apostles possessed, to seek only the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

360 Even in her own time, the mystical Doctor St. Teresa of Jesus lamented when writing to her confessor that their preaching was not yielding very many rewards among souls because the ministers of the Gospel were not sufficiently stirred by the love of God⁵¹. How much more rightly can we ourselves lament the same thing in our own ministers?

361 Present-day society, venerable priests, provides us with a vast field for exercising the virtue of zeal in the salvation of souls. Not often have we seen so much ignorance in religious matters nor greater vanity and arrogance. Men presume to know everything these days, everything is the object of their critical investigation yet nevertheless, they show no interest at all in the study and knowledge of the truths of the supernatural order, where their worldly and eternal happiness lies.

362 Our Holy Father Pius X regrets this development in his encyclical on the teaching of the Christian doctrine in these words: "It would be difficult to consider the thickness of the darkness that envelops them and, even sadder, the calm with which they remain within it. They give nothing to God, the Sovereign Creator and Moderator of all things and the wisdom of the Christian faith, to the extent that they truly know nothing of the Incarnation of the Word of God nor of the perfect restoration of the human race consummated by Him: they know nothing of grace, the main help for attaining the eternal goods, and nothing of the holy sacrifice nor of the Sacraments through which we obtain and preserve grace. Concerning sin, they neither know of its malice nor the infamy it brings with it and thus do not make the least effort in avoiding it or eliminating it and arrive at their final day in such condition they do not leave themselves any hope of salvation. The priest is seen trying to take advantage of those last moments of life to summarily teach

⁵¹ Cf. ST. TERESA: *Libro de la Vida* 16.7, in *Complete Works of St. Teresa* (BAC, Madrid, 1962), p. 67, Cf. 1145.

them Religion instead of mainly using them, when it would be advisable, to moving them towards the affects of charity; but this only occurs if the dying person suffers from such guilty ignorance that it renders the aid of the priest useless and is quietly resolved by passing through the shadows of eternity without having satisfied God for his or her sins. Our predecessor Benedict XIV wrote: 'We declare that the majority of those condemned to eternal sorrow suffer their everlasting misfortune from ignoring the mysteries of the faith, which they necessarily should know and believe in to be counted among the chosen ones'⁵².

363 We must, therefore, make them understand their nonsense and teach them the doctrine of Jesus Christ not with subtlety of speech and words of human wisdom, as the Apostle said to the Corinthians, but rather with the most persuasive of reasons, spirit and virtue, because faith does not have support itself, as he says himself, in the wisdom of men, but rather in the virtue of God (I Corinthians 2: 1, 4, 5).

364 That is the way the Lord makes our words effective and we will be able to instill the virtues of the faith in the hearts and minds of men, the only things that can save society from the ruin and damnation which threatens due to the evil doctrines. *This is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith* (I John 5:4).

* * *

365 The preaching and teaching of the doctrine of Jesus Christ contained in the Catechism is, beloved children, undoubtedly the most excellent and important of all the works we can do, both religiously and socially⁵³. In the religious order itself because, if the entire mission of man on earth consists of serving his Maker, so that he may reach eternally happiness after his death, what else could be more important to man than having a perfect knowledge of this Supreme Being in everything related to human understanding; to return his fine love and to fully know His holy will and the precepts that He establishes on man, to adapt all the actions of our lives to them and direct them to His greater glory? And in the social order because the peace and tranquility of the peoples and their material development and progress depends on the honesty, work ethic and union of the citizens, which must be respected in their rights in return, nothing is more necessary to man than living in a society where he knows the duties he has with respect to his fellow man, the laws of fairness and justice he has to abide by in his work and treatment of others and the motives and reasons which tie and oblige him to the love and mutual union of his fellow man.

This holy book teaches us all that, a code of the Divine Law given by God for the governing of the world and which it has been governed by since its creation.

366 Yes, beloved children, the doctrine teaches man that God is the beginning and that to serve Him is his mission on earth and seeing and pleasing Him his ultimate end. This recalls the law established by the Lord himself and must also

⁵² Pius X, *Acerbo Nimis*: ASS 377 (1905), pp. 614-615.

⁵³ Cf. 2222.

be kept as a precept of his Church. It instills the truths that are to be believed as those revealed by God himself and it teaches how one has to direct oneself to the heavenly Father through prayer; in a word, it instructs one how to relate to the supernatural life. But in addition to this, it also indicates the duties established by the society in which you live, teaching you that all men are your brothers whom you must love by the rule of God himself as if they are children of our Father who art in heaven. Therefore, you do not want for them what you do not want for yourself; avoid offending them in any way and trying to secure all possible spiritual and worldly good for them. That you must obey and respect the authority of any person who may represent him, because all power and authority comes from God. And in short, it makes you understand that you must exercise charity with your fellow men, without which your sacrifices would not be pleasing in the eyes of the Lord, and to be resigned and patient in the tribulations that you will suffer as a result of sin in this exile until you reach Heaven.

367 What happiness there would be if this holy doctrine was better understood and practiced better in the world; Nothing more would be needed to end all the ambition, envy, hatred and discord which divide men! The fulfillment of duty, the faithfulness in dealing with them, conscientiousness in work and its compensation and honesty and integrity in all actions of life would be the result necessary for such sublime teachings, because the entire aspiration of man would be reduced to doing the will of God in everything, whom he would wish to serve as his Lord.

368 Beloved children, let us instruct the people in the eternal truths and duties the doctrine of Jesus Christ teaches, so we may free them from the damnation to which the modern worldly doctrines are leading them because our victory lies only in faith. *This is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith* (1 John 5:4).

* * *

369 This almighty and divine mission is the duty of all Ministers of the Lord, since their lips have to store the knowledge and the law has to be learned from their mouths, because since they are the angels of the Lord of hosts, as the prophet Malachi says (Malachi 2:7). He says their lips have to store the knowledge because they have not been given their knowledge solely for themselves but rather that they may illustrate it to everyone, leading them, as angels of the Lord, to their eternal salvation by the way of the divine precepts. For that purpose, they should not let out of their hands the book of the divine law, which St. Ambrose calls the priestly book, and says: "Unfortunate are the times when the book studied the least by the priests was this priestly book".

370 Yes, beloved Priests, the Divine Master was speaking to you when he says: "Go, instruct all the people, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you", (Matthew 28: 19-20). These lines are collected in the small but sublime and admirable book of the Christian doctrine, a highly noble mission

which makes you part of the mission of the Son of God, who says: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." (John 20: 21). And through this most high mission, you become like co-redeemers of humankind by leading the souls to their eternal salvation.

371 But if every priest takes it as their duty to instruct the people in the divine Law, this mission corresponds in a special way to those entrusted with the curing of souls. The Lord says of them through Jeremiah: "And I will give you pastors according to my own heart, and they shall feed you with knowledge and doctrine" (Jeremiah 3:15), in order that the faithful do not become, as the Apostle says to the Ephesians, like children being tossed to and fro nor taken away by any wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men; but by following the truth with charity, that they may grow in Christ, who is our head (Ephesians 4: 14-15).

372 We particularly speak to you, then, our worthy collaborators in the pastoral position for the purpose of stimulating your zeal in a work so pleasing to God, so important to man and so beneficial to society.

373 This is one of your principal obligations in the holy days, as stipulated in the Council of Trent⁵⁴. To better perform that obligation it is advisable that you help the lay members of both sexes belonging to the associations established in our churches who are responsible for teaching the text of the Catechism to the boys and girls and give them brief instructions about them, by making it easy to understand your explanations afterwards. Get them to understand that in these times when lack of devotion is working so hard to de-Catholicize the people, that good Catholics cannot and should not remain inactive. This makes it necessary that everyone be propagandists for the faith because today, as a result of the pernicious doctrines being spread, they can deal with them better than the priest, whose interest they think can be seen when they speak of the eternal truths. Many people are presently creating and working in propaganda and social action to counteract the perverse modern doctrines and their terrible consequences and that is certainly all very practical, useful and praiseworthy; but believe me, beloved children, if we want to cut the evils of society off at the root, we have to begin by bringing it back to Jesus Christ, from whom it has distanced itself, and to that end make its spirit and doctrine known, which contains the antidote for all those evils.

374 The teaching of Christian doctrine, beloved children, is the most excellent of the works you can dedicate yourself to for the glory of God, the good of your fellow man and of society. It is the work that your Prelate earnestly encourages you to carry out, and blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

375 Beloved children, with the laudable aim of expressing the truths of the faith uniformly, His Holiness Pope Pius X has written a catechism and commanded that it be taught in all the dioceses of Italy, thus avoiding the inconvenience that the faithful may have to learn a new text for the Catechism when they move from one diocese to another. However, many prelates, interpreting that the desire of

⁵⁴ Cf. Council of Trent, session 22, chapter 8, in DENZINGER, 946.

the Roman Pontiff would be to establish this Catechism in all the dioceses in the Catholic world and understanding the advantages this would produce, adopted it in their own dioceses. The same decision was made in this ecclesiastical province, so that we order that no other Catechism text other than the one written by the Roman Pontiff Pius X and translated into Catalan may be taught in our diocese in the future. But until the knowledge of it has become generalized, we commission the priests to give the examinations of Catechism for adults using the old text they have been teaching it with in the diocese up to the present.

Solsona, on the holy day of the Apostle St. Andrew of the year 1909.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP AD. AP.

7

Penance in Lent

(B. Sol 45 [1910], pp. 33-44)

“But except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish (Luke 13:5)

Most illustrious Council, venerable clergy, religious communities and the faithful.

376 The Catholic church, beloved children, that gentle and affectionate mother who wishes and tries to secure by all means to lead our souls to Heaven in fulfillment of its divine mission, calls us and invites us in the holy period of Lent to meditation and prayer, with the aim of preparing us to listen to the voice of God, which only allows itself to be heard under these conditions. *I will lead her into the wilderness: and I will speak to her heart.* (Hosea 2:14), in addition to pressuring and obligating us to do penance, as the only means of attracting divine mercy upon us and prepare our return to the Lord if we have distanced ourselves from him by sinning or preserve ourselves in his grace and friendship in which we may serve as intermediaries in favor of our brothers.

377 It is true that this teaching comes up against, on the one hand, the loathing and resistance offered by our overpowering passions and inclinations of our corrupted nature. On the other, it encounters the materialist tendencies of our century and their perverse doctrines, which at the same time as they depress the spirit encourage sensuality and idleness, so that the mere name of mortification and penance today scares off and frightens the majority of people, even among the faithful. How many, in fact, evade fulfilling the slight privations the Church imposes on us, such as fasting and abstinence, with frivolous excuses that clearly reveal their limited spirit! And many others even take their avoidance of mortification to the extreme of condemning it as overly strict for such benign laws, which does nothing more than make us realize the need to accept mortification to achieve our eternal

salvation. But understand this well, beloved children, this teaching and doctrine comes from God himself and will not change or fall into disuse, nor shall we ever stop hearing, no matter how heavily it weighs on us, that we are unforgivable. Even though our Holy Mother the Church does not instill that in us, our own conscience would always repeat to us these words of the evangelist St. Luke: "Except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish: *Except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish*" (Luke 13:5).

* * *

378 Yes, beloved children, because this virtue of penance is absolutely necessary or required as a means for saving ourselves, having had the misfortune of sinning, as the baptism is to erase the original sin and open the gates of Heaven to us. It is true that these ideas come from the words of the Lord; in the same way that He tells us through St. John that anyone who was not reborn through water and the Holy Spirit cannot enter into the Kingdom of God: *Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God* (John 3:5), He also teaches us through St. Luke that if we do not do penance, everyone shall perish in the same way: *Except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish*" (Luke 13:5).

379 If man has remained in the state of grace he gained in the holy baptism, he might never have to resort to the difficult and rough path of mortification and penance in order to reach Heaven, when he might have reached it more safely by the spacious and delightful way of innocence, the only routes that can lead you to that happy and beatific land. Having lost that way through the abuse of his freedom, as a just solution he has to have recourse to penance to repair the disorder and consequences of his sin. Justly with regard to God and as a solution he himself is looking for.

380 Beloved children, what is, in fact, sin but a rebellion of man against the Supreme Being, to whom man owes so much and depends on for everything? Yes, a rebellion against God, who is the first beginning and ultimate end, to whom all works of man, should be directed and aimed towards as a tribute rendered to the sovereignty of his Being, the dependence He requires of us and to which our perfect submission to His orders bears witness. But sin reverses this order in man, by paying tribute to the created beings through worship and adoration due only to God and consecrating the works that we would not be able to carry out without the help of the Lord and should be made in His honor, a horrendous injustice committed against the Supreme Being.

381 However, beloved children, should not He who orders us to make full amends to our fellow men whom we might have injured and satisfy fairly the damages we might have caused also demand of the sinner that he repair the honor and glory that he took away from us with his sin? Yes, of course, and in such a way that if we do not satisfy that payment with voluntary penance while we are alive,

divine justice shall obligate us to pay it in full in eternity: *Thou shalt not go out from thence till thou repay the last farthing* (Matthew 5:26).

382 Admire and appreciate here, beloved children, the mercy of the Lord, who wanted to put his trial in our hands and establish us as justices between Him and us, willing to content Himself with our efforts if, in fact, we did our part to satisfy his divine justice. And at the same time, consider the great difference between what we voluntarily have to do to give this satisfaction to the Lord and what He demands and obligates us to do for it in the other life. Here, a sigh, a tear of sorrow shed at the foot of a crucifix and any mortification, no matter how small, has immense value for being able to join us to the merits of our Divine Redeemer, which apply to us for as long as we are alive, and are enough to disarm the justice of God and bring upon us His divine mercy. But once life is finished, in eternity the soul will be deprived of this supernatural and divine assistance and will have to satisfy the penalty owed for its crimes by itself with terrible torments in purgatory until it is purified in fire as gold is in the crucible, because nothing tarnished shall enter in the Kingdom of Heaven. And if you have left this world in mortal sin, you shall also suffer eternally and without reward the rigors of this penance in hell without being able satisfy the righteous indignation of God.

383 Ah!, beloved children, would we not be blind and cruel with ourselves if we did not make use of such an easy means for putting ourselves in the grace of God and assuring our salvation? What can an offender more anxiously desire than to be able to wash away, even with his tears, the stains that make his soul ugly, fulfilling in this way his first and principal duty, Atonement?

384 But not only the justice of God demands penance from us; it is absolutely necessary as a cure for the ills that sin carries to our soul.

385 It is necessary to the sinner as the only and powerful antidote to cure the deep and mortal wound that sin caused his soul, instantly causing its death: *The soul that sinneth, the same shall die* (Ezekiel 18:4). If, then, only this salubrious balm could heal this open and mortal wound and only through penance can we recover grace, the life of our soul, if sin separates us from God and establishes us as His enemies, penance brings us closer and reconciles us with Him. If sin closes the gates of Heaven to us, penance, and only penance, opens them for us. Wherever the sinner who does not accept it may seek his eternal damnation, Our Lord Jesus Christ says through St. Luke that we shall perish eternally without penance: *“Except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish”* (Luke 13:5).

386 But penance is not only necessary for sinners, but for the righteous as well, to assure their justification; because who could presume to be so far ahead of God? When the Apostle St. Paul fears this and says: *“My conscience is clear, yet that does not make me justified; because it is the Lord who has to judge me: For I am not conscious to myself of any thing, yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me, is the Lord”* (I Corinthians 4:4). We could have repented, crying for our losses as well and our sins confessed at the feet of the Minister of Jesus Christ, but are we sure of the truth of our conversion and has the accusation of our flaws been

accompanied by the sorrow and intent necessary to obtain forgiveness for them? If, then, the Church says that even with our sin pardoned, we live in fear: *Be not without fear about sin forgiven*, (Ecclesiastes 5:5), how could we not tremble, being uncertain of our true conversion? To assure ourselves of that, let us accept penance, a secure way of attracting upon us the divine mercy and plead for the grace we need to escape our state of sin, should we have the misfortune to be in it, or to keep the friendship of the Lord and progress on the way to perfection, following the advice of the apostle St. Paul who called on the Philippians to do the required works for salvation with fear and trembling, for the purpose of assuring eternal beatitude: *With fear and trembling work out your salvation*. (Philippians 2:12).

387 But penance is also necessary for us, beloved children, to strengthen and fortify our spirit and harden it for valiantly fighting the Lord's battles, which we have to sustain against the enemies of our salvation relentlessly.

388 There are illnesses of the spirit which, like physical sicknesses, are so serious that even after disappearing they leave the patient so weakened and prone to relapse that they need a special treatment and food to make them grow stronger and assure their recovery. That is the way our soul, even when the divine grace has helped it leave its bad condition and seriousness of the guilt, remains so prone to sin and in such weakened condition to resist the suggestions of its enemies that one will see the danger of losing the acquired grace every step of the way if some means is not used to strengthen it. This is certainly nothing other than penance which, as well as purging us and purifying our defects so that we may satisfy the divine justice through them, but also is a preservative in order not to sin and a very effective means for gaining the mercy of the Lord who, as the prophet David says, will never reject the contrite and humbled heart: *A contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*. (Psalm 50:19).

* * *

389 It must be a cause for great satisfaction and relief for us, beloved children, to know that, even though it is necessary to drink even the most vile dregs from the bitter chalice of mortification and penance to save us, in exchange it is so effective that it assures us the forgiveness of our sins. A truth which God himself declares to us through the prophet Zechariah: *Turn ye to me, saith the Lord of hosts: and I will turn to you* (Zechariah 1:3), turn to me and I shall return myself to you; and to engrave it deeply in our hearts the Divine Redeemer provided us the lovely and very tender parable of the prodigal son⁵⁵ who, notwithstanding his monstrous ingratitude in abandoning his good father and having squandered his substantial inheritance by living in luxury, comes back after being plagued and taught a lesson by misery. Recalling the abundance the children had in the home of their father, he decides to present himself before his father, ask his forgiveness and beg him

⁵⁵ Cf. Luke 15: 11-32.

to become one of his servants. He is welcomed with great joy by the father who, forgetting his offences and putting aside his just indignation, embraces him and arranges a great feast so that everyone may take part in his joy at having found the son he had lost.

390 The power and effectiveness of true conversion and penance to satisfy the Lord and return the soul to the life of grace is also declared in these comforting words of the prophet Ezekiel: *Because he considereth and turneth away himself from all his iniquities which he hath wrought, he shall surely live, and not die* (Ezekiel 18:28). The ungodly, by entering into themselves again and distancing themselves from all the iniquities they have committed, will have true life and will not die. The city of Nineveh is the best testimony of the fulfillment of this promise: having distanced itself from God; the iniquities and sins of the city had irritated the divine justice, which decreed its destruction if the people did not admit them in the period of 40 days and do penance; a prophet was sent who let them know of his will and the punishment that was threatening them. From the king to the last vassal, the elderly and children devoted themselves to fasting, covered their bodies in sackcloth and scattered ashes on their heads, they cried out publicly asking the Lord for mercy. The Lord granted it and thus Nineveh saved itself through penance⁵⁶.

391 Oh, the admirable force of this virtue which not even God himself can resist! Beloved children, its effectiveness is such that it does not just appear to have, but rather does have, control over the divine Heart. David sins and lives forgotten by God until the Lord sends the prophet Nathan to him, who makes him understand the enormity of his crime in a parable and at the appropriate moment, having admitted his crime and prostrate on the ground confessing his sin, David hears from the prophet: "The Lord has now forgiven your sin"⁵⁷. The sinner of the Gospel recognizes his sins, and just as soon as he prostrates himself at the feet of Jesus Christ and cries bitterly, he hears these words of life: "Your sins have been forgiven"⁵⁸. Dimas makes public confession of his sins from the cross when he was crucified together with the Divine Redeemer and asks him to remember him when he is in His kingdom. And right away he hears from those divine lips that comforting promise: "Today you will be with me in Paradise!"⁵⁹.

392 Such admirable examples should serve to encourage us, beloved children, to bring us back with fear or delay to our good Father and embark on the way of penitence, the only way that we can lead the sinners to Heaven and by which we will surely arrive there. But if our weakness and feebleness still require fresh encouragement, let us focus on what the saints and Saint of Saints, Jesus Christ, our good, have done.

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⁵⁶ Cf. Jonah 3:1-10.

⁵⁷ Cf. II Samuel 12:13.

⁵⁸ Cf. Luke 7:48.

⁵⁹ Cf. Luke 23:43.

393 The life of this divine model was completely one of self-denial and sacrifice, pain and torments, to the degree that Isaiah could say there was not a healthy part in Him from the top of his head to the soles of his feet: *From the sole of the foot unto the top of the head, there is no soundness therein* (Isaiah 1:6). But where He gave us the most eloquent lesson in suffering and made the need of this suffering for atonement of sin most clear was on Calvary, attracting all of humankind to the Cross upon which he was nailed wearing the crown of sharp thorns tightened across his temples.

394 Since this sacrifice of the Son of God, suffering and enduring trials and tribulations was not considered the heritage of a damned race but rather like any precious treasure or badge of honor and glory, because of its similarity to Jesus Christ and the right it gives us to His glory.

395 This is why the Apostle St. Paul only wanted to take glory in the cross of Jesus Christ: *But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ* (Galatians 6:14): that the Apostles went to the courts joyfully, considering themselves happy to be able to suffer in the name of Jesus: *rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus* (Acts 5:41); and the martyrs made great efforts to suffer the most atrocious tortures, convinced that they started to be His disciples when they suffered for His love, as the martyr St. Ignatius said⁶⁰.

396 From this also comes the insatiable thirst for mortification, penance and sacrifice of the saints, which made St. Teresa cry: "To suffer or die"⁶¹. Because the saints understood, as true wise men, that Jesus Christ, having entered into His kingdom by the path of mortification and opened its gates with the master key of the cross, should be followed by his disciples along the same path, each one burdened by his own cross, as the sovereign master himself taught them, saying: *He who does not take his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple: And whosoever doth not carry his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple* (Luke 14:27). This is why the more He loves the righteous, the more He gives them to drink from the bitter chalice of tribulation, as we see in the Holy Virgin, whom we rightly call the Queen of the Martyrs.

397 Mortification or penance is therefore necessary, beloved children, to save ourselves, as the only mean to satisfy the Lord and to strengthen our soul to overcome the obstacles his enemies raise against Him and to attract the divine mercies upon ourselves. So the Lord stimulates and encourages us to embrace its rigors, providing us with the example of the saints, who placed their good fortune in them and of Jesus Christ himself, Saint of saints, who suffered for us, giving us an example so that we might follow in his footsteps as the apostle St. Peter says: *Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow his steps* (I Peter 2:21).

⁶⁰ Cf. ST. IGNATIUS: *Letter to the Romans*, 3:1-5 in Funk, 1:215-219. Cf. ST. JEROME: *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, 16 in RB, 6th reading of 1 February (PL 23:667)

⁶¹ Cf. in RB, 6th reading of 15 October. Cf. ST. TERESA: *Libro de la Vida*, 40:20, in works cited, p. 176. Cf. 1206, 1507.

398 The calamities and disgraces that are continually and with increasing intensity occur in the in the world clearly show us, beloved children, that our sins have provoked the righteous indignation of the Lord, as with the inhabitants of Nineveh. May thanks be given to the Lord that He also bestowed his mercy on us, warning us of the need to return to Him and beg his clemency, no longer through a prophet but by his own Mother instead, the Holy Virgin who, by appearing in La Saleta and Lourdes, warned us several times of the anger of the Lord and the need to appease Him with penance.

399 We are not ignoring, then, his voice and his loving exhortations, particularly in this holy time of *Lent*. Let us return to our good Father, like the Prodigal Son⁶², because he is waiting for us with open arms to embrace us and cover our nakedness with the garment of justice and holiness, and dressed in it, we shall be able to enter, after our deaths, in the feast of glory.

This is what your Prelate, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, truly yearns for and continually asks of the Lord.

Given in Solsona on the holy day of the Purification of the Holy Virgin in the year 1910.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP AD. AP.

8

Two Powers and Two Flags (B. Sol 45 [1910], pp. 413-423)

“He came unto his own, and his own received him not (John 1:11).

Most illustrious Council, venerable clergy, religious communities and the faithful.

400 Beloved children, as the celebration of the Birth of the Son of God approaches each year, it calls our attention once again, that over the course of time, when human malice reached its highest point, love would make its full power shine on the redemption of men and there was an overabundance of grace where sin abounded (Romans 5:20), and that the world and even the people of God themselves do not know their Savior and closed their eyes to the magnificent light of the Truth which enlightens all men who come into this world (John 1:9). And it always causes us deep sorrow to consider that the twenty centuries of foolish resistance and vain struggle against the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, society has still not recognized its Redeemer and does not wish to submit to the Catholic Church, the outward and visible institution authorized by God to lead all the people and administer the mysteries of health to the faithful.

⁶² Cf. Luke 15: 20-22.

401 But this regrettable phenomenon does not surprise us, because the prophets had already announced it. "Who is this," Isaiah declares, "who comes from Edom and Bosra with his garments dyed of blood? This beautiful man in his clothes who walks among the multitude who are his strength? I, the Word, who speaks justice and battles in order to save. Why then, oh, Word! is your garment red and your clothing like those who step in a winepress? I stepped on the winepress by myself, and I do not have any men from the nations with me: I stepped on it in my fury and I trod on them again in my anger, and they splashed my garments with their blood and stained all my garments. The day of vengeance is in my heart and the year of redemption has come" (Isaiah 63:1-4). "The kings and princes," said the royal prophet, "conspired against the Lord and his Christ, but the God who lives in Heaven shall laugh at them and cover them in infamy" (Psalms 2:2 and 4).

402 This diabolical resistance does not surprise us, and we also know this fierce struggle will not end until the immortal King of Eternity comes on the day of final victory to glorify his Church and confound the impious forever.

403 Jesus Christ and Satan are fighting over the possession of souls and are unleashing the most noble battle in the world in order to make them subjects to their respective rules. The terrain is well marked off and the respective flags are in plain sight, but the darkness of error introduces the most terrible confusion when the enemies of the Light manage to place obstacles to the inextinguishable brilliances of the Truth.

404 So, it is our duty to make this darkness vanish when we can and avoid the resulting ruin of the souls entrusted to our direction; we currently consider it our duty to exhort you to the recognition and defense of the supernatural Power corresponding to Jesus Christ and his Church and warn you that the enemy, by feigning friendship and mixing up the concepts of truth and falsehood, bewilder and disconcert many Catholics and are attempting to eject Catholicism from society under the pretext of guaranteeing the predominance of civil power.

* * *

405 The work of Jesus Christ was a work throughout the centuries and must extend to all men who it came to save, teaching them as the sovereign master the way to Heaven; thus, the thirty three years of his mortal life were no more than the first instant of his everlasting existence among us: the works of his public life scarcely gave a hint of his perpetual ministry, and Judea was only the entry way to the great edifice of the world, the vast field of action in which work had to be done until the end of time.

406 To extend his activity throughout all the land and let his voice be heard by men over the centuries until the end of the world, the formation of an association or organization was necessary to, animated by and living through his spirit, was his living representation and marked with the stamp of his divinity. This then is the Church: a reproduction, permanent manifestation and continuation of Jesus

Christ, from whom it receives life and influences which it circulates and spreads proportionally to all its members.

407 This is the Catholic Church, with its unity assured by the exclusion of all opposing doctrines and the agreement of all the faithful with the Vicar of Christ and the Prelates appointed by him; its saintliness with the appropriate means for producing it in the world, by teaching the doctrine contained in the Holy Scripture in order to believe and the fundamental precepts dictated by God in order to act, and that any other precepts announced do not oppose those of God, but rather are arranged to assure greater compliance with them; in its universality by the same will of God, who wants to save all men and have them know the true Church, outside of which there is no salvation, and the ministry, through the inevitable succession of the apostolic ministry and the teaching of a single doctrine since the founding of the Church. The inevitability of its ministry and unity of doctrine was found supported in the words of Christ when He said: "Go therefore and teach them to observe all that I have commanded you...behold that I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world, and heaven and earth shall pass before the word of God is unfulfilled (Matthew 28:19-20)⁶³. This Church is the Kingdom of the Son of God, whose kingdom, without being of this earth, was founded on earth and for the earth.

408 The world is opposed to this reign. Hatred against the austerity of Christian doctrine, the anger of the Pharisees on seeing their hypocrisy revealed, and the gullibility of the public subjugated by them caused the death of Jesus Christ; but the Savior was resurrected on the third day, as had been foretold, and gave us the most convincing proof of the dignity within him; he still remained for forty days with his disciples, gave them instructions for the formation and spreading of the Church and then was raised up to Heaven, after have promised us His eternal presence in the world close to us by means of the grace and his real presence in the Holy Sacrament.

409 Despite the evidence of the divine origin of the Church, which its miracles and doctrine bear witness to, the world closes its eyes to the true light, Jesus Christ, and also does not want to open them to recognize His mystic body in the Church. Even many Christians, imitating the behavior of the Jews towards Jesus Christ, do not acknowledge it as the source and deny the Church the veneration and respect due it, insulting it, offending it and saying, at least with regard to the works, like those who killed Christ: "We do not want you to reign over us" (Luke 19:14). You could say that, as their divine Master, that his own people, whom He came to save, did not welcome him. "*He came unto his own, and his own received him not*" (John 1:11).

410 We, beloved children, confessing its origin and divine mission, obey his teachings of eternal life that He gives us and loudly proclaim his royal nature and independence.

⁶³ Cf. Matthew 24:35 as well.

411 Beloved, children, all authority comes from God: *All they shall be praised that swear by Him*⁶⁴. By me, says the Lord in Proverbs, the kings reign and the lawgivers decree just laws; by me the princes rule and the judges administer justice (Proverbs 8:15-16). As the beginning on whom all beings depends and the end they are directed towards, He spreads and makes the creatures participants in his authority to the necessary degree and proportion for the good order and governing of the world. But to Jesus Christ, his Only Son, who through whom and in whom all things were made, gave him all power in heaven and earth and established him as King over Zion, his holy mountain: the immortal King for all eternity, before whom all inhabitants of Heaven, earth and Hell itself must kneel⁶⁵.

412 As the Angel also announced to the Mother of the blessed chosen creature, saying “that He would reign eternally in the house of Jacob and his kingdom shall have no end” (Luke 1:32 and 33). The Three Kings asked about the newborn King of the Jews in order to worship Him⁶⁶. The people always believed him to be King and when they wanted to proclaim him as such, he disappeared from sight⁶⁷. He himself confessed that he was king before Pilate⁶⁸, albeit of a kingdom very different from those on earth, and King of the Jews was written on the sign that was ordered to be put on the Cross where the Redeemer died⁶⁹.

413 And as His Kingdom is eternal, even after his Resurrection, he reins and shall reign forever in his Church and through his Church, in which He shall always live, as He promised his disciples: “*And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world*” (Matthew 28:20).

414 The Church, therefore, is the daughter of the immortal King of Eternity and wife of Jesus Christ, from whose side came any Eve other than that of Adam, and therefore the Queen, with a kingdom and power so much greater than that of the kings on earth, as the spiritual is superior to the material and the soul to the body.

415 For the same reason, it enjoys through divine right the perfect legislative authority and coercive power to make and establish laws for the spiritual good and salvation of its faithful children and to restrict them with legitimate sanctions for their fulfillment.

416 In the use of this authority, the Church has recourse to ecclesiastical discipline and religious government; regulate the worship and provide laws for the liturgy, sacred rites and administrations of the sacraments; choose its ministers from among the faithful capable of instructing others; judge, absolve or condemn its subjects; control the life of man in its various states; sanction its votes and establish wise laws for matrimony; and in the mixed questions that affect civil

⁶⁴ Cf. Psalms 62:12; Romans 13:1.

⁶⁵ Cf. Philippians 2:10; Romans 14:11.

⁶⁶ Cf. Matthew 2:2.

⁶⁷ Cf. John 6:15.

⁶⁸ Cf. Matthew 27:11; John 18:36-37.

⁶⁹ Cf. Matthew 27:37.

and religious society. The Church declares her sovereign judgment; in short, it uses the supreme authority it enjoys throughout the full extension of its dominions, an authority received not from men but rather from God, from whom all power comes⁷⁰.

417 Not to stop punishing and restricting its subjects with sanctions for compliance with its laws, as we see the Apostle threatening the Corinthians if they did not change, saying to them: For the third time, I come to visit you. By the testimony of two or three witnesses all will be determined. I said before when I was present, and I say it once again now that I am absent, that if I come another time I will not spare those who sinned before nor any of the others (II Corinthians 13:1 and 2).

418 Likewise, the Church deprives the public sinner many spiritual goods the rest of the faithful enjoy and denounces the offenders of its laws and doctrines to teach the others a lesson, as the Apostle did in saying to the Thessalonians: "For we have heard there are some among you who walk disorderly, working not at all, but curiously meddling...And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed" (2 Thessalonians 3:11 and 14).

419 But in cases of bigotry, where the crimes are enormous and cause a great scandal, the Church also uses the supreme remedy of excommunication, through which the corrupted member is severed and separated from the community of the faithful with the aim of avoiding infection of the rest, in accordance with the advice of the Apostle previously mentioned, who says: "Do you not know that a little leaven corrupteth the whole lump? Purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new paste, as you are unleavened" (I Corinthians 5:6 and 7), and the example of the same Apostle who excommunicated the man who committed incest in Corinth saying: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, you being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus; To deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 5:4 and 5).

420 Beloved children, the Church, which received this high authority for the regimen and government of the faithful from Jesus Christ, cannot and must not be subordinated to any earthly authority in matters concerning its almighty mission. On the contrary, the civil power, considering the superiority of the mission of the Church, should obey it, respect it, and give it all the necessary support for its performance in the temporal sphere. The Church has been instructed by her divine Master, who commands to give unto to God that which is God's and to Caesar that which is Caesar's⁷¹, so that this harmonious union of authorities may result in the order and good for society proposed by the Lord, the source and giver of power to both of them.

⁷⁰ Cf. Romans 13:1; John 19:11; I Chronicles 29:12.

⁷¹ Cf. Matthew 22:21.

421 A French bishop was correct in writing to Henry I of England: "Nothing is administered well when the Empire and the priesthood are not in accord. As the senses must submit to reason, in the same way the temporal power has to be with the ecclesiastical government, because what the body becomes when it is not governed by the soul occurs when the temporal power is not instructed and governed by the teachings of the Church"⁷². And Hosius also said to the Emperor: "Do not interfere in ecclesiastical matters or attempt to give us instructions on these issues; on the contrary, learn from us what you yourself should do"⁷³.

422 The reason for this superiority, beloved children, is very logical and St. Thomas expressed it this way: "If man could achieve his eternal destiny by his natural strengths, the king would be responsible for leading him to it, because the king is always the highest authority in the temporal sphere, and it belongs only to him to lead all that is below him to its ultimate end. In fact, we see that whoever leads to the final object in everything presides over the ones who only provide the means for its execution; the sailor leads the shipbuilder; the architect leads the bricklayer, the military commander leads the soldier. But as man is incapable by human strength alone to achieve his goal, which is the possession of God, it turns out that a leadership not human but divine is necessary for him. And the king to whom this leadership belongs is he who is not only man, but God and Man, Our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the men made children of God are led to Heaven". A mission of salvation, beloved children, which Jesus Christ through his holy Church.

423 The superiority of this power, as useful for society as for the governments themselves, has nevertheless joined together the rage and anger of the temporal powers against the Church at all times, even those who appreciate the dictates of the Catholics, who become alarmed like Herod, believing themselves in danger and their authority absorbed and reduced by the Church. Infuriated by that, they have always plotted and schemed to oppress the Church with unjust and wicked laws which persecuted it, without taking into account that they and their laws will perish and the Church will emerge from its persecutions, the prisons and martyrdom itself, more splendid every time, without being diminished at all and flaunting its eternal power over the remains of its enemies.

424 No, the power and authority of the Church does not usurp or reduce the authority of the terrestrial powers; on the contrary, the Church is their safeguard because it has always taught people to respect and obey the laws of the rulers, even when they are bad. The Church is the first to set the example for us by complying with them, as the divine Master did when, without being forced, He submitted to the laws of men. And for the subjects, the authority and power of the Church is their best support and defense against the abuses of authority by the rulers, because the Church, with an empire to rule over and the authority of the teacher, sets the boundaries of its jurisdiction and reprimands the abuses made of them.

⁷² Cf. ST.YVES, Bishop of Chartres: *Letter 106*: PL 162:125.

⁷³ Cf. HOSIUS: *Letter to Constantine*: PL8:1329c.

425 However, this behavior of the world and its authorities towards the church should not surprise us, because they also did not know Jesus Christ⁷⁴. Nor should that of the bad Catholics, because as the church is in complete accord with its divine Spouse and the institution continuing His work of Redemption, it is not surprising that his own people do not welcome him. *He came unto his own, and his own received him not* (John 1:11).

426 But we, beloved children, who appreciate being his docile and submissive children, confess and always defend His power and authority on all occasions, His royal nature and independence, and comply with the doctrines of eternal life that he teaches us for the fulfillment of our religious and social duties. We do that so, as Solomon says, grace may be added upon our heads⁷⁵, and we achieve being led by that to our eternal salvation, the end to which the Lord created us and what your prelate and servant in Christ wishes so ardently for you, and blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Solsona, on the first Sunday of Advent, 27 November 1910.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

9

Teaching of the Christian Doctrine

(B. Sol 46 [1911], pp. 57-67)

As the Father hath sent me, I also send you..."

(John 20:21).

"Teach ye all nations..." (Matthew 28:19).

Most illustrious Council, venerable clergy, religious communities and the faithful.

427 The battle between good and evil, and truth and error, between the doctrines revealed by God and those coming from the father of the lie, is nothing new in the world, beloved children, nor should it surprise us that the Lord permits it. It is as ancient as mankind itself, who Lucifer values in order to unleash his battles against God, and is very much in accord with the arrogance of that infernal spirit, who in his mad fury attempted to scale the heavens, place his thrones among the stars and be similar to the Almighty. *I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God...I will be like the most High*" (Isaiah 14:13 and 14)."

428 In fact, there is no period in history which has not been marked by its errors against the dogmas and doctrines which our sacrosanct Religion teaches, or one of these truths which has not been questioned. The Lord allowed this so that these truths might be more fully proven and clear from the controversy, for the

⁷⁴ Cf. Jonah 1:10.

⁷⁵ Cf. Proverbs 10:6.

purpose of convincing people, even the ones who want to submit it to the judgment of their limited reason, that the mysteries of the Catholic Religion are not contrary to reason even though they may be beyond its scope. But in our times, doctrinaire liberalism seems determined to compile and adopt all the errors of the preceding centuries, judging by the countless number of them His Holiness Pius IX had to condemn in the *Syllabus*⁷⁶. The modernists, the new offspring of liberalism, are little better and were recently condemned by the current Pontiff Pius X⁷⁷.

429 Nevertheless, the area where the modern enemies of the Catholic Church seem to place their main effort is attacking its right to teach, in order to demolish its base and uproot if they could the very foundations of this mighty bulwark of the Catholic faith, of which the church is the depository and infallible teacher.

430 From that comes the effort to exaggerate the authority of the civil power, presenting it as the arbiter of teaching, diminishing the sacred rights and authorities of the Church and even those which are incumbent on the parents of the family.

431 Ungodly propaganda also leads to this as does the protection which the followers of error favor secular education, through which they attempt to de-Catholicize the people, depriving the children of the knowledge of God and our duties towards Him.

432 But what throws this satanic plan into sharper relief is the general persecution against religious Schools, the targets for the anger of the impious. Currently, they mainly delight in tormenting the ones which especially dedicate themselves to education whereas these were always respected before for that very reason, even in times of revolution. That is because, convinced of the impossibility of making their doctrines prosper as long as the intelligence of man and the knowledge of God, his precepts and the truth that He revealed to us, and the holy love and fear of his heart is not uprooted, they believe they can achieve this by furiously attacking Catholic education, which instills and sustains them. Unhappy ones, are they unaware that it is impossible to extinguish the supernatural light that the Lord enlightens us with so that we may know Him, and by knowing Him we love Him, and by loving Him, we serve Him? Or do they think that human wisdom, prudence and advice can prevail against God, who is the support for the Church? *There is no wisdom, there is no prudence, there is no counsel against the Lord* (Proverbs 21:30).

433 In vain, therefore, they shall try to prevent the Church from fulfilling its teaching because its mission is divine and conferred by Jesus Christ, who says: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." *As the Father hath sent me, I also send you*" (John 20:21). Nothing will be able to prevail against the Church and the divine power invested in it will be the rock against which all the attacks of impiety shall crash and break apart. Undaunted, the Church will always fulfill the precept of her divine Master to teach all people: *Teach ye all nations* (Matthew 28:19).

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⁷⁶ Cf. in DENZINGER, 1700-1780.

⁷⁷ Cf. PIUS X: *Pascendi*, in DENZINGER, 2071-2109.

434 Knowledge of the truth, beloved children, is an innate desire in man, whose spirit is only satiated and his intelligence fully satisfied from finding it, because it is his nourishment, like food is for the body. From that come all his efforts and fatigue, his studies and investigations, his consultations and advice to achieve knowledge.

435 Man will be able to instill his fellow men with his doctrines, opinions and beliefs and even penetrating into the sanctuary of the conscience, communicate his customs and provides them rules of behavior. There is no doubt his teachings have to have great value when they have the noble mission of instructing and educating them in acquiring knowledge. But if some human faith has to be given to man and his teachings, will that be enough if we cannot be sure of achieving the possession of the truth our soul so anxiously yearns for by that means?

436 No, beloved children, only the Catholic Church can teach us the truth without doubts or misgivings, without contradictions or errors, because it is the depository of the words of God, which disclosed his will and precepts to us by speaking, as the Apostle says, to our parents many times and in different ways through the prophets, and then through his own Son, the everlasting Truth. Taking our human nature, He established himself as the Teacher to teach us by word and deed the science of sciences, the one which all paths are leading to and is made up of knowledge, love and service to God. *God, who, at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets; last of all, in these days hath spoken to us by his Son...* (Hebrews 1:1-2). This is a work which the Lord completed and continues through his divine Spirit, sending Him a number of chosen and predestined men, "And he made some apostles, and others prophets; and some evangelists, and others pastors and doctors" (Ephesians 4:11), so that they, with their science and doctrine, became the light which banished the darkness of ignorance and error which envelops the world, teaching the truth to all peoples: *Teach ye all nations* (Matthew 28:19).

437 And in that way Jesus Christ identified the Church as His spouse and conferred upon it his divine teaching, which received it as if expressly made for what the Church was doing, saying: "*He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me*" (Luke 10:16). So the evangelist St. Matthew rightly condemned those who did not listen or submit to the authority and supreme judgment of the Church, saying, "Let them be to thee as a Gentile or tax collector" (Matthew 18:17).

438 Through that means, then, the light of Catholic truth has been spread to all parts of the world, without any region, no matter how distant, deprived of hearing the word of the evangelists and their teachings of eternal life in all branches of human knowledge. Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the whole world (Romans 10:18).

439 In the same way the sun spreads its rays everywhere and we cannot avoid its brilliant light without voluntarily closing our eyes, the light of the truth,

which is one, as one is God, the Truth in its essence, *I am the truth* (John 14:6), enables us to see and know in all places and among all men, however rude and ignorant they may be, by means of the evangelists who proclaim it anywhere in fulfilling their mission and therefore those who do not accept it are unforgivable.

440 If men had managed to attain the knowledge of this truth through their investigations, studies and intellectual powers, how few would have obtained this treasure! Those blessed with good intelligence, wise men and those who could dedicate themselves to studies due to their position will scarcely manage to know, and still only partially after so much work, the truths that are within reach today for the rude and ignorant who never welcomed the sciences and even to schoolchildren through the instruction of the learned doctors and teachers to whom the Catholic Church has committed the mission of education.

441 And do not say this mission and teaching of the Church should be limited to the truths of religion without extending it to teaching the other sciences because, if God, the Lord of all of them, as the book of Kings names him: *God is the Lord of Knowledge* (1 Kings 2:3)⁷⁸, has not established these sciences as the exclusive patrimony of the Church, it is only natural and logical that, since as He is the source and giver of all wisdom as it says in Ecclesiasticus: *All wisdom is from the Lord God* (Ecclesiasticus 1:1), He confers his gifts and graces for knowledge especially to the Church, for the purpose of establishing it as the infallible teacher of the truth. It can announce and verify through all the sciences that none of them are in contradiction with the truths of the Catholic religion; on the contrary, the sciences are the best proofs to the credit of these truths.

442 For the same reason, we always see it figure as the first in all branches of human knowledge. The Church guarded and saved the treasure of the sciences in the monasteries during periods of barbarity. The most renowned universities and other educational centers are in debt to the Church which funded and provided the wise doctors who were admired throughout the world. To counter the errors with which the spirit of darkness has tried to obscure the light of truth throughout time, the Church has always provided legions of learned men who, with the invincible force of their arguments, have crushed and made the sophisms of darkness vanish. In short, the Church is the standard-bearer for civilization and the sciences that brought it, through its children, to the most distant lands; civilization and science that is sustained and promoted in countless schools scattered all over the world, administered by the various religious schools which have flourished in great numbers so they may be the light of the world for their knowledge and the salt of the earth for their virtue.

443 Those who call the Church retrograde and are determined to make it appear as an enemy of science are slandering the Church. Nothing less than that. The Church approves, applauds and blesses all advances, without paying attention to the person who achieves it, knowing that "Every best gift, and every perfect gift, is

⁷⁸ Cf. I Samuel 2:3.

from above, coming down from the Father of lights" (James 1:17), without focusing on anything more than the advantages these advances produce for humanity.

444 What the Church does do in using its teaching is to correct and condemn the errors of those who, availing themselves of a vain wisdom which inflates and makes them arrogant, attempt to deviate from the science of God with their sophisms and make its principles appear to be contrary to the truths of the religion. And in this regard the Church, while simultaneously fulfilling its beneficial mission of leading men to their Creator by the straight paths of truth and justice, also makes evident its superhuman authority, received from He who is the guide of wisdom and the corrector of wise men. *He is the guide of wisdom, and the director of the wise* (Wisdom 7:15).

445 See here the reason why the enemies of the Catholic Church are so irate with it and its teachings, which they want to prevent at every critical moment. Not because they are unaware of the truth of the doctrine and the superiority of its teachers and schools, as shown by the fact they entrust the teaching and education of their children to the religious schools, while at the same time they wage a harsh war and try to cut off the rights of the Church to teach, whether because, as conscious or unconscious instrument of the Prince of Darkness, they systematically hate the light and for that reason want to throw Jesus Christ, "the true light who illuminates with his doctrine and example every man that comes into the world" (John 1:3) from the schools and also the sectarians whenever they can, without even tolerating the image of the divine Master.

446 For that reason, today more than ever, the faithful children of the Church must support Catholic education with all their strength, the only cure for our unbelieving and unsettled society.

447 Let us not forget, beloved children, the prudent advice of that wise man of Athens⁷⁹ who, when dealing with the means for reforming society, showed with a simile the need to begin with the youth, presenting a rotten apple to the assembly and proposing as the only means for obtaining some good fruit from it extracting its seed and sowing it in good land, from which they would achieve good, ripe fruits of the same species. Convincing ourselves, then, that if we want to reform and save the present-day society, perhaps more lost than that one in Athens, the only means is to separate the young people, the still healthy seed, from the corrupting maxims of the world and instilling in them, together with the sciences, the principle of the true wisdom, which is the fear of God. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom* (Proverbs 1:7).

⁷⁹ The wise man Luis Amigó refers to is surely Socrates, and the anecdote he cites would be based on the Socratic ideas collected by Plato in *The Republic*. In that work, Plato frequently expresses the belief of his teacher that all reform of society must begin with a suitable education for the young people. Although he does not expressly cite the example of the apple, it is clear that for Socrates the proper development of any seeds has a direct relation with "the quality of the land where it might have been transported" (cf. PLATO, *The Republic*, first half of book VI).

448 And do not say this mission is incumbent only on the priests, the parents of families and those who have the duty of teaching as their profession. Just as everyone must consider themselves soldiers to defend the homeland when enemies attack it, in the same way and with even more obligations, all the faithful should, within the sphere of their activity and according to their powers, defend the rights of your mother the Catholic religion when attacked and violated by impiety.

449 The plan of the enemy itself indicates to us the means we have to employ in this defense. We have to fight on the terrain where the battle presents itself and using the same weapons they fight us with. Do you not see the insistence they are putting into taking control of teaching, multiplying and favoring the lay schools at the expense of great financial sacrifices? How much they discredit our centers of learning, making them appear as if they are not at the high level that the sciences and modern advances demand? And how hard they work to prevent teaching the catechism in the schools with the aim of depriving the children of the knowledge of God, his precepts and his sacrosanct religion? Well, you see our plan of operations indicated there.

450 Firstly we must try to bring about an increase in the number of Catholic schools, by establishing parish schools in the parishes of greater significance, paid for by subscription and governed by a board appointed by the parish council for that purpose. In the smaller parishes lacking an official school, the parish priests should make the sacrifice of instructing the children themselves, if possible, and trying to have the fathers respond gratefully to this non-obligatory service.

451 This will help facilitate education, which is deficient even in the major towns, because it is physically impossible for such a great number of children to receive instruction in the public schools.

452 Secondly, we have to bear in mind that this Christian teaching demands sacrifices from everyone, of material work for some and economic for others, but no one should spare themselves when we are dealing with the glory of God and the well-being of the souls redeemed with his precious blood. The children of the light do not have to be less prudent than the children of darkness, and if the latter spend great sums and impose all sorts of sacrifices to spread and propagate evil, the Catholics must spend and sacrifice even more to promote good. So everyone, beloved children, must cooperate in this work of regeneration, helping your parish priests in accordance with your abilities and powers.

453 And finally, the people responsible for inspecting the schools should watch with the utmost interest to ensure that the professors give preferential attention to teaching the catechism, encouraging and stimulating them to the point of rewarding those who fulfill this duty best. In our diocese, thank God, the majority of them do that but when that is not the case, the inspectors should denounce those professors who fail on this essential point through negligence, or worse, through hatred and rejection of religion. And with the aim of assuring this religious teaching to the greatest degree possible, we want the private schools that are founded for

young boys to be entrusted to priests and the schools for young girls to the nuns of a religious order, provided that we have sufficient personnel in our diocese for that.

454 Beloved children, this is way we shall fulfill as good Catholics the obligation to watch over the glory of God, which mainly consists of the salvation of souls, and you will obtain the eternal reward that your Prelate and servant of Christ wishes for you, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Solsona, on the first Sunday of the 50th Anniversary, the year of our Lord 1911.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP A. A. DE SOLSONA

10

Dignity and Duties of the Christian

(B. Sol 47 [1912], pp. 57-72)

"And man when he was in honor did not understand" (Psalm 48:13).

Most illustrious Council, venerable clergy, religious communities and the faithful.

455 The Catechism, that book of gold which reminds us we come from God and He is our ultimate end, the one we shall have; which teaches his divine precepts and the virtues we have to practice for fulfilling it and instructs us in the manner for directing ourselves to God to obtain his graces through prayer. I mean this compendium of theological science begins its instructions by asking us: Are you Christians? You see here as well, beloved children, the question that we could and still should ask today of the great majority of men. Not only to those skeptics who, having forgotten the faith they promised at baptism, attempt to banish God from society, erasing His name from the sciences, arts and human commerce, relegating Him to the heavens as if He had nothing to do with governing the world, but also those who pride themselves on their faith yet live in open opposition to it.

456 Are you Christians? We should ask that of those people who call themselves strong spirits, precisely for their tenacity in not admitting any more truths of religion than the ones within the reach of their limited intelligence or that are to their liking. They reject the rest as suitable only for weak, ignorant spirits and for restraining the people through fear in carrying out their duty, in spite of these people presuming to be children of the Church and take it as a great insult that their religiousness is called into question.

457 Are you Christians? We would be able to ask that of those who subordinate their conscience and even their religious feelings to the benefit or interests of the policy they are affiliated with.

458 Are you Christians? We could ask it of those who put their interest in worldly things, in their businesses or earnings, who pay no heed to either divine or

human means and precepts, making it clearly evident how far their heart is from the true treasure that is God and how little esteem they hold for the words of the divine Master, who says: "What does it matter to a man if he gains the whole world if he loses his soul" (Matthew 16:26).

459 In the same way, look at the mixture of piety and license and the relaxation of customs that one observes in women, mainly among the younger ones who, at the same time that they frequent the temple and perform the sacraments make no amends about attending immoral spectacles and diversions where their innocence is at risk, nor in wearing indecent and scandalous fashions. Many of these fashions are introduced by disgraced, fallen women whose behavior they would be embarrassed by, and we could also ask of them: Perhaps you are Christians?"

460 And that way, beloved children, if we focus on the relation of customs one observes in our society and the lukewarm and indifferent attitude on religious issues, we will have more than ample reason to judge that the majority of people who call and honor themselves with the name of Christians are very far from knowing the spirit which should inspire them as it does so many, so they can say as Jesus Christ did to his disciples: You do not know what spirit you are: *You know not of what spirit you are* (Luke 9:55)⁸⁰.

461 This is why the immortal Pontiff Pius X indicated from the start of his papacy the need to restore all things in Christ⁸¹, attempting to have His spirit inform all actions of men, in religious as well as civil, political and family life, for the purpose of having society correct its ways and distance itself from the route to damnation it is headed down, because only in Jesus Christ and in no other is our salvation: *Neither is there salvation in any other* (Acts 4:12).

462 Beloved children, it is important that we are well imbued with the high level of dignity to which to the honorable title of Christians raises us, which the Son of God bestowed upon us, and of the duties that He imposes on us; so that we may act in a way that it cannot be said of us that, showered with benefits and favors by God as we are, we do not give them the esteem due them, nor not know how to reciprocate with our faithfulness: *And man when he was in honor did not understand* (Psalm 48:13).

DIGNITY OF THE CHRISTIAN

463 To the question of whether we are Christians posed in the Catechism, you respond affirmatively without hesitating, attributing this benefit to pure grace and mercy of He who is the Creator of all good, saying: Yes, by the grace of God. And it is true, beloved children, that this is the greatest example of the favored love with which the Lord distinguishes us from the other creatures.

⁸⁰ Reading of the Vulgate, which the Jerusalem Bible considers an addition.

⁸¹ Cf. Pius X: *E Supremi Apostolatus*: ASS 36 (1903/1904), p. 131. Cf. 1780.

464 At one time, we were the object of the anger of God, the children of wrath because of the original sin, which made us unrighteous before his divine eyes: *And were by nature children of wrath* (Ephesians 2:3). Made by the Creator as kings and noblemen of the world, we were subjected and enslaved for the sin to the most cruel of tyrants, who pays with eternal torments for the services rendered unto him: *For by whom a man is overcome, of the same also he is the slave* (2 Peter 2:19); and as a necessary result of the sin, vices and passions and their seeds had taken control of our soul, the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and arrogance, the gnawing worms of remorse which embitter the existence of man, without giving a moment's rest to his heart. A sad condition whose misfortune only increased on considering the impossibility of a human remedy, with man not having the powers to cross the infinite distance separating him from God nor to break the chains of his passion and those of Lucifer, to whom he had voluntarily subjected himself!

465 But as what is impossible for men is not for God (Luke 18:27), thanks to His kindness and the love He has for us, we were freed from this slavery, being able to exclaim like the Prophet King: you have broken, Lord, my chain, so I shall pay tribute to you with a hymn of praise: *Thou hast broken my bonds and I will sacrifice to thee the sacrifice of praise* (Psalm 115:16 and 17).

466 And who could imagine, beloved children, the means that God valued for bringing about this reconciliation? A victim pleasing to His divine eyes and capable of satisfying his justice was necessary; as this could not be found on earth, he sent it to us from Heaven, from where his Only Son descended and taking on our human nature, the lamb of God removed the sins of the world (John 1:29), canceling the decree against us and nailing it to the cross on which he sacrificed himself for our redemption: *Blotting out the handwriting of the decree that was against us... fastening it to the cross* (Colossians 2:14).

467 In this way, the justice of God was paid superabundantly, for the victim he was offered was priceless, and his mercy was satisfied when man, created in his own image and likeness, was pulled from the clutches of death and sin.

468 In the tree of the cross, which symbolizes justice in the straightness and length of its trunks and mercy through its arms, was the central point where these two divine attributes converged, to create the kiss of peace which saved humankind from eternal death: *Justice and peace have kissed* (Psalm 84:11).

469 But, oh, misfortune and sorrow, how few there are, proportionally, who make use of this price of redemption that was given for everyone! How many there are who still sleep in the shadows of unfaithfulness and heresy, closing their eyes against the light of the faith of Jesus Christ, now preached around the entire world, and shying away from washing their souls in the healing waters of the Baptism, the only gateway for salvation!

470 Beloved children, it has fallen on us to have the inestimable good fortune of sharing abundantly in these beneficial fruits of our redemption, have been born in the bosom of Catholicism, a grace we could not deserve yet was granted to us by

the pure mercy of God and the merits of his Holy Son. Does it seem like our dignity could be any greater?

471 However, that is not everything: man, another prodigal son who had rejected his father, separating himself from his loving company and squandering his goods, could only aspire to be counted as one of the servants in the house of his father, without daring to call him by that sweet name: *I am not worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants* (Luke 15:19); but Jesus Christ our Lord also returned this lost right to us, of being able and even duty-bound to call God Father in accordance with his mandate: *When you pray, say Father, hallowed be thy name* (Luke 11:2). And this is through a new title He has bestowed upon us, because not only are we sons of God now for creation and preservation but also right of conquest, for having redeemed and rescued us from the power of darkness with his passion and holy death: *He gave them power to be made the sons of God* (John 1:12).

472 We can reach God in prayer and call him Father with complete confidence, certain that we will not be rejected, because he sees us in Jesus Christ his Only Son, of whom the Christian is a copy, by the grace that justifies him and the virtues which, in imitation of Him, are sanctified and pleasing to His divine eyes.

473 Since then, our mother the Church teaches us to end all our prayers to the Eternal Father, supporting our plea in the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord, saying: *Through Jesus Christ your Son*.

474 And the rationalists do not say it is impudence and arrogance for man to want to go back to divinity, through a chimerical and disrespectful love, and call God father; because man, of the earth as he was, was constituted by Jesus Christ into a man of heaven for our own good, as St. Paul says (1 Corinthians 15:47). Now he is not the slave who was dragging the ignominious chains of guilt, but the freed man rescued at the cost of the blood of the Son of God. And when he reaches the Lord, he does not present himself to Him alone, nor speak in his name, nor appear covered in the ancient rags of sin, but instead is brought by Jesus Christ, the only one who can lead us to the Eternal Father: *No man cometh to the Father, but by me* (John 14:6).

475 And it is He who speaks and begs for man, in accordance with his service as mediator: *...Always living to make intercession for us* (Hebrews 7:25), and finally appears clean and washed with the blood of the Immaculate Lamb and dressed in the beautiful garments of innocence and grace which He deserved: *...That we should be holy and unspotted in his sight in charity* (Ephesians 1:4).

476 Can you conceive, beloved children, of a great dignity or more indescribable good fortune than to be able to call ourselves and be, in effect, children of God? This is what we enjoy being disciples of Jesus Christ and our Christian character.

477 However, if we are the sons of God, consequently we are inheritors of his kingdom as well, co-inheritors with Jesus Christ: *And if sons, heirs also; heirs*

indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17); in whom the sum of our happiness truly consists.

478 Man was created by God to be eternally happy by rejoicing with Him in Heaven, he has to necessarily be that much more fortunate while his time in this world lasts by living more closely united to God and have a greater certainty of achieving his eternal beatitude; and, on the contrary, he will live that much unhappier and unsettled the greater his separation from the Supreme Maker. Because, as St. Augustine says: "The Lord made us for Him, and our heart cannot be at peace until it rests in Him"⁸².

479 We have this security in the school of Jesus Christ, first because He shows us the way that leads directly and without obstacles to Heaven, our homeland, with his example and above all with his holy law. And with the aim that we do not become discouraged by the difficulties that our enemies raise against us, to enlarge our heart and prolong our spirit so that we may run happily on the path of these sacred commandments: *I have run the way of thy commandments, when thou didst enlarge my heart* (Psalm 118:32).

480 Even more, because He is the eternal truth can cannot deceive himself nor deceive us, we are certain that by following him, we are not walking in the darkness of error: *He that followeth me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life* (John 8:12). And finally, because He is the creator of life, for whom and in whom all things were made, and of the grace that he bestowed on us with his passion and death, we are certain that by following his teachings on life, and by no other way, we have to be fortunate and happy in life and eternity; because there is no possible salvation apart from Him, because only He is our savior: *There is no savior besides me* (Isaiah 43:11).

481 Oh, one thousand and one times fortunate are those who have been called by God, with special vocation, to the school of Jesus Christ! We fully obtain the reward of our redemption in that: for we recover the noble title of sons of God through Him, and by following his teachings and doctrines we manage to be happy in life and later blessed in eternity, for which the Lord created us.

482 Oh, Christians, acknowledge your dignity! I will tell you that, beloved children, along with St. Leo, the Pope. Remember from what body and what head you are limbs, and that freed from the power of darkness, you have been moved to the knowledge of God and his kingdom⁸³. Behave in a way that is not unbecoming to the life of high dignity to which you have been sublimated, and be the fragrant scent of Jesus Christ everywhere, so that God may be known through you⁸⁴, as St. Paul says. Detest the perverse doctrines of our century, contrary to the spirit of Jesus Christ, and do not take part in their malign works, because they would take you without fail: "In religious matters, to skepticism and modernism; in politics, to give your support to the enemies of the Catholic Church; and to the most unbridled

⁸² Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Confessiones* 1.1: PL 32:661. Cf. 351 above; 521, 663, 966, 1048, 1510.

⁸³ Cf. ST. LEO: *Sermon* 23:5: PL 54:203; cf. 1328.

⁸⁴ Cf. II Corinthians 2:14-15.

license in customs". You would imply in this way that you do not know the honors and benefits the Lower has showered on us. *And man when he was in honor did not understand* (Psalm 48:13).

483 If, as is often said, there is *noblesse oblige*, and if the gifts require reciprocity by the favored, think, beloved children, of what the high dignity of the Christians the Lord has sublimated us to requires and the duties it imposes on us, which is what we are going to consider now.

DUTIES OF THE CHRISTIAN

484 According to the Catechism, the Christian is a man who professes the faith and the law of Jesus Christ.

See here then, beloved children, all of our duties summarized as such. To keep the Catholic faith unscathed, for it is impossible to please God without it: *But without faith it is impossible to please God* (Hebrews 11:6), and to fulfill the divine precepts exactly, which is the way to bear witness of our love.

485 Faith is absolutely necessary for us, because it leads us to the perfect knowledge of God, to the degree it can be known by the creature, and of his works

486 Without faith, we could go back to the knowledge of the Creator through the works of creation, but then our knowledge would never reach the knowledge of his essence, attributes and perfections that we have through faith; of our origin, fall and recovery; of his designs for us, the precepts He imposes on us and the eternal reward he promises us, which the Apostle says that which neither the eye saw nor the ear heard, then the human heart could not understand (I Corinthians 2:9). And the truth is that if man does not manage to understand the hidden mysteries that nature is so full of, in spite of observing their effects, how would he have the power to penetrate the mysteries of divinity and grace without the aid of this divine light? Faith is the bright beacon which guides our steps to Heaven through the thick darkness of this world.

487 It is also necessary for us, for it is what obliges God to concede us His graces and favors and the *sina qua non* for our eternal salvation, just as unfaithfulness is the true signal for condemnation.

488 See how this is confirmed in these passages from the Gospel: A woman who suffered from a flow of blood for twelve years came to Jesus full of confidence of being cured if she could only touch his garments; she touched them and from that moment was clean and Jesus said to her: "Daughter, your faith has healed you; go in peace and stay free of your illness" (Mark 5:34). Another woman from Canaan begged him to free her daughter from the devil that was tormenting her, and when Jesus said to her that it is not good to give the bread for children to dogs, she replied: "That is true, but the dogs also eat the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters" (Matthew 15:27-28), and deservedly hearing from the lips of the

Lord: "Oh, woman, how great is your faith! Do as you like. And her daughter was cured from that moment". Taxed by the enormous weight of his sins, a poor sinner prostrated himself at the feet of Jesus, kissed them, washed them with his tears and wiped them off with his hair. Taking pity on him, the Lord said to him: "Your faith has saved you; go in peace" (Luke 7:50). He himself also shows us the effectiveness of faith for asking for graces and divine assistance, telling us: "Everything that you ask for when you are praying, believe that you will receive them and they will be granted to you. Truthfully I tell you that anyone who says to this mountain: Rise and throw yourself into the sea, and if you do not doubt in your heart, but believe that what you say will be done, everything shall be granted to you" (Mark 11:23 and 24).

489 But the greatest praise is that faith is what indicates our eternal destiny, as the Lord says through the evangelist St. Mark: *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned* (Mark 16:16).

490 Faith is also the act in which we give the most glory to God, through sacrificing in Him our most precious gifts, intelligence and reason. On seeing Jesus Christ born in a poor stable, living a despised life and suffering insults, torments and death on the cross, our poor reason, when destitute of the supernatural light, does not see in Him anything more than a man suffering the misfortunes common to poor humanity. But listen to the voice of God who says: "This is my beloved son in whom I have my satisfaction" (Matthew 17:5), and without hesitation he turns towards worshipping Him, saying with St. Peter: "You are Christ, the Son of the Living God" (Matthew 16:16). A glorious confession to God, that undoubtedly will bestow on man the same praise that Jesus Christ gave to St. Peter: Blessed, because this confession was not revealed to you by the flesh and blood, but rather the Heavenly Father (Matthew 16:17).

491 Similarly, the limited intelligence of man makes it impossible for him to penetrate the sacred mystery of the Eucharist: how Jesus Christ himself can be beneath the sacramental elements. But know what He said about the bread: This is my body; and about the wine: This is my blood; and gave his disciples the authority to work this miracle, saying unto them: "Do this in memory of me"⁸⁵; and how they recognize Him as their God and fall to their knees worshipping Him in the Holy Sacrament. Can you offer a more glorious act to God and therefore a more pleasing one to His divine eyes?

492 Since this faith is our comfort in the tribulations, our support and defensive shield in the serious battles we have to endure against our enemies, and the true cause of our happiness, as a sign of the eternal happiness that awaits us, it is the bulwark against which impiety directs its most formidable attacks.

493 The modern wise men despise it, believing themselves omniscient for having discovered some secrets of nature, but not bearing in mind they still do not know the essence of the very elements that they use in their inventions. The

⁸⁵ Cf. Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11: 23-25.

enemies of the Catholic religion also attack faith for forming the very firm base of the Church, which they are attempting to demolish down to the foundations if they can. These worldly ones ridicule its dogmas as inappropriate for our civilization, and bad Catholics discredit it before the unbelievers with their relaxed life.

494 In the midst of so much danger for our faith, beloved children, we have to try to continuously confirm ourselves in it more and more; guard it in our heart like the most precious treasure and be prepared to give our life for it if necessary. But, above all, we have to confess with the works, without which our faith would be dead as the apostle James says (James 2:26). Works which have to consist precisely in the fulfillment of the precepts of the Law of God, which distinguish us as disciples of Jesus Christ.

495 All the beings of creation, as well as having their own particular mission in the natural order, also have their indicated laws, which they have to abide by for the fulfillment of this mission and the proper order and harmony of the universe. If you see, beloved children, the admirable balance and regularity that exist in the world among all creatures, an effect of the exactitude with which they fulfill these laws imposed by the Creator. If then, everything is subject to law, man cannot be left without them as the principal creation and king of creation; and in fact God established that law. But different from the other creatures who necessarily fulfill their laws since they are destitute of reason, man as an intelligent and rational being is left free to fulfill it, so that he can deserve or not deserve the eternal blessing for which he was created, and it is offered to him with this condition: *But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments* (Matthew 19:17).

496 In order that man always bears this divine law very much in mind, and for that to be that law of love to which all the precepts refer, the Lord engraved it in his heart so that together with his correct reason, it would continually remind him of his duties towards God and towards his fellow man.

497 Nevertheless, having forgotten their Creator, through the disorderly love of the creatures, the heart of man became so hardened he reached the point of breaching and rejecting the divine precepts of this natural law, falling into all sorts of vices and ignominious passions, so that Moses could say that all flesh has corrupted its ways: *For all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth* (Genesis 6:12), and that (to our form of understanding) the Lord, pervaded by sorrow, regretted having created man: *It repented him that he had made man on the earth. And being touched inwardly with sorrow of heart...* (Genesis 6:6).

498 With humanity in this condition, in order not to lose the favorite work of His hands, the Lord proclaimed His holy law again to man and, letting his voice be heard amidst the thunder and light at the summit of Mount Sinai, He disclosed them and gave them to Moses, written in his hand on two stone tablets, as if to reproach the people with the hardness of his heart⁸⁶.

⁸⁶ Cf. Exodus 19:16-19; 24:12; 31:18.

499 Later, when the time determined by God to work our redemption arrived, the Word Incarnate also solemnly announced to us the need to fulfill this law in order to achieve salvation. When asked by a youth what he should do to be saved, He told him: Keep the commandments: *But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments* (Matthew 19:17).

500 This law is what must govern all our actions, for being the most excellent of all the laws, since it is given by God; the most ancient and therefore the source of all the others; the most universal for obligating everyone without exception, the same for Christians as for the unfaithful, the wise men and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, and finally because the Divine Master teaches and dictates to us through it as the only means of salvation.

501 How great should our gratitude be towards the Lord our God for the great sacrifice of making his divine law known to us, and showing the way to us on which we have to walk to achieve our salvation? We would have had to ask him continuously, like the true prophet: "Show me, Lord, the way of your commandments, straighten my steps so that I do not deviate at all from Him while I may live. Give me the intelligence so I may come to penetrate the secret mysteries of your law and practice and guard them with all my heart. Guide me along the way of your precepts, because this is the way I embrace and want to follow constantly. Incline my heart so that I may love your law, and not be snatched away from it by the love or desire of the outdated and mortal things of this world. Blindfold my eyes so that they are not used on the vain objects of the earth and make me follow the way that leads to You, who are the life. Make me declare and have your law take root in the heart of your servant through your fear so that I may faithfully carry out all your orders" (Psalm 118: 33-38).

502 This is how we would be willing, beloved children, to fulfill the holy law of God, even at the cost of our life if necessary, as in the example of Eleazar⁸⁷. And we are obligated for so much; for it is God who imposes these precepts on us, because we also promised that in the holy baptism and our eternal salvation depends on fulfilling the law.

503 In sum, we must, beloved children, hold in great esteem the high level of dignity to which our title of Christians raises us. It returns our lost grace to us, our lineage with God and the inheritance of the kingdom of Heaven, but on condition that we guard our faith and keep the commandments of the law of God, which is what we promised in the holy baptism.

504 However, from all that was said you should deduce the terrible remorse those bad Christians will feel for not having followed Jesus Christ, allowing themselves to be deceived by the devil and the temptations of the world and the flesh, wasted the rewards of their redemption and are condemned for eternity. How these words of the Lord must resound in their ears: *What is there that I ought to do more to my vineyard, that I have not done to it?* (Isaiah 5:4) How much more should

⁸⁷ Cf. II Maccabees 6:18-31.

I do for you that I have not done? And the memory of the benefits that the Lord gave them and the consideration of the ease with which they may have been able to fulfill their duties as good Christians, will be the gnawing worm that will eternally devour their entrails.

505 Add to this the mockery and insults that they shall constantly receive from the devils and other condemned ones because, although they were placed by God on the way to Heaven and marked in the baptism with the indelible stamp of His children, they find themselves separated from Him and it is their own fault. And from all this, beloved children, take great esteem and appreciation of the high level of dignity to which we sublimate our character as Christians and a firm intention to fulfill our duties as Christians, defending our faith and keeping the commandments of the law of God, so that we may act in a way that it cannot be said of you that, showered with benefits and favors by God as you are, you have wasted them, and not given them the esteem due them: *And man when he was in honor did not understand*⁸⁸.

This is what your Prelate, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, wishes and asks of the Lord.

Given in Solsona on the first Sunday of Lent in the year of our Lord 1912.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP A. A. OF SOLSONA

11

On the Love of God

(B. Sol 48 [1913], pp. 61-76)

“Let us therefore love God, because God first hath loved us” (I John 4:19).

Most illustrious Council, venerable clergy, religious communities and the faithful.

506 The works of all creation, beloved children, each proclaims the glory of God in their own way, and in unison they sing a hymn of praise to His infinite power, wisdom and kindness clearly making us understand, as the kings of creation, the love we owe Him is in return for the love He shows us by making all thing abide by our rule and be at our service⁸⁹.

507 This silent but eloquent language of nature was understood very well by the great Father of the Church when, speaking to the flowers while he was walking

⁸⁸ Cf. Psalm 48:13.

⁸⁹ Cf. Psalm 18: 2; Romans 1: 19-20.

in the countryside, he told them: "Be quiet, I already know what you want to tell me: to love God"⁹⁰.

508 The Lord shows himself as great, in fact, in creating the multitude of stars whose bright beacons illuminate our planet, making it fertile and giving it life with their influence. Great in the fertility of the land, which with the same substances produce such a varied multitude of plants, trees and ripe fruits, and keeps in its bosom such a richness of precious metals. Great by creating from nothing such a varied and prodigious multitude of animals which populate the air, land and sea. Great in the creation of the microscopic beings, so much more admirable the smaller they are, which multiply on the atoms of the air. Great beyond measure in the strength, intensity and power He has transmitted to the elements which give, sustain or destroy life of all things. Great, in short, in the extremely wise laws which rule and govern the earth, multiplied to infinity yet nevertheless reduced to an admirable unity and simplicity which regulate and maintain the equilibrium of the immense machine of the world.

509 But if consider that all these wonders are only an outline of the magnum opus of God that is man, in which He condensed the beauty and kindness of other beings, and whom he instilled with his divine breath a soul created in his image and likeness⁹¹, we could not do anything but, falling to our knees, cry with the writer of the psalm: "O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is thy name in the whole earth! The heavens shew forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of his hands" (Psalms 8:2 and 18:2).

510 However, what is amazing, beloved children, is that the love that God professes for man is revealed to us in the creation of this beautiful palace of the world, where he not only provided the essential necessities of life but even more than he would have liked for his comfort and well-being. And this in spite of the ingratitude and unfaithfulness which man has shown to Him in return, disobeying Him by giving free rein to his appetites and disorderly passions, instigated by the enemy of his soul.

511 And if on top of this we consider the eternal purpose He gave to man, and He himself wanted to be his portion and his legacy in the mansion of glory, we shall understand better how much God loves us, since He made us participants in his own happiness.

512 Nevertheless, what reveals to us more than anything the unlimited love the great Father of families professes for us is having given his only begotten Son to rescue us: *He that spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all* (Romans 8:32).

513 Rightly, given the size of the benefit and such an extreme proof of love that the angels themselves admire and are amazed by it, can He exclaim and tell us:

⁹⁰ It is possible that the following thought of St. Augustine is concealed behind this phrase: "The sky and earth and everything contained in them, behold that they tell me from all over that I love you" (cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Confessions* 10:6: PL 32:782).

⁹¹ Cf. Genesis 1:26; 2:7.

My son, after this, what more can I do for you? *And after this, what shall I do more for thee, my son?* (Genesis 27:37).

514 Beloved children, if faith cannot teach us that, we truly would not be able to imagine that the love of God for his creatures would be so strong that he identifies himself with them to the point of taking on their human nature and abiding by the hardships and poverty that we observe in his birth and during his entire life.

515 How justly, then, can the Lord demand and require our love, and how much it should humble us that it was necessary to impose on us through a commandment the same love that we owe Him and in which all our happiness lies!

516 In fact, in the first Law of the Ten Commandments, the Lord orders us to love him: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God* (Matthew 22:37), so that we understand it to be our first and primary obligation, and the purpose for which we were created. In addition, so that we do not forget that since we are made from his hands, we owe everything to Him and not to put our interest in worldly things, and also declare to us the manner and measure that we have to love him, since it is impossible to love Him as much as He deserves, he adds: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind* (Matthew 22:37)⁹².

517 We see here, beloved children, our primordial duty, which should be the motivation for continual meditation for us, and the object of the greatest diligence and effort, for the purpose of reciprocating the love the Lord professes to us. *Let us therefore love God, because God first hath loved us* (1 John 4:19).

We see how we have to love in accordance with his express command:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart.

518 Beloved children, we have to put everything that we are, all that we can be and are worth at the service of the Lord, from whom we have received it and to whose glory it is ordained; so our eyes should discover the Lord in observing His creatures; our tongue has to be used in his praises; our ears have to pay attention to hear his precepts in order to fulfill them; our feet ready to run along the paths of his commandments and our hands willing to execute the works of piety and mercy that He orders us to carry out. But none of this would satisfy him if with it we did not give Him the priceless treasure he put in our breast, that is, our heart; small in size, yes, but with an immeasurable and near-infinite capacity to hold the feelings of our soul, which lives in the heart as if in its home.

519 The Lord wishes to conquer the heart, and wanting it to give up, never ceases in asking us for it, in spite of being it only legitimate owner, because He wants it to be delivered freely and to our credit. *My son, give me thy heart* (Proverbs 23:26).

520 As our hearts are formed to love, and love God, love is its life, as St. Augustine says. To love is its prime purpose and the center to which it is naturally

⁹² Cf. also ST. FRANCIS: 1R 23:8, in works cited, p. 109.

directed⁹³. But our greatest and perhaps only misfortune is in focusing and lavishing our love on objects unworthy of Him and refusing it to our Lord, the only one who deserves it.

521 How ardent and vehement is our heart to follow the charms of a chimerical passion, one where we immediately find the seeds of all ills. It closes its doors to the light of reason and faith, which makes it see that only in God can we find all that captures its affection. And of the truth, the beautiful qualities which we observe in the creatures are always mixed with defects that displease us, and our heart never finds itself satiated by them: only in God can it find that, because He is the beginning and inexhaustible source of all good, and its Creator, which He made for himself as St. Augustine says: *You made us, Lord, for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in You*⁹⁴.

522 Imagine all that is great in the world, what can make our life more enchanting and delight our senses, what may attract and fascinate our spirit more powerfully and fill our heart with greater tenderness; all that, then, we shall find in God, but infinitely more perfect than in the creatures. Because He is not only beautiful, but is beauty itself; He is not just wise, but rather the infinite wisdom; not only powerful but omnipotent; not only good, but the essence of kindness and holiness; therefore St. Augustine rightly exclaims: "I admired the dazzling light of the sun, the fertility of the land, the vast expanse of the sea, the charms of the mortal beauties, the majesty of the kings, the power of the great, the eloquence of the orators, the subtlety of the philosophers; and entering into myself I told myself: none of all this is comparable to my God. He possesses infinitely more than all this to captivate my heart and fill my desires"⁹⁵.

523 Why, then, beloved brothers, do we tire ourselves out seeking after something outside of God that we can find only in Him? And until when shall our heart be slow and reluctant in loving Him, from following vanity and the lie? *O ye sons of men, how long will you be dull of heart? Why do you love vanity, and seek after lying?* (Psalm 4:3).

524 You should also notice that He is not content that we love him reluctantly, but rather with all our heart; making us understand that we do not have to enter into Him on the side of God with the creatures. If we have to love, it has to be in Him, by Him and for Him⁹⁶. Since we are the absolute owner of our heart, which he created for Himself and provided with the effect of the beautiful qualities and inclinations which adorn it, it is not just that we forget such a noble purpose and place our affection in the creatures in disorderly fashion, which he gave us as means that might bring us to Him and stimulate our gratitude for his benefits.

⁹³ Cf. ST AUGUSTINE: *Confessions* 13:9; PL 32:848-849. Cf. also : *De Substantia Dilectionis*, 6: PL 40:846, where one reads: "Vita cordis, amor est".

⁹⁴ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Confessions*, 1.1: PL 32:661, Cf. 351, 478 above; 663, 966, 1048, 1510.

⁹⁵ Poetic translation of the ideas of St. Augustine contained in *Confessions* 10:6 (cf. PL 32:782-783).

⁹⁶ Cf. 351 above; 1056, 1151, 1195, 1307.

525 How grateful, in fact, God made our heart! How many ways is the heart capable of showing its affection for the beloved object! Already yearning to unite and identify himself with Him, as the Apostle did when he said: I want to see myself free of these ties to this body and be with Christ (Philippians 1:23). I live, but now I am not the one who lives, but rather Christ who lives in me (Galatians 2:20). Already ardently desiring that it be known and esteemed by everyone, such as the Seraph of Assisi when he cried inconsolably because Love was not loved⁹⁷. Now full of rejoicing for the honors and gifts made to him, such as the Patriarch St. Joseph when he saw the Child God worshipped by the shepherds and the kings⁹⁸. Now possessing a holy indignation and zeal against those who may offend and insult Him, such as the apostle St. Paul, who condemns those who do not love Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 16:22) and Moses, who on viewing the people committing idolatry, became indignant and angrily broke the tablets of the law⁹⁹. In short, the heart lived united and identified with its beloved to the degree that it made their pleasures its own, their joys, pains, sorrows, suffering and how much it affects Him; and therefore St. Paul said: *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire?* (II Corinthians 11:29).

526 These affections, although they may come from our spirit but settle in our heart and have their base there, and communicating with other men through it, are the ones the Lord wants and demands from us, beloved children, when he asks us for our heart and orders us in his holy law to love Him with all our heart. Will we deny the Lord what he so rightly demands from us?

527 But think that even with this we are not fulfilling our entire duty, because if we deliver the material part of our being with it, there is another part which is our soul, created in the image and likeness of God, that He loves like his daughter and established it as inheritor of its glory. This is what he principally demands from us, commanding us in the first rule of the Ten Commandments: "You shall love your God with all your soul".

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole soul.

528 The heavens and the entire universe, populated by such surprising and wonderful beings, can say, beloved children, with the royal prophet that they are only the work of the fingers of God: *The works of thy fingers* (Psalm 8:4), since they were created from nothing to the form they have as the result of a single command from the Omnipotent one: *Let it be done*, "Do it". But this work of his hands, apparently with advice from the Holy Trinity in its creation, is man, whom he established above the things and made slightly lower than the angels, creating him in his image and likeness: *Let us make man to our image and likeness* (Genesis 1:26). So not only do we come from God like the other creatures, but we carry in our soul the indelible mark of our beginnings, announcing us as children of God, with the most marked characteristics of similarity.

⁹⁷ Cf. CT 14, in works cited, p. 540. Cf. 350 above; 1272.

⁹⁸ Cf. Luke 2:16-18.

⁹⁹ Cf. Exodus 32:19.

529 In fact, if God is One in essence and the Trinity in persons, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit without being three distinct Gods, but one single and true God, our soul is also one in essence and endowed with three very noble powers of memory, understanding and will, distinct from the soul and one another; therefore it becomes a reflection of the Holy Trinity¹⁰⁰. In addition its essence makes it similar to the Father, the intelligence to the Son and the will or love to the Holy Spirit. Even more, our soul is eternal like God, since once it was created by Him, it shall live eternally. And similarly it will also partake of the same happiness as God, which comes in knowing and loving oneself and that to see, know and love God will also make up our eternal beatitude. Oh, what good fortune and happiness is ours, beloved children! How strange it is now that the Lord placed such esteem on the souls that he never hesitated to give his own Son to rescue them?

530 However, what He requires of us in ordering us to love him with all our soul is that we use in his Service these powers He gave us for this purpose.

531 The Lord wants us to employ Memory in recalling his Holy Law, so that by continuously meditating on his precepts like the real prophet, they will become deeply engraved in our souls, and we will adapt all our actions to them. He wants us to use it to bear his designs for us and our very noble purpose in mind so that our life is in accordance with His. And he wants us to employ memory in considering the ingratitude, unfaithfulness and disobedience committed against the Lord, so that we may throw ourselves contritely into the arms of his mercy, which He grants us with his forgiveness. And in view of the graces, favors and blessings he has lavished on us by the handful, our heart is ignited in His holy love as a just reciprocation.

532 For this reason, Moses, the leader of Israel, reminded His chosen people several times of the precepts of his holy laws to keep them faithful to the Lord; others he reproached for their unfaithfulness and hardness towards their God and Lord, and arranged feasts so that the people might celebrate, appreciate and perpetuate the memory of the divine benefits.

533 In truth, when the sinner tired of the pleasures of the world, his heart emptied of the happiness that he fancied, dragging the chains of his enslavement to vice and consumed by remorse, the memory brings to mind another prodigal son, and the kindness and generosity of his Heavenly Father towards those who serve Him, and the love he always showed toward Him, and he resolves then to break with everything, conquer his regard for human conventions and subject himself to greater sacrifices to achieve reconciliation and union with God¹⁰¹.

534 Therefore, the Lord provided our soul with this power of memory, and wants us to make this use of it in his service.

535 But he also requires that we consecrate our understanding, and introduces this power to us in the sanctuary of his eternal wisdom, making our soul

¹⁰⁰ Cf. 966, 1158, 1177, 1351.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Luke 15:17-18.

take part in his divine light: *The light of thy countenance O Lord, is signed upon us* (Psalm 4:7).

536 With understanding, man penetrates the core of the earth, plumbs the depth of its seas, travels in space, overtakes any eagle flying up to Heaven. He knows and discovers the nature of the beings that populate them, their qualities, the services they offer, the beauty and kindness; and consequently his reason necessarily discovers the ability, wisdom, providence, kindness and other infinite attribute that are required in the Architect of such magnificent works, which they could not even begin to do themselves. In that way, man comes naturally to the knowledge of the Creator through knowing His creatures, as the Apostle says: *For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made* (Romans 1:20).

537 Nevertheless, as the works of creation, even being so admirable and great in size, have no comparison with those the divine grace worked and continuously works in the redemption, justification and salvation of man. The Lord has deigned to reveal them to us, so we may know them for our understanding and, with the soul weighed down from the weight of his kindness, remain imprisoned in the bonds of His love.

538 The Lord wants that the homage and worship we offer him be reasonable: *your reasonable service* (Romans 12:1), and for that reason He gave us understanding and reason, which we should employ in thinking about his infinite perfections and his kindness towards us, with the intention that it moves our will to serve him, which is the other power He provided the soul.

539 What a difference, beloved children, between the way God governs the universe, whose beings are governed by laws which they necessarily fulfill, and the paternal solicitude, vigilance and caring which surrounds the life and destinies of man!

540 For man, as an intelligent being and loving son, He did this freely so that by voluntarily practicing good they might deserve the eternal happiness they were destined for. And to that end he provided them with a very strong will with which they might love and always be determined to do good, although sometimes it is not the true good they are seeking, unfortunately.

541 But so they might not make the wrong choice, or that their foolish acts be unforgivable, he gave man this power as guides and aids to those of understanding and memory, that they have them in mind and remember the designs of God for man, and the fine points of his paternal love, to encourage them to love such a great benefactor in return.

542 See here, beloved children, the strength of the most accurate blows the enemy of our soul lands, and therefore the life or death of the soul depends on the will.

The Lord also loving requests the affects of our will, because even though He is its absolute owner, he wants it to be given spontaneously, in accordance with the freedom to act he granted to man.

543 This effect stimulates the natural gratitude of the soul, showing us his love and reminding us of his benefits. And He says it to his chosen people through Zechariah and in him to us: He who touches you touches the apple of my eye. *For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of my eye* (Zechariah 2:8)¹⁰². And by Isaiah: Can the woman perhaps forget her infant, without taking pity on the child of her womb? And if she forgets him, I shall not forget you. *Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee.* (Isaiah 49:15).

544 Similarly, we remember through David the wonders He worked in favor of the Israelites in the desert¹⁰³, which were nothing more than simple symbols of the greater ones He did in the law of grace in our favor.

545 Because if he brought them out of captivity of Egypt and freed them from the persecution of the Pharaoh, opening the passage for them between the waters of the Red Sea, he liberated us from the captivity of the devil by means of the waters of the sacred Baptism; if he forgave them their ingratitude and sins of idolatry after the pleas of Moses¹⁰⁴, for the infinite merits of his Only Son and through the absolution of his minister he also forgives us our sins; if he sustained them in the desert with manna¹⁰⁵, the heavenly delicacy that He knew how much they would like, he nourishes us during this exile with his precious body and blood; if he protected his chosen people against their enemies by means of the Holy Ark¹⁰⁶, it was only the symbol of the true Ark of the Alliance, the Holy Virgin Mary, who is our refuge against the evil spirit and the defender of our cause before the court of God. And if Moses was the leader chosen to release that people, in order to rescue and free us God did not hesitate in giving up his Son, who, with his example, doctrine and death on the cross, could lead us to the glory, the true promised land. *He that spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all* (Romans 8:32).

546 However, beloved children, in view of the size of these wonders and such unique proof of the love of God towards his creature, shall the will of man remain indifferent and inactive, without loving He who loved him so much?

547 That is, the divine fire will ignite in our heart that the Lord says came to set fire to this world, and wishing it to burn in him: *I am come to cast fire on the earth; and what will I, but that it be kindled?* (Luke 12:49).

548 We may frequently recall and reflect on the divine mercies, so that like the example of David, his meditation may what ignites our will in divine love. *In my meditation a fire shall flame out.* (Psalm 38:4).

549 Employing the powers in this way will fulfill the very noble mission of the soul to love God. But we must not forget, beloved children, that He requires

¹⁰² Cf. in the Jerusalem Bible: Zechariah 2:12)

¹⁰³ Cf. Psalm 77; 104; 105; 114.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Exodus 32:11-13.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Exodus 16:4.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Numbers 10:35.

another condition of our love, that it be the utmost, that is, that we love all things and with all our strength.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy strength.

550 St. Thomas says the way we have to love God is to love Him without measure¹⁰⁷. Because it is not like charity or the other virtues, which can become defective if one does not maintain a regular practice of it; like the generosity which degenerates into excess and strength into rashness when they go beyond the prescribed limits. Since God is infinite in his perfection, He should be loved with an infinite love, and since that is impossible for us, we must love him as much as we can, or with all our strength as He commands us: *With all thy strength*.

551 For that must be our love, as St. Thomas says, of distinction or preference, by virtue of which we hold him in higher esteem than any other object, willing to lose everything before separating ourselves from God. A love that is not made up of tenderness and sensitivity that are not available to us; nor does it have to have an intensity and vehemence which exceeds our strength, because the Lord does not demand the impossible of us, but rather a love which joins us to God with bonds so tight that no one is capable of separating us from Him; like that which burned in the breast of the Apostle St. Paul when he said: Who could separate us from the charity of Christ; tribulation, hunger, nakedness, dangers, persecution or the sword? No, I am certain that neither grandeur nor abasement, not life nor death nor any creature shall be able to separate us from the love of Jesus Christ. (Romans 8:39).

552 We shall love God with this preferential love, beloved children, if we are willing to renounce and lose everything, goods, health and life itself for Him: and if we love Him; and if we want to fall into disgrace among men and suffer all the ills before offending Him. But if on the contrary, we place our affections in some object against the will of Good, or renounce his favors by not becoming angry and quarreling with some creature; or we prefer to offend him before depriving ourselves of a pleasure, undergo a test, an affront, a rejection, a loss of fortune, we shall protest that we love in him in vain because it is not only the tongue but rather the works which have to bear witness to our love, as St. John says: *Let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed, and in truth* (1 John 3:18). This is the sign by which Jesus Christ recognizes those who love Him: the observance of his precepts is how we make clear our love towards Him, as St. John himself says: *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them; he it is that loveth me* (John 14:21).

553 However, do you want to know, beloved children, who it is that loves God, and if you love him yourselves? Well, look: he who loves God fears nothing more than offending him, tries to do his will and uses the powers of his soul to serve and glorify Him; he who loves God pays him due tribute in the prayer, worship and exercises prescribed by religion, observing exactly the holy days and proclaiming with the utmost veneration his holy name; he who loves God gives to

¹⁰⁷ Cf. ST. THOMAS: *Summa Theologica*, 2-2, q.27, a.6.

each what corresponds to him and the honor that is due him; generously forgives insults, does not offend anyone and tries to achieve peace with his fellow man, in accordance with the precept of the Apostle to the first Christians¹⁰⁸; he who loves God removes from his heart all the goods and honors of the world, renounces the pleasures, moderates his passions, is humble in prosperity and patient in adversity; in short, he who loves God gives him his heart without reservations, consecrates the powers of his soul to His service and nothing attracts him besides God, since God is everything for him, as the Seraphic Father St. Francis said: My God, and my all¹⁰⁹.

554 Beloved children, do we love God in this way? Is our heart free from disorderly affections, so that it may possess divine love? Does this love inflame our soul, remembering its kindness and meditating on its grandeur? Do we hold it in such esteem that we may easily conquer the obstacles against it? If so, our happiness will be at its utmost even in this world, and a secure guarantee in the eternal, which is what your prelate desires with all his soul for you, and blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in Solsona, on the holy day of the apostle St. Matthew, on 24 February of the year of our Lord 1913.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP A. A. OF SOLSONA

12

Farewell from Solsona

(B. Sol 48 [1913], pp. 353-360)

Most illustrious Council, venerable clergy, religious communities and the faithful.

555 We were quite content and satisfied, as if we were in our center, beloved children, in the solitude of our cell which for us was certainly a true heaven¹¹⁰, when the Divine Providence, through holy obedience, took us from it in order to entrust us with the care and pastoral direction of our beloved diocese of Solsona, and thus we became betrothed. We have worked in it and for it, if not as we should have, at least as much as our strength permitted; and it was a great comfort for us to see how faithfully our efforts were returned and attended to down to the last details by the virtuous and very zealous clergy, our collaborators in the pastoral ministry and for you, beloved faithful, whose religiosity and submissiveness we shall never be able to praise enough. This made us put a great deal of effort during the frequent moments of discouragement our spirit felt when considering the inequality of our

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Romans 12:18; I Thessalonians 5:13.

¹⁰⁹ This expression seems to be what Bernardo of Quintavalle heard from the mouth of Francis on the night he had him as a guest (cf. *Actus Beati Francisci et sociorum eius*, c. 1, n. 20-25 [Ed. Paul Sabatier, Paris 1902] 4s. Cf. also IRIARTE, L.: *La Spirito Francescano di Santa Veronica Giuliani*, in *Laurentianum* 24 [1983], pp. 139-140.

¹¹⁰ Cf. 169 above.

strength compared to the responsibility imposed on us, and moved us to wish that this might be our final destination and resting place.

556 But the Lord, whose judgments are mysterious¹¹¹, made different arrangements for us and assigned our pastoral diligence to the care of another portion of His flock in the diocese of Segorbe.

557 Certainly this change has to be advantageous for you, beloved children, because the Lord, who arranges all for the good of his chosen ones¹¹², has given you a very zealous Pastor¹¹³, full of virtue and knowledge, who can lead your soul better than we can by the way of perfection and raise the diocese to the height it had in its finest moments. Love him, my children, with the same love you professed to us, and respect him with the veneration you always felt for us; because certainly no one deserves your love and respect more than the one the Holy Spirit has chosen to govern his Church, and who watches over your souls and has to answer for them before God.

558 Having to separate ourselves shortly from you, beloved children, to take charge of the new flock the divine Shepherd has entrusted to us, we want to give you a final testament of the love we profess for you, advising you of what you should observe to persevere yourself from the common contagion of hostility and indifference to religion, which, like any gangrene, is eating away at society in our times and which is the main cause of the ills and upheavals we deplore.

559 Therefore our first and fundamental advice to you, beloved children, is that you always maintain your faith unscathed, the priceless gift the divine Spirit instilled in your souls on being reborn through the waters of holy Baptism.

560 If, in accordance with the natural impulses of our hearts, you yearn to be happy and know that only through faith will He who is the source and giver of all good¹¹⁴, look kindly upon you and you will achieve happiness because it is impossible to satisfy God without it, as the Apostle St. Paul says. *But without faith it is impossible to please God* (Hebrews 11:6). Faith, with its beneficial and shining cloud will guide your steps through the dense darkness of this place of our banishment until it leads us to the true promised land. It shall be the heavenly manna which gives you strength during your moments of discouragement, sweeten your bitterness and make you vigorous in battle; the rainbow of peace which recalls your alliance with God and your Ark of Salvation which frees you from capsizing in the universal deluge of separatist ideas that invade the entire earth.

561 How sad and intolerable life would be for us with so much bitterness to devour, so many tears to shed, so many misfortunes and ills to suffer if, when looking up to heaven, faith did not tell our troubled heart that the end of all these sufferings lies there and that our happiness shall be all the greater for how trying the tests we went through have been!

¹¹¹ Cf. Romans 11:33.

¹¹² Cf. Romans 8:28.

¹¹³ The pastor was Dr. Vidal y Barraquer, later Archbishop of Tarragona and Cardinal.

¹¹⁴ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: IR 23:9, in works cited, p. 109; and Adm 8, in works cited, p. 80.

562 If the martyrs, rejecting the flattery and threats of the tyrants who reproached them, suffered the most atrocious torments as if they did not feel them, it was faith which gave them that resolve and bravery. And what else other than the faith also sustained through time and reinforced the spirit of the true disciples of Jesus Christ, so they did not weaken in the trying battles they continuously had to endure from such hardened enemies as the world, the devil and the flesh? Faith also made them practice the virtues heroically and face the greatest sacrifices, so that St. Teresa could say: "The good that I am waiting for is so great, that I delight in the sorrows"¹¹⁵. Yes, beloved children, the true greatness of spirit, strength and heroism are exclusively the heritage of faith, which raises the spirit and rejects worldly things.

563 But it not only makes men great in the moral and religious order but, through instilling submission to the law and respect for authority in them, and bringing to life in their hearts the love of their homeland that God has infused in them, makes them very useful citizens of society, guarantors of morality and order, submissive before all its laws and willing to endure sacrifices and death if necessary for their homeland, which looks at them proudly and considers them its glory and crown.

564 Focus on the glorious acts recorded in the history of all peoples and nations and you shall see that the greater part of them were due to zeal, love of the homeland and heroism of men of faith. But who other than a man of ardent faith and eminent virtue and zeal, Christopher Columbus, expanded our homeland with the discovery of a new world to the degree that one could truly say that the sun never set on its dominions? Who encouraged our brave soldiers to achieve so many notable victories over their enemies in Otumba, Granada, Pavia, and one hundred other battles but faith and religion, which ignited in their breasts this love of the homeland? The same religious sentiment also infused bravery and gave resolve to the good Spaniards to banish the Moors from our beautiful land and build a barrier against the invading army of the neighboring nation trying to dominate us. If you look at it with dispassionate eyes, you will not find any act in the history of our homeland that is not an act of faith of our fathers and forefathers.

565 Therefore, our beloved Catalonia does not cede to any other province in Spain in zeal for defending its faith and, especially, these rich mountains which seems to be the bastion where it is most deeply entrenched against the furious assaults of modern impiety. Yes, beloved children, we confess with true pride and great satisfaction that our diocese distinguishes itself like no other, thanks to God, in the strength and tenacity to preserve and defend its religious beliefs.

¹¹⁵ This phrase does not seem to be from the Saint herself, even though there is an obvious parallel with "I live without living in me, and I await such a noble life, that I die because I do not die: (cf. in *Complete Works of St. Teresa* [BAC, Madrid 1962], p. 480). On the other hand, the sentence denotes a thought typical of St. Teresa regarding knowing how to feel contentment and joy in the midst of suffering and sorrow (cf. ST. TERESA: *Libro de la Vida* 6:2 and 30:8, in works cited, p. 29 and 121). Cf. 1000.

566 Nevertheless, that has not kept us from experiencing in some towns of our diocese the terrible effects of religious indifference and skepticism which unfortunately is widespread in our homeland. For that reason, we must raise a solemn voice of warning at this moment, beloved children, so that you can valiantly defend the precious depository of faith, which enriches and makes us nobler than all the goods of the world and distinguishes us from other nations.

567 And our second piece of advice is so you may always emerge victorious in the battles that you have to maintain to that end: to try and especially distinguish yourselves in veneration, submission and obedience to the holy Church, with the Roman Pontiff as the visible head and the prelates who it establishes over its flock.

568 Beloved children, focus on the efforts impiety and hell itself have made throughout time and continue to make to attack the Church (although uselessly, because their gates will not be able to prevail against it), and from that you will deduce how formidable it shall be for its enemies and, consequently the safety of those take shelter in its impregnable strength.

569 Do not be surprised by this prolonged battle, since the divine Master already announced it to his disciples, telling them: "You shall suffer persecution in the world but trust in me because I vanquished the world" (John 16:33). And he showed them the reason, saying: "If you were of the world, he would love you as his own; but as you are not of this world, for that he abhors you" (John 15:19). And to encourage them even more, he added: "If the world hates you, know that before you it abhorred me. And the servant must not be greater than his Lord" (John 15:18-20).

570 But blessed be God, for if he allows these persecutions, tribulations and temptations, it is always so that his chosen ones may be purified through them, as gold is in the crucible, without permitting attacks superior to their strengths. And He has left us a very powerful defense against our enemies and an impenetrable shield against their poisoned arrows in the Holy Church.

571 Therefore as soon as you recognize the first symptoms of persecution, beloved children, run to the church to protect yourself with the same speed as a child running to the lap of his mother when he feels he is in danger, or chicks to shelter themselves under the wings of the hen when threatened by the hawk. Because you will be safe under the protection of the Church, as the *Crisóstomo* says: "No force can do anything against the Church because God, who is stronger than all things, is with her"¹¹⁶. And as St. Ambrose expresses it: "The Church observes the failure of all its enemies, always remaining immune and safe from all dangers"¹¹⁷.

572 Do not listen to those who try to reduce your love and veneration of the holy Church by impugning it with sophisms and attempt to diminish your respect for your ministers with gross slanders. This has always been the practice of all the heretics and enemies of religion but, nonetheless, they have fallen to the right and

¹¹⁶ Cf. ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: *Second Homily. "In Inscriptionem Actorum"* 1:PG 51:77-79. *Fifth Discourse. "Adversos Iudaeos"*, 2: PG 48:884-886.

¹¹⁷ Cf. ST. AMBROSE: *Book of the Blessings of the Patriarch* 5:27: PL 14:715.

left, buried in the mire of their ignominies, without having been able to tarnish the shine of the Church nor stop its triumphant march throughout the centuries.

573 Not even the defects and shortcomings you observe in some of its ministers are reason enough for you to deviate from it or scorn it¹¹⁸, because you have to consider, albeit that they are covered in the high dignity of the priesthood, that as men we do not stop being subject to the miseries and passions of the poor descendants of Adam; nevertheless, they did not stop God from conferring on us a ministry greater than that of the angels by having us join his eternal priesthood.

574 Therefore nothing or no one may separate you from those whom the Lord established as the fathers of your souls, which shall never be so perverse as to desire your damnation or depraved enough to instill doctrines contrary to those of our divine Master¹¹⁹. And should wolves of that nature introduce the infernal spirit in the flock of the Church over any given time, as always they shall be sent fleeing by the crook of the Supreme Pastor.

575 Always consider, beloved children, that the greatest benefit that the Lord granted you is allowing you to be part of his holy Church and having given you zealous guides who show you and lead you safely along the path of salvation.

576 However, after our most recent advice that we wanted to engrave in your hearts, beloved children, there only remains to give my most expressive thanks to our virtuous and learned cathedral, parish and beneficial clergy who, with their great zeal and interest for the souls, have helped us to much to bear the responsibility of the pastoral ministry. Similarly, I want to thank the religious communities of both sexes who, with their doctrine and example have edified and taught the members of our dioceses the practice of virtue; and especially to you, my beloved congregation, who with your meek, submissive and obedient nature have contributed so much to smooth things over for us in our difficult position.

577 To all of you and each of you in particular we are extremely indebted and we shall hold you forever in our memory, which will keep us always united to this part of the flock of the great Father of families, the one He commended to us, and therefore particularly beloved by us.

578 And pleading for indulgence from everyone for the shortcomings that we may have shown in carrying out our pastoral responsibility, we hope that you always continue to pray for us, beloved children, and we bless you with all our heart in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Solsona on 13 November of the year of our Lord 1913.

FRIAR LUIS, BISHOP

¹¹⁸ Cf. 266 above.

¹¹⁹ Cf. 266 above.

13
On Entry in Segorbe
 (B. Seg 33 [1913], pp. 172-182)

By the grace of God and the Apostolic Holy See, Bishop of Segorbe.

Our Friar Luis Amigó y Ferrer.

579 To the Illustrious Council of our Holy Church Cathedral, the respectable parish and beneficial clergy, the most honorable authorities, the seminary, religious schools, societies and the faithful of our beloved diocese:

Greetings, peace and blessings in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

*Non meis meritis ad vos me misit Dominus,
 vestris cornois participem fieri* (Ecclesia in of. Sancti
 Clementis)¹²⁰.

580 It is impossible, beloved children, to be able to express the different emotions which overcome our spirit on preaching our first pastoral sermon to you and greet you with the announcement of peace the angels delivered to the world when the Redeemer¹²¹ was born and the Lord himself used to greet the Apostles when he appeared to them after he was raised from the dead: *Peace be to you* (John 20:19). Peace be with you.

581 The high level of dignity to which it pleased the Lord to raise us, incomparable with any other on earth, and the noble mission he entrusts to us intensifies the feelings of gratitude in our souls, and they grow even greater the more we consider how unwarranted these gifts are, in that they do not acknowledge any merits that we might have had for receiving them.

582 In its own time, like the infinite depth of the kindness of the Lord, it makes us discover the immensity of our ingratitude and unfaithfulness. Seeing it confuses and terrifies us, leaving us without encouragement but to exclaim with the tax collector of the Gospel: Lord, show mercy to me as a sinner. *O God, be merciful to me a sinner* (Luke 18:13).

583 And finally the consideration of our scant powers on comparing them with the sacred duties inherent to our pastoral ministry also fills us with terror.

584 In spite of that, we take heart and strength from the words of the Lord through St. John, who says: It is not you have chosen me but rather I who chose you so you may go forth and bear fruit, and your fruit will remain. *You have not chosen me: but I have chosen you; and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit; and your fruit should remain*¹²²; these words which assure us of the success of our undertakings, because St. Bernardino says that when the Lord

¹²⁰ Cf. in RB, response to the fourth reading of 23 November.

¹²¹ Cf. Luke 2:14.

¹²² John 15:16.

chooses someone for a certain condition, he grants them the assistance they need, as can be seen in the Apostles and other saints¹²³.

585 And even our own insignificance makes us wait confidently, as the ordinary providence of the Lord is to choose weak instruments for his great works, to whom the joyous success of these works cannot be attributed in order that, as St. Paul says, no one may glory in the presence of the Lord. *That no flesh should glory in His sight* (I Corinthians 1:29). It has to always be Him with Us, enlightening our understanding in order to make wise decisions in resolving all problems; directing our acts for the greatest glory and good of our souls, and giving us the necessary strength without regard to human conventions, which we understand meets with his divine approval.

586 Certainly we have to confess with more reason than the Apostle St. Paul that we are unable to do anything by ourselves, especially in the great work of the salvation of souls which the Lord entrusts to us; but because it is the Lord who sends us among you, we are certainly hoping for his divine assistance, with which we have no fear of declaring, like the Apostle himself, that we will do anything in Him who comforts us: *I can do all these things in Him who strengtheneth me* (Philippians 4:13).

587 In fact, the Lord has put great models in our sight in our worthy predecessors, whose knowledge, impassioned zeal and eminent virtues have enlightened our beloved Diocese. One who stands out among them like a star of the first magnitude, the great *Canubio*¹²⁴, well known to all of you, beloved children, still attract people to follow Jesus Christ with their sweet fragrance. For that reason, we will try to follow his footsteps and adapt our behavior to his, in order not to disappoint the designs of God nor your hopes.

588 And we are also confident in the extremely valuable collaboration of our wise and exemplary Cathedral council, our very zealous parish clergy, instructive religious communities and all the honorable authorities. We hope, beloved children, to work fruitfully for the good of your souls, to participate in one day of your merits and be able to say with the Apostle: *You are my joy and my crown.* (Philippians 4:1).

589 The words of the Church that we place at the head of our pastoral letter, to wit: the Lord has not sent us among you for our own merits to take part in your crowns; they have to serve you, beloved children, to understand and appreciate the nobility of our mission as someone sent by God, and for you to make use of the instructions, advice and warning that we might offer you; and as a great stimulus for us to work tirelessly in your behalf, with the aim of entering on the side of your merits. And we thereby consider it advisable to stop and take a little time to explain them.

¹²³ Cf. ST. BERNARDINO OF SIENA: First sermon of St. Joseph, in RB, fourth reading of the IV Fair in the second week after the eighth day of Easter. Cf. 254 above.

¹²⁴ Cf. LLORENS, P.L.: *Espiscopologio de la diócesis of Segorbe-Castellón*, t. II (Madrid 1973), pp. 468-479.

“NON MEIS MERITIS AD VOS ME MISIT DOMINUS”

590 God, who is admirable and holy in all His works, appears much more that way to our consideration, beloved children, in the work par excellence of our redemption. One does not know what to admire most in ell: if the humbling of the Son of God by his taking on of human nature to raise the fallen man, or having wanted to always be with him in accordance with his promise: *He therefore that sweareth by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things that are upon it* (Matthew 23:20), governing man by his doctrine, guiding him with his example and strengthening him with his grace through the Church, the depository of his treasures and sacraments for the purpose. But what seems even greater is that he would deign to ennoble man to the point of associating him with the priesthood and mission his eternal Father conferred on him to save the human race. *As thou hast sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world* (John 17:18).

591 This is certainly a very high level of dignity, beloved children, one which not even the greatest kings in the world had been able to take pride in who, like the other faithful, had to kneel at the feet of the minister of the Lord, to receive forgiveness for their sins from Him and submit to the penance he may impose on them. For example, take the emperor Theodosius who St. Ambrose prohibited from entering the temple of the Lord for eight months as punishment for his cruelty¹²⁵. And he also had to receive at the hand of the priest the body and blood of Christ, which only he consecrates and denies to the unworthy, even though they may be crowned heads of state, as the *Crisóstomo*¹²⁶ says.

592 But Jesus Christ did not give all his ministers equal authority, because, with his Church set up along the lines of the human body, one can observe the diversity among the members of the Church. That is why the Apostle says to the Corinthians: God put in his church, in first place, the Apostles; in second, the Prophets; in third, Doctors; after that, virtues; then graces of treatments, assistance, governing, genres of languages and interpretation of words. Or perhaps all are Apostles, Prophets and Doctors and everyone possesses virtues and have the grace of treatment, speak languages and interpret?¹²⁷

593 In addition, as it is essential for all societies that there exists an authority which regulates and maintains its life, whose authority lies in chosen leaders, the Church of Jesus Christ, the perfect society, also has its hierarchy of power. The princes are the Bishops, the successors to the Apostles and united to the Pontiff, the supreme heir of the authority of the Prince of the Apostles.

594 The Lord wants this supreme authority to be respected by men to the extent that when this authority is used by the Church, man takes it as done by the

¹²⁵ Cf. in RB, sixth reading of 7 December.

¹²⁶ Cf. ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: *Third Homily to the People of Antioch*: PG 49-50:50; and *Liber in Sanctum Babylam*, 9: PG 49-50:547.

¹²⁷ Cf. I Corinthians 12:26-30.

Lord Himself, saying through St. Luke: He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me (Luke 10:16).

595 And in the book of Chronicles, alluding to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob whom He calls anointed because from them came the priests, He says: You do not want to touch my anointed ones, nor do evil to my Prophets (I Chronicles 16:22).

596 However, beloved children, who among mortal men would presume to deserve such sovereign dignity, superior to that of the angels themselves, to whom the Lord never said as he did to his Apostles: I shall not now call you servants, because the servant does not know what his master does. I have called you friends, because I have made you know all the things I have heard of my Father (John 15:15). And the Apostle St. Paul is confused and disconcerted by this and says: "I am not worthy of being called Apostle, and what worth I do have is due to the grace of God" (I Corinthians 15:9, 10. How much more reason will we need to acknowledge our unworthiness and innocently confess, that not for our own merits, for we had none, but through His mercy he has lifted us in order to govern you and lead your souls to heaven? *Non meis meritis ad vos me misit Dominus*¹²⁸).

597 Yes, beloved children, because the government of the Church and the regimen for souls is the duty of the Bishops as the Roman Pontiff, the Supreme Shepherd, has entrusted them to us; illustrating them with their doctrine and example, so that they may know good and observe virtue; showing the obstacles and precipices which vice leads them to; making them distinguish the good pastures from the bad, so that they may eagerly search for those which give them life and flee in horror from those containing the seeds of death; and defending them from the continuous attacks of the enemies with their crosiers. The bishops have fulfilled this very noble mission at all times, as the history and traditions of the peoples bear witness through the actions which refer us to the saintliness of their lives; the very wise laws dictated by the general and provincial Councils; the errors they have condemned themselves for, and the fervor and zeal with which many of them have sealed their commitment to the faith they were preaching with their own blood, all in accordance with the advice of the Apostle, who says: *Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the church of God* (Acts 20:28).

598 Beloved children, for all that you must have the utmost veneration and affection for the prelates who govern and rule you at any given time, leaving aside their personal qualities, because they are sent by God, who knows, can and wants to grant them his aid and graces for the good of the Church and of your souls. And so we confidently hope of you on undertaking our pastoral duties among this flock with which the Lord has entrusted me: *Ad vos me misit Dominus* and of whose merits we hope to be participants.

¹²⁸ Cf. 579 above.

"ME MISIT DOMINUS, VESTRIS CORNOIS PARTICIPEM FIERI"

599 You see His glory here, beloved children, what God, necessarily loving them, decided on creating all things and what he demands of all the creatures, especially man who was formed in His image and likeness, and was destined by Him for heaven.

600 That is why this is the constant yearning of all the souls who love God; more intensely and vehemently the greater knowledge they have of Him. They work tirelessly on their own sanctification for that reason, which they understand as the best way to glorify Him, and they are impassioned in their zeal to make everyone know, serve and love Him, without sparing any sacrifice or allowing fatigue in that quest. In that way they have their thought and affection placed in God, and only want that He loves them as a reward for their works; as St. Thomas Aquinas said when the Lord, through the mouth of a crucifix, said to him: "You have written well of me. What reward do you want me to give you?" He answered right away: "Nothing more than you, Lord¹²⁹", that is, his love, service and glory.

601 But if this glory of God has to be the principal motive of all our acts, the Lord wanted the ones who lack such an unselfish and perfect love of God serve us as an inspiration and incentive to act well to receive the prize and the reward promised to us in the other life; for that reason he instilled this desire in the heart of man, who so often acts more by impulse, according to the extent of the reward awaiting him; that is why David said: "I have inclined my heart to practice of your righteous commandments forever and for the hope of the prize" (Psalm 118:112). And this reward is so great that the Apostle says: "That which neither the eye saw nor the ear heard, nor could the human heart wish for what things God hath prepared for those who love Him" (1 Corinthians 2:9).

602 However, we shall achieve it more securely, beloved children, by carrying out works of charity towards our fellow men, the only ones the Lord will mention in the sentence he has to proclaim on Judgment Day in favor of the chosen ones and against the reprobates¹³⁰; and they are more in accordance with the will of the Son of God, who out of the love of man descended from Heaven to Earth to save him.

603 For this reason, the saints have always shown such an ardent zeal for the salvation of their fellow man, for whom they willingly sacrificed their goods, their peace, their health and even their lives, secure in the knowledge that by saving a soul, they were determining the destiny of their own¹³¹.

604 And such is the kindness and generosity of the Lord in rewarding the services given in benefit of the souls that in addition to the credit for those services acquired in His divine presence, He adds the share in the reward of the good works that they performed through our mediation. It is the same way that worldly business often grant equal compensation to those who help to increase them through their

¹²⁹ Cf. en RB, fifth reading of 7 March.

¹³⁰ Cf. Matthew 25:31-46.

¹³¹ Cf. James 5:20.

industry or their talent. Thus, as the reprobates will increase their pain and torment to the extent they continue condemning souls through the influence of their bad example and perverse doctrines, so the credit for the righteous will increase the same way and even in heaven, in the coincidental glory of the blessed for the works of virtue practiced by those who they made know, love and serve Jesus Christ.

605 See here then, , beloved children, the correct reason why we tell you that we came to participate in your laurels, that is, of your merits: *Vestris cornois participem fieri* because, having been sent by the Lord to work for the benefit of your souls with the intention of taking all of you to Heaven, for that to be possible, we do not doubt that Our Lord will use mercy with us for you and He will let us enter in the part of the eternal reward He has prepared for you.

606 From you, beloved children, we expect that, consistent with your past, you will profess to us, like you would to a father, the respect, love and submission you have always had for the Prelates that the Lord sent to you and made their tenures so glorious and so fruitful for your souls. For our part, albeit that we cannot do anything, trusting in the grace of the Lord who sent us and the extremely valuable cooperation of our virtuous clergy and instructive religious communities, our fellow curates in the sacred ministry, we shall tirelessly work in the fulfillment of the noble mission the Lord has entrusted to us. And with that we have no doubt that we shall jointly receive with you our eternal prize that the Lord promises us.

In guarantee of this, your father and prelate blesses you with all his heart in the name of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on 2 December 1913.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

14

The Fulfillment of Easter

B. Seg 34 [1914], pp. 53-66

“That grace may be added to thy head, and a chain of gold to thy neck” (Proverbs 1:9).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese, health, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

607 The Church is attentive to the spiritual good of its children, for whose rescue its Divine Spouse gave his blood and life and entrusted their salvation by making it the depository of his gifts, grace and sacraments, in order that the Church would continue its divine mission. This loving mother does not overlook any means, beloved children, to achieve this object so much to the pleasure and glory of God.

608 And with the intention of stimulating the divine love within us, in which all our worldly and eternal happiness consists, it reminds us of the fine points of the love of God toward us in different periods of the year; presenting to us a few times the Son of God made man, born in a stable, enduring inclement weather and the hardships of the utmost poverty, while others show him at home in Nazareth, sanctifying family life with his submission and obedience towards the Holy Virgin and the Patriarch St. Joseph. Now they remind us of his works, solicitude and fatigue in seeking after the poor sinners, to instruct and teach them the way of Heaven, or the torments and death on the cross he suffered for our redemption. In short, the Church speaks to us, full of joy, of the supreme proof of infinite love that the Son of God gave to us by presenting us with his body and precious blood as a delicacy for of our soul and the sure pledge of our salvation.

609 But, at the same time, the divine love wants to be reciprocated in such a way that it demands that the beloved imitate it in his sacrifices and sufferings. In order to reach the close union with the supreme good one has to give up everything, even yourself, and remove all the obstacles preventing the soul from flying to God. What the Church urges and even imposes on us in this holy time of Lent is mortification and penance as the best means to bear witness to the Lord of our love and the only means for purifying our souls, so that we may reach that close union of the beloved in Holy Week without obstacles through receiving the body and blood of our adorable Redeemer in the Eucharist.

610 Enter deeply then, beloved children, into the spirit and intention of our Holy Mother the Church and make use of this acceptable time and these days of health to arrange through penance, like the people of Nineveh, to receive the mercies of the Lord: *That grace may be added to thy head, and a chain of gold to thy neck* (Proverbs 1:9).

611 Fasting and abstinence are the mortifications the Church imposes on us in Lent to beseech forgiveness for our sins which, as the Lord says, can only be obtained through penance: *Except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish* (Luke 13:5), and the Holy Week communion to unite us intimately to Jesus Christ, so that his grace may make us strong against our enemies and ensure salvation.

To encourage you, beloved children, in the fulfillment of these precepts through the Church, we shall try to make you see their necessity and importance in this sermon.

612 There is nothing more common and frequent, in these times in which idleness, sensuality and insubordination have grown so much, to hear people exclaim against the precepts of abstinence and fasting, judging them to be inhuman and unhealthy and branding the Holy Church as austere and strict, when in fact it is all benevolence and gentleness towards its children. An insult from which now not only those who live separated from the Church and its precepts but even a great many people who pride themselves on being faithful children of the church, deduce that they do not have to give any importance to those commandments, as if the church could not impose them on us or that they would not have any force.

613 But who could dispute that authority? Jesus Christ himself says: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you" (John 20:21); "Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven" (Matthew 18:18); "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me" (Luke 10:16). This makes it known that He confers on them his own authority, without limits or restrictions, as he received his authority from his heavenly Father so that what the Church commands, it commands in the name of Christ; what the Church does as binding and not binding on earth is confirmed in Heaven and any disobediences committed against the Church are taken as disobediences against Him.

614 In addition, Jesus Christ calls it king, and as such must be ruled by a government with authority for the good of its subjects and to obligate them with penalties for their fulfillment. And He also compares it to an enclosure for sheep¹³², and therefore the faithful must submit and let their legitimate Pastors and Prelates govern with the same meekness as the sheep do.

615 Beloved children, the law of fasting and abstinence is not any innovation introduced by the Church; they are practices as old as humanity. Because, what else but a law of abstinence was the prohibition made by God to man to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? The Jewish people also prohibited the eating of certain foods, such as pork, and ordered a fast of twenty four hours to prepare for the sacrifice of atonement. Elijah and Moses fasted for forty days; so did our model and example Jesus to give us an example¹³³. What, then, is there to be surprised about that the Church imposes these mortifications on us at certain times, which together with prayer we have to have to receive heavenly graces?

616 Do not even say these are inhuman laws, which weaken and debilitate bodily strength and diminish health, since far from it, fasting makes the body stronger, sharpens understandings and strengthens the will. Remember what the Holy Scripture refers us to in the book of Daniel concerning that idea, of the four youths of Israel (Daniel, Ananias, Mishael, Azarias) whom, abstaining from the delicacies of the king's table, asked to be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. Nonetheless, they appeared after a few days with their faces fuller, well-nourished and more handsome than the other youths who were eating the delicacies of the royal table¹³⁴. The Fathers of the desert fasted very strictly for almost the the entire year and nonetheless, lived to a ripe old age. You read the same thing in the lives of the saints and you can observe it in the religious communities, which all have many fasts prescribed in their rules. Also, what is it that doctors do for illnesses but put the patients on a strict diet? Ecclesiasticus confirms this as well, saying: "*By surfeiting many have perished: but he that is temperate, shall prolong life*" (Ecclesiasticus 37:34).

617 You should also not ignore that our intellectual powers function quickly and with more lucidity to the extent that our stomach is less burdened, because

¹³² Cf. John 10:16.

¹³³ Cf. I Kings 19:8; Exodus 24:18; Matthew 4:2.

¹³⁴ Cf. Daniel 1: 8-16.

the gases which rise from it to the head because of excess food makes all mental work impossible. See here one of several reasons that can be alleged as the reason why more talented men are frequently found among the poor whose circumstances do not allow for any excesses with food. That is why the prophet Daniel, who mortified his body with fasting and abstinence, distinguished himself in the court of Nebuchadnezzar for his talent among all the wise men there¹³⁵.

618 But fasting and abstinence not only favor the intellectual functions but strengthen the will, which grows weaker to the degree that the animal part of man grows stronger. From this comes the battle between the spirit and the flesh which the Apostle proclaims to the Galatians, desiring and fancying the one against the other. The Apostle himself says: "But I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection: lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway" (I Corinthians 9:27), and advises us, in his epistle to the Galatians, that we act in accordance with the laws of the spirit and not to fulfill the desires of the flesh (Galatians 5:16).

619 Strengthened in this doctrine of the Apostle, the saints always fought valiantly the battles of the Lord against the enemies of his souls, wielding the weapons of mortification to subdue the flesh to the spirit: remembering what the Lord says: "This type of enemy is not frightened off except with prayer and fasting"¹³⁶.

620 For all that, the holy Church instills these precepts in us, moved by their desire to secure the good of our souls by every possible means.

621 But such is its prudence, clemency and benevolence that the Church does not obligate its children to fast during the time of their physical development, nor in their declining years, that is, not before they are twenty-one years old nor after they reach sixty years old. And similarly, they make exceptions for the ill, the very weak and those dedicated to physical work which requires that they expend a great deal of physical force.

622 Do not listen then, beloved children, to the voice of our corrupt nature which rebels against everything which opposes its disorderly appetites and will want to exempt itself using futile reasons from the slight mortification that the church imposes on us in this holy time of Lent. Do not listen to the protests from the enemies of religion, and even more of bad Catholics, against these healthy laws of penance as the Apostle says: "The sensual man does not know the things that are of the spirit of God"¹³⁷. Rather accept them gratefully and fulfill them faithfully, as laws from a mother who is so interested in the good of her children, and numerous goods shall come to our souls through their fulfillment: *That grace may be added to thy head, and a chain of gold to thy neck.*

623 Because the truth is that fasting has always attracted the mercies of the Lord and His graces upon men. The people of Nineveh, through fasting and

¹³⁵ Cf. Daniel 1:17.

¹³⁶ Cf. Matthew 17:21.

¹³⁷ Cf. I Corinthians 2:14.

penance, satisfied the justice of the Lord and avoided the punishment he threatened them with¹³⁸. If through Judith the Lord miraculously freed the people of Bethulia from the siege of Holofernes, they owed this aid to the praying and fasting they did¹³⁹. The three youths thrown into the flames of the furnace of Babylon were freed from it through abstinence and fasting, and in exchange the flames devoured their executioners¹⁴⁰. If Moses and Elijah could see and deal with God on Mount Sinai or Horeb, it was only following a long fast and prayer¹⁴¹. St. Augustine says that fasting and alms are the two wings for flying to God in prayer¹⁴². And as the church says in the Preface to this period of Lent, fasting suppresses the vices, raises the mind towards God and the Lord grants the souls virtue and the prizes for it.

624 But above all else it provides us with the greatest reward, which is to receive in our breast and accommodate in our hearts the divine spouse of our souls, made a sacrament by our love. See here, beloved children, the other and main precept that the Holy Mother Church imposes on us during the Holy Week; organizing the penances, preaching, meditation and prayer which we carry out during Lent for a worthy reception, and we are going to occupy ourselves with the importance of that now.

625 Our divine Redeemer Jesus loves us so much that, not content with having taken on human nature and bore our miseries and suffering until He gave his life on the cross, he also wanted to perpetuate his time dwelling among men, and says he shares their flesh. To that end, he instituted the Holy Sacrament of our altars, in which He not only fulfills his word of being with us until the end of time but also joins with and takes possession of our hearts in a special and indescribable way.

626 This union is so close the Lord Himself compares it to that between food and the body which receives it: "My flesh", He says through St. John, "is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him" (John 6:56-57). This way the delicacy becomes the substance of the one who receives it but, on the contrary, Jesus Christ transforms us into Himself in communion in such a way that our flesh becomes one with that of Jesus Christ; His precious blood runs through our veins and His soul and divinity reside in us¹⁴³. So man can say in all truth after receiving communion, like the Apostle does: "I live, but now I am not the one who lives, but rather Christ who lives in me" (Galatians 2:20).

627 Jesus Christ himself compares this union with the soul by means of this Sacrament, which He has with this eternal Father in the Holy Trinity, saying: "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me,

¹³⁸ Cf. Jonah 3 1-10.

¹³⁹ Cf. Judith 8:17; 9:1-14.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Daniel 3:24-30.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Exodus 24:18; 1 Kings 19:8.

¹⁴² Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Exposition on Psalm 42*, 8: PL 36:482.

¹⁴³ Cf. 786.

the same also shall live by me" (John 6:58). As Jesus Christ is one with his eternal Father through the divine nature they have in common, so the soul is in a certain way one also with Jesus Christ when it receives the sacrament; and as Jesus Christ receives from his Father a completely divine life, proportionally He comes to be the beginning of a completely spiritual and divine life in those who join with Him by partaking of His precious body and blood.

628 To understand, then, the glory that comes to the soul of this union it makes with Jesus Christ in holy communion, it would be necessary to be able to appreciate the infinite distance that exists between God and the creature, between the omnipotent power and weakness, infinite grandeur and utmost baseness, between everything and nothing. However, who would ever have been able to imagine that God would love man the sinner in such a way that he would seat him at his table and feed him with his own body and blood?

629 The themes the Lord employs in creating this Holy Sacrament gives us a clear idea, beloved children, of the admirable rewards that He works on the soul which receives Him appropriately. Because, in fact, the bread and wine sustain the life of man and make evident his strengths; thus the royal prophet David says: "Wine cheers and strengthens the heart" (Psalm 103:15); and the Lord makes us understand that bread is the main element which sustains and invigorates our life by ordering us to ask for it insistently in the Sunday prayer: "Give us this day, our daily bread"¹⁴⁴. Well, in the same way, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, which the bread and wine changes to in the sacrament of Eucharist, are the nutrition, the life and the sustenance of the soul. Without food, the body weakens and dies, and without communion it is absolutely impossible for our soul to live the life of grace.

630 Ah, my beloved children, this divine bread of the Angels, which the Lord also uses to feed mankind, how much strength does it provide to climb, without weakening, to the summit of the mountain of perfection? When strengthened by it, nothing frightens them; the furies of hell do not intimidate them, because they have with them not only the grace to conquer them, but the Creator of the grace itself, in whom all things are possible, as St. Paul says¹⁴⁵. Not even worldly pleasures have any appeal for them; because, their soul drunk with the sweet nectar of divine love, they are not satiated by anything other than this heavenly manna, which contains all delights in it, and this wine which breeds virgins. For the divine fire they breathe, they are as fearsome as lions, according to the expression in the *Crisóstomo*, to everyone up to the devil himself¹⁴⁶; the infernal enemy who, in the manner of the exterminating angel going straight by and respecting the houses whose doors he saw tinted with the blood of the lamb¹⁴⁷, as he flees terrified from

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Matthew 6:11; Luke 11:3.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Philippians 4:13; II Corinthians 12:9-10; Colossians 1:29.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: *Homily 61 to the people of Antioch*, in RB Fifth reading of the Saturday of Corpus week (cf. in *Opera Omnia*. Ed. Sebastián Nivellium, t. V, Paris 1581, col. 345). Cf 798.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Exodus 12:7 and 13.

the ones he sees with their entrances bathed with the blood of the divine Lamb Jesus Christ.

631 See here, beloved children, the reason why the Holy Church, who desires your salvation so much, instills in us and commands us so insistently to receive this divine sacrament.

632 In accordance with this wish, the primitive Christians received communion daily; then on Sundays, and ultimately in Christmas, Easter and the Pentecost. But as the fervor of the faithful was growing more lukewarm over time, in the Fourth Council of the Lateran the Church ordered: "All the faithful who have reached the age at which they can distinguish between good and evil, shall confess their sins at least once a year, and at least during Easter they shall devoutly receive the Sacrament of the altar (CONC LAT., can. 21)¹⁴⁸. This decree was confirmed by the Council of Trent in these words: "If anyone might deny to the faithful of either sex, when they reach the years of discretion, that they are obligated every year, at least in Easter, to receive communion in accordance with the precept of the Holy Mother Church, they shall be excommunicated (COUNCIL TRID, Session XIII, can. 9)¹⁴⁹.

633 However, if the Church limits this precept to the Easter communion, understand, beloved children, that nevertheless its wish would be that its children receive nourishment from this sacred delicacy very frequently, and every day if possible; as recommended with the utmost insistence by His Holiness Pius X¹⁵⁰. And if they only prescribe the annual communion it is because, attentive to the coldness and indifference of the majority of Christians, they would not approach the sacred altar even at this time of year if they were not ordered to. That is why this precept makes the argument of a great ingratitude towards God in a certain way since, as He has his delights in dwelling with us, what makes up the total of our happiness is our indifference, so that it became necessary to obligate us so that we would approach this sacred occasion in which the Lord gives himself to us as a delicacy. For us, it is also a motive for great humiliation that the Lord had to order us to break bread, in the first law of the Ten Commandments.

634 How long, then, beloved children, shall we be slow and heavy in our hearts towards a God who love us so much and taken his love to the extreme of given himself to us? If we wanted to demand of him and new and better proof this love, being omnipotent, He could not do more for us than he has already done, as He himself says: "What more can I do for you, after having given you this supreme proof of my love?" *And after this, what shall I do more for thee, my son?* (Genesis 27:37).

635 We may be grateful to the Lord, beloved children, and come to receive the sacrament with the greatest possible frequency. And especially in these days of

¹⁴⁸ Cf. DENZINGER, 437.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. DENZINGER, 891.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. PIUS X: *Decree of 20 December 1905*: ASS 38 (1905/1906), p. 401 ss.; in DENZINGER 1981-1990. Cf. 802.

penance, we cleanse and purify our souls with it, so that on receiving it in Easter it may fill us with the graces that are promised to the children who meekly subject themselves to the arrangements of your Mother: *That grace may be added to thy head, and a chain of gold to thy neck.*

636 In this way we will be able to truly say that we are resurrected with Christ, and we neither seek nor fancy anything of the world, but rather to live united with Him in time and for all eternity. This is what your Prelate wishes, who blesses you in the name of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on 8 March, the second Sunday of Lent, of 1914.

FRIAR LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

15

War and Peace

(B. Seg 34 [1914], pp. 217-229)

“Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will (Luke 2:14)”.

To the faithful of our beloved diocese, health, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

637 When one reflects carefully, beloved children, on the state of present-day society, the premonitions about its future the imagination offers are ever more appalling. The nations, some grown big-headed with the gifts of knowledge and power the divine Providence has provided, while others who look at the yoke of the Lord as something ominous and intolerable try to shake it off by rising up against God and Christ. They persecute its Church, strip it of all its material resources so it cannot do any good for the people and that way loses its influence with them. They separate its Ministers from society as opposed to liberty, civilization and progress. With this for an example, the peoples look on indifferently, if they do not treat it disdainfully, at their common and loving Mother and some abandon it, others make fun of its dogmas and doctrine, and most of them insult it by not giving it greater significance than any other religious sect and hypocrites.

638 With the world having reached such a depraved state, it should not surprise us that divine justice wanted to purify it and awaken humanity from its lethargy with the current war, unprecedented in history, in the way it did in another time through the waters of the Great Flood and the fire that consumed the cities of the Pentapolis (Sodom and Gomorrah).

639 Have no doubt, beloved children; if the spirit of discord has taken control over nations and armed some against others in fierce warfare, the Lord has permitted it as a just punishment for their abandoning of religion; and so that

when they find themselves harassed by their enemies, they come back to Him, like sheep hastily rushing back to their pen when threatened by wolves.

640 A terrible punishment, certainly, is war! Not only for the multitude of men who perish in it, the victims of lead and steel enemies, but also because many other calamities follow as a consequence of war, including poverty, hunger and the plague. Hence, the royal prophet David asked the Lord to send him any other punishment, but save him from the punishment of war¹⁵¹.

641 From this, it is easy to deduce how great and valuable is the benefit of peace, the reward of the redemption announced by the angels to the world in the coming of the Messiah: *And on earth peace to men* (Luke 2:14). This is why it is yearned for and desired by everyone, even the impious, who clamor for "Peace! Peace!" but do not obtain it because the Lord says in Isaiah: "There is no peace for the wicked" (Isaiah 48:22), since the Divine Redeemer brought it from Heaven only for men of good will: *Men of good will* (Luke 2:14).

642 But since no one ever knows and appreciates the value of a treasure so much as when you lose it, peace is what everyone is crying out for in the present circumstances because the peoples, forgetting their hatreds and quarrels, and making room in their hearts for feelings of humanity and compassion, are looking at and joining together with each as brothers, the children of the same Father who is in Heaven. And He, our perversity notwithstanding, makes the sun rise over the good and bad alike, and sends his beneficial rains over the righteous and unrighteous. *Who maketh his sun to rise upon the good, and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust* (Matthew 5:45).

643 If, then, you wish for peace as the most prized gift for your soul and society in general, do not look for it, beloved children, in the world or in worldly things, which cannot give it to you because they do not have it. This is the effect of their jealousies, zeal, hatred and ambitions, which make Cain declare war to the death on his brothers; look for it in Him and by Him who, calling himself the Prince of Peace, *Princeps Pacis*, acquired it for us at the cost of his own pure blood.

644 But as the ordinary providence the Lord grants His graces comes when man is deserving of them with his virtues for them or through repentance; let us prepare ourselves, beloved children, in this holy time of Advent, an appropriate time and favorable days, to beseech the Almighty through penance this supernatural gift of peace which converts the world into the waiting room of Heaven, making its inhabitants look at their fellow men as the children of God we all are and live together as brothers, tolerating patiently each other's shortcomings.

645 And because the Lord wants us to ask for his aid and graces that represent our needs to him, do not stop crying out to Him in prayer, making the spirit of discord feel the world and restoring the lost peace to us; and if His justice demands satisfaction, to send us other punishments so that not as many souls may perish as they do in war.

¹⁵¹ Cf. II Samuel 24:12-14.

646 In sum, beloved children, the divine plan to make us feel his justice is quite obvious: God afflicts and troubles the people who distance themselves from Him, but He welcomes them like any loving father if they are repentant and invoke Him.

* * *

647 The Divine Providence, which rules and governs all the creatures in the heavens, on earth and in the seas, and is so attentive towards man, not allowing even a single hair to fall from his head against its will, is especially fond of the people and nations which divide men for the good order of society. It encourages and stimulates the righteous on the path of good, with worldly and eternal rewards, and distances the sinners from vice by means of threats and punishments, in the same way it behaves with societies, entrusted to organize and direct the actions of their citizens for the worldly and eternal good.

648 Governments are given to the people to rule them for the purpose, and there is no authority, says St. Paul, that does not come from God. *For there is no power but from God* (Romans 13:1); and the Lord himself, in the Book of Proverbs, says (Proverbs 8: 15 and 16): “By me the kings reign and the lawgivers decree just laws; by me the princes rule and the judges administer justice”. And the Lord deals with it in this way, so it can be said the first and main thing that falls under the dominion and conduct of the Providence of God are the governments of the nations.

649 This affirmation perhaps will strike some as surprising, accustomed as they are to see the changes in governments in most cases as due to political manipulations of influence and favoritism, and not a few to intrigue, fraud and willful misconduct by the ones who are scaling the rungs of power. But you have to bear in mind that it is God, through his mysterious judgments, who allows this and, as the Book of Proverbs says (Proverbs 16:9): “The heart of man prepares his ways, but the Lord must direct his steps”. It also seems repugnant that God allows certain governments which oppress the men of good and are against order and justice; but our admiration will never cease if we consider that the sins of the people have to be paid in this world, and God gives unto those governments what they deserve; those zealous of good if they are righteous, or the tyrannical and inadequate governments when they follow the path of impiety. In addition, the government comes from the people like fruit from the tree so, as the good tree produces good fruits, a people which fears God and loves virtue give rise to governments that revitalize them morally and protects them against the foreign order; but a people which boasts of its ungodliness and turns its back on God, insults and blasphemes Him, laughs at and scorns the beliefs and customs of their ancestors, and tread upon and violate the divine precepts, the Lord makes this rotted, eaten away root, like the bad tree, yield as fruit bad and adventurous governments which unite their faults and corruption with that of the people, and rush with it from abyss to abyss until their total ruin and damnation.

See here, beloved children, one of the principal punishments that God inflicts upon peoples where they distance themselves from Him.

650 But as a result of this, another, more terrible punishment follows and that is war. When the proud peoples believe themselves to be so much in control of their own destinies that they can do without God in everything, and attempt to relegate him to the heavens as if He had nothing to do on the earth, and their governments turn a deaf ear to or demonstrate open hostility towards his Church, harassing and persecuting the disciples of Jesus Christ, then the Lord takes reprisals. From the heart of the peace that they believe they had assured with their policy and the Congresses celebrated to maintain it, a terrible voice of insurrection rises us and the peoples launch themselves without premeditation into the throes of a disastrous war; the weapons shine and the lives of an infinite number of men are harvested, the blood of the wrongdoers mixing with that of the righteous to satisfy the wrath of the Lord. Is that not we are observing in our time with the European nations, beloved children? And when the Lord wants to punish the people he begins by blinding them: *Whom God would destroy, He first makes mad*; therefore, not seeing beyond their hatreds, bitterness and resentments and beset by ambition and envy, they rush into a fratricidal war one after the other and ultimately fulfill what the royal prophet says: "The Lord shall govern them with a rod of iron and destroy them like a clay vessel" (Psalm 2:9). *Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron, and shalt break them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*

651 The divine justice is a terrible punishment, when it lets the people feel the weight of its iron rod, in the words of the Prophet. Yet even this is a merciful punishment, since its aim is to try to make them mend their ways as the Lord hopes, like a Father who after using other, milder means resorts to punishment to correct his son as long as there is hope the child will reform. Moreover, this "Ay, the people the Lord take all his mercies from and destroys like any vessel of clay!, according to David's expression, signals that He is totally abandoning them from despairing that they can be corrected. And as the fragments of the broken vessel cannot be rejoined but rather, abandoned and thrown by the wayside, they are ground down until reduced to dust and scattered by the wind, in the same way the peoples whom the Lord repudiates through his mysterious ways shall be ruined, without any vestige remaining of them, so that they may serve as a lesson for posterity. What else happened to the people of Israel, as favored by God as they were ungrateful for His benefits? Dispersed, they wander through the world, without being able to form a nation, subject to the jeers and ridicule of all. What also became of the immense empire of Alexander? And what of the empires of ingenious Greece, magnificent Persia and austere Sparta? What stopped the Roman Empire, founded on the ruins of many Empires and so vast that it compassed the greater part of the earth? All of them disappeared. A power much superior to the that of man ruined them, and the ones which seemed like they should have existed forever now lie forgotten in obscurity, almost as if they had never existed: *Like the slain sleeping in the sepulchres, whom thou rememberest no more* (Psalm 87:6).

652 Why, then would we say with the royal Prophet: "The people have cried out in fury and the peoples devise vain things The kings of the earth met together and the princes joined forces against the Lord and against his Christ saying: Let us break their bonds asunder and let us cast away their yoke; if He who dwells in Heaven shall laugh at them, and the Lord shall deride them, then shall he speak to them in his anger, and trouble them in his rage?" (Psalm 2:1-5)

653 Nevertheless, because the Lord as a loving Father is more prone to exercise mercy than justice; hence, at the very instant when the people feel stricken by the pain of his justice, acknowledge Him and ask Him for forgiveness of their guilt, He forgets their unfaithfulness and, giving them the kiss of peace like the father to the prodigal son¹⁵², restores peace, unity and calm among them, in the way serenity and fair weather follow the storm.

654 This consideration encourages our hope in the present-day situation, for seeing the awakening of religious sentiments in the warring nations, after feeling the cruel blow of the justice of the Lord. But, in order to speed up the advent of the days of mercy and the rebirth of the much-desired peace in our Europe, we must not forget, beloved children, to practice the means to achieve it, penance and prayer.

* * *

655 When the Holy Virgin appeared in La Salera, after being announced to the shepherds so they could let the people know, the Lord was so irritated by the sins of the world, and the arm of his justice weighed so much that, when men did not convert, He was forced to let it fall upon them, weeping and saying three times: "Penance, penance, penance." And penance and the practice of prayer returned to be instilled when the Holy Virgin again appeared before Bernadette in Lourdes.

656 See here, beloved children, the two wings we have to make us soar up to the throne of the mercy of God, to beg forgiveness for our sins and those of the world, and be sure of achieving it. If, then, the Lord says: "If my people are converted, and plead with me, seek me out and do penance for the evil ways they walked, I shall hear from Heaven and I shall look with favor upon your sins" (II Chronicles 7:14). The people of Israel give us a good testimony of that, since in spite of showing themselves so ungrateful for the notable benefits and display of favoritism by the Lord, for which He punished them by delivering them into the hands of their enemies; only after they admitted their sins and begged for his forgiveness did He raise the arm of his justice from them, granting them victory over their adversaries. We also saw the same thing confirmed with the people of Nineveh¹⁵³, who through doing penance managed to make the Lord remove the conditional decree of extermination they had provoked from Him with their sins.

657 The more penance the better, but incomparably greater is the power of prayer, since nothing is impossible with it. It is the channel leading to the graces of

¹⁵² Cf. Luke 15:20.

¹⁵³ Cf. Jonah 3:1-10.

the Almighty; the Jacob's ladder on which our pleas climb up to Heaven and return favorably settled; the key which opens the merciful bosom of God and the power which sustains the arm of his justice so, as the *Crisóstomo* says: "In a certain way, God himself make us triumph"¹⁵⁴, and the evangelist St. Matthew assures us that all we ask for with faith shall be granted to us: *And in all things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive* (Matthew 21:22).

658 Since the tribulation presently afflicting most nations is so great due to the European war, and our own homeland is also feeling its fatal effects even when it remains separated from combat through the mercy of God; it is time, beloved children, to go to the throne of the mercy of the Lord to beg forgiveness for our sins and those of the world, which have triggered his arm and his justice, and say to him with a humble, contrite heart: "Forgive, Lord; forgive your people, do not be angry with us for all eternity". *Parce Domine, parce populo tuo; ne in aeternum irascaris nobis*. Yes, let us ask and ceaselessly cry out to the Lord not to treat us according to what our guilt deserves, but rather in accordance with the multitude of His mercies. That he cast his divine eyes away from the iniquities and sins of this wrongdoer Europe and focus them on the many righteous souls that still exist in all his nations, and to disarm his wrath and cut short the days of tribulation by restoring the lost peace. And so that to commemorate His coming to the world next Easter, we can sing rejoicing with the choruses of the holy angels "Glory to God in the highest; and peace on earth to men of good will". *Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will*¹⁵⁵.

659 But let us not forget, beloved children, to accompany our pleas with the mortification and penance that is pleasing to the Lord. And because the Holy Virgin indicated when she appeared in La Saleta that one of the sins that most irritated the Lord was blasphemy; in order that we may contribute as much as possible to satisfying his righteous indignation, this is our wish: "In all the religious ceremonies in which His Divine Majesty is displayed, after giving the benediction of the Holy Sacrament, as it is ordained, and before guarding Him, the priest shall recite out loud, so the congregation can repeat his words, the praises to the Lord listed below, as is done in Rome and several other dioceses in Spain".

660 Joined together, our prayers shall climb any column of incense to the throne of the Almighty, and shall attract His blessings to us and the kiss of peace, the garment of his eternal life, which your Prelate wishes for you and blesses you in the name of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on 8 March, the first Sunday of Advent, of the year 1914.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

¹⁵⁴ Even though the teaching of St. John Chrysostom about the strength of prayer is very rich, nevertheless the present thought seems to belong more fittingly to Tertuliano (cf. TERTULIANO: *Treatise on Prayer* 28: PL 1:1303).

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Luke 2:14.

PRAISES

661 Blessed is God.
 Blessed be his holy Name.
 Blessed is Jesus: God and true man.
 Blessed be the sacred name of Jesus.
 Blessed be his most sacred Heart.
 Blessed be Jesus in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar.
 Blessed is the great Mother of God, the Virgin Mary.
 Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.
 Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.
 Blessed is St. Joseph, Spouse of the Virgin.
 Blessed be God in his Angels and his Saints.

16

On Redemption

(B. Seg 35 [1915], pp. 45-59)

“God hast broken my bonds: I will sacrifice to thee the sacrifice of praise” (Psalm 115: 16, 17).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: health, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

662 Not long ago, beloved children, our heart overjoyed, we were singing in the union of the angelic choirs and our Mother the Church, glory to God in the highest and peace on earth for men of good will. This was the hymn that we were singing in praise of our liberator and a sign of the jubilation that possessed our souls on seeing the chains of our captivity broken and saved from the abyss that was preventing our access to our homeland. *God hast broken my bonds: I will sacrifice to thee the sacrifice of praise* (Psalm 115: 16, 17).

663 Our misfortune was truly immeasurable when we were deprived by sin of the love and caress of that Lord who, creating us for Himself, instilled such an ardent desire to join together with Him in our heart that it is always restless until it can rest in God, as St. Augustine says. *You made us, Lord, for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in You*¹⁵⁶. An unhappiness that became greater after considering our incapacity for overcoming the distance that was separating us from God, for how limited our merits and satisfactions were and how infinite the offense done to the Creator.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Confessiones* 1.1: PL 32:661. Cf. 351, 478, 521 above; 966, 1048, 1510.

664 But in spite of the heaviness of this chain by which sin had us bound, what made it even more intolerable was the slavery he had reduced us to; because it was sad in any case to see ourselves, the ones who did not want to abide by the mild and loving laws of our heavenly Father, obligated to serve such a cruel tyrant as the devil. But the height of our misfortune was not having any solution for it; because as we were born children of anger and enemies of God through sin, we had to stay deprived of the sight and possession of the Lord eternally.

665 However, this triple chain of slavery is what our divine liberator came to break, and for that it is more than fair that we sing with the royal prophet: "You broke, O Lord, the bonds that imprisoned me, so I will sacrifice to you a hymn of praise" (Psalm 115:16, 17).

666 But if the debt of humanity was fully saved by the humiliation of the Word made flesh, the hardships and penalties He subjected himself to on being born and the first drops of his precious blood spilled in the Circumcision, as works of the Living God were therefore priceless. Nonetheless, the Lord was not content but wanted our redemption to be copious and plentiful: *And with him plentiful redemption* (Psalm 129:7); he also left us an inexhaustible, never-ending treasure in his Church that is infinite in its merits, and also establishes itself as our model and example in the practice of the virtues we should carry out to achieve salvation. He lived thirty three years among us for that purpose, leading a hidden life full of sacrifices and hardships; and the last three years of his life as a good shepherd seeking the wayward sheep to return them to the fold of his heavenly Father. He was proclaimed to the world as the promised Messiah and founded his Church, confirming his word with portentous miracles and finally sealed with his blood his mission as Savior of humanity, dying on a cross after suffering unprecedented torments.

667 The blood of Jesus Christ, then, was the price of our rescue, washing away the stains of our guilt and made us abominable to the divine eyes. *Washed us from our sins in his own blood* (Revelation 1:5); his passion and his death freed us from the tyrannical and despotic dominion of the devil, whom we had been subjected to by sin: *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness* (Colossians 1:13), and his cross was the key with which we opened the doors to the kingdom of Heaven, which had been closed to us forever.

668 Let us stop briefly, beloved children, to consider this triple slavery which Jesus Christ freed us from through his death and passion, so the feelings of gratitude may move our hearts to love its Redeemer.

669 The slavery which sin had reduced man to presented, beloved children, a dual difficulty to his liberation. On the one hand, man was inclined towards evil by the effect of sin itself. He was not valuing good as highly as he should, or the lost grace, or reconciling having to remove from his lips the cup poisoned by guilt, which offered death with delight; loving his own slavery in that way more than the freedom of the sons of God. On the other hand, it was impossible through his own efforts to give appropriate satisfaction to divine Justice, which could not and

should not forgive a sinner than to his nothingness and misery was united his willfulness in sinning. Would man remain separated from God forever and the Lord deprived of the glory that this privileged being that he created for this purpose should give Him? How do you cancel the debt contracted with the divine Justice without diminishing its rights?

670 See here, beloved children, what the Son of God did; taking on our nature, he broke this double bond, capturing the heart of man with his love with the aim that, illuminated by his divine light, he would know what an evil and bitter thing it was to have left God and his holy fear (Jeremiah 2:19) and return to Him begging forgiveness. By sacrificing his life and spilling his blood for humanity, he would go about appeasing the justice of his eternal Father, who could not be satisfied with sacrifices of animals or offerings of breads and perfumes, but rather with a priceless victim: *Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldst not: but a body thou hast fitted to me* (Hebrews 10:5).

671 In fact, Jesus Christ is born as one of the poorest children in a stable; he lies in a manger, wrapped in poor swaddling clothes and, of course, the divine fire that would set aflame the hearts of men, who were ready to worship him in the persons of the shepherds and the wise men, converted into the men proclaiming the coming of the Messiah. He speaks later to the learned men and doctors of law in the temple, and his divine wisdom and eloquence captivates and seizes their hearts. When he showed himself to the world, the multitudes followed him everywhere, eager to hear him and contemplate the miracles he worked. He healed all sorts of sick people, gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, movement to those who were paralyzed, cleaned the lepers and resurrected the dead, and all these miracles, as he was curing the bodies, were illuminating their understandings in the knowledge of God and inflaming their hearts with his love. If all this was not enough to conquer the human heart, he wanted to give us the greatest proof of his love by suffering and dying for us, because no one has a greater love than the one who gives his life for his friend¹⁵⁷. And thus he permitted himself to be insulted, spat upon, slapped, flogged, crowned with thorns, nailed to a cross, and after his death they opened his side with a spear to expose his heart, which loved us so much.

672 How could the human heart be indifferent and return such a significant display of love? How will they not have to feel sorrow and repentance for having offended a God who loved them so much? Our adorable Redeemer Jesus said that to be exalted on earth would attract everyone to Him: *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself* (John 12:32); and it is true that he attracted the love the hearts of men to follow him that, instilling in them to hate and detest sin, so they can say with the apostle: "I live, but now I am not the one who lives, but rather Christ who lives in me": *And I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me* (Galatians 2:20).

673 See here, beloved children, how the glorious slavery of Jesus Christ replaced the ignominious and cruel one of sin.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. John 15:13.

674 The second difficulty to be faced in order to free ourselves from the slavery of sin was the impossibility of giving appropriate satisfaction to the divine Justice.

675 By abusing his freedom, man has distanced himself from God like another prodigal son and found it impossible to return to His friendship and grace and without the strength to break the chains of his slavery; the Lord, who by using only his divine will created man from nothing, giving him the being of son of God and heir to his glory, and also took him from the void of sin, which he had voluntarily reduced himself to, by means incomparably more extraordinary and stupendous than that of the Creation. Yes, because a little bit of mud was enough to form his body and then it was given life, filling the soul with his divine encouragement, but in order to restore it to the life of grace nothing less was necessary than the eternal Word would become flesh and give His life for man, because all the merits, pleas and penance of all mankind was not enough to appease the justice of the Lord since that satisfaction was finite and limited and therefore inadequate for eliminating the sin. Only Jesus Christ could give this infinite satisfaction required for canceling this debt by spilling his priceless blood as the price of our rescue.

676 Great beyond all consideration certainly was the benefit God did us by taking us from nothingness to being; but having taken us from the second nothingness, which we had fallen into through sin, was even greater; and moreover this benefit reveals his indescribable love towards us. If for the first there were not and could not be merits on our part, since we did not exist, there were also no demerits to make it more difficult; if there was no reason for love and kindness for the former, for the latter there were motives for anger and punishment; in the first we were not His friends, but in the second we were declared in open rebellion against Him through sin. Yet when we found ourselves in a state of such abasement, humiliation and misery, and deserved to stay in that condition for all eternity, the Lord was thinking of our cure and rescue; and while He gave the rebellious angels no opportunity for repentance, he opened the bosom of his clemency, benevolence and love for the reconciliation of man. And to be able to offer a victim pleasing to his divine eyes and appropriate for satisfying his divine justice, he gave his own son, who became the guarantor for the sin of man: *He that spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all* (Romans 8:32).

677 Let us rejoice, then, as the sad descendants of Adam because we not only have a loyal advocate towards the Father in Jesus Christ but also an extremely valiant guarantor who pays plentifully for the debt which we contracted for the original guilt and our current sins and makes us grateful to his divine eyes by washing us with his precious blood: *Washed us from our sins in his own blood* (Revelation 1:5). Now it is not man who is the object of anger and indignation for God, since man has renewed his friendship with Him and having received his blessing, dressing himself like another Jacob¹⁵⁸ in the skin of the immaculate Lamb and the clothing

¹⁵⁸ Cf. 27:16.

of his merits of his older brother, Jesus Christ. And even more his voice, like Jacob's, may reveal him before his heavenly Father as a sinner, but He, delighting in the fragrance of the virtues being given off by the garment of humanity that his Only Son has covered him in, acknowledges the sinner as his son and reinstates all his rights as such. The Lord will also not reject in advance the sacrifices and holocausts that we men present him, as long as they are united to what his Son and our Redeemer Jesus Christ did for us himself, who washed our iniquities with his blood and freed us with his death from the slavery of sin: *Washed us from our sins in his own blood* (Revelations 1:5).

678 This slavery that sin reduced us to was aggravated even more, beloved children, by the servitude to the devil we were subjected to by it.

679 Seeing the rebellious spirits eternally separated from God because of their pride, and that men should possess the seats that they lost in Heaven, possessed by jealousy of their happiness and more than from hatred towards man than to avenge themselves on God, they tried to rip from his arms his favored creature and associate it with the unhappiness and ruin that they had been reduced to. As nothing can be done against God, they turned furiously against man, who was made in His image. In fact, Lucifer led the battle against our first parents in paradise and with the serpentine astuteness induced them to break the divine precept of the Lord, communicating to them his arrogant desire to be like gods: *You shall be as Gods* (Genesis 3:5), and they, weak, feeble and inoculated, so to speak, with the poisonous virus of ambition and pride, surrender their discretion, disobey God and are left like those evil spirits deprived of the gifts of grace, banished from the paradise on earth and heaven for which they had been created, and burdened by the chains of slavery to the devil, to whose kingdom they were subjected.

680 For that reason, from Adam until the coming of Jesus Christ, humanity groaned under the despotic rule of this arrogant spirit, which they could not remove themselves from because, on the one hand, they had voluntarily delivered themselves to him by taking the devil for their confidant, advisor and support, renouncing God, not believing in his word and refusing his domination. On the other hand, Satan had them under the power of a contract and as a conquest of the war that he was waging in paradise, and, at the same time, the Lord, rejected and abandoned by man and cast away in favor of his rival the devil, delivered man to his sense of wickedness and no longer looked on him as his son, but rather as his eternal enemy.

681 Add to this that this cruel adversary, emulating the interest with which the Lord commends the custody of men to His angels, besieged them from all sides, gave each of them a wicked spirit which induced them to evil, as well as the ones to whom he entrusted the damnation of the kingdoms, cities and towns and promoting the vices and passions contrary to each of the virtues. Who could, then, free man from such an oppressive rule? Only Jesus Christ, beloved children; He who through His death had to put an end to the eternal death of man and sweep

away the hell that is his prison: *O death, I will be thy death; O hell, I will be thy bite.* (Hosea 13:14).

682 So by appearing in the world and being illuminated by sufficient light, the father of darkness lost his empire and man could see the shadows he was enveloped in and the way he must follow to save himself, which was Jesus Christ himself. When this Lord, who is the eternal truth, reveals himself and makes himself known, the father of the lie was left confused and shackled and man could know this truth; and knowing it, to love it and as a result, to adapt his life according to it. And, finally, when the promised Redeemer came to the world, for whom and in whom all things were made, he resurrected man from the death of sin to the life of grace, destroying the empire of Satan who had taken control of humanity.

683 For this reason, the malign spirit, full of fury on seeing that Jesus Christ would take away the prisoner he had possessed for so many years and was deposing him from the kingdom of the world he had for his own, he exclaimed as St. Luke says: "Leave us be: What do you have to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to make us disappear? I know well who you are; the saint of God" (Luke 4:34). And we do not have to admire how, in his crazed frenzy, he would then increase his attacks against men, and for that reason there was a greater number of possessed men in those times, the Lord allowing it for the greater glory of his Only Son. So mankind, seeing the rule that Jesus Christ was imposing on the evil spirits and how fast they were obeying, acknowledged Him and confessed through the Son of God and the Savior of Israel: *Behold, God is my savior* (Isaiah 12:2).

684 But if Jesus Christ gave us freedom as children of God with his death, breaking the chains with which the devil held us captive, nevertheless he did not want to remove from him the power to tempt mankind, so that by resisting him with the aid of his grace, man might increase his merits and eternal reward. In order to encourage us in the battle against our enemies and instruct us in the way to fight in these battles, He allowed himself to be tempted and wanted his chosen ones to be tempted, and even more violently so their perfection and the degree of glory they were destined to have would be that much greater. And so we do not die from the difficult battle, He tells us through his Apostle that the Lord will not allow us to be tempted beyond what our powers are capable of: *And God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able* (I Corinthians 10:13).

685 The Lord blesses us, beloved children, because not only has he destroyed the chains the devil imprisoned us with, but he converts into good and a benefit for our souls the same means the devil uses for our ruin and damnation.

686 The sin was erased, the debt contracted with the divine justice cancelled, and man enriched with the treasures of the merits of Jesus Christ and could exclaim together with the church: "Oh happy guilt that I deserved such a Redeemer!¹⁵⁹ With the enemy cast into fire who intercepted the steps of man on the path of eternity, and strengthened by the grace, he can now run without stumbling along the way.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. *Pregón Pascual* (Easter Proclamation).

What remains, then, to conclude but that Jesus Christ, who washed our stains with his blood and freed us from the power of darkness by dying, also closed with this holy cross at our feet the bottomless abyss of hell at our feet and opened the doors to the kingdom of heaven?

687 Oh yes; the cross was the mysterious altar where, with the victim's wellbeing, all human nature was offered and where the immaculate Lamb erased with his blood the pact of ancient wrongdoing. From it, salvation and all good comes to us. Through it, we were elevated from being slaves of sin to the freedom of justice, and from a deep abyss of malice to the summit of holiness and we were reconciled with God. Against that very solid rock crash the enraged waves of our enemies' attacks and all their poison spears are blunted by it. And finally the demons are vanquished and flee in terror of its presence.

688 However, if the Savior closed the gates to hell and opened the door to the glory for us with his death and passion and his cross, and it was agreed that he would enter in His kingdom by this door as St. Luke says: *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?* (Luke 24:26), we must infer from this, beloved children, that we also have to suffer and endure, to live crucified through the mortification of our passions and appetites¹⁶⁰ and to die for ourselves and for the world so that, resurrected in Christ¹⁶¹, we can enter in the glory that He conquered for us: *Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God* (Acts 14:21).

689 And so that this obligation stays deeply engraved in our souls as an indispensable condition for salvation, our holy mother the Church in administering the sacraments and all its ceremonies, uses the sign of the holy cross as an emblem that reminds us that we have to live crucified with Jesus Christ. The Church also puts it anywhere in our sight, on mountaintops, in the temple towers and at crossroads; they want us to wear it on our chests as a badge of honor and sign of victory and be the most prized jewel that adorns even the scepters and crowns of the kings.

690 Let us love the cross, beloved children, as the wood of salvation that has to save us from the shipwreck capsizing in the tempestuous sea of this world and lead us to the port of eternal salvation. We nail our feet and hands to it by fulfilling the precepts of the Lord, so that, separated from sin and well united to Jesus Christ, we may be formidable to our enemies and without stumbling, racing along the way of perfection, so that we may arrive at the beatified homeland that our divine Redeemer bestowed on us with his passion and death and that your Prelate wishes for himself and all of you, in the name of the Father, Sun and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on 24 February, the holy day of the apostle St. Matthew, of the year 1915.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Galatians 5:24.

¹⁶¹ Cf. Romans 6:8; II Timothy 2:11.

17

Progress and lack of religious feeling

(B. Seg 35 [1915], pp. 225-240)

“He came unto his own, and his own received him not” (John 1:11).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: health, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

691 The stubbornness of the Jewish people provokes great admiration, beloved children, in that in spite of seeing in Jesus Christ the precise and exact fulfillment of the prophecies referring to the Messiah, the Redeemer of the world, and admiring his miracles and doctrine as He Himself said, bearing witness to who he was and his mission, *The works themselves which I do, give testament of me, that the Father hath sent me* (John 5:36). Nevertheless, they did not given him credit or receive him as their Savior, but rather rejected, insulted, persecuted and maltreated him until his death on the cross.

692 Whether coming from the pride, self-love and the passions, that Jesus Christ reproached them for with his doctrine, if they had let it speak to their hearts, it would certainly have born witness of the divinity of Jesus, how all the creatures professed that in their own way by showing their obedience to the rule of his will. But closing their eyes to the true light, they preferred to remain enveloped in the darkness of error and unawareness of the one who came to save them. *He came unto his own, and his own received him not* (John 1:11).

693 We see this behavior of the Jewish people that captures our attention repeated, beloved children, in the multitude of Christians who have even greater testimonies of the truth than the ancient Jews (like the realization of acts and prophecies proclaimed in the gospels; the miraculous spreading of the Christian religion over the entire earth, despite the austerity of its doctrine and the insufficient resources that God destined for that, and the harsh, ongoing war waged against it by the devil and his satellites around the world throughout the ages), yet in spite of having professed the faith of Jesus Christ in the holy baptism and obligating themselves to its service, quieting the cries of their heart and conscience, they deny and oppose Him in practice, making common cause with its enemies by worshipping any gentiles as the idol of their passions.

694 The censure of the divine Master is directed at all of them when he said: *If I say the truth to you, why do you not believe me?* (John 8:46). If I had announced the truth to you, confirming it with an infinite number of wonders and sealing it with my blood and that of my martyrs, why do you not only not offer it a place to settle, but rather reject and deny following the truth?

695 This blindness and lack of religious feeling which seems inconceivable, especially among Christians, has various causes, beloved children, which we are now going to consider.

1. RELIGIOUS IGNORANCE

696 It will seem paradoxical that we want to chastise our century as ignorant when it prizes being known for its progress, especially in the natural sciences, which have helped in being able to understand various natural laws and their application to the comforts of life. In truth, these sciences have progressed a great deal in the present day, which deserves our applause and congratulations, since it does not stop being a gift of the Father of light, from whom all knowledge comes: *All wisdom is from the Lord God* (Ecclesiasticus 1:1), and a material progress of the utmost use for humanity, a progress the Church blesses.

697 But there is another science, beloved children, incomparably more important and whose knowledge is of the utmost significance, which men nonetheless do not pay the attention due it today; it is the science of the truths the Christian religion teaches us. If man could get by without less knowledge of the natural sciences, and despite that, the people who preceded us lived prosperously and happily; but not so when the truths of the supernatural order the Church teaches us are ignored, since man outside of God cannot find either worldly or eternal happiness.

698 As a spiritual and at the same time material being, one should not limit or be content with knowing and admiring the nature of beings, their laws and qualities, but rather have this knowledge serve as a ladder for ascending to the knowledge of the Supreme Maker, who creates, governs and preserve all with his almighty providence. If it is not used that way, science serves above all to make man become vain and fill himself with pride. Because after seeing that through his studies he manages to extract some secrets from nature and, like any eagle, he can now soar up and fly in space, and imitating the fish, cross the seas beneath the waves; that no long distances exist for him now because his voice can be heard by means of the telephone and he records his speeches and songs on the phonograph, to reproduce them wherever and whenever he wants; as distance has disappeared with those discoveries, he believes himself now to be a semi-God. And when logically he should think that these laws suppose the existence of a Supreme Being who created the material and given the life that it does not have in itself; of an extremely knowledgeable being who has dictated the admirable order of the laws all the creatures abide by, and the harmony and reciprocal dependence of one with the other; when all this, I repeat, should raise man up to God, on the contrary he falls into the greatest absurdities, whether believing the material is eternal and formation of the beings as an effect of their evolutions, or whether attributing divinity to the creatures or his own human reason; everything short of falling on bended knee and confessing to God as the creator of heaven and earth, the visible and invisible, as faith teaches.

699 These wise men nor their science, can bring happiness to the peoples, but rather the contrary, since by dispensing with God they cannot instill man with

the principle of authority which arises from the Lord¹⁶², and from that comes the rebellion and anarchy one notes among the peoples and even within families, where now they do not even respect parental authority. As they do not attribute a nobler purpose to man than other beings, believing that, like them, they will be reduced to nothing one day, this is what the people experience as the result of this doctrine: if man expects nothing after his death and his mission concludes in this world, we may eat and enjoy ourselves because tomorrow we will die; but since in most cases that comes up against the fact that he cannot achieve his ideal whether due to ill health, adverse fortune or any one of the countless other setbacks that may occur in life; and seeing that others without any greater merits or talents than he has is happily enjoying the rewards of good fortune, out of fury and desperation he tries to take from his fellow man what he believes he has equal right to; refuses to offer him his services, does not acknowledge his superiority and authority, and in the paroxysm of his madness many times makes an attempt on his own life or that of his fellow man.

700 Is this not, beloved children, the history of man in our times? What do these continuous battles of the proletariat and tenant farmers against the ones they have come to call the bourgeoisie and factory owner mean, if not that? What uncertainty, unease and general loss of control one observes in society, the effect of the sinister interpretation given the holy words of liberty, equality, and fraternity from the Gospel, taking them in the sense of licentiousness and dissolute behavior, not acknowledging the superiority of anyone and the hatred against those they categorize as their oppressors?

701 So this is the general evil the lack of religious feeling and Godless science produces and its only cure lies in the healthy principles instilled by the Catholic Church. Yes, because the church teaches man to believe in a God who created heaven and earth, that He arranges everything related to the number, weight and measurement for the good of his creatures, that he has provided them with his immortal soul, destined to enjoy it for all eternity and this faith lifts his spirit above worldly things, letting him hear the silent languages of all the creatures speaking of the kindness, power and wisdom of God. It also teaches the duties man has towards his Creator, consisting of doing everything in accordance with His holy will as expressed in His wise law, and adapting all his acts to them, hoping confidently to enjoy the next life, for which he suffers patiently and with resignation the works and misfortunes of this outdated, transitory life. And similarly he instructs them in the law of reciprocal love towards his fellow man, because the Lord commands him to love his fellow man as himself; and for this reason, he cares for and helps them in all their needs, and practicing the works of mercy, he comes to do everything for everyone, with the aim of winning them for Jesus Christ.

702 See here, beloved children, the only doctrine which can lead society along the trails of reason, equality and justice. But unfortunately, the importance it has in

¹⁶² Cf. Romans 13:1; 1 Chronicles 29:12.

the destinies of human is not recognized and it is relegated to obscurity as suitable only for the weak and cowardly spirits; it is common to find men very learned in the human sciences and identified as Catholics who do not occupy themselves with the truths of the religion for anything (if they do not reject them as ancient ideas which do not fit with modern progress), using this ignorance to distance themselves from Jesus Christ, who shall point to them on the not-too-distant day when He judges them, saying: "If I told you the truth, why do you not believe me?" *If I say the truth to you, why do you not believe me?* (John 8:46).

2. THE ABUSE OF GRACE

703 Another cause of the lack of religious feeling and why many people do not follow Jesus Christ is the abuse they make of divine grace; because the knowledge of God and his love may increase or decrease in man depending on his reciprocation to it. We are more sensitive to and feel the effects of the light and heat which fire produces more intensely the closer we come to it and, conversely, we feel the effects less the farther away we are, to the point where we are in darkness and completely cold when we are at a distance from the fire. In the same way we feel our correspondence to the grace of the Lord when it is conveyed to us more generously, and with its aid we will be able to know it more clearly and increase our awareness of the divine love. But if by distancing ourselves from God, we underestimate this divine treasure, He will take it away from us; and even if He would not deprive us of it completely, because the Lord does not deny enough grace to any creature, but we would be left with such scant light of his knowledge that we would fall into a thousand errors, and our heart become so cold in His love that we would not take care of his service in anything, and our complete damnation would be inevitable.

704 This is what is seen of the ordinary providence of God in the distribution of its graces. And for that reason, you see the righteous ascend from virtue to virtue up to the summit of perfection and, on the contrary, the sinners plunge downward from abyss to abyss to their eternal damnation.

705 However, does not it strike you, beloved children, to see a multitude of souls who, after having living many years seated in the shadow of error, heresy and idolatry, that the voice of the minister of Jesus Christ immediately opened their eyes to the light of the faith and their heart to the love of God, while others born in the bosom of Christianity, who have so many instructions and good examples, become increasingly blind and harden their hearts against the good? This is one mystery among the designs of God which are mysterious to human understanding; but we must admire the justice of the Lord in it, rewarding the meekness and promptness of the former in reciprocating the grace, and punishing the latter for their obstinacy and rejection of it.

706 How many of the latter, then, are there in our times? Born in the bosom of Catholicism and identifying themselves as Christians to the point of being

greatly offended if someone disputes their right to such an honorable title, many of them nevertheless live in open opposition to the duties the Catholic religion imposes. They make common cause with its detractors and those who slander it; they ridicule or do not pay the slight attention to its precepts and scorn or even persecute the faithful who fulfill the holy law, all based on a false science which they believe is in conflict with religious beliefs, and a misguided freedom which considers subordinating oneself to the precept of God and his Church as servility and slavery. This is why the Lord delivers them to their feeling of wickedness and takes grace away from them, which they have abused so much, and thus they fall into hardness of heart and distance themselves from Jesus Christ.

707 What a terrible punishment this is, beloved children! But that is still not everything, because the threat will be carried out on them that the Lord makes in the book of Proverbs: *I called and you refused*, I called you with a special vocation to my Church, and in a thousand ways I asked for your heart, and you refused to hear and snubbed me: *You have despised all my counsel, and have ignored my reprimands*, you did not want to hear the loving voice of my grace which, by making your flaws evident to you, I indicated to you the path to follow to save yourselves, and you looked at the warnings I gave you through my ministers with the greatest disdain: *I also will laugh in your destruction and will mock so I*, in the time of your death, I shall laugh and make fun of you (Proverbs 1:24, 25, and 26).

708 And what happens to individuals also happens to peoples and nations. When they do not correspond to the grace of the Lord, they fall into a lack of religious feeling, heresy or unfaithfulness, as happened to England, Egypt and North Africa. Because God not does leave unpunished, in temporal life nor in eternity, the disdain that men show to Jesus Christ and his grace, which is the "price of his priceless blood".

3. THE INCLINATION TO EVIL

709 The sacrifice of the passions on the altars of virtue that the Christian religion demands of man is another reason why the feeble and relaxed spirits separate themselves from it and from following Jesus Christ.

710 There is in man, as a being composed of soul and body, with one having heavenly aspirations and the other worldly instincts, a continuous internal struggle, with each of those parts trying to draw the other to its feeling and desires.

711 This is the struggle the Apostle felt inside himself when he said: "I am experiencing in my limbs a power which impels me and draws me to act for evil, against which my reason and understanding dictate to me: *But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, that is in my members* (Romans 7:23). This is the most fearsome battle of the struggles we have to maintain in our life, because it is our domestic enemy, the one we cannot get rid of because it is our own corrupted nature. If, then, St. Peter warns

us against the attacks of the devil and to be on guard, because any furious lion surrounding us is seeking the opportunity to devour us (I Peter 5:8), what steps will be enough to escape free of the traps and inclinations of our flesh? For that reason and taking into account that Job says the life of man is a warfare on earth (Job 7:1), we have to battle relentlessly and without rest; because only the one who struggles valiantly and bravely will put on the crown of victory: *He is not crowned, except he strive lawfully* (II Timothy 2:5). But paying attention to our feebleness, does it not seem to you, beloved children, that we will rightly be able to exclaim with the Apostle: “Unhappy as I am, who shall free me from this body of death?” (Romans 7:24). The grace of God, yes, and only the grace of God which Jesus Christ our Savior bestows on us, as the Apostle himself says: “in whom and for whom all is possible”: *I can do all these things in Him who strengtheneth me* (Philippians 4:13).

712 The Catholic religion encourages and urges us on in this struggle, putting in front of us the examples of so many others with our identical nature and subject to the same passions who were able to overcome them and achieve victory; and making us also see that the Lord does not allow us to be tempted beyond our powers and helped by His grace, and bestows to the victorious the prize and crown of glory.

713 However, this is the cause of sanctification for the righteous, because conquering and patiently suffering purifies like gold in the crucible. But for the wicked and sinners who do not want to mortify themselves and do violence to their passions, it is the reason why, exasperated, they disdain and try to shake off the yoke of religion, without paying attention to the sworn faith of Jesus Christ and his divine precepts, which, judging them and separating themselves from them, they will reproach them: If I told you the truth, why do you not believe me? *If I say the truth to you, why do you not believe me?* (John 8:46).

4. INTEREST AND HUMAN RESPECT

714 Interest and human respect also separate many people from fulfilling their religious duties, and confession and to follow Jesus Christ, some from the disorderly affects of worldly things, and others through cowardice and consideration of others.

715 Beloved children, it seems unbelievable that men who have faith in their eternal destinies may put before them worldly goods and comforts and nevertheless a sad experience like this teaches us something. How many are there who sell their conscience and betray Jesus Christ like Judas, and for a lesser price than he did? How many who in order not to fall into disgrace of those who hope for some favor, sacrifice their religious feelings and beliefs, in the way Pilate sentenced the Redeemer, for not losing the friendship of Caesar?

716 But if this provokes admiration and surprise in us, what captures our attention even more is there are also others so cowardly that to get human respect,

for one what they will say or too shy away from the jokes and satires of the enemies of religion, stop practicing its precepts and are embarrassed to publicly confess their faith.

717 To the former, so they do not put worldly things ahead of eternal life, the divine Master says: *For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?* (Matthew 16:26), and truthfully neither the riches nor the comforts that many may acquire, or the honors and positions they may rise to will be able to provide them their happiness should they lose their soul. And from this it becomes a great need to strive to achieve these things that, once acquired, torture and pierce the heart and puts you at great risk of losing yourself.

718 Jesus Christ reprimands the latter even more seriously, saying: "Whoever is ashamed to confess and practice his doctrine before men will also deny it as his before the heavenly Father and the angels on Judgment Day" (Luke 9:26). A terrible threat, like ending with a sentence of eternal condemnation against them. And what reason for living will those considerations and excessive regard for them have for practicing good and other works of virtue, when the wicked are not embarrassed and boast of their crimes and wickedness? If they make fun of the good man, but internally and practically honor them, trusting more of him in their businesses and affair that the ones who share their same ideas. And especially that they not fear the judgments of worldly men, who in the judgment of God shall be obligated to confess that they were the ones who erred and those who accurately took the way of salvation were those lives they took as foolishness and madness: *We fools esteemed their life madness ... Behold, how they are numbered among the children of God ... Therefore we have erred from the way of truth* (Wisdom 5:4, 5 and 6).

719 See here, beloved children, some of the causes why many Christians live in disagreement with their religious beliefs and the precepts of Jesus Christ.

720 However, do you want to save yourselves of them to stay firm in the faith you profess and behave according to what agrees with the disciples of Jesus Christ? First, try to have your knowledge have a strong foundation in the faith, seeing God in all things and contenting yourself with acquiring the knowledge that yield to what divine wisdom tells us: *Not to be more wise than it behoveth to be wise* (Romans 12:3), because those who, out of curiosity and arrogantly want to survey and penetrate the divine secrets will be dazzled, fall into errors and shall be oppressed by the majesty of God as He himself says in Proverbs: *He that is a searcher of majesty shall be overwhelmed by glory* (Proverbs 25:27). Secondly, show your gratitude for the grace of the Lord, reciprocating it faithfully and that shall increase this divine treasure, as the Lord says though St. Luke that he who has it shall be given more and become rich in it: *Every one that hath shall be given, and he shall abound* (Luke 19:26), and through Him you will be happy temporally and eternally. Thirdly, watch over yourselves in order to emerge victorious in the inevitable struggle we have to maintain against our passions, because once tested, as with gold in the crucible, you will achieve the crown of eternal life the Lord promises to those who love Him: *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for*

when he hath been proved, he shall receive a crown of life, which God hath promised to them that love him (James 1:12). And finally, try to not be attracted by the worldly things that are false and you will not be able to preserve perpetually and will hold you back from acting for good: and if you feel desires or ambition for riches, *desire the true riches*, I say unto you with St. Gregory: love and try to get the true riches, which you shall find only in practicing virtue; and if you want to climb to the summit of honors and have ambitions for position, make it your effort to conquer the Kingdom of Heaven and form part of the choruses of the angels, as the saint himself urges us¹⁶³.

721 In this way, beloved children, you will be happy and true imitators of Jesus Christ and shall achieve the eternal reward He promises you and your Prelate wishes for you, and blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on the first Sunday of Advent of the year 1915.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

18

On Divine Justice

(B. Seg 36) [1916], pp. 53-64

“The mercies of the Lord that we are not consumed” (Lamentations 3:22).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: health, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

722 Give way to the divine Justice! That is what we cry out for, beloved children, seeing the very sad spectacle that Europe presents, and the entire world for that matter, tarnished by a fratricidal war that has been devastating nations for over a year and a half and left their resources exhausted; the fountains of their riches now dry, whether it be agriculture, trade or industry, many of their cities reduced to rubble and the number of their children claimed as victims now in the millions.

723 Yes, give way to the Justice of God, because that is the justice which, irritated by the crimes and sins of the world, is purifying it through the devouring fire of war, as it did in another time with the waters of the Great Deluge.

724 No, do not attribute the fundamental cause of such a terrible catastrophe to the hatreds, jealousies and desires for expansion of nations. At most, they would be the immediate cause; but search higher for its true origin, the righteous indignation of the Lord over the wrongdoing, apostasies and lack of religious feeling

¹⁶³ Cf. ST. GREGORY: *Homily 15 to the Gospels*, in RB, 9th reading of the 60th Anniversary (cf. PL 76:1132). In this sermon, St. Gregory also develops the theme of the falseness of material riches.

all the nations have fallen into. Since they have to be judged the same as individuals and receive the honor or punishment they have made themselves deserve, so to speak, and the Justice of the Lord cannot carry it out in the other life since nations as such will not go there, is it necessary they receive now, in the present, what they deserve in accordance with their works.

725 From the enormity of the punishment, the greatest ever seen in the world, beloved children, you will deduce the magnitude of the offenses which have provoked them; having taken into account that the most merciful Lord never treats us in this world as our guilt deserves but rather tempers the wine of justice with the oil of mercy to such an extent the words of the prophet are fulfilled: "Let justice and peace give each other a strong kiss and embrace". *Justice and peace have kissed* (Psalm 84:11).

726 However, thanks be given to the infinite mercy of God, our nation, although it shares, unavoidably, the effects inherent in such a great cataclysm, is free from direct involvement in such an inhuman and cruel war, because everywhere it goes sowing ruin, sorrow, desolation and death. And not because our nation does not likewise deserve punishment like the other European nations, since like them it has contributed to provoking the wrath of the Lord; the reason is that Spain has been experiencing the weight of his Justice for years, persecuted not only by its enemies but even by those who sear friendship to it and its own children, of whom one can say as the Lord does through Isaiah: I raised and exalted my children, and they rejected me. *I have brought up children, and exalted them: but they have despised me.* (Isaiah 1:2) And not only this but it also finds itself poor and stripped of the greater part of the vast territory it possessed, once so widespread the sun never set on it. In this condition, it is laughed at and scorned by the other nations, when once it was held in regarded and respected as the queen of the world.

727 Yes, beloved children, the hour of the Justice of the Lord arrived in the wrongdoer nations. And if we have to feel sorrow and regret for the terrible effects of its avenging scourge affecting us and our fellow men, we must also, in exchange, kiss and bless the paternal hand which blesses us with mercy, so that we may return to Him repentant and abominating our inequities. As Job said to his wife in the midst of his enormous misfortune: If we received the good from the hand of God, why shall we not also receive the evils? *If we have received good things at the hand of God, why should we not receive evil?* (Job 2 10). When the Lord has his hands full and spills his graces and blessings over the people, granting them well-being, peace, prosperity and abundance in spite of them being unfaithful, we received with pleasure so many inestimable benefits from the liberal hand of God, perhaps without giving him the gratitude due him. So why, now that he abases, humbles and punishes us to correct us and make us mend our ways, will we not receive his eternal punishment which yields us a moral good infinitely greater than the worldly goods, so that we may be richer in other times?

728 See here, beloved children, the reason for the tribulations we presently afflict upon the Lord and what he proposes and expects of us in them, which is the subject of this sermon.

* * *

729 The life of peoples, like those of individuals, have their periods of prosperity and bonanza followed by time of trials and tribulations. The Omnipotent God, who rules and directs everything for the good of his creatures, arranges it that way and, whereas the tribulations of individuals many times are tests, a means for increasing their virtue, the difficulties and calamities which afflict peoples are ordinarily the wages of sin; since men have to be rewarded or punished in the other life, while the present is the only time in which peoples exist.

730 But it is true that the misfortunes and calamities of the peoples are the fruit of their wrongdoing because, as the writer of the Psalms says, those who separate themselves from the Lord shall perish (Psalm 72:27); the manner, time and distribution of these punishments are nonetheless an impenetrable mystery to the human understanding. In some, the Lord lets them feel the full weight of his justice to the point of destroying and annihilating them while others, although He rules them with the iron rod, he nonetheless gives them time to repent and correct themselves. We see the Lord decided to end the human race through the Great Flood with the exception of the eight people in Noah's family¹⁶⁴, because as the sacred text says, all flesh had corrupted its ways¹⁶⁵; and he commanded that it rain fire from the heaven, and the devouring, avenging flames of his justice consumed the unspeakable cities of Pentapolis¹⁶⁶, in punishment of their sins. But meanwhile the people of Israel, albeit that He humbled them and allowed their enemies to declare war on them and reduced them to slavery when they distanced themselves from Him and forgot his benefits, in spite of all that, He freed them and granted them forgiveness as many times, humbled, they asked for it.

731 However, we know that the Lord, as well as not being an acceptor of persons, does not make any difference between peoples, since his judgments are just and righteous as the writer of the Psalms says (Psalm 118:137) and therefore the different treatment he gives to nations obey a multitude of circumstances which converge in the wrongdoing of these peoples and are only known by infinite wisdom; or the malice and abuse they have made of the graces He bestowed upon them, and their wickedness and stubbornness in not hearing His voice and those of his envoys. Always obey the Justice of the Lord, convinced that whatever way He may punish you he always does so with mercy, because he does not want the impious to die, but rather be converted and live (Ezekiel 33:11) and we may say

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Genesis 6:9 ss.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Genesis 6:12; cf. 497 above.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Genesis 14:8; 19:24.

with Job: Although he might kill me, I will have hope in Him. *Although he should kill me, I will trust in him* (Job 13:15).

732 Nevertheless, some people with little knowledge of God and his designs, and less educated in the knowledge of religion admire that the Lord treats severely and keeps punishing the sins of individuals and the peoples even after the Divine Redeemer came to this world and delivered himself as a victim of atonement for everyone. They ask: is not Jesus Christ the lamb of God who removes the sins of the world? When dying, did He not ask his eternal Father to forgive, excusing our malice by saying that we knew not what we were doing? Is his heart not all tenderness towards us, as he shows when, taking pity on the tears of Lazarus' sisters¹⁶⁷, he resurrects him after being dead for three days, as he also did for the widow's child in Naim¹⁶⁸ and cries over the misfortunes and ruin that had struck Jerusalem?¹⁶⁹ Yes, because the eternal Father can do no less than listen to him, for being his beloved Son, in whom he has all his satisfaction¹⁷⁰. *Was heard for his reverence* (Hebrews 5:7) as the Apostle says; and with Him praying continuously for us in his capacity as mediator: *Always living to make intercession for us* (Hebrews 7:25), how can the divine Justice not be satisfied and stop punishing Humanity?

733 The answer to this, beloved children, is that if Jesus Christ, in dying for us, reinstated the right to the Heavenly Kingdom for us, lost through the guilt of our first parents, and provided us the means to obtain it with his merits and grace, it is still necessary that we make ourselves deserving of it through our good works and give full satisfaction to the divine Justice for our current sins and the shame merited by them, since nothing tarnished can enter into the Heavenly Kingdom. But as man not only sins as particular individuals but also the societies they form part of break the precepts of the Lord, they likewise have to receive their just treatment. And not having anything more than the present time for that, since societies are not eternal, the Lord unloads on them the full weight of his Justice and troubles them in countless ways in order to purify them of their sins, when they do not give Him the satisfaction owed it voluntarily.

734 And do not commit blasphemy by saying the severity with which the divine Justice punishes the peoples is at times excessive; because who can measure the seriousness of the offenses they commit? The men who die in mortal sin and therefore in the disgrace of God, separate from the Lord by themselves, throwing themselves into the eternal fire of hell; and those who leave this world with a light burden guilt, without having fully satisfied the penalty they owed for their already forgiven sins concerning that guilt, are tormented terribly in Purgatory, purifying them like gold in the crucible until they pay in full: *Thou shalt not go out thence, until thou pay the very last mite* (Luke 12:59). What must be, then, the severity of the guilt for separating the soul itself from the Lord, after it was the object of

¹⁶⁷ Cf. John 11:33.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Luke 7:13.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Luke 19:41.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. Matthew 3:16.

caresses and rescued with his precious blood? Truly, the dignity of the offended person is the measure of the seriousness of the sin, and with nothing less than an eternal hell could the serious offenses committed against God be punished? So if God punishes individuals in this way, why are we amazed by the wars, famines, epidemics, earthquakes and a thousand other calamities He sends to the peoples and nations to punish their faithlessness when the clock of the Providence tolls the hour of their Justice?

735 This time seems to have arrived, without any doubt, for the European nations. And since they must atone for so much, it accounts for the huge cataclysm we are experiencing, the greatest one ever recorded in history.

736 Truly, have not some of them turned their backs to the Lord, rejecting the truth of his doctrine to embrace error and heresy? How great have been the persecutions, sacrilege and insults that others have inflicted on the Church of Jesus Christ, and the plundering and mistreatment officials of the Church have been the victims of on earth? Can one also not say truthfully that all the nations have officially done wrong in their duties towards God and Religion? How surprising is it, then, that the Lord unleashes the lash of his justice upon them?

737 What we have to admire, beloved children, is the patience with which He has waited so many years, inviting them to penance and mercy which, in the middle of everything, He uses with them to not exterminate them like the unspeakable cities; undoubtedly in view of the merits and prayers of the righteous that are still in them and whom the Lord loves so much. *The mercies of the Lord that we are not consumed* (Lamentations 3:22).

* * *

738 But what does He suggest with this terrible punishment and what does He expect of us?

Punishment, beloved children, always has the reform of the guilty party as its goal and is at the same time a proof of the love offered to him; while not correcting his faults is a cruel mercy, as we read in the Book of Proverbs: *He that spareth the rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him correcteth him betimes* (Proverbs 13:24).

739 The Lord our God loved his chosen people of Israel very much, and worked so many wonders and miracles for them, including keeping them alive while they wandered through the desert with a manna rained down from heaven, and punished their enemies with terrible plagues. But when the ungrateful people forgot his benefits and knelt down before idols, invoking the false gods to act in their favor, at that moment he delivered them to their enemies, who afflicted and tormented them, in order that, realizing how terrible and bitter it is to be abandoned by the Lord, as Jeremiah says (Jeremiah 2:19), they would return to Him begging for mercy. What else also suggested sending Jonah, who announced to the people of

Nineveh the punishments being saved for them, except that they might repent and do penance, and by doing so disarmed the divine Justice?¹⁷¹

740 Well, the present day punishments we are experiencing suggest the same thing. Yes, the Lord wishes that the peoples, abominating their past inequities, return to Him asking for forgiveness and mercy, as the people of Nineveh did.

741 And how much did he not do in favor of the European nations to attract their gratitude to Him, before making them feel the weight of His justice? He bestowed on them abundantly the knowledge with which they have discovered such admirable inventions that amaze the world; he increased their grandeur through the prospering of their agriculture, industry and trade; through his ministers he repeatedly advised them of their foolish acts and as if that were not enough, the Holy Virgin Mother herself made various appearances and instilled in them the need to return to the Lord through penance. But the nations, obstinate in their wrongdoing and proud of their power, closed their ear to the voice of God and repeated with their actions the *I will not serve* of Lucifer and from this, beloved children, arrived the moment to experience the righteous wrath of the Lord. And how truly formidable the punishment turns out to be! The enemy of discord, which the nations have delivered themselves, insists on a fratricidal war with incalculable losses and misfortunes. How many lives cut off in the prime of life, how many men made useless for earning the sustenance of their families, how many orphans, how many homeless families, how much ruin and destruction everywhere. But undoubtedly the nations will continue shedding the blood of men and money.

742 Nonetheless, in the midst of so much bitterness and darkness, we can glimpse a ray of light and hope if reborn of a prompt and happy conclusion to such a terrible conflict, the resurgence of religious sentiments in the warring nations; primarily among the poor ones who ardently fight for the love of their homeland. Many of them are undoubtedly victims very pleasing to the divine eyes to appease his justice.

743 And so that is may be that way, beloved children, on our part we must also fulfill the obligation that charity and what the Lord wants of us imposes, to redouble our pleas to the point of doing violence to the Sacred Heart seeking the forgiveness for the sins of the world and of our own, because we have all contributed to filling the cup of the righteous indignation of the Lord. And accompanying our prayers with penance, repeating frequently and very fervently this short prayer: *Forgive, Lord; forgive your people, do not be angry with us for all eternity.*

744 This way, do not doubt that the most devout and merciful Lord shall hear your pleas and we shall finally be able to sing a hymn to His mercy, which we must not let perish, saying with Jeremiah: *The mercies of the Lord that we are not consumed*¹⁷².

This is what your Prelate wishes for you with all his heart, and blesses you in the name of the Father, Sun and Holy Spirit.

¹⁷¹ Cf. Jonah 3:1-10.

¹⁷² Cf. Lamentations 3:22.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on the first Sunday of Lent, 12 March of the year of our Lord 1916.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

19

For Peace in Europe

(B. Seg 36 [1916], pp. 203-219)

Oh, ye sons of men, how long will you be dull of heart? (Psalm 4:3).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: greetings, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

745 If the situation the world is presently going through, especially Europe, causes terror and horror at seeing how the nations are rushing to their total ruin at a dizzying pace, without neither the sacrifices of lives and property nor the tears and sighs of so many victims being enough to stop them. It is no less horrifying and makes one shudder to consider the insensitivity and hard hearts with which the nations contemplate this tremendous catastrophe, without wanting to see in it the hand of divine Justice avenging the very serious sins they have committed. When God, in his mysterious designs, decides to punish men, he allows them to blindly race to their own damnation: *Whom God would destroy, He first makes mad.*

746 It is true and certainly very consoling that some religious reaction is evident everywhere, as shown by the many prayers, pilgrimages and ordinary Communion being practiced to beseech the Lord for peace, but those are done by the ones who love and fear God, or those who, albeit indifferent, still have not lost their faith. But the nations officially continue to be, for the most part, as indifferent if not ungodly or atheist as before. Their leaders, save for a few honorable exception, do not think of invoking the help of the Lord of the armies, the only one who can give victory or defeat to the enemies: *The Lord putteth an end to wars* (Judith 16:3), on the contrary, it seems that they become more stubborn and harder when punished, like what happens to wax and mud when exposed to the sun, the former melts and the latter becomes harder.

747 Certainly this is regrettable and heartbreaking, beloved children, because it reduces the hope for a prompt end of the punishment the Lord is afflicting us with. The Lord intends to attract the peoples to Him, even for fear of his justice, and abandon his anger and use mercy with them as quickly as they beg for it, as he did with the people of Nineveh. But as opposed to that, he makes them pay their debts in full when they stubbornly keep their distance from Him.¹⁷³

¹⁷³ Cf. Luke 12:59

748 If, then, Jeremiah was lamenting in his time when he considered that the land of Judah was filled with devastation because no one looked internally to consider its misfortune: *With desolation is all the land made desolate; because there is none that considereth in the heart* (Jeremiah 12:11), does it not seem, beloved children, that we could lament with even more reason, in view of the foolish persistence and hard hearts of the peoples, who, forgetting God and his law of charity, and attentive only to their worldly perspectives and satisfying their hatreds, inspired by the common enemy, they destroy each other mercilessly, as if they were not children of the same Father in heaven? Yes, we could very easily point them to David: children of men, until when shall you be so slow and hard-hearted to know and fulfill the will of God? *O ye sons of men, how long will you be dull of heart?* (Psalm 4:3). Until when do your hatreds and rancor and excessive ambitions have to last, which blind you and bring you to the edge of the precipice? When will you give your heart room for humane feelings, in order to take pity on so many misfortunes, so many devastated widows, so many orphans who lack the necessary sustenance, on so much misery and ruin?

749 But, ah! Since this is the work of the infernal enemy, to whom the Lord in his mysterious designs has delivered them to punish their rebellion, they will not be freed from this cruel captivity until the time they seriously approach God and beg for his lenience through prayer.

750 The Church, our loving mother, by mandate of the Roman Pontiff has already spent many years asking for the end to the masses that, through the Archangel St. Michael, the Lord hurls the infernal spirit, which wanders the world to the detriment of so many souls, into the deepest abysses. In accordance with the mind and spirit of our good mother, we must also redouble our prayers to the degree that the persecution of the enemy and affliction of the peoples increases, with the intention of disarming the divine Justice and begging for leniency. Because prayer is the most effective means for appeasing the Lord, to attract his graces upon us and shatter the power of the enemy.

PRAYER, THE MEANS FOR APPEASING GOD AND OBTAINING HIS GRACE

751 How consoling it would be to a criminal to be sure that his pleas would move the compassion of the judge, who would not only lighten but lift his sentence? What new joy for a debtor that it would be enough just to plead for leniency from his creditor to obtain the cancellation of his debt! We are even surer of receiving divine mercy, beloved children, if we beg for it through prayer. The Lord himself assures us of that, saying: *Ask and ye shall receive. Knock and they will open for you. Ask, and it shall be given you. Knock, and it shall be opened to you* (Luke 11:9). These words are not only a mere promise to encourage us to come to Him with our needs, but rather indicate the infallible effectiveness of prayer, as the Lord himself says: *Verily, verily I say unto you that what you ask the Father for in my name, He*

will grant to you: *Amen, amen I say to you: if you ask the Father anything in my name, he will give it to you.* (John 16:23).

752 An infinite number of proofs, from both the Old and New Testament, corroborate this truth. When the people of Israel, turning their backs to the Lord and His benefits forgotten, made a golden calf and worshipped it as their God, attributing their release from captivity in Egypt to it, the Lord was so righteously annoyed that he wanted to exterminate them but Moses interceded and prayed with such effectiveness for his people that, as if it would prevent him from exercising his will, the Lord says to him: *Let me alone, that my wrath may be kindled against them* (Exodus 32:10); and when Moses insisted in continuing his prayer, he appeased the Lord so he did not carry out the evil to his people he had threatened. *And the Lord was appeased from doing the evil which he had spoken against his people* (Exodus 32:14). And to what, other than Moses' prayer, can we attribute the victory of the people of Israel over Amalek, as the Israelites won while his hands were raised to heaven in the gesture of prayer? And to the contrary, did they not suffer defeats when Moses let his hands fall from fatigue, and when Aaron and Hur saw this, they held up his arms until the battle ended favorably for the people of God?¹⁷⁴ But what gives us an ever better idea of the effectiveness that prayer does violence to the Lord is the fact that he would prohibit Jeremiah from praying for Judah, whom he had decided to punish as a penalty for his unfaithfulness: *Do no thou pray for this people, nor take to thee praise and supplication for them and do not withstand me* (Jeremiah 7:16). And admire now, beloved children, the hidden judgments of God. While He did not want to forgive the people of Judah and prohibited Jeremiah from interceding on their behalf, sent Jonah to proclaim to the people of Nineveh his determination to exterminate them if they did not repent, and with the utmost kindness received the cries and pleas that everyone from the king to the lowliest vassal raised to Heaven requesting forgiveness¹⁷⁵.

753 If these and an infinite number of other passages from the Old Testament reveal to us the power and strength of prayer, what will its effectiveness be now in the law of grace, uniting our prayers to the merits of our mediator and Redeemer Jesus Christ, for those who ask for it from the Father? All of us have much experience with it but, for the glory of God and to encourage us more, we recall what one reads concerning it in some passages of the sacred text.

754 Upset, the Church was weeping at seeing St. Peter, its Pontiff and support, held prisoner and exposed to a sure death, but redoubling its prayers to the Lord, He sent an angel, who releasing the chains of captivity of his Vicar and opening the jail door, set him free, making a mockery of the vigilance of their enemies¹⁷⁶. The sisters of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, also prostrated themselves at the feet of Jesus, weeping over the death of their brother, and their tears, an unspoken prayer asking for a miracle in their favor, obtained the resurrection of a man who was four days

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Exodus 17:8-13.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Jonah 3:1-10

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Acts 12:4-11.

buried¹⁷⁷. The prayer of the prince referred to by St. Matthew obtained the same favorable outcome who presented himself to the divine Master by saying: "Lord, my daughter just died but come, put your hands over her and she will live" (Matthew 9:18). How effective was the plea of the leper who, worshipping Jesus told him: "Lord, if you want, you can cleanse me" (Matthew 8:2) and immediately was healthy? And the blind man of Jericho, who cried out as Jesus passes along the road: "Son of David, have mercy on me" (Mark 10:47), and when the Lord said: "What do you want me to do?" replied: "Lord, make me see", and instantly recovered his sight? But above all these graces obtained through the power of prayer, the most admirable and consoling one, which should instill the greatest encouragement and hope in us, is that of the good thief. He was waiting for the cross together with the Savior; he acknowledges and confesses the divinity of Jesus Christ and at the same time he repents and publicly discloses his evil deeds. With this intention, he asks the Lord to remember him when he is in his Kingdom and is deserving to hear his complete forgiveness from the mouth of the Lord and be sure that the same day he will be with Him in Paradise: *Today you will be with me in Paradise* (Luke 23:43).

755 The effectiveness of prayer to obligate God, can be understood and explained, beloved children, just by said that He is our Father; because as He himself says: If you, being evil, know how to give good things to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give his goods to those who ask him for it?¹⁷⁸ And even more when we ask through Jesus Christ, his beloved Son, in whom, by whom and for whom all things were done and is our Redeemer and mediator towards his Father. He himself assures us of that by saying through St. John: "What you ask the Father for in my name, He will give it to you" (John 16:23).

756 Through prayer, then, we are in a certain way omnipotent, beloved children, because it does violence as you see to God himself and all nature is subject to his rule. This is why St. John Chrysostom can rightly say: "Nothing is more powerful than man in prayer" (St. John Chrysostom)¹⁷⁹. "Joshua prayed to the Lord, and commanding the sun and the moon to stop, He stopped them in their progress until the people of Israel had avenged themselves on their enemies" (Joshua 10:13). "The walls of Jericho also came tumbling down from the outcry and pleas of the children of Israel" (Joshua 6:20). Praying and praising God, the three youths thrown into the furnace of Babylon no longer felt the effects of the fire (Daniel 3:24). "St. Peter asked the Lord if he would command him to go to him over the water and, in fact, he could walk over the waters as if they had solidified under his feet" (Matthew 14:28-29). Finally, in the lives of the saints we find an infinite number of proofs of the dominion he exercised over all nature, through the effects of his prayer.

757 Will you tell me, then, how is that we asked so insistently for the solution to the present calamities afflicting the world and the Lord does not hear us, or

¹⁷⁷ Cf. John 11:33.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Matthew 7:11.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: *Homily 57 on St. Matthew*, 4: PG 58:563.

delays granting this much-desired peace? Perhaps our prayers will not be pleasing to Him?

758 Let us not offend with this new insult to the Lord, beloved children. We would not urge Him for what we are asking for if He did not want to give us what we ask of him, as St. Augustine says¹⁸⁰. “Fortunately,” says St. John Chrysostom, “will someone who in his piety encourages people not to flag in praying deny what the person who prays asks for?”¹⁸¹ His desire to do us good is so great, that even when he is required to punish us, he goes looking for someone to intervene on our behalf, like any loving father, and feels sorry and complains when he cannot find one, saying through Ezekiel: “I sought someone who might step between Myself and the earth like a fence, and struggle against Me to not destroy it, and I did not find him? *And I sought among them for a man that might set up a hedge, and stand in the gap before me in favor of the land, that I might not destroy it: and I found none* (Ezekiel 22:30).

759 Yes, the Lord wants and is very pleased that we ask Him for the peace of the world; but as this has to be based on the peace of God, without which the other peace is not found, and the increasingly hardened nations disregard anything of God, we have to start, beloved children by begging him to grant a special grace those who, deaf and blind by their own volition, do not listen to the threats of the Lord or the laments of the people, weeping inconsolably over their ruin, and do not see or want to acknowledge the hand of God punishing us in this horrible war that annihilates nations.

760 We also have to try to have our prayer come from a contrite, remorseful and humbled heart which, according to the Royal Prophet, God will not reject: *A contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.* (Psalm 50:19), because he loves the righteous so much and uses mercy with the peoples for them; as proven when he said to Abraham that if there were only ten righteous men in Sodom, he would pardon the city: *I will not destroy it for the sake of ten* (Genesis 18:32).

761 To these conditions we must unite an unshakeable confidence: *Nothing wavering* (James 1:6) says the apostle James, that the kindness and mercy of the Lord is going to grant us what we ask for, and we do have any doubts about in attaining it, because the Lord himself says through St. Matthew: “Whatever you ask for in prayer, believing, you shall receive” (Matthew 21:22).

But as the infernal enemy is, as we said before, the one who instigates and promotes discord among the nations destroying each other in punishment for the sins of the world, know that prayer, beloved children, is also the weapon for defending ourselves against him.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: Letter 130, 8: PL 33:499-501.

¹⁸¹ Cf. ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: *Homily “de non deseperando”*, 7: PG 51:370-373.

PRAYER SHATTERS THE POWER OF THE ENEMY

762 The fury the infernal enemy attacks us with, beloved children, does not have our ruin as its goal so much as the hatred he has for God, on whom he wants to avenge himself. But since his arrows cannot wound Him, nor his poisoned spears reach his Throne, he turns furiously against us, envious of our happiness but desiring more to upset the will of the Lord, who as a loving father wants our salvation.

763 The power and strength of the enemy are truly great and fearsome and therefore, if limited to loving and the permission of God, who never consents for us to be tempted beyond our powers and aided by his grace. What evils did this malign spirit cause St. Job by the permission of God! He destroyed his cattle, tore down his houses, burying his children among their ruins; reduced him to the greatest misery and filled him with leprosy from his feet to his head; in spite of that, he respected his life, because the Lord commanded that it be that way: *But yet save his life* (Job 2:6).

764 Sometimes, the Lord allows him to shake us like wheat as a penalty for our sins and other times in order to increase our merits and virtue, as in the cited case of Job. But it always turns out that the fury of Hell crashes against the will of God, who knows how to convert the same evils into good for his chosen ones: *All things work together unto good, to such as, according to his purpose, are called to be saints* (Romans 8:28).

765 The weapons that the enemy ordinarily uses to attack us are the lusts that are active in our limbs, as the apostle James says (James 4:1): the lust of the flesh, the eyes, and pride of life.

766 And what troubles the first of these lusts has provoked throughout all time in both the souls and society! It should suffice for us to remember the example of a great king like Solomon¹⁸² who was induced to the point of worshipping the god of the Gentiles by it. For the same reason, the Lord also had to destroy the cities of Pentapolis¹⁸³; and if He inundated the earth with the Great Flood, which killed all living things with the exception of Noah and his family¹⁸⁴, it was for no other reason than that all flesh had corrupted his ways, as the sacred text says: *For all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth* (Genesis 6:12).

767 So who will also be able to list all the pitfalls the souls have rushed into due to the false goods and pleasures placed before their eyes to excite their lust? Let us speak of David for all of them, how one imprudent glance pushed him to commit so many crimes that, in spite of obtaining the forgiveness of God, he and his people would have to atone for them with terrible punishments¹⁸⁵.

¹⁸² Cf. I Kings 11:1-8.

¹⁸³ Cf. Genesis 14:8; 19:24.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. Genesis 6:9 ss.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. II Samuel 11:2-27.

768 But pride and arrogance, the cause of his eternal damnation, is the lust with which the enemy most incites man. Our first parents were brought down from their state of innocence by it, and from that experience it is used to instill and continuously seduce their unfortunate children. Pride and arrogance took control of the heart of Saul¹⁸⁶ so that in his fury he would plot to kill David. The pride and arrogance that inspired the Pharaoh also made him resist for so long the will of God, as manifested through Moses, that his people should be set free, and led to terrible plagues on Egypt¹⁸⁷. And this same pride and arrogance induced Herod to cut the throats of innocent children in order to kill with them the Child God, who believed was coming to challenge him for the throne¹⁸⁸. And if we look dispassionately at the cause of the struggle that currently is bleeding and filling Europe with grief, does it not seem to you, beloved children, that we will likewise have to agree that it is nothing other than ambition and pride of each nation wishing to be dominant over the rest? Yes, they truly sacrifice so many and such precious lives to them, and they do not make amends for the total ruin of nations.

769 Truly we have to confess that the enemies of our soul are mighty. David describes them with that word: *The mighty have rushed in on me* (Psalm 58:4), and that is how St. Augustine understands the devil¹⁸⁹. The divine Redeemer calls them strong through St. Luke: (Luke 11:22). Mighty, yes, for their nature and abilities, but even stronger against us through the weapons our own lusts supply them with.

770 Concerning this, their malice even brings them to hide underneath the appearance of good, or with very well seasoned reasons, their treacherous ends and intentions to capture our will and offer our assent to their suggestions more easily.

771 So how will we be able to save ourselves from the power and traps of these cruel enemies? It is impossible with only our own powers, beloved children; but if man cannot enter into battle with the spirits by himself without being conquered, he nonetheless has a very powerful weapon given by God to fight and always come out victorious over his enemies; and that weapon is prayer.

772 The divine Redeemer himself, who allowed himself to be tempted as an example to us¹⁹⁰, prepared himself for that battle prayer and recommends that we always pray: *That we ought always to pray, and not to faint* (Luke 18:1). And in the daily prayer that our Eternal Father commands us to perform, he tells us to ask him: that we should not let ourselves fall into temptation¹⁹¹; that is, he gave us powers in order to not succumb in the battles that we will have to sustain with the enemies of our soul.

773 With this weapon of prayer, Susanna triumphed in the battle she had to wage with those lascivious old men, the instruments of the evil spirit¹⁹². Through the prayer that Tobias and Sara performed together, the Lord saved them from the

¹⁸⁶ Cf. I Samuel 18:8-9.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Exodus 7:13 ss.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Matthew 2:7-18.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Exposition on Psalm 58*, 6: PLO 36:695.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Matthew 4:1-11.

¹⁹¹ Cf. Matthew 6:13.

¹⁹² Cf. Daniel 13:42.

devil, who had killed the other seven husbands that she had before¹⁹³. The prayer that St. Peter performed while prostrate on the ground disrupted the diabolical arts that Simon Magus deceived and seduced the people with by faking miracles, and brought him down to earth when the evil spirit had him flying through the air. The apostle St. Paul took pity on the young fortune teller of Philippi after praying, and commanded in the name of Jesus Christ that the devil come out from her, and immediately it left¹⁹⁴. All the Apostles and disciples of Jesus Christ had this same control and rule over the infernal spirit through prayer and not only them but all the saints, whose lives are an ongoing testament to this truth.

774 Yes, beloved children, although it is true that the power of the devil is fearsome, after Jesus Christ chained him to his cross and armed us against him with the prayer, he is nothing more than a tied-up dog, in the words of St. Augustine¹⁹⁵. This is why St. Anthony, when they presented themselves before him in huge packs and horrible figures of animals in order to tempt him, told them: "If you were able to do as much as you show, any one of you alone would be enough against me; but there are so many of you together since none of you are capable of doing anything"¹⁹⁶; and he sent them fleeing with the sign of the Cross.

775 However, the general chaos and unrest one observes in society today is undoubtedly the work of the evil spirit. The hatreds and bitter rancor which are killing men or leaving them useless, as if they were not our brothers; the hardening of hearts and lack of humanitarian sentiments, which makes people look on indifferently, if not with cruel complacency, at all the calamities befalling innocent victims; the excessive desire for power and control over others, even at the expense of destroying nations; and the amazing inventions themselves used in this war, suitably only for destroying everything that exists, shows us quite clearly, beloved children, the intervention of the evil spirit, which wants to do away with Humanity and seize from Jesus Christ the souls he rescued with his precious Blood.

776 Therefore it is our duty to raise our hands to the Lord in prayer, like Moses¹⁹⁷, and not flag in praying until we obtain the divine mercy for ourselves and for the people. We ask fervently that the Lord open the eyes of the blind who race to their damnation; to calm the unrestrained passions and inspire in men feelings of humility, compassion and charity and, in short, to disrupt the plans of the devil and hurl him into the deepest abyss, so that peace shall be reborn in the world, the guarantor of the peace we shall enjoy in eternity. This is what your Prelate wishes for himself and for everyone, and he blesses you in the name of the Father, Sun and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on 29 November 1916.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

¹⁹³ Cf. Tobias (Tobit) 8:4-8.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Acts 16:16-18.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Sermon 37*, 6: PL 39:1820 (cf. in RB, 4th reading of the 4th Sunday after Pentecost). Cf. 1125, 1333.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. ST. ATHANASIUS: *Life of St. Anthony*, 9: PG 26:858. Cf. 1123.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. Exodus 17:11-12.

20

On Easter Communion

(B. Seg 37 [1917], pp. 45-59)

“He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him” (John 6:57).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: greetings, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

777 Once again, beloved children, the sacred time of Lent has arrived, when our Mother the Church, concerned for the good of its children, tries to prepare us with preaching, penance and fasting for the sacred banquet the Divine Redeemer invites us to, because He says he came to give us life, and wanted us to have it in abundance: *I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly* (John 10:10). This can only be achieved by eating the flesh of the Immaculate Lamb and drinking his blood, which He left to us as delicacy and drink: *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life* (John 6:54).

778 Who could imagine the love of God towards his creatures would go to this extreme? The omnipotence and wisdom that shine in the works of his creation, whether in the heavens, on earth or in the seas; the admirable providence with which the Lord rules, preserves and governs all the beings he created from nothingness; the miracles in favor of the people of Israel; the infinite piety and mercy towards man reveals in the mystery of the Incarnation and all the works of the Word incarnate, including his Death and Passion, gives us a noble idea of the love of the Lord towards us, like the institution of the holy Eucharist, the summary of all the wonders of the Lord: *He hath made a remembrance of his wonderful works, being a merciful and gracious Lord. He hath given food to them that fear him* (Psalm 110:4-5).

779 Yes, because if in the creation he created a world from nothing with a single word, he does the same transubstantiation of bread and wine in this Sacrament, and not just in any body, but in His own precious Body and Blood. If the existence of all beings is preserved through the providence of the Father, without whose assistance they would cease to exist, this providence comes to be like a continuous creation. The Eucharist gives and preserves the life of our soul, strengthening it and making it more robust with the Bread of the Angeles, which is His Body, the guarantor of eternal life. If the Israelites fed themselves in the desert with manna rained down from heaven, it was nothing more than a symbol of this divine delicacy, delicious above all other things and it invigorates the soul to climb tirelessly to the summit of the glory. If the incarnation of the Word shows us the great mercy of God towards man through this sacrament, which is like an extension of that mystery, the Lord comes down from the heavens to dwell with us every time the priests consecrates someone anywhere on earth. Finally, if the divine Redeemer sealed the testament of his love by giving his life for us, in this Sacrament, a

memorial of his Passion, he appears to use up the source of this love, because not only does he offer himself in sacrifice for our sins but also gives himself to us as nourishment, so that whoever receives it can truly say, like the Apostle: "I live, but now I am not the one who lives, but rather Christ who lives in me" (Galatians 2:20).

780 How true it is, as the Lord himself says, that his delights are being with the children of men: *And my delights were to be with the children of men* (Proverbs 8:31), and no nation is so great that its gods are as close to them as we are to our good God!

781 Therefore it is amazing, beloved children, to see the coldness and indifference with which men reciprocate these fine touches, and are not inflamed by the divine love in the midst of this fire the Lord says he came to set on earth: *I am come to cast fire on the earth* (Luke 12:49).

782 We do not want to believe, beloved children, that any of you are among the number of those ungrateful souls who place worldly things before the spiritual and eternal good which the Lord provides us. But still, for greater encouragement and the intention that you are as grateful for them as they deserve, we shall occupy ourselves in considering the great advantages the Holy Communion brings us: to join us intimately to Jesus Christ and fill us with his graces. *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him* (John 6:57).

UNION WITH JESUS CHRIST

783 The desire to live closely united and identify with the beloved is typical of love, beloved children, and thereby accounts for the vigor and speed that solemn bodies have at their centre, in their own heart and even greater when love is seeking its own. And could we not say that even God himself, who engraved this law in the heart of man, wanted to act in accordance with it? "I have loved thee with an everlasting love", he tells us through Jeremiah, "and therefore you are attracted to me" (Jeremiah 31:3), and tried to identify with the creature he favors to such an extent that to redeem him from the guilt he took on our human nature, and lived and talked with us, felt our needs, partook of our sufferings, cried with the grief-stricken, suffered insults and torments for our love and gave his life on a cross, becoming the victim of it.

784 But even this was not enough or satisfied his love, which never says enough, and with the time arrived for having to leave this world for the Father and leave men behind, he gave the greatest and most extreme proof of his love by instituting the holy sacrament of the Altar: *Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them unto the end* (John 13:1). A divine invention which allowed him, at the same time that He rose to the left hand side of the Father, his mission of redeeming humanity fulfilled, to also remain with us as He had promised: *And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world* (Matthew 28:20).

785 In this way the union that was established with his creatures was not only not adversely affected but, to the contrary, became more intimate and close to the extreme degree of truly being able to say of man, as the apostle St. Paul, that now it is not he who lives, but rather Jesus Christ who lives in him (Galatians 2:20).

786 This great union, which the Lord himself compares, to give us an idea, to that of food with the body which receives it. "My flesh", He says through St. John, "is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him" (John 6:56-57). In that way, just as the delicacy transforms into the substance being eaten, the same transformation is verified in Holy Communion, but with the difference that here it is not man who converts the Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ into his sustenance, but rather Jesus Christ who transforms within Himself the one who receives the sacrament; coming to be another Him, as St. Leo says: "It is our flesh that merges, so to speak, with His; his blood which runs through our veins, and his divine nature which resides in us"¹⁹⁸.

787 Through the mystery of the Eucharist, the Lord achieved an even greater union with man than through the Incarnation; because on becoming incarnate in the very pure womb of the Holy Virgin, he took on an individual flesh, whereas through the Eucharist he takes on the flesh and blood of each and every one of those who receive him in the sacrament and makes them his own.

788 The divine Redeemer also compares his union with the soul by means of Communion to the one He has with his Eternal Father. "As I live", he tells us, "my life through my Father, so whoever eats my flesh lives my life through me: *As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me* (John 6:58). In the same way that Jesus Christ is one with his Father through the divine nature common to them, in some sense Jesus Christ is also one with the soul that receives the sacrament, forming, so to speak, a sustenance with Him: and as Jesus Christ receives from his Father a totally divine life, in the same way and in proportion, this divine Redeemer comes to be the beginning of a spiritual and divine life in men, through the partaking of his Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist.

789 With the soul being, then, so closely united to Jesus Christ, it now no longer belongs to itself and all its operations must be regulated by Him, so that his thinking is focused on Him, his affections are directed towards him, he directs his works to his glory and lives and moves in Him, since he is in Him more than in himself: *For in him we live, and move, and are* (Acts 17:28).

790 However, what the Lord wants and wishes of us, beloved children, and earnestly asks the eternal Father for is that we live united with each other by the links of charity to the extent that we become one as He is with his eternal Father and the Father with Him, so that we may achieve this union with God: *That they*

¹⁹⁸ Cf. ST. LEO: *Homily 63, 7*: PL 54:357; *Letter 59, 2*: PL 54:868. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the language of "concorporeality" and "consanguinity" that Father Luis uses here is more typical of St. Cyril (cf. ST. CYRIL: *Catecheses, 22:3*: PG 33:1100). Cf. 626 above.

all may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us (John 17:21). And he earnestly encourages us through the apostle St. Paul, saying that in the same way he Eucharist bread we eat is one, all those who are partaking of the same bread must also form one single body: *For we, being many, are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread.* (I Corinthians 10:17). With this lovely comparison, he gives us an idea of the mutual union that he wants to exist between us and with Him. What do you need, in fact, to make just one bread from many different grains of wheat? Just one thing: that all these difference disappear by mixing and milling the wheat that will produce an uniform flour and a bread in which the different grains that form it will not be seen.

791 Keep away from you, beloved children, the differences that distance and separate you. Fuse or merge with each other, so to speak, so no personal interests or opinions would temper the love that you must profess as children of the same Father in Heaven. And nourishing yourself with the sacramental bread, you will be formed with Jesus Christ with one single body and soul among you, as our divine Redeemer wishes.

792 Our nature was greatly ennobled by the Lord taking it as his own in his incarnation; but his love desired a tighter union with man, and through this sacrament he communicated to each one of us individually that not only had he received the human nature, but also his divine nature. Oh, admirable miracle! Who would have said, beloved children, that the poor man, servile and humble, would feed himself on the very flesh of his Lord? *Oh res mirabilis, manducat Dominum pauper, servus et humilis!* How much good can we do, along with the woman in the gospel who blessed the bosom that brought the Lord¹⁹⁹, to similarly call the lips and tongue that are stained with his blood beatified, as well as the heart which serves him as throne and the soul left deified by the intimate union with his God?

793 However, if the Church is amazed that the Lord would deign to take the nature of flesh in the pure womb of a virgin (*"thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb"*²⁰⁰), what must be our astonishment at seeing him select for his dwelling our poor miserable heart, many times not even well-purified by penance?

794 The Apostle St. Paul asks with good reason that man be well tested before reaching the sacred table: *But let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice* (I Corinthians 11:28), because being unworthy and eating this bread would serve for his damnation: *For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself* (I Corinthians 11:29).

795 Prepare yourself then, beloved children, as much as possible to receive this holy sacrament, so that you find no obstacles in the way of the union the Lord wants to perform with your soul, nor the torrent of graces that he gives to faithful servants.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. Luke 11:27.

²⁰⁰ Cf. *Te Deum* Hymn.

GRACES THAT THE COMMUNION YIELDS

796 St. Theresa of Jesus says, beloved children, our divine Redeemer is in the Eucharist with his hands filled with graces, ready to distribute them to those who ask for them²⁰¹. And if so, what abundance of graces would not spill over our soul when he takes possession of it through communion? If the kings of earth take pleasure in dispensing favors when their vassals visit them, what satisfaction shall the Lord experience in dispensing to us his gifts and filling us with his graces when he establishes his dwelling in our heart?

797 The manna the Lord feeds his people in the desert not only gave them strength and vigor to not falter, but he knew it appealed to everyone, with the intention that they would not like the delicacies they had in Egypt²⁰²; and in this sacred manna, symbolically, the soul finds itself satiated, the taste for virtue and the solution for its needs; that is, it serves as food that preserves and increases the life of grace, and is the remedy that cures its illness and preserves it from the death of sin.

798 This supernatural bread the angel of the Lord gave the prophet Elijah comforted his weakness so much that he could walk for forty days and forty nights without any more food to reach the mountain of God, Horeb (I Kings 19:8), and the communion bread acts on our souls the same way. Why do you think, beloved children, the Lord established this sacrament under the symbol of bread and wine, except to let us know the marvelous effects that it produces in the soul? Because in the way these foods preserve life and increase the body's strength, this heavenly delicacy preserves and increases grace, the life of our soul, the same way; it makes us grow in virtue, and raises us above ourselves to such an extent that, in the expression of St. Cyprian, from worldly men we become heavenly men²⁰³. Have not all of us experienced this? What internal strength don't we feel after receive communion to face the greatest difficulties that oppose us on the way to perfection? How smooth and even pleasurable the practice of virtue then seems to us when we felt such repugnance and aversion to it before receiving in our breast this bread of the mighty! How easily we conquer the suggestions and temptations of the enemy having in our soul the power which vanquished the world and hell! We have an excellent testament to that in the holy martyrs who, reassured by the Holy Eucharist, presented themselves bravely before the tyrants without fear of the horrendous torments awaiting them, because the fire of divine love that burned in their breasts was greater than the fire ready to consume their bodies. This divine bread also strengthened the penitent saints so that, prepared for mortification, they could avenge the honor of the Lord on their bodies, diminished by their own and other people's guilt. In the furious attacks the infernal spirit has always unleashed

²⁰¹ Cf. ST. THERESA: *Camino de Perfección*, 33-36 (Codex of Toledo) in *Obras Completas de Santa Teresa* (BAC Madrid, 1962), pp. 288-298.

²⁰² Cf. Exodus 16:1-36; Wisdom 16:20.

²⁰³ Cf. ST. CYPRIAN: *Letter 63*, 11: PL 4:394.

to defeat the servants of God, the Eucharistic delicacy gave them such strength and bravery that the Devil himself feared them, as St. John Chrysostom says: *Facti diabolo terribiles*²⁰⁴. Not only does this bread invigorate and strengthen the spirit, there are the times the Lord makes us see it also gives these benefits to the body; and, in fact, there are many saints and noble souls to whom he granted the power to be able to endure long periods, even entire years, without any food other than the sacred Eucharist, as one reads of St. Rita of Cascia²⁰⁵. In addition, if it is typical of the sacraments of the living to increase the grace they may honorably receive, the Eucharist should naturally yield these divine effects; but with the difference that they are incomparably more numerous and abundant; because if the other sacraments are like channels where the water of the divine grace connects with us, this is the source itself since the creator of the grace gives himself to us in it.

799 Similarly, this divine sacrament is the remedy for our spiritual illnesses and preserver of our souls from eternal death. In fact, if the sick people who reached Jesus Christ found the health of their bodies under the rule of his word or contact, even if it was only to touch his garments; if the lunatics were freed of the tyrannical possession of the devil in his presence; if death restored its victims to his kingdom, and wherever this divine liberator of humanity went he was generously spreading his benefits since, as He says, He is the resurrection and life: *I am the resurrection and the life* (John 11:25), what will he not do in our soul when he visits it, not in passing now but to build his mansion in it? He cures the blind man of Jericho of his blindness²⁰⁶ so that he clearly sees the way leading to heaven, and the obstacles in his path; like the leper²⁰⁷, he cleanses him with his blood of the leprosy of sin; cures the deaf so they can lend an attentive ear to his divine precepts; raises man from the state of deep depression and abasement his everyday shortcomings had reduced him to, giving him the courage to conquer himself and, finally, this divine sacrament is the antidote which cures all his ills and ailments, and frees his soul of the external death of sin.

800 So if the passions might have blinded your soul, beloved children, enveloping it in the thick darkness of error and unfaithfulness and you want to know the reality of things through the prism of faith, you will find in this sacrament the light that enlightens all men who come into this world: *That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world* (John 1:9). If drinking from the poisoned cup of the pleasures of the world has left your spirit dry and arid and without any taste for virtue, try and you will experience in this sacrament with all sorts of delicacies in it, how smooth is the Lord: *O taste, and see that the Lord is sweet* (Psalm 33:9), and you will see your heart let go of worldly things. If

²⁰⁴ Cf. ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: *Homily 61 to the people of Antioch*, in RB 5th reading of the Saturday infraoctave of Corpus week (cf. in *Opera Omnia*. Ed. Nivellium, Vol. V, Paris 1581, col. 345). Cf. 630 above.

²⁰⁵ Cf. *Life of St. Rita*, 9, in *Acta Sanctorum*, May, Vol. V, p. 227.

²⁰⁶ Cf. Mark 10:46-52.

²⁰⁷ Cf. Matthew 8:1-4.

daunted by the bonds the enemies of your soul (world, devil and flesh) hold you with, despairing for your salvation, receive in the Bread of the mighty this Lord with whom the Apostle says everything is possible: *I can do all these things in Him who strengtheneth me* (Philippians 4:13), reassured with Him you shall make hell itself fearful of you. If you consider your soul dead from sin, the enemy trying to induce you to despair, remember that Jesus says he came to seek the sinners²⁰⁸; reach out to Him in the court of the penance so He can wash you like his apostles; and do not fear of approaching and receiving him in your breast, because He shall be resurrection and life for us: *I am the resurrection and the life* (John 11:25).

801 Eat, yes, beloved children, eat of this sacred Bread, because through it you shall join together with Jesus Christ so closely you are as one with Him, and He shall enrich your gifts to make you worthy of being his eternal depository.

802 But do not limit yourselves, children of my soul, to receive communion only once a year because the Church requires it, because his mind and his wish, expressed through the immortal Pius X, is that the faithful receive the Lord very frequently, even daily, as the early Christians did²⁰⁹.

803 When there is so much interest in worldly goods, which are false, why do we have to look indifferently at the only truths that come to us from the union with Jesus Christ and the connection to his graces? Let us not ignore Jesus, who is calling us from the tabernacle. Let us enter into his heart by the wound in his side, and build our mansions in it so that by living in Him, by Him and for Him here on earth, we may enjoy his sight in Heaven, which your Prelate asks for, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Sun and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe, on the holy day of the apostle St. Matthew, on 24 February 1917.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

21

Cries for Peace

(B. Seg 37 [1917], pp. 201-212

“Peace, peace: and there was no peace”
(Jeremiah 6:14).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: greetings, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

804 Peace, peace! This is the outcry you hear everywhere, beloved children. The poor soldiers continuously exposed to an imminent death call for peace, while

²⁰⁸ Cf. Matthew 9:13.

²⁰⁹ Cf. PIUS X: *Decree of 20 December 1905*: ASS 38 (1905/1906), p. 401 ss.; in DENZINGER 1981-1990. Cf. 633 above.

they watch their companions fall left and right, horribly mutilated by enemy fire. The poor families deprived of the loved ones who are their sole means of support yearn for peace. The poor souls forced to abandon their towns, homes and interests to be safe from the devastating fire of the war, fleeing to unknown regions where they perish from hunger and cold, shout for peace. All the people long unanimously for peace, raising their pleas to heaven to demand that prized good. To reach truces for peace the nations call on the representative on earth of the Prince of Peace, the only one who can give it to the world. And, in spite of that, there is no peace; peace runs away from us: Peace, peace: and there was no peace" (Jeremiah 6:14).

805 Beloved children, what would the reason be for this prized good to be denied or postponed for the world?

Let us note that peace is the fruit of a good conscience, of the holy fear of God, submission to His divine precepts, of mutual union and brotherly charity, and, in a word, the reward for men of good will who serve God and love their fellow man: *and on earth peace to men of good will* (Luke 2:14). Without these conditions, you cannot be at peace with God, your fellow men or nor even yourself, because an uneasy conscience does not let you enjoy such a priceless benefit.

806 Having noted this, then, take a glance at society and you will see its lack of religious feeling, lack of faith, rejection of divine authority and rebellion against human authority, its egotism and lack of charity, its insatiable thirst for worldly pleasures and goods and dismissal of the true goods of the spirit. In accordance with all that, tell me, is it strange that the Lord, in his righteous punishment, would have abandoned them to their sense of wickedness and consequently confusion, disorder, anarchy and satanic hatred of each other reign over the people, the real causes of the war that afflicts the world today?

807 And have no doubt that this is a punishment by God, beloved children. The same stubbornness with which they furiously persist in the battle, without stopping to think about the ruin the peoples are plunged into, the weeping of the victims or the terrible death toll depopulating the nations, and the disdain with which they ignore our loving pleas and means to enter into peace offered them by the Roman Pontiff, are obvious proofs of the blindness of those the Lord allows to fall whom he has to punish with his righteous judgments: *Whom God would destroy, He first makes mad.*

808 The merciful Lord, in order to keep the world from rushing into the abyss it was racing towards, or was unforgivable in his eyes, warned them twice in the last century through the Holy Virgin. At La Saleta, she announced that the sins of the world weighed so heavily the arm of her Son that if the world did not change that, He would have to let it fall upon them; and at Lourdes she asked several times for people to do penance. Nonetheless, just as in Noah's time²¹⁰, when men rejected his preaching when he announced the punishment threatening them, they have not paid attention to the word of the Mother and shelter of the sinners today. And now

²¹⁰ Cf. Genesis 6:8 ss.

we are experiencing the words of the Holy Virgin fulfilled, because the arm of the Lord weighs terribly upon us, making us experience the world punishment he can send to a people, war.

809 What should we do then, beloved children, to beseech the mercy of the Lord and grant the world the longed-for benefit of peace? Nothing else but putting into practice what the Holy Virgin asks, that is: do penance for our sins and those of the people, refrain from offending God and that others offend him, especially with those sins the Mother said most annoyed her Holy Son, to wit: blasphemy, breaking the holy day and dishonesty.

In this way we will be able to present ourselves to the Lord as victims in atonement, to whom divine mercy is never denied.

PENANCE

810 Such is the power and strength of this virtue, beloved children, that it does violence to God him and overcomes his cries and tears. David says the Lord watches and listens from heaven to hear the moans of those, repentant, who invoke his name: *From heaven the Lord hath looked upon the earth, that he might hear the groans of them that are in fetters* (Psalm 101:20-21); the pleas of the penitent soul and the tears, water that drowns his righteous anger, are sweet arrows for his heart and to persuade us of that and that we can confidently go to Him and beg for his mercy, the Lord himself says to us through Isaiah: Who shall I focus my eyes on but the poor man, who cries for his sins and fears my judgment and words? *But to whom shall I have respect, but to him that is poor and little, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my words?* (Isaiah 66:2). This is why the royal prophet assures us with good reason that the Lord will never reject the contrite and humbled heart: *A contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.* (Psalm 50:19).

811 Nothing, in fact, satisfies Him so much as penance and the sorrow of the sinner, something several parables of the Gospel clearly show us. Through St. Luke he tells us “there is more joy in heaven for a sinner doing penance than for ninety nine righteous men who do not need to do it” (Luke 15:7). St. Matthew refers us to the pleasure of the shepherd who finds a lost sheep, saying that he rejoiced more over that one than the ninety nine who did not go astray (Matthew 18:13).

812 However, the most obvious manifestations of repentance and the sorrow of the heart are penance and tears. For this reason, when the prophet Samuel wanted to reconcile God to the rebellious people of Israel, he orders them to take water and spill it in the presence of the Lord in order to symbolize the tears they would have wanted to shed more abundantly; and that they fast that day, wound their breasts and confess their sins with moans (I Samuel 7:6). They would be symbolizing the three acts of penance: contrition for the water they spilled; confession, by saying publicly: “We have sinned against the Lord” and appeasement with fasting. In the same way the people of Nineveh beseeched the Lord for mercy by fasting, wearing

sackcloth, scattering ashes over their head and confessing in public with moans²¹¹. St. Peter and Mary Magdalene obtained forgiveness for their sins through tears and sobs more than words²¹². And the reason is that tears are the most expressive language of the heart.

813 Following these examples, then, we do penance, beloved children, and cry in the presence of the Lord over our own sins and those of others, which have provoked his righteous indignation and provoked the terrible war which is ruining most of the European nations, making us feel at the same time as the others the terrible consequences of such a terrible punishment. We offer to the Lord all our sufferings and our works in sacrifice, because, following the advice of Isaiah, we should not present ourselves before His Majesty to ask for any grace without offering some gift to temper his indignation and incline his divine will to be benevolent towards us. *Thy justice shall go before thy face ... Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall hear* (Isaiah 58:8-9). Like Moses, let us raise our hands to heaven²¹³, and let our eyes raised to the Lord shed abundant tears in asking for peace, a prized gift the Divine Redeemer brought us and the world has lost through its sins, but can recover through penance.

814 Let us also value the intercession of children, righteous and innocent souls who suffer with us the pain of sins they did not commit, able to say with Jeremiah: "Our parents sinned and now do not exist, and we are bearing the weight of their iniquities (*Our fathers have sinned, and are not: and we have borne their iniquities*: Lamentations 5:7). The signs and tears of these pure and blameless victims rise mixed with our prayers to the Almighty, continuously telling him: Let your anger, your justice and your strictness subside, Lord. Sweet Jesus of my life, mercy, Lord.

815 Do not doubt, beloved children, that our pleas would obtain a favorable and prompt response in the court of the divine mercy, always quick with forgiveness, and even in the punishment itself it does not stop practicing with the wrongdoer, and surely we shall achieve peace.

816 Nonetheless, we have to bear in mind that true penance likewise involves the rejection of sin, and we mainly have to avoid the ones which the Holy Virgin said most annoyed the Lord: blasphemy, profaning the holy day, and dishonesty.

REJECTION OF SIN

817 Sin, yes beloved children, sin is the cause of all ills, or better said, the only evil, and it is what we have to avoid in order to please and satisfy God.

²¹¹ Cf. Jonah 3:5-10.

²¹² Cf. Luke 22:62; 7:38.

²¹³ Cf. Exodus 17:11-12.

818 Everything we call ills in this world are that only to the extent they mortify our body or torture our spirit to a greater or lesser degree; but their effects are ordinarily fleeting; there is always something to alleviate the pain, and sometimes they are even the cause of greater goods, by suffering them resignedly or joyfully for seeing that we are doing the will of God in them; and therefore the name ills is not truly appropriate for them. The only true evil is sin; evil for God and the creatures both: of God, because only he can oppose it and in fact does face it with his holy will, the salvation of men; and the creature because it deprives him of the friendship and grace of the Lord, it makes him relinquish the spiritual goods he might have acquired, makes him a slave of Satan, and seizes him from the legacy of heaven and opens the abyss of hell beneath his feet. And even in the temporal world, how many calamities, afflictions and miseries strike man because of sin? If the Lord inundated the earth by means of the flood, which consumed all the living beings there were on earth, with the exception of Noah and his family, it was because all flesh had corrupted its ways²¹⁴, as the sacred text says. If the people of Israel endured the persecutions and maltreatment of their enemies in the desert for so many years before entering into the promised land, it was for no other reason than sin, that is, their unfaithfulness to God. If the Lord consumed the cities of Pentapolis²¹⁵ with fire raining down from heaven, sin was the fuel for those flames. And, finally, the wars, famines, epidemics and all sorts of calamities which God has inflicted on humanity throughout time always admitted sin as the cause.

819 Yes, beloved children, yes: nothing happens by chance in the world, but instead the Lord, whose justice cannot stop rewarding virtue, even in time, similarly punishes the vices and sins of the peoples, which, as peoples, can and must give full satisfaction to the divine justice only in this world.

820 Therefore, one has to attribute the ills that we lament today to the same cause. The nations disregard God in everything. They do not want to recognize his power or abide by His laws, and even the ones which pride themselves on being Catholic look indifferently or push the fulfillment of the duties the religion imposes on them into the background. If this is the behavior of nations towards God, how surprising is it to see so much disorder, lack of religious feeling, indifference and unbridled passions in individuals? But if our society suffers from all these vices and passions, blasphemy, profaning of the holy day and dishonesty are undoubtedly the ones we could call its dominant passions.

821 In fact, beloved children, it is horrible to hear the rude, scandalous language against God employed today not only by skeptical, depraved men, but even the women who are always renowned for their devotion. What is even more appalling is that the children themselves learn from their parents to blaspheme the Lord instead of loving and blessing him. The blasphemies one hears anywhere are so horrible that only the devil himself could invent them, sometimes hurling them as a provocation to the religious feelings of others, or to display a lack of religious

²¹⁴ Cf. Genesis 6:12.

²¹⁵ Cf. Genesis 14:8; 19:24-25.

feeling and declare themselves to be, as they often say, strong spirits when in reality they are so weak that the wind the devil wants to blow at them doubles them over like reeds; and in many cases they insult God only to charm or ingratiate themselves with others. Oh, the inexplicable madness of men! If they preserve any trace of faith, how can they lend themselves to doing the bidding and service of the devil, which is to blaspheme God eternally? And how great the kindness of the Lord, who patiently suffers the slanders and insults of man without flinging him into the abyss of hell!

822 But if he is greatly offended by their blaspheming of Him, his anger is equally provoked by usurping his rights and denying him the obedience due him by profaning the holy day.

Beloved children, this abuse is already so generalized today that even people who attempt to establish a place as members of a religious order view it with indifference or do not give this precept the significance it has. Some use the pretext that they cannot stop working on Sunday without neglecting the needs of their family, and they are so busy they do not even have time to attend the holy mass. But you will see them later in the afternoon in the theaters, casinos and public entertainments because they say relaxation and recreation are necessary for man; so that rest does not have to be in the way, time and form that God establishes, but rather more in line with their likes and passions. Others want to justify their non-fulfillment of the divine precept by making clear that they work to escape from idleness, the mother of all the vices: without taking into account there are many works of the divine worship and mercy towards their fellow man in which we can and should employ ourselves in the holy days to sanctify ourselves. But most people profane the day of the Lord with disdain, or at least with indifference to the divine precept. The abuse they commit by doing this is such that in our nations it became necessary for the civil authorities to order rest on Sunday and impose fines on the ones who did not keep it. This should embarrass us, beloved children, because what a decline it represents for us that it was necessary for the human authority to impose penalties on us to force us to respect and obey the divine authority?

823 From this disdain for the authority of God and his divine precepts, only the corruption of customs that corrode and destroy society could follow; because without consideration or fear of God, who can put limits on the lusts of man?

824 If all flesh had corrupted its ways in Noah's time²¹⁶, as the sacred text expresses it, we could say the same of the present. All that surrounds us, everything we see and hear leads to evil. The theatres no longer are the school of customs they were before but more an incentive to wrongdoing. As if that were not enough, the cinemas have come to practically and visibly teach the unsuspecting young people the style and form for perpetrating all sorts of crimes and wrongdoing and greatly excite their passions. There is also nothing innocent about the dances and public entertainments any more, but rather more pitfalls for young people. The

²¹⁶ Cf. Genesis 6:12.

indecent styles which honorable Christian woman should be embarrassed to use yet disgracefully dare to wear even to the temple of the Lord, are also a provocation to lasciviousness. And finally, there are traps in everything everywhere in which modesty and honesty succumb.

825 Rightly then, beloved children, the Holy Virgin, appearing in tears to the little shepherds in La Saleta, told them that those three sins were the one that more irritated the Holy Son. And if we experiencing how much the arm of the Lord weighs over us, there is no other cause for the horrible upheaval that afflicts all of humanity today.

826 Let us therefore redouble our pleas to the Lord, so that he may take pity on us and not treat us as our guilt deserves, but rather in accordance with his great mercy. And to that end, let us use the mediation of she who is the mother and shelter for sinners, by offering to the Holy Virgin our tears, penance and intentions to reject sin, so that She may present them before her divine Son together with her merits and tears, to obtain the forgiveness for us from the Lord and his blessings that will make us happy in time and for all eternity. This is what your Prelate desires, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe, on the holy day of the apostle St. Andrew, on 30 November of the year of our Lord 1917.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

22

Divine Will and Sanctification

(B. Seg 38 [1918], pp. 165-180)

“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”
(Matthew 6:10).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: greetings, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

827 See here, beloved children, the briefest and yet at the same time most sublime, effective and pleasing prayer to the Lord our God, as taught by Jesus Christ himself to his apostles.

828 In it, we perform an act of worship to the Lord, acknowledging his supreme dominion over all creatures, who pay homage and fealty to Him in heaven, on earth and even in the deepest abysses; through it, we abide by his sovereign rule even when it costs man most dearly: our understanding, judgment and our own will; it is sometimes joined to the most sublime sacrifice of our suffering, sorrows, adversities, contradictions and even life itself. It is, in short, the most genuine expression of our love to God, as love is the bond that so strongly joins the wishes of the lovers together.

829 Following the will of God is the greatest act that man can do, and all the virtues are practiced in it. Thus Abraham, willing to sacrifice his son Isaac because it was the will of the Lord, gave us an admirable example of obedience and his faith and hope in that, in spite of losing his only child, never doubted the Lord would fulfill His promise to make him the father of numerous offspring²¹⁷. Stripped of his considerable goods, his children dead and his body covered in leprosy, Job also shows us his amazing patience and resignation when, putting his will in accordance with the divine, he said: "The Lord giveth to me and the Lord taketh away; as it pleased the Lord, so it was done. Blessed be his holy name!" (Job 1:21). The Seraphic Father St. Francis, united as he was in everything and devoted to the will of God, was not only resigned but happy in the midst of his illnesses and pains. When one of his children said he should ask God to treat him less strictly, he was shocked at his words, severely reprimanded him and prostrate on the ground, asked the Lord to increase his suffering even more²¹⁸. Holy Mary, the Great Queen of Heaven who has no will other than that of God, by sacrificing her Son for the sins of the world, as His justice demanded, also showed her fervent charity towards us, the poor sinners for whose rescue she offered her Only Son.

830 Yes, beloved children, the union of our will with the divine one raises us to the most sublime degree of perfection in the practice of all virtues; because the Lord, who wants us to be saints as He is – *For I am the Lord, that I might be your God* (Leviticus 11:45) –, requires us to practice them.

831 And what work can we execute that can be so perfect and pleasing to God as the Lord himself wants and demands of us? Is not the fulfillment of his holy will what we come asking for our entire life? Make it your will, here on earth as in heaven, we say every day ever since our mothers taught us the Sunday prayer. But not only this, justice also requires that we be devoted to the divine will in everything and for everything, because if the architect has all-encompassing right over his work, how will we be able to remove ourselves from fulfilling the divine approval, when everything we are, have and hope for we owe to the liberal hand of God?

832 Therefore, all the wisdom of man consists in knowing and carrying out the will of God, as the apostle St. Paul points out by saying: *That you may prove what is the good, and the acceptable, and the perfect will of God* (Romans 12:2).

833 We do not need much study and investigation to know the will of God. The Angelic Doctor St. Thomas says there are three things that God wants of us: first, that we are all saved: second, that we keep his precepts, and third, to see us restored to the state of perfection and holiness in which He created us.

²¹⁷ Cf. Genesis 22:1-18.

²¹⁸ LM 14:2, in works cited, pp. 468-469.

GOD WANTS OUR SALVATION

834 Yes, beloved children, in all eternity, when God meditated on (to our way of understanding) and decreed the creation of the world, he subordinated everything to the health and salvation of his chosen ones: *For all things are for your sakes* (II Corinthians 4:15). After the glory of God, the only aim of everything that exists in this charming palace of the world is to facilitate the transcendental event of the salvation of man, and He wants us to give full importance to this task and attend only to this task.

835 For that he also gave us a rational soul, created in his image and likeness, with three powers that make it capable of knowing and loving it, and this soul is joined to a body so admirably designed that it is a summary of the wonders of creation, so that its limbs and senses would help serve and glorify God and secure its salvation.

836 And if we soar up to grace from the natural order how many proofs we will see of the esteem God has for our soul and how much He desires its salvation!

837 But as man listened to the false words of the enemy and violated the precept of the Lord, he was stripped of the vestments of the original grace, that made it so lovely and please the divine eyes, and banished from paradise, the planned heaven of man, where he had all his delights and from which the Lord descended to speak with his creation²¹⁹. Not in the same way as his tempter Lucifer who, after rebelling against God, was stripped of the supernatural gifts of grace and hurled from heaven into the deepest abysses of hell.

838 Thrown out of heaven, stripped of the legacy of his father and reduced to the condition of slave to Satan, man, who was the son of God, was in such a sad state; lacking enough strength to raise himself up like the prodigal son and return to his Father, and with divine justice demanding his eternal condemnation, who or what means could there be that would restore him to his original state and restore the lost right to the glory? Only the infinite wisdom could find it, beloved children, by joining together in hypostatic union the human nature to divinity in the person of the Word; through that and the merits of the Redeemer, man could now appropriately pay for his sins and the divine justice receive the due compensation. Could the Lord perhaps give us a greater proof of how much He desires our salvation that giving us his own Son for our rescue? *For God sent not his Son into the world, to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by him* (John 3:17).

839 But apart from that, the cost of the redemption would still have been ineffective for many people, by not having a model before the eyes of the soul who they could follow in the middle of the disorderly movement of the passions, which lead to evil, and a light that would illuminate the dense darkness of error we find ourselves enveloped in. For that reason, this divine Liberator wanted to live among

²¹⁹ Cf. Genesis 3:8-9.

us for thirty three years and establish himself as our guide to teach us, through his doctrine and example, the practice of the necessary virtues to save us.

840 How admirable is the providence of God, beloved children! Man got lost for wanting to be similar to God, as the Tempter told him: *You shall be as Gods* (Genesis 3:5), and today, to save himself, he has to necessarily imitate the Son of God, who is his way, truth and life: *I am the way, and the truth and the life* (John 14:6). A way that directed and straightened his steps, diverted by the trail to damnation, his pride and ambition scolded by His humble birth and poor and hidden life, teaching the need to escape from the untruthful pleasures of his world through his mortification, then with his passion and offensive death on the cross, encouraging himself to endure what the divine Justice demands of him in the world, to ensure our salvation. A truth that, like the unfailing light that illuminated the darkness in which sin had enveloped man, made him clearly know the deceptions and false promises of the enemies of the world, devil and flesh; and with that he could let go of them and unite intimately with his God. And life, since the man dead through sin is resurrected to the life of grace, giving up his own for him, and with that he recovered the title of son of God and his right to the glory.

841 But the Lord did even more. In his desire to save us, he founded his Church, the safe ark that should lead man to the door of his eternal salvation. In the Church, he left seven never-ending sources of grace, the Sacraments, in which the soul could resolve all its needs. Because the Baptism regenerates, cleansing you of the original sin; Confirmation confirms and strengthens you to valiantly fight the battles the enemies of your soul offer; through Penance you recover from your falls, obtaining the mercy of God and forgiveness for your sins; in Communion, you are given the food which invigorates and strengthens you to preserve the life of grace, food that is none other than his body and blood; Extreme Unction helps you in the illness of your body, giving you health if advisable and the strength necessary to overcome the suggestions of your enemies in your last battle; the Sacrament of Order provides man with the ministers who communicate with and dispense the grace of the Lord, being their guides on the way of eternity; and , through the sacrament of matrimony the children of God, the heirs of his glory, multiply.

842 What more can the Lord do to show us the desire he has for our salvation? *What is there that I ought to do more to my vineyard, that I have not done to it?* (Isaiah 5:4).

GOD WANT US TO KEEP HIS PRECEPTS

843 But in order to achieve our salvation, it is necessary to observe the divine precepts, beloved children. The Lord himself said this to someone who asked him what he could do to save himself: *But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the*

commandments (Matthew 19:17), that is what, according to St. Thomas, the Lord wants and commands from us²²⁰.

844 And why should the Supreme Lawgiver not demand that of us, as the one who established laws for all the animate and inanimate beings of creation, and whose fulfillment results in the harmonious order of nature, created that way for man (after the primary purpose that was his glory) when he came into existence?

845 For this reason, the holy law was engraved so deeply in the heart and soul of man that it is called natural law with good reason; because we carry it in ourselves and, as St. Ambrose says, not written, but rather bred in our very nature²²¹. In the same way that the baby cannot use reason, the Gentile and pagan naturally know how to act rationally and when they abuse their liberty and work against this law, their conscience immediately deduces it. This is why St. Paul says: "The Gentiles were led by the same nature to carry out what the law commands, so on judgment day they shall be judged by the natural law" (Romans 2:14 and 16).

846 It should have been enough for man that God announced his holy will in this way, to carry it out faithfully and exactly as the other beings of creation did, as the Lord also imposed his precepts on them. But the one who violated the prohibition of the Lord in Paradise by condescending to his appetites also did not know how to abide by the impulses and dictates of his conscience concerning the fulfillment of the natural law, which was virtually unknown to him, blinded by his passions as he was.

847 To take him out of this state, then, and so he could not allege ignorance of the will of his Creator, God solemnly proclaimed his law on Mount Sinai, giving it to Moses written in his hand on two stone tablets²²², as if to reproach the people with the hardness of his heart.

848 And when the Lord decided to send his only Son to the world to redeem man²²³, this Divine Liberator not only did not abolish the precepts of the Ten Commandments, which He himself says he came to fulfill: *I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill* (Matthew 5:17), but instead perfected those referring to charity and explained to man the works of mercy they should carry out. This is why they rightly named the law of grace the law of love.

849 Charity should, beloved children, unite us so intimately to our divine Redeemer that we would sacrifice ourselves in his service, fulfilling his holy law, in fair reciprocation for His sacrifice and death on our behalf.

850 This service that does not enslave us, as the worldly people want to believe but rather, by freeing us from the slavery of sin, as the Apostle says, it puts us at the service of justice, returning to us the freedom of children of God (Romans 8:21).

²²⁰ Cf. 833 above.

²²¹ Cf. ST. AMBROSE: *Letter 73*, 3: PL 16:1305.

²²² Cf. Exodus 24:12.

²²³ Cf. Galatians 4:4.

851 And what an admirable order would reign in the world if we all followed exactly the law of God! His love would be the only object of our longing, and to serve Him faithfully our entire aspiration; people would look to the representatives of God as authorities and therefore show them respect and submissiveness; we would all love each other as brothers and sisters, and enmity, hatred and quarrels would disappear; we would watch over the moral and material interests of other people as if they were our own, and fulfill in this way what we continuously ask for, that the Kingdom of God be in us, since his holy will would be fulfilled on earth, like the blessed carry it out in heaven.

852 But, what a disgrace! Men distance themselves from the will of God, scorning His holy law, and thereby creating the confusion and disorder that reigns in the world: the satanic hatred and war they wage against Jesus Christ in his Church; whose authority is mocked and offended. Men race after the passions to their damnation and by their ambition, pride and arrogance, turn the world into a battlefield, where nothing is heard other than laments and moans, cries for revenge and wars of destruction.

853 In vain the leaders who govern the nations want to channel society by multiplying their laws while, by doing without God and not instilling in the people the need for the fulfillment of the holy law, the world will tumble from precipice to precipice until its total ruin.

854 Yes, beloved brothers, if we want to ensure our salvation and contribute to saving society, engrave in our hearts the holy law of God and fulfill exactly its precepts, which is what He wants of us.

855 But this is not only what the Lord demands of us. He also wishes to see us restored to the state of perfection and saintliness in which we were created: *For this is the will of God, your sanctification*²²⁴.

GOD WANTS OUR SANCTIFICATION

856 Although by keeping the divine precepts we assure our salvation, beloved children, according to what the divine Redeemer himself says: *But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments* (Matthew 19:17), to completely fulfill the divine will, we still must aspire to the perfection and saintliness the Lord demands of us, saying: "Be perfect, like your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). "Be saints, like I am a saint" (I Peter 1:16). In the first, regarding the fulfillment of the holy law of God, he orders us with a formal precept; for the second, concerning perfection, he advises and urges us to achieve it. But the good children must be attentive to carry out the will of their parents not only when they are ordered by rules and threats but in everything they know is pleasing to them.

²²⁴ Cf. I Thessalonians 4:3.

857 And to achieve this end that He set out for us, he gave us an infinite number of means that came with his gifts and graces. God sent his Only Son, who with his admirable doctrine, preaching and example, showed us the way of perfection previously unknown to men. Yes, because he warned us that, if we wanted to follow him, we had to start by denying ourselves²²⁵; loving our enemies and doing good to those who hate and slander us²²⁶: to remain alert and pray in order not to fall into temptation²²⁷; and not want to treasure worldly goods, which are transitory and perishable, but should establish our treasure in Heaven²²⁸, and so much other advice of such sublime perfection that they only could emanate from a God and raise us to a very high level of saintliness.

858 He also granted us his Holy Spirit, which perfects in us the work of the divine Word, because in the same way the sun gives life and makes the seed planted in the earth sprout, the Holy Spirit makes what the Son of God has started in us flourish and reach perfection.

859 This divine Spirit, with its present or predisposing grace, enlightens our understanding and strengthens our will. This happened with the Apostles, who turned from rude and ignorant, timid and cowardly men into great wise men who attracted the world to the Christian faith with their preaching. They were so brave and intrepid they did not fear the tyrants, the torments or even death itself, sealing with their blood the faith they preached. The same was also seen later in an infinite number of martyrs.

860 Through the sanctifying grace acquired from reciprocating the present graces, the Holy Spirit takes possession of the soul and makes it beautiful and pleasurable to the divine eyes. If David, St. Paul and the prodigal son became so pleasurable to God and admirable to men, it was because they had listened to the internal impulse of the divine spirit, which asked for their conversion.

861 Finally, this sanctifying Spirit, purifies us of our sins; it connects us to the life of grace, uniting us with God and making us his holy temple: it instills in us the habit of the virtues and, in a word, it enriches us with its divine gift so that we can reach the perfection and saintliness that the Lord demands of us.

862 But there is more, beloved children, as the Lord is attending to our weakness and lack of enthusiasm, in order to encourage and stimulate us on the way to perfection, by putting in front of our eyes the example of the Saints who, being of our own human nature and condition and perhaps many of them had to conquer greater difficulties than we do to practice virtue, were able to reach through grace the sublime state of saintliness God had destined them for.

863 The Lord also wants us to be saints: *For this is the will of God, your sanctification* (I Thessalonians 4:3). To that end he gave us our being, creating us in his image and likeness; he redeemed us at the cost of the blood of his divine

²²⁵ Cf. Matthew 16:24.

²²⁶ Cf. Luke 6:27-28.

²²⁷ Cf. Matthew 26:41.

²²⁸ Cf. Matthew 6:19-20.

Son; gave us his holy law; sent his divine Spirit, and in Him and through Him he communicated to us all the help and graces we needed so that we would be able to save ourselves as saints, which is his holy will upon us.

864 And how do we respond in kind to the design of God? Ah, beloved children, how sad it is to confess it! But all of you could appreciate the indifference of men for the extraordinary enterprise of salvation, in contrast with their excessive concern for worldly things. They do not want to see God in absolutely anything and even deny his existence; His holy law is violated and all divine and human authority representing it are rejected, and from that comes the social upheaval and breakdown that we lament.

865 "All the land has been completely laid to waste", said Jeremiah, "because there is no one who meditates on it in his heart" (Jeremiah 12:11); and we could also say the same in these disastrous times. In fact, who is there, in light of the horrible wars devastating the world, the hunger and plagues decimating humanity and the many disasters and misfortunes afflicting us, who recognizes in all this the avenging arm of divine Justice and raise his eyes and hand to Heaven begging forgiveness and mercy?

866 It cannot help but seem like we are back in the times of Noah, when men deaf to the voices of the holy Patriarch and indifferent to the warnings of the Lord were amusing and enjoying themselves until the tremendous punishment of the Great Flood came to take them out of their foolish and insensitive senselessness and purified the earth of the abominations of the sinners²²⁹.

867 What solution, then, is there to sever the evils that afflict us and evade those which threaten us? Nothing else, beloved children, than that we return to seeing God. "If my people", says the Lord through David, "would have listened to me, if Israel had walked in ways, certainly I would have humiliated their enemies and let my hand fall upon those who troubled them" (Psalm 80:14-15). Yes, beloved children, only God is our hope in the midst of tribulation.

868 But be aware that God is only pleased by having his holy will carried out, and in our case, that is nothing other than our salvation; and to this end we must follow his holy law and try to achieve the level of perfection that He wants for us, which will increase its coincidental glory and make greater the glory we enjoy in his sight for all of eternity. This is what your father and servant in Christ desires, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on 30 November, the holy day of the apostle St. Andrew, of the year of our Lord 1918.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

²²⁹ Cf. Genesis 6:9 ss.

23

Justice and Peace

(B. Seg 39 [1919], pp. 49-61)

"Justice and peace have kissed" (Psalm 84:11).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: greetings, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

869 There is a good, beloved children, desirable above all worldly things and which all mankind longs for. In it the spirit finds serenity, tranquility and joy; the sciences, industry and the arts progress with it; in short, it is the root and cause of innumerable goods and without it, everything is desolation, disorder and misery, making even life itself oppressive to man. This good, beloved children, is peace.

870 But, if men have always cried out for peace throughout time and recognized its necessity, never more so than in the present; because never before were the consequences of losing peace greater and more disastrous. The nations bled of their men and money by a fratricidal war; the ruined towns and starving masses all cry out in unison: Peace! Peace! And the experts and leaders of governments of all nations meet, hold conferences and establish treaties to ensure this peace in the world: and if they manage to extinguish the din of war, they nevertheless spread unease and tension among the peoples, as well as insubordination and rebellion. Opposing camps and factions multiply, the lower classes are in conflict with the upper class, the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, and strikes, mutinies and rebellion are repeated after day, bringing with them misery and carnage.

871 What, then, causes this universal desire for peace to be frustrated, and all the accords and measures taken to ensure it rendered ineffective?

The answer, beloved children, is that men, governing themselves with human wisdom and trusting in their science, disregard the doctrine of the Gospel when they try to find a cure for social ills and disorders; seeking a worldly peace to calm spirits and relieve tensions without bearing in mind that the world cannot give peace as the Church says: *Mundus no potest dare pace*²³⁰.

THE WORLD CANNOT GIVE PEACE

872 This concerns the world that did not know Jesus Christ when he came to save it, closing its eyes in order not to see his miracles and its ears to not listen to his doctrine, which the promised Messiah clearly states: *He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not* (John 1:10). This is the world the apostle St. John commands us not to love, nor the things in it, under penalty of lacking the love of God: *Love not the world, nor the things which are in*

²³⁰ Cf. *Oración de la misa pro pace*, en *Missale Romanum* of Pius V, adapted by Pius X.

the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15). (???) The reason the holy Apostle gives us is: Because all that is in the world is lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life; which do not come from the heavenly Father but from the world (I John 2:16). For that reason, Jesus Christ, our adorable Redeemer, when he prayed to the Father for his people who are in the world, expressly says that he is not praying for the world itself: *I pray not for the world* (John 17:9).

873 This world, not cannot give us the peace our heart longs for; because its doctrine breed in the powerful ambition, despotism, and arrogance, violating the rights of their subordinates while it instills in the latter hatred, insubordination and rebellion, thereby establishing the perpetual struggle between rich and poor, artisan and manufacturer, and tenant farms and owner. This is the struggle which neither the laws nor sanctions of governments have managed to end, but instead assumes greater proportions every day and threatens to destroy society.

874 In addition, the three lusts that St. John speaks of prevail in the world, with the resulting unrestrained passions, insatiable thirst for material goods and pride, the head and origin of all sins. And in such a situation, tell me, how can the spirit find tranquility and serenity? Not what peace the worldly man will be able to enjoy, when peace is only found and goes together with justice, and virtue, which brings joy, serenity, and tranquility to the spirit? *Justice and peace have kissed* (Psalm 84:11). Yes, beloved children, the testimony of good conscience; carrying out the will of God, even in the midst of tribulations, hardships and poverty; the escape from vices; disregard for worldly things, and, in short, the practice of virtue is the only way to achieve true peace because it is the...

REWARD OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

875 There are two starting points of action in man; one is natural, which is reason, and the other supernatural, which is grace.

This is why in his activities and acts we have to distinguish between those coming from reason, which we can call rational rewards, from the others that acknowledge in principle a much higher virtue, grace, and therefore are called rewards of the Holy Spirit.

876 The first type of action, although naturally good as acts of purely human virtues, are nevertheless useless for heaven and only give an imperfect pleasure to man. The second join this kindness to another, supernatural one which perform acts deserving of credit in the eternal life; perfecting the grace of the work in nature and filling the soul with great peace and satisfaction.

877 The reward, then, of this grace is the horror with which man shies away and distances himself from the deceptive flattery of the lust of the flesh, which offers pleasures but embitters his existence by taking peace and rest away from him. Another reward is the supernatural light, which detects the falseness of material

goods which try to fascinate the lust of our eyes by making us see that these goods are thorns which puncture the heart without being able to satisfy it, and from that we learn to reject it. A similar reward of this grace is the close conviction that man acquires of his own insignificance and miseries, which humbles and confuses him, conquering in that way pride, the cause of his ruin and damnation.

878 And finally the reward of grace is the spirit of charity and brotherly union which makes man live among his fellow men hiding their faults, forgiving their insults and loving them as much as himself.

879 The Holy Spirit works all this in us through grace, beloved children, bringing our soul the peace and tranquility the world cannot provide and was announced by the angels at the birth of Jesus Christ Our Lord, the Prince of Peace, who came to bring it to the world and He is its model and example.

JESUS CHRIST IS OUR PEACE

880 Stable and true peace is only achieved, beloved children, when one has peace with God, yourself and your fellow man, and cannot be achieved if the three do not go together. This is the peace that Jesus Christ brought us and taught us with his doctrine and example.

881 Man cannot achieve peace with God without giving the Lord appropriate payment for his son; and with his sin, it was impossible even when all the tears, mortifications and penance of everyone were joined together; for no matter how great its merit, it would always be limited and finite and therefore inadequate for settling an infinite debt due to the infinite dignity of the Supreme Being as the offended party; and the seriousness of the offense must always be measured by the status of the offended party. Only Jesus Christ, then, who did not stop being God but was also a true man could, wanted to and in fact reconciled us with the Eternal Father, for whom he gave his life on a cross and on which, after having erased, the decree of our wickedness was nailed: *Blotting out the handwriting of the decree that was against us, which was contrary to us. And he hath taken the same out of the way, fastening it to the cross* (Colossians 2:14). Yes, through Him the Eternal Father, beloved children, gave us the embrace and kiss of peace, like the father in the Gospel to his prodigal son²³¹.

882 But not only does Jesus Christ put us at peace with God, He also taught us how to secure the inner peace of the soul, which is only achieved, beloved children, by the union of our understanding and will to those of God, the harmonious center of creation as the beginning and end of all things.

883 If you observe in the Universe such admirable order and arrangement of all beings, which we could call universal peace, in spite of the dependence of some beings to others, the reason is nothing other than their all-encompassing

²³¹ Cf. Luke 15:20.

submission to the laws of the Supreme Lawgiver, who has arranged all things in equilibrium. And the moment that balance is missing, conflict will arise and the clashes between these beings and their destruction as a result.

884 Therefore the spirit of man will enjoy peace and tranquility as long as his powers and senses are fulfilling the will of God and his precepts; but, if the contrary is the case, it will escape from him because there is no peace for the unfaithful: *There is no peace for the wicked* (Isaiah 48:22).

885 However happy, powerful and calm the unfaithful may appear to the eyes of the world, their peace shall never be more than a worldly and passing peace, not one from the inner tranquility of the soul, with itself and God. This peace, having begun in this life, receives its perfection in the next life, the eternal.

Jesus Christ our Redeemer gave us the example of this peace, as the model He is for the predestined ones.

886 His will was nothing other than that of his eternal Father, as He himself says: *Because I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me* (John 6:38), and in fulfilling it he found his satisfaction, no matter how arduous and painful the sacrifices it demanded of him were.

887 If by the will of his Eternal Father he had to be born in a stable in the most extreme poverty; if eight days after being born, he had to already spill his blood in the circumcision; if he was persecuted by a tyrant king who tried to take his life; if he had to live hidden and unknown to the eyes of men for thirty years, subject to obedience to his father and the greatest hardships to the point of having to earn his sustenance with the work of his hands; he endured all this with the utmost peace and joy, knowing that it was the will of his Heavenly Father.

888 Oh, if we were able to go into the tabernacle of the Godly Heart! How we could contemplate there the divine harmonies of humanity and divinity in his desires and affections, in accordance with the supreme will of God!

889 If after admiring the operations of the Eternal Word in its hidden life, we focus on those of his public life, we will be able to even better appreciate the peace and joy that overflow from his divine Heart after fulfilling the will of his Eternal Father.

Look at him climb the mountains and cross the passes, like a loving shepherd in search of the wayward sheep. Observe him, tired from the road, when he was sitting next to the edge of a well where a poor Samaritan sinner He wanted to convert has to go to get water²³². Listen to the words he says to his disciples when he invited them to eat: "I have a delicacy to eat that you do not know...My delicacy is to do the will of He who sent me here" (John 4:32-34). See him after pardoning the adulteress and Mary Magdalene²³³, saving the possessed from the power of the devil; giving sight to blind, hearing to the deaf, movement to the paralyzed and resurrecting the dead. Hear how He expresses himself, close to his passion, about the peace and pleasure his soul experienced for the glory it had given to his Father,

²³² Cf. John 4:6.

²³³ Cf. John 8:11; Luke 7:48 respectively.

saying: *I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do* (John 17:4).

890 But the time when Jesus Christ mainly reveals the identification of his will with that of his Eternal Father to us is in the final period of his life, when he went to consummate the work of our redemption.

891 Hear how He expresses to us, through St. Luke, his desire to suffer and die for man: He says, with the baptism of blood, I have to be baptized; and how he longed for the moment when this is fulfilled. *And I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized: and how am I straitened until it be accomplished?* (Luke 12:50). With the greatest calmness of spirit he hears the slanders, insults and defamation they say against him before the courts; and to the man who had the nerve to strike him on the cheek, he answers with the greatest gentleness: "If I spoke badly, show me in what; and if I spoke well, why do you hurt me?" (John 18:23). With the same meekness he also endures being slapped, spat upon, flogged, crowned with thorns as the king to be mocked, and finally nailed to the wood of the cross, on which he had to give his life for our rescue.

892 In conclusion, beloved children, focus on this divine model and you will not find any disturbance in his heart or agitation in his words, nor any adverse effect on his affection, but you shall always see him enjoying an unalterable peace as he is the Prince of Peace: *Princeps pacis*.

893 However, if Jesus Christ brought us peace, reconciling us with his Eternal Father, and teaches us to secure the inner soul, he instructs us no less, by word and deed, to always maintain peace with our fellow man.

894 The main obstacles that oppose our love for this peace within ourselves often are the slights, affronts, and insults we have received from them. To conquer this loathing and rid ourselves of all pretexts that may oppose peace, the divine Master orders us in the Sunday prayer, after asking the Eternal Father to forgive us our sins, that we demonstrate it in order to obligate our good intentions by also forgiving the sins of our fellow men: *And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors* (Matthew 6:12). He also confirms this doctrine with his example, kneeling at the feet of Judas to wash them, in spite of knowing his intentions and the deals he made to betray him to his enemies. Focus also on the docility with which this divine Lamb received the kiss the traitor gives him as the signal for them to seize him; and in the loving response he gives to the greeting of Judas in order to move his heart to repentance: "Friend," he says, "what have you come for?" (Matthew 26:50). "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with the kiss of peace?" (Luke 22:48). Later you will see him lovingly cure the ear of Malchus, one of those who was going to seize him²³⁴. And if you listen carefully to the words that come from the divine lips during his passion, you will see how they reveal to us the inner peace of his soul; the pleasure he receives from carrying out the will of his Eternal Father and the infinite love with which he gave up his life for our rescue. But what is most revealed to us is the

²³⁴ Cf. Luke 22:51.

tenderness of his love towards in the way that he pardons our wickedness before the Eternal Father, saying: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do". *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do* (Luke 23:34).

895 Yes, beloved children, yes, peace came to us in Jesus Christ and for Jesus Christ; because it satisfied the debt that man had with God, giving him the glory that had been taken from him by our sin, and he taught us with his doctrine and by his example to preserve it in our soul and maintain it with our fellow men. This is why the angels sang at his birth: "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to man" (Luke 2:14).

896 This treasure is his gift to the degree that He himself declares when, appearing before his apostles after being resurrected, he told them: "I leave you peace; I give you my peace". *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you* (John 14:27). And truthfully, without Jesus or, that is, without his doctrine, true peace is not found.

897 Are you not seeing this clearly in these times, beloved children? How much have they spoken of, argued over or worked more for than peace in our days? A palace was even built for the conferences they periodically had to deal with it; and when the world believed they had ensured peace, the European war broke out and caused so many millions of victims; currently the representatives of the nations are arguing over the bases and treaties with which to avoid wars in the future and ensure world peace. But observe that they do not look beyond the material, without paying any attention at all to the doctrine of Jesus Christ and even excluding from their deliberations his representative on earth, the Roman Pontiff. And, what a coincidence! At the same time they are trying to secure peace the enemies of order and society are rising up everywhere, threatening to destroy and annihilate everything, like burning lava consuming everything that crosses its path. And since man is a composite of the material and spiritual, criminal laws and sanctions which he carries out from fear are not enough to govern him, but instead man has to mainly be governed through spiritual sanctions, that is, the doctrine of Jesus Christ, the only one, as we have seen, which can bring to the world true peace by teaching us the practice of the virtues: *Justice and peace have kissed* (Psalm 84:11).

898 This is what we continuously have to ask for from the Lord, beloved children, for ourselves and the entire world, because it is the secure guarantee of eternal peace, which your Prelate desires for itself and for everyone, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on the second Sunday of Lent, 16 March of the year of our Lord 1918.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

24

On Scandal

B Seg 39 [1919], pp. 225-238

“Woe to the world because of scandals”
(Matthew 18:7).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: greetings, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

899 Contemplating the state of devastation, misery and anarchy the ways of freedom, civilization and progress have brought society to, so many lives poured away, the countless deceptions, no one can doubt, beloved children, that the Lord has wanted to humble and confound the pride and arrogance of men, who believed themselves to be able to do without Him and in their madness even reached the point of denying his existence and his providence upon the world.

900 No, the calamities and catastrophes the peoples experience do not happen by chance, but rather the Supreme Maker who rules and governs everything with his almighty providence, correcting and punishing the sins of mankind with them and purifying the land stained with their abominations and unfaithfulness. He did this by means of the universal Flood, because all flesh had corrupted its way²³⁵, as expressed in the sacred text. With fire falling from heaven it also consumed the loathsome cities of Pentapolis and ended the wrongdoing and lives of their inhabitants²³⁶.

901 Pharaoh and the Egyptian people were similarly afflicted with great plagues because they oppressed the Israelites and did not give them their freedom, and ultimately the Lord drowned them in the Red Sea when they were pursuing the Israelites²³⁷. And if we look at all the events in the world with impartial eyes and in the light of faith, we can do no less than confess, beloved children, that the great catastrophes that have struck the nations, wars, famines, plagues, earthquakes, floods and other similar plagues have not been anything other than punishments by the Lord for the sins of the peoples.

902 To what other cause than this are we to attribute the horrible war which has devastated Europe and the social imbalance which threatens to submerge it in the most appalling anarchy?

903 Yes, men have distanced themselves from God, rejected and violated his holy law, and in their brazenness reached the point of insulting Him face to face, blaspheming his holy name, with even the children causing public outrage as they now imitate this sacrilegious language. These sins are crying out to Heaven for vengeance.

²³⁵ Cf. Genesis 6:12.

²³⁶ Cf. Genesis 14:8; 19:24-25.

²³⁷ Cf. Exodus 7:14 to 12:30; Exodus 14:27-28.

904 Add to this that now it is not only the men who provoke the justice of the Lord through their blasphemies, but also the women who throughout history have merited for their devoutness that the Church pray especially for them, calling them the devout feminine sex²³⁸. Today their distinctive reserve and modesty is lost and they are the stone of scandal over which so many stumble and the spiritual ruin of countless souls with their indecent fashions.

905 Does it not seem then, beloved children, that we can rightly cry out with the evangelist St. Matthew (Matthew 18:7): *Woe to the world because of scandals*, Woe to the world for the scandals! How heavily the hand of the Lord is falling on us and what a disastrous future awaits us if we do not truly return to God!

906 Because blasphemy among the men and the lack of modesty in woman are, in our judgment, the principal vices which our society suffers from, and attract the ills that the divine justice afflicts on us. We believed it necessary, beloved children, to raise our voice to condemn them and make you see their ugliness and terrible consequences in this pastoral sermon.

THE HIDEOUSNESS OF BLASPHEMY

907 All vices and sins offend and outrage God, beloved children, in the sense that they break his holy law; but no guilt, says St. John Chrysostom, exasperates him so much as hearing men blaspheme his holy name²³⁹. The other sins ordinarily reveal human weakness and misery and indirectly offend God; but blasphemy dishonors him directly by cursing his holy name. *Qui blasphemat, contra ipsam Deitatem agit*, says St. Athanasius²⁴⁰.

908 However, one sins just by saying the name of God in vain, because it is holy: *And holy is his name* (Luke 1:49). This is why the people of Israel did not dare say it, nor the royal Prophet believe that one could praise His name enough, and the Holy Angels never cease to bless and praise him in Heaven. How great will the insult be that the blasphemer commits when he curses, insults, or slanders the divine nature of God, attributing to Him what is not appropriate and trying to deny what is properly His.

909 If society detests the slanderer who denigrates the reputation of his fellow man, attributing to him alleged crimes, what condemnation will the one who attributes to God his own flaws that are incompatible with His adorable perfections deserve? And this makes those who are ungrateful for his benefits deny his kindness; those who, not agreeing with the proofs the Lord sent them, treat Him

²³⁸ Cf. RB Antifona al Magnificat del Común de la Virgen.

²³⁹ Cf. ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: *Adversus eos qui apud se habent virgine subintroductas*, 8: PG 47:506

²⁴⁰ Cf. ST. ATHANASIUS: *Questiones contra Antiochum ducem*, 72: PG 28:642. The phrase that St. Athanasius uses here says literally: "Ea impietas (blasphemy) totam plenitudinem divinitatis offendit".

unjustly; those who, muttering continuously about the designs of his providence, deny his wisdom, and finally, those who make fun of his power or refuse to submit to him as their God, the father and creator of their existence. But, above all, what are we to think of those who have the audacity to hurl disgusting words from their filthy mouths against the Lord, words embarrassing to even write down? All of them now have a very terrible mark of their eternal reprobation, since in life they imitate the devils and condemned people, who in their hatred of God use them to curse and blaspheme him.

910 A horrible sin, beloved children. St. Ephrem says: "Oh, blasphemy! Do you not fear that fire will come down from Heaven and devour you or the earth may open beneath your floors and swallow you up?"²⁴¹ "The devil trembles on hearing the name of Christ", says St. Gregory of Nazianzus, "and why do we not tremble at offending him?"²⁴² "Oh, diabolical tongue", adds St. Bernardino of Siena, "what is irritating you to the point of blaspheming your God, who created you and redeemed you with his precious blood?"²⁴³ It is truly horrible, beloved children, to see a tongue that so many times has been tinted with the blood of Jesus Christ in the Holy Communion, and therefore should be used in blessing and praising him, instead insult his holy name, imitating the behavior of the condemned.

911 But the saddest thing is that they alone are not lost, but their pernicious example drags a multitude of souls to hell with them; because so many imitate this diabolical language. Some, to show off their lack of belief or to receive credit as what they call strong spirits, spew out insults against God. Others, fearful of being branded and mocked by the blasphemers, imitate their sacrilegious language and the rest, not excepting the children, follow this pernicious custom as it is passed on. How rightly, then, can we cry out with the evangelist St. Matthew: "Woe to the world because of scandals!"²⁴⁴

912 But God does not let them wage war against Him with impunity. Infinitely righteous and powerful, he never allows such serious offenses to go unpunished; in time, through the guilty person making amends and as a lesson to the others; and if they do not, with terrible penalties in eternity. In truth, if the human justice punishes the crimes of *lèse majesté* more severely than other offenses, because they directly attack the person of the prince, what is it surprising that the justice of God is carried out more rigorously against the blasphemers who try to take his glory and honor away from him?

913 The holy text provides us, beloved children, with many examples of the worldly penalties that God used to punish this sin. He prohibited it for his people of Israel with a death sentence. This law was observed so rigorously in the time of

²⁴¹ ST. EPHREM: *Parenesis 46*, in *Opera Omnia*. Ed. Gerardo Vofsio, Vol. II (Rome 1593), p. 193 b.

²⁴² ST. GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS: *Carminum liber II, poema ad Nemesium*, verse 80: PG 37:1085.

²⁴³ Cf. ST. BERNARDINO OF SIENA: *Sermon 41* in *Opera Omnia*, v. I (Paris 1636), pp. 245-251. St. Bernardino uses the expression "diabolical tongue" in this sermon (cf., *ibid.*, p. 249, l.c.).

²⁴⁴ Matthew 18:7.

Moses that when one man got in an argument with another and blasphemed the name of God, the Lord ordered him to be stoned²⁴⁵. He announced to David through the prophet Nathan that, because of the blasphemies he had uttered to the people for his sins, his son would die and the disasters would never stop in his house while he lived. But even more frightening was the penalty inflicted on Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, for having blasphemed the God of Israel by saying he was not powerful enough to save His people from his hands, the Lord sent an exterminating angel who killed 180,000 soldiers of the Assyrian army²⁴⁶. Oh Lord, who shall know your power and how far does your indignation reach? *Who knoweth the power of thy anger* (Psalm 89:11).

914 St. John Chrysostom said to the people of Antioch: What do you think is the cause of the earthquakes and disasters afflicting you?²⁴⁷ It is nothing else but the blasphemies that are spreading so much in your towns". And beloved children, we could say the same thing today to you. If sometimes the drought and other times the floods, devastate your fields, depriving you of their fruits and reducing you to misery; if the storms, hurricanes, and earthquakes ruin you and knock down your homes, do not believe that all this happens by chance; all the elements are in the hands of God and with them he avenges your insults. If the European war has brought mourning, devastation and misery to all peoples, and still continues inflaming the spirits of some against others, making one fearful of the advent of total anarchy instead of the peace the nations believe they have achieved, the cause is nothing other than our sins, beloved children, and mainly the disgusting blasphemies that are continuously being uttered.

915 And these punishments still are merciful, because God arranges it so the guilty parties can make amends; but woe to the blasphemer who arrives at the threshold of death without making amends or doing penance! As the book of Tobit declares, all those who blaspheme the Lord shall be condemned: *They shall be condemned that shall blaspheme thee* (Tobit 13:16). And through the mouth of Job the Lord says: "If you imitate the language of the blasphemers, you shall condemn your mouth and not I". *Thou imitatest the tongue of blasphemers. Thy own mouth shall condemn thee, and not I* (John 15:5-6). And it is very just that, having accompanied the devils and the wicked in life, they also accompany them in their pleas for all eternity. Because since they did not want to bless and praise God, who had created them for this, they should not be admitted to sing his praises with the righteous in Heaven, but as their tongue and mouth were like tombs, from which nothing but vile stench and corruption comes out, they must be burned with eternal flames and their mouths watered with dragon bile and asp venom, as the book of Deuteronomy says: *Their wine is the gall of dragons* (Deuteronomy 32:33).

916 Fear then, beloved children, the righteous indignation of the Lord because, as the Apostle says to the Hebrews, it is horrendous to fall into the hand of

²⁴⁵ Cf. Leviticus 24:10-14.

²⁴⁶ Cf. II Kings 19:10-16 and 35.

²⁴⁷ Cf. ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: *2nd Homily to the People of Antioch*, 3: PG 49:37-38.

the living God: *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God* (Hebrews 10:31).

917 Never utter the holy name of the Lord if not to bless or praise it, and flee, as you would from someone with the plague, from all those whose bad example could induce you to commit the horrendous sin of blasphemy, the cause of so many evils in the world.

918 Unfortunately (we say this embarrassed and full of sorrow), the towns of our beloved Diocese are not the ones which offend and blaspheme the majesty of the Lord the least. While we wanted to be able to wash such filth away with our own blood, but since this was not given to us to do, help us, beloved children, to pray to the Lord to look upon us with devotion and not to vent his wrath against us, continuously saying: "Let your anger, your justice and your severity subside, Lord. Sweet Jesus of my life, mercy, Lord!"

919 But blasphemy is not the only pitfall men now fall into to cause scandal and ruin in present-day society; the devil has set another trap for the damnation of many souls that forces us to exclaim: "Woe to the world because of scandals!"²⁴⁸ And, beloved children, this is:

THE LACK OF MODESTY IN WOMEN

920 The devotion and religious feeling of women was always a reason for hope for us, in the midst of the corruption of this society; that those women who were fulfilling to the letter the words of the Apostle to the Philippians: "May your modesty be well-known among all men" (Philippians 4:5), could rein in the dissolution and bad habits of men and lead them to the path of their salvation. The Divine Wisdom, which arranges all things for the benefit of its creatures, has supplied the woman such powers of persuasion and so much influence over man that she could easily induce him to follow her opinion and advice. This quality, when properly employed by the woman, makes up the happiness and salvation of man; this is why the Apostle says that the unfaithful man will be sanctified by the faithful woman: *For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife* (1 Corinthians 7:14). As seen in St. Cecilia, who converted her husband Valerian and brother-in-law Tiburtius who died after having received the baptism as she did, martyrs for the faith²⁴⁹. And in St. Rita of Cascia, who through her friendliness and patience tamed and converted her husband, who was a true tyrant to her²⁵⁰.

921 But if, on the contrary, the woman does not how to use this grace of the Lord, or abuses it, it results in her ruin and damnation of the man; as it left us sad to remember our Mother Eve inducing Adam to shatter the precept of the Lord.

²⁴⁸ Cf. Matthew 18:7.

²⁴⁹ Cf. RB, 4th, 5th and 6th readings of 22 November; cf. 1081.

²⁵⁰ Cf. *Life of St. Rita*, Chapter 1, n. 2, in *Acta Sanctorum*, May, t. V, p. 226.

922 Yes, beloved children, the role of the woman in the divine plan of the creation is great and very important, because not only was she given to the man as a companion and the mother of her children, but also someone to advise him regarding his doubts, help in his works, comfort in his bitterness, provide relief in his illnesses, and attentive administrator of the fruits of his labors. And to this end God gave her such shrewdness and insight, so much industriousness and attentiveness, and a heart so kind and compassionate that it would facilitate the carrying out of her noble mission.

923 For that reason we see her associated with man in all his great works, and even in the Redemption the Lord wanted her represented by the Holy Virgin, the Co-Redeemer of the human lineage. So that man would never be able to reproach woman for his damnation by taking into account that if he ever lost his way because of one woman, he owes his salvation to another woman.

924 The Holy Scripture and History refers us to a multitude of heroic acts in which the woman, with her zeal for the glory of God, her patriotism and virtues, served as a guide and paragon of virtue for man and was the salvation of her people. Remember what they tell us of Judith; how she raised the spirits of the inhabitants of Bethulia so they would not falter during the siege of the city by Holofernes, recommending that they approach God in prayer and penance, and how she freed her people of the tyrannical oppression of that leader by killing him²⁵¹. In the same way, Esther saved the Jewish people from the extermination decreed against it by Ahasuerus, due to the deceits of Haman; she accused him before the king, who made Haman die on the same gallows he had prepared for the loyal Mordecai, and authorized the Jews to avenge themselves on their enemies on the same day their extermination was decreed²⁵². To whom do you believe, after God, the young Maccabees owed their bravery and spirit with which they faced the horrible tortures and death that Antioch gave them, except to the virile urgings of their mother who, like them, also gave her life later in the faithful fulfillment of the law?²⁵³ How many philosophers embraced the faith of Jesus Christ after hearing the wise reasoning of St. Catherine, who they thinking of seducing?²⁵⁴ To whom does St. Augustine owe his conversion but the urging and tears of his mother, St. Monica?²⁵⁵ But it would be an all but impossible task, beloved children, to make reference to all the memorable acts, great social accomplishments, reform of customs and admirable conversions worked through the mediation of women. And the influence and predominance she exerts over man through her persuasion and example is great.

925 Unfaithfulness understands this well and for that reason makes so many efforts to attract and pervert her, killing if it can her religious feelings or, at least, trying to get her to live a life that does not conform to them. In the former, the

²⁵¹ Cf. Judith 8:1 ss.

²⁵² Cf. Esther 6: 1 ss.

²⁵³ Cf. II Maccabees 7:20-30.

²⁵⁴ Cf. RB, 5th reading of 25 November.

²⁵⁵ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: Confessions, 5:9; PL 32:714.

woman becomes a poisonous hydra in the society, killing with her venom as many as she bites; and the latter, a bad wife, worse mother and an outrage to many.

926 Who is capable of calculating, beloved children, the disastrous results that strike society and the family from the perversion of the woman? Just as her virtues greatly influence the reform of habits of the man in the family and society, her example is equally and even more destructive, given our inclination towards evil, when it is perverted and causes great ruin.

927 Unfortunately, today we have to confess that even when the majority of women remain devout and fearful of God, there are now a great many who, having lost their reserve and modesty that honor them so much, are the first to provoke men with their words and altered manners. How many times have we witnessed this, embarrassed, passing by the places where young people have gathered!

928 And what shall we say of the extremely indecent fashions they wear without embarrassment in public! They are so opposed to their virtue and even health that there can be no doubt that they are an invention of Satan for the damnation of souls and in other times would have formed a very bad impression of women who dressed as they dress today, even as they pride themselves on being devout.

929 And the worst of this is that, for being fashion, they believe they are authorized to present themselves this way even in the temple of the Lord, and even come up to the Holy Altar. How the enemy of our souls upsets our common sense!

930 This frenzy of fashions and luxury that many unhappy people believe to be a means to marriage serves only wickedness and is counterproductive, since the number of marriages decreases every day because the young people reflect and realize that it is not possible to bear the costs that marriage involves.

931 Pay attention, then, beloved daughters, to the damages that the indecent fashions of our times, which the Supreme Pontiff and the Prelates have raised their voices against, cause you; and the countless sins that you will find on your account in the presence of God for having committed your scandals. Dress modestly and moderately, in accordance with your rank and position, always running from any unseemly fashion that could make you abominable in the eyes of God, an object of horror to his Holy Angels and the cause of damnation for men.

932 In this way you shall attract upon you the graces and blessing of the Lord, and through your example and virtues shall lead many souls to Heaven, as God wants and your Prelate asks, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on the first Sunday of Advent, 30 November of the year of our Lord 1919.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

25

The Church and Science

(B. Seg 40 [1920], pp. 41-51)

"Give you them to eat" (Matthew 14:16).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: greetings, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

933 Beloved children, what truly causes us amazement and astonishment, in a society so boastful of its advances in the sciences, the arts, industry and trade, inexhaustible sources of abundance and richness, is seeing, so much need and poverty in the material realm and just as much lack of knowledge in the science of sciences that is Religion.

934 Any science that is not founded in the truth, which is God, cannot be food for the intelligence any more than solutions can be found for the great needs of Humanity without charity, which is also God.

935 In vain the so-called philanthropists and friends of Humanity tire of attempting to attain its well-being by putting into practice their theories, and founding companies, strike funds and other resources. By not being based in true charity, all of them only serve to satisfy the avarice of some and promote anarchy in the others. Similarly, those who try in vain to illustrate the intelligence as a means for obtaining happiness are too conceited about their scientific conquests. Believing they can do without God in governing society, they add to that the crassest religious ignorance and as a result, end up in despair from lacking faith in the supernatural.

936 No, beloved children, the laws for good order and progress, moral as well as intellectual and material, are only found in the doctrine of Jesus Christ, the Supreme Maker of all things. Without it or against it, the miseries of Humanity have no solution, because without charity, only the most refined egotism rules and it is not possible to straighten and direct their steps to the paths of the true science and justice, whose source and origin is God.

937 Yes, only He, with his infinite Providence maintains and fills with blessings all the creatures: *Thou openest thy hand, and fillest with blessing every living creature* (Psalm 144:16. He can, wants and in fact does attend to all the needs of man, who he established as the king of creation and heir to his glory. And only He, the infinite wisdom and the true light which enlightens all men who come into this world: *That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world* (John 1:9), can with his doctrine illustrate the intelligence so that they govern the destinies of humanity in accordance with his divine teachings.

938 And He made his spouse, the holy Church, the depository of this providence and these teachings, so that, urging and practicing charity they would help meet the needs of their children: *Give you them to eat* (Matthew 14:16), and informing man of the true science, which begins with the fear of God: *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom* (Psalm 110:10), reconciling the interests of all,

rich and poor, and establishing the social equilibrium in which the happiness of the peoples consist: *Teach ye all nations*" (Matthew 28:19).

939 And all the peoples of the world can bear witness that the Church has always and exactly fulfilled this double responsibility given by its sovereign Master, of being the material providence of men and also nourish their intelligence with the bread of divine teachings, since no nations has been excluded from her maternal concern.

MATERNAL PROVIDENCE OF THE CHURCH

940 For four thousand years, humanity groaned inconsolably, like any sheep without its pastor, separated and roaming far from the true way and dying from starvation in the arid solitude of its sin, without finding anyone who would look on it with compassion nor a heart that would love it, nor any providence that might satiate the devastating hunger it felt for virtue, justice and the truth. Humanity was in this sad state when there appeared He who is the way, the truth and life, Jesus Christ: *I am the way, and the truth and the life* (John 14:6), which was like true bread descended from Heaven: *I am the living bread which came down from heaven* (John 6:41), and satiated its hunger with the nourishment of grace; and as the true light which enlightens every man who comes into this world, and straightened and directed his footsteps onto the path of salvation.

941 The Jews, egotistical and hard-hearted, looked on indifferently and neglected the needs, afflictions and calamities of their fellow men and even rejected them, judging them to be punishments for their sins. For the pagans, sympathy and devotion were unknown sentiments, and even condemned as weaknesses inappropriate for man. Only the loving and tender Heart of Jesus, which came to rescue man from the slavery of sin and raise him from his abject, abased state to the honor of son of God, showed all the sweetness and affection of his paternal love towards them, giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, movement to the paralyzed and resurrecting the dead. It did not limit its concern to helped the physical or moral ailments of man, but also extended to trying to secure bodily nourishment, as the Evangelists refer to. The multitudes followed Jesus Christ everywhere, eager to hear his divine Word without the slightest concern for eating themselves. Fearing that they might falter on the road, the Divine Master orders his disciples to given them food to eat: *Give you them to eat* ²⁵⁶. They had only sixty loaves of bread and a few fish which, blessed by the Lord, were enough to satiate that multitude composed on four thousand man, not counting the women and children.

942 See here, beloved children, the mercy and paternal providence of the Lord, and focus on the mandate he gives to his disciples: "Give you them to eat;

256 Cf. Matthew 14:16.

thereby trusting the concern and care of the needy to his Church. It seems we could rightly say with the Apostles: "And how shall we be able to have enough bread to feed this multitude?"²⁵⁷ But it is God who commands, who created from nothing whatever exists and sustains with paternal providence all the beings of the Universe, and since then the Church comes lavishly distributing the material goods, which Lord multiplies in its hands, and those of grace for which the Church was made the depository.

943 In fact, there is no nation, people or savage tribe the Church has not reached with its maternal concern; no misery or need that it does not help with a generous hand. If there are parents so unnatural they abandon their newborn children, the Church, like any Mother, receives them in her lap, raises and educates them until they shape men useful to society from them. For the sick who falter from the lack of means to care for their ailments, the Church has established hospitals everywhere, where at the same time they supply the necessary care for their illness, they bring peace and tranquility to their spirits through the nuns who are responsible for their care. People unable to work and also those who cannot earn their sustenance due to physical handicaps are sheltered in countless asylums, where all the needs and ailments known to Humanity is cared for and helped. Yes, there is no sex, age or any need that can allege it is not cared for by our Mother the Church. She instills in her Missionaries the apostolic zeal which makes them cross the seas seeking out poor savages, who they civilize and teach, and with the material bread they make them know God, the giver of all good. The church instills the heroism of the multitude of virgins consecrated to the Lord who willingly sacrifice their youth, fortune and hopes to devote themselves completely to the service of their fellow man in orphanages, asylums and hospitals where, like mothers, they are the comfort and providence of those who are housed in them. And the Church inspires the generosity and largesse by which their faithful children come to help the needs of their fellow man. Do not look outside the Church for these heroic actions, because without religion there is nothing but petty interests, egotism and scorn for the needy.

944 See here, beloved children, the only means the Church counts on to attend to the multiple needs of its children, trusted by the Lord for their providence. The only means, I say, because if once the poor could be cared for through the charity of the faithful who, imitating the ancient Christians, gave part of their goods to the Church, today, with that removed by the public authority, they can only trust in the Providence, who knows how, can and wants to help them generously. How appropriately then, do the words of the writer of Psalms suit the Church: "The poor have been entrusted to you; you shall be the protector of the orphan" (Psalm 9:14). And this also appears to be how the needy understand it, as they approach no one for help with so much confidence and sureness about being cared for as the

257 Cf. John 6:5-7/

ministers of the church, and to the faithful, who for their piety and charity are the most select part of the Church.

945 Oh, if the tycoons of the earth would listen to the teaching of this loving mother, who the Roman Pontiff and Prelates speak to so many times instilling charity in them, there is no doubt this internecine class struggle that is devouring society and threatening to bury it would disappear. The rich and poor would come closer together until they hold each other in a fraternal embrace; the rich would take responsibility for and help with the necessities of the needy, who in turn, blessing the hand that aids them, would be their support; this way, the admirable balance the Lord put upon the earth will be re-established whereby, with some individuals leading and administering and the others dedicating themselves to manual work, the needs of society would be attended to and men would live as brothers, mutually helping each other as sons of the same Father who is in Heaven.

946 This way the Church fulfills its noble and providential mission of caring for the bodily needs of its children: *Give you them to eat*²⁵⁸. But as, *Not in bread alone doth man live*, says the Divine Redeemer, *but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God* (Matthew 4:4), this is what nourishes and also feeds your souls with the true science that the Divine Spirit had made him the depository of.

THE CHURCH, TEACHER OF THE TRUTH

947 Even more than the need for material food for the life of the body, beloved children, our spirit feels the need to investigate the truth, the base and foundation of all knowledge and to know its noble principle and mission. Who would be able to teach this science of the sciences clearly and directly, without contradiction or error? Who will be able to throw the light of truth upon the most obscure problems of the destiny of man? Only God, as Plato said²⁵⁹. Because if men without a divine mission wanted to go into the sanctuary of the conscience and force the intelligence to accept the dogmas contained in the Creed and force the will to abide by the precepts of the Ten Commandments, not seeing in them anything more than man, they would reject them and refuse to submit to something they had no right to demand of them. But it is God who has spoken to us and taught us these truths, through his Word incarnate, Jesus Christ; and he in turn perpetuates these divine teachings through his Church, who in the person of the Apostles he told: "Teach all the peoples, teaching them to keep all that I have commanded you": *Teach ye all nations ..., teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded*

²⁵⁸ Matthew 14:16.

²⁵⁹ This Platonic reasoning in all probability reached Father Luis through Augustinian theology which, in accordance with the theories of the Greek philosopher, presented God as "the reason of human understanding" (cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *City of God*, 8:5: PL 41:230), as "the light of the minds which teach everything" (cf. *ibid.*, 8:7: PL 41:232).

you (Matthew 28:19-20), and they could not resist this eternal truth and infallible teacher and necessarily have to submit to reason and human intelligence.

948 As a result, the Catholic truth began to be proclaimed by the Lord himself, and from his divine lips they were deposited in the Church, the educational society, where it is preserved in full and without change, spreading the beams of His light from generation to generation without any change or reduction in intensity.

949 There is no nation or people excluded from his divine teachings. The Church announces the new good of the divine world, just the same as the kings announce to the tycoons and the plebeians; the wise men to the ignorant; in public and privately; appropriately or inappropriately, as the Apostle says²⁶⁰, not fearing the powers on earth, because obeying God comes before obeying men, as St. Peter responded to those who were judging him²⁶¹; and does not give up in his undertaking until sealing with his blood the divine faith he preaches.

950 And as teacher of the truth, having received the gift of wisdom from the Divine Spirit, the Church always stands at the head of the scientific movement, in all branches of knowledge, founding schools, academies and universities everywhere, where they teach man that all knowledge comes from God, and we owe it to Him for leading us to the information that makes up all of human knowledge.

951 Fortunate are the nations who listen to the voice of the Church and follow its teachings because virtue flourishes, peace reigns, the arts and industries progress in them and they are, in a word, happy and fortunate.

952 The church teaches man the way and practice of virtue; its duties towards God and the society in which it lives; the reciprocal obligations of spouses and their noble mission with respect to the family; becoming not only the universal teacher, but also the universal solution for all the needs of humanity.

953 Therefore, hell unleashes all its furies against the Church, and taking advantage of their satellites, the godless, declares harsh war against it, challenging its dogmas, doctrine and morality, restricting the freedom of education of its ministers and reducing it to misery to deprive it of the means to help the faithful and spread its doctrine; if all in vain, because "The gates of Hell shall never prevail over it" says the Divine Redeemer (Matthew 16:18).

954 Beloved children, you must always show your gratitude for the paternal concern of your good Mother, helping her in her undertakings in favor of your brothers with the generosity and charity the church instills in you; obeying meekly and submissively its teachings of eternal life, on which your happiness rests; defending the Church against all its enemies and detractors and always willing to sacrifice for her, even your life if necessary; so that the Lord spills his graces abundantly over you, as Solomon says: *Forsake not the law of thy mother, that grace may be added to thy head*²⁶².

²⁶⁰ Cf. II Timothy 4:2.

²⁶¹ Cf. Acts 5:29.

²⁶² Cf. Proverbs 1:8-9.

This is what your Prelate ardently desires and asks God for, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on 14 March 1920, the fourth Sunday of Lent.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

26

True and False Riches

B. Seg 40 [1920], pp. 189-200

“There is not a more wicked thing than to love money” (Ecclesiasticus 10:10)²⁶³.

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: health, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

955 If we consider, beloved children, the state of present-day society with its insatiable desire for riches such that men no longer compensate for having them, either by fulfilling the divine precepts or the laws of charity; violating other people’s rights, oppressing the poverty-stricken and ignoring the laments of those who can barely take care of their own subsistence, we have to agree that they have either lost all their faith in the other life and have established their happiness in this one, or they have separated themselves from the school and effects of Jesus Christ, who condemns such disorder.

956 The faith teaches us that this is not our legacy, but rather that we have been created for Heaven: *For we have not here a lasting city, but we seek one that is to come* (Hebrews 13:14), and that worldly goods are false and cannot make us happy as long as the moths and rust consume them and the robbers steal them; therefore, as St. Matthew advises, we have to establish our treasures in heaven, where neither the dust nor the moth can consume them or the robbers take them away from us (Matthew 6:19). The Divine Master, who on coming to this world could have been born in opulence and look to riches, for the influence they have over the human heart, to spread his doctrine, preferred to reject them, teaching man the lesson that they presented an obstacle to perfection and to encourage man to follow his example, telling them through St. Matthew: “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20).

957 If men would make the actions of their life accommodate this faith and model themselves on the example and instructions of Jesus Christ, their heart would be far away from considering riches; the powerful would use them for the

²⁶³ This citation from the Vulgate does not correspond to any citation in the Jerusalem Bible.

good of their brothers, not as owners but depositories of God; the rulers would stop oppressing their vassals with taxes that ruin them; the owners and patrons would be considerate and generous towards the needy and tenants, and those dedicated to sales and trade would earn modest profits, paying heed to the laws of the Church. This would be the dike that would contain, beloved children, the revolutionary wave that threatens to submerge us and have the nations in such upheaval. Because the seed of separatist doctrines that the satellites of unfaithfulness spread everywhere, claiming that we all have to be equal and that property is robbery, finds a fertile field among the poor and needy; victims of the greed of some, the rapacious nature of others and the lack of charity and fear of God of almost everyone.

958 With good reason then, the book of Ecclesiasticus says nothing is more wicked than to love riches excessively: *There is not a more wicked thing than to love money* (Ecclesiasticus 10:10)²⁶⁴, and to that end it is advisable that we focus on what they are in and of themselves and the evils they produce, so we can rid ourselves of them in our heart.

TRUE AND FALSE RICHES

959 The desire for happiness, beloved children, is innate in man; because God, who created man for his glory, wanted him to rejoice with Him over time, by means of his service and love, and in eternity with his blessed vision. Hence, the human heart feels constant longings and intensely seeks what it judges can make it fortunate and happy. As man is a composite of the spiritual and material, the good it can enjoy are spiritual and supernatural, or material and worldly. The former are acquired by carrying out the diving precepts, the practice of virtues following Jesus Christ, are the ones which can properly be called good, because they enrich the soul with heavenly graces and gifts that make man happy in time and eternally. But worldly goods and riches should exclusively be used in the service of God and in accordance with his holy will; if not, they only serve for the eternal condemnation of man.

960 In spite of this, how indifferently and coldly man looks at the riches of the spirit and what eagerness men have for attaining and enjoyed material riches. Acquiring them costs man much work, great sacrifice and sometimes even loss of health or risk to his life; once acquired, they require just as much attention and effort to preserve and increase them, and the final result is to leave them behind at death, so that others may enjoy them. As St. Luke refers to what the Lord said to that rich man, satisfied with his rewards, who said to him: "My soul, you have many goods and for many years; rest, then, eat, drink and fill yourself", and the Lord told him: "Fool, this very night they will ask for your soul, and what you have hoarded, whose will it be?" (Luke 12:20).

²⁶⁴ Reading of the Vulgate, considered an addition to the Jerusalem Bible. Cf. 955 above.

961 The riches of this world are false, as St. Matthew calls them, and man therefore searches for happiness in them in vain, which is only found in the practice of virtue.

THE EVILS THAT RICHES ATTRACT TO THE INDIVIDUAL

962 But riches do not only disappoint man's hopes, this being a minor evil, but instill and attract many vices and passions to the soul that do not make good use of it and are the cause of its spiritual ruin. And I say that they do not make good use of it because riches that are well acquired are a gift of God that puts man in position to give much glory to God by employing them in good works and redeeming his sins through giving alms. *Redeem thou thy sins with alms* (Daniel 4:24).

963 The first and major damages then that riches bring to man is to distance him from God because, enamored over them and swamped by them, he does not stop to consider where they come from and who is the giver of this good; far from thanking the Lord for it, they offend Him by attributing it to themselves, their work and industry, and even prefer the riches to God himself, since they pay no heed to breaking His rules and those of his Church in exchange for increasing them.

964 They also instill pride and arrogance in the soul, the first of the capital sins, because with them man now believes himself omnipotent, without need of anything or anyone, judging himself as much superior to others, whom he treats indifferently or with scorn. In reality, he is the one rejected by others, because there is nothing more abominable than pride, and if they serve and pay homage and fealty to him it is not out of consideration or affection, but only for the usefulness it can produce for them.

965 They also harden the heart and make mercy flee from them, always fearful that they must be lacking in what they can give the needy, without taking into account that the Lord promises one hundredfold for every one given to the poor man in His name.

And, finally, the riches are the typical reason why man, because he puts his heart in them, acquires many vices and passions which bring about his eternal unhappiness.

RICHES DO NO SATIATE THE HEART

966 But worldly good do not even make man happy in this world, since the human heart, created for God, cannot find rest, as St. Augustine says, as long as it does not rest in God²⁶⁵. Even the triangular shape the Lord gave the heart

²⁶⁵ Cf. St. Augustine: *Confessions*, 1.1: PL 32:661, Cf. 351, 478, 521, 663 above; 1048, 1510.

is demonstrating to us, beloved children, that only a three-sided God could fill it, unlike a world that is spherical in shape²⁶⁶.

967 The more riches man hoards, the more you will always see him aspiring for more. He never says enough or is content with what he has; however great his possessions may be, he always wants to extend them more; nor enjoy his profits when he sees that those of others are fatter, and envy and ambition torture his heart; as the book of Ecclesiasticus says, the eye of the greedy is, in a word, insatiable: *The eye of the covetous man is insatiable* (Ecclesiasticus 14:9). It is his passion like an illness that torments him and which he cannot cure. He is rightly compared to someone suffering from hydropsy (edema), whose thirst increases the more he drinks. It is, in sum, a fire that cannot be extinguished and an abyss impossible to fill up. The ambition never says enough to riches: *The fourth never saith: It is enough* (Proverbs 30:15).

968 St. Augustine rightly says that Jesus Christ Our Lord compares riches to thorns²⁶⁷ because as the latter pierce and injure those who touch them, the same effect is produced in the heart by the latter due to the yearning to acquire them, the ambition to increase them and the spite from having lost them²⁶⁸.

969 But what must strike terror in the rich and make their hearts do without the excessive love of riches are the terrible words of Jesus Christ speaking through St. Luke: "Woe to you that are rich!" *But woe to you that are rich* (Luke 6:24), and through St. Matthew says to his apostles: "Verily I say unto you that the rich shall have difficulty entering into the kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 19:23). *Amen, I say to you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

EXAMPLES OF DISINTEREST TO IMITATE

970 Nevertheless, we have to take into account, beloved children, that riches are not always an obstacle for the perfection and salvation of the soul, because if God gives them and they are properly employed, they increase the merit of our being; nor is Jesus Christ lamenting the conduct of all rich men indiscriminately. Because there are rich men whose hearts are quite detached from their riches; they use them to benefit their fellow men, as administrators of God, and spend only the purely necessary on themselves. There are also those rich men who are poor in spirit, of whom the Lord who is king of heaven was speaking. And to counteract them, there are poor men who are poor only in fact, but with their affection, desire

²⁶⁶ Cf. 529 above; 1158, 1177, 1351.

²⁶⁷ Cf. Matthew 13:22.

²⁶⁸ Cf. the following texts of St. Augustine, among others: *Sermon 50*, 4:6: PL 38:328; *Exposition of Psalm 139*, 4: PL 37:1805-1806. The comparison of riches with thorns is frequently repeated in the writings of the Holy Fathers (cf. ST. GREGORY THE GREAT; *Homily 15 to the Gospels*: PL 76:1131).

and intention are rich men, and the words of Jesus Christ when he threatens the rich are fully suitable for them.

971 The first Christians gave us an admirable example to follow of this disinterest and detachment from worldly goods; in order to run more freely along the path of perfection and copy as much as possible our model Jesus Christ, who rejected riches and wanted to be born, live and die poor, they sold whatever they had and put their products at the disposal of the apostles, so that they would attend to the needs of the other followers. All the saints who founded religious orders also followed this example and proposed to drive all worldly interest from their children, imposing a vow of poverty on them; something in which my Seraphic Father St. Francis particularly distinguished himself²⁶⁹.

972 But not only do the members of the religious orders reject worldly goods, since there are countless saints and faithful followers who, born into opulence, let go of riches in their hearts and gave their goods to the poor to follow Jesus Christ; or when they distributed their earnings with them, considering them as mere depositories and administrators of the great Father of families, Our Lord God.

GOODS TO SOCIETY THIS DISTINEREST PRODUCES

973 If men, then, by follow these examples would rid themselves of their excessive affection for riches, and those who possess them begin to use them to help their fellow man and aid the poverty-stricken, instead of investing them as they do in excessive luxuries, gambling, feasts and even worse uses that are like a provocation and insult to poverty, then calm would again be reborn in society; the poor would look at and treat the rich respectfully, seeing them as their fathers and protectors who would defend their interests, so the poor would be aided in their necessities; and that is how the order and balance that God wanted to reign in the world would be re-established, with the due dependence of some being to others, and peace would be reborn.

974 Yes, beloved children, God wants this subordination and dependence of some creatures to others, and you shall find that if you look at all the beings in the universe. More than anything, the omnipotence and wisdom of God shines through in the infinite variety one observes, even in beings of the same species; but in spite of this variety, you shall also seem them so closely united and connected to each other that each is like a link in the admirable chain of creation.

975 However, this variety must also reign in man, the masterpiece of God, and some men are granted wisdom, others intelligence, some are have the gift of the word, others of government, some have good sense, etc. All those gifts are not found in the same man, with the aim that they would recognize their mutual dependence since everyone needs each other and thus live completely united, aiding each other

²⁶⁹ Cf. LM 7:1, in works cited, p. 420.

in all their needs. And the way God distributed his supernatural graces and goods to them in different amounts, he also wanted there to be the same difference among them in possessing material goods.

976 It is there, therefore, a utopia to think of equality as preached by those who presume to reform society; because as Jesus Christ speaks an infallible truth, there will always be poor people among us: *For the poor you have always with you* (Matthew 26:11).

977 What a beautiful role the rich man plays if he knows how to be a minister of the divine Providence, giving food to the hungry and the thirsty something to drink, clothing the naked and in a word, helping the needs of their fellow man! And how many praises and blessings will he receive from them, which shall attract in turn those of the Lord!

978 Nevertheless, even though the mission of the rich is noble, there is absolutely no comparison that the most noble, most holy and reliable mission is the salvation of the poor, since the divine Redeemer also was poor for us²⁷⁰, and they say he is the king of heaven: *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven* (Matthew 5:3).

EVILS THE EXCESSIVE LOVE OF RICHES ATTRACTS TO SOCIETY

979 But unfortunately, beloved children, in these times the insatiable thirst for riches drives men crazy and completely disrupts society. Now no one is content with the is fortune and only thinks of hoarding wealth, without compensating for it in any way, no matter how illicit it may be. The poor man does not accept his humble condition, which he considers a punishment and violates and infringes on the rights and powers of the employers on whom he depends; nor does the ambition of the rich know any bounds, oppressing and mistreating the poor whose sweat they use to their advantage.

980 The governments with their unfair taxes, the owners with their rent raises; the merchants with the excessive prices of their goods; the industrialists with their ambitions for profit; the employees and needy with the excessive increase of the working day and reduction of work, make the unease of the nations so great and inflame the spirits of one against the others to such an extent that can truly declare, beloved children, that the social war that we are experiencing today is the worst war. When men separate themselves from fulfilling the law of God and forget their eternal destiny, they only have ambition for their temporal well-being, without sparing any means to attain it. But how differently they would think if they bore in mind the words of the Lord through St. Matthew: *For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?*²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ Cf. II Corinthians 8:9.

²⁷¹ Matthew 16:26.

981 Beloved children, try to be sure your heart does not become attached to worldly goods with an excessive love. If God gives them to you, use them to benefit your brothers; taking into account that the great Father of families has put them in your hands so that, after meeting your own needs, you will aid them with theirs. And those the Lord wanted to eat from the fruit of your labor, faithfully fulfill your duty and be grateful to those you supply with food. This is how one and all will contribute to the pacification of society and you will be ready to receive the eternal award the Lord promises to the ones who keep his holy law, the only true good we should aspire for, and what your Prelate desires for you, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on 28 November, the first Sunday of Advent of the year 1920.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

27

On Faith

(B. Seg 41 [1921], pp. 33-45)

“Being justified therefore by faith, let us have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ”
(Romans 5:1).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: greetings, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

982 Beloved children, today you hear nothing but laments everywhere in society. Such is the corruption of customs and debauchery of the passions; so great is the despotism of some people and the insubordination and rebellion of the others; the egotism, unfaithfulness in negotiations and anger of some against others is so extreme that honor, virtue and faithful fulfillment of religious and social duties are now considered heroic acts, because the world looks on those who practice them with a certain disdain and scorn.

And how vainly do the societies and governments try to channel this raging current with laws and threats!

983 They have wanted to persuade the people that man has nothing to expect outside of this life and that you find glory or hell in it, according to whether you enjoy or suffer; that there is no God or if there is one, he has nothing to do with the world; in a word, tried to de-Catholicize the world by tearing the faith from its soul; and with hope also lost, the practice of charity is now idled, and consequently no less than the most complete anarchy could reign, which we unfortunately suffer today.

984 How then can the lost peace, serenity, good harmony and happiness return to society? The only way, beloved children, is by reviving this faith, in the divine teachings of our Redeemer Jesus.

985 Yes, the faith that he taught us when he came from God and after our lives are over, we return to Him to receive the award or the eternal sorrow that our works deserved, according to whether or not they adapted to his commandments. This is what we have to make enter ourselves, to reconsider the vanity and lies of worldly things, adapt our life to the precepts of God and achieve the justification of our souls, and with that the peace and happiness of the children of God which is in Jesus Christ: *Being justified therefore by faith, let us have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ* (Romans 5:1).

986 In fact, faith is what makes man happy in this world, even in the midst of the greatest disasters and tribulations. The greatness of the nations also rests on faith, in the sense that it unites, invigorates and sanctifies its citizens, who become its glory and crown, and even the cause of its triumph in battles because as St. John says, faith is the victory conquers the world: *This is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith* (1 John 5:4).

987 This is, then, a tribute to our spirit, which submits to the authority of God to believe in the truths that He reveals to us and our heart for putting into practice his divine precepts and, as a result, faith exercises its rule upon the spirit and heart of man. Over the former by rendering it docile to believe the truths that religion teaches us, and over the latter by making us faithfully observe the virtues and practices that faith orders.

...That there is a need to believe and live in accordance with these beliefs is what we are going to occupy ourselves with, beloved children.

* * *

988 Men have become big-headed and arrogant today, beloved children, from their discoveries and material advances, considering that because of that there are no secrets in nature, and mock and react with scorn anything referring to the supernatural. Without recognizing that nature itself is full of impenetrable mysteries to their intelligence, they may know and apply some of its powers and effects, but continue ignoring the nature and essence of the causes that produce them. And in themselves, their powers and talents, they have more than enough reasons to know that not everything in man is inert matter, but rather possesses a vital force or spirit in it that we call the soul, by which he understands, thinks and wants, and this cannot be a force but rather a supreme being on whom everything depends, which is God.

989 Man, by necessity, has to believe in a God, the Maker of all that exists. This belief or faith is found even among savages, albeit full of errors; because in the same way you cannot have more than one God, you cannot also have more than

one faith which propounds the same truths to believe and the same doctrines to practice.

990 And this virtue of faith is so necessary, beloved children, that without it is impossible to please God, as the Apostle says: But without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6). This is the first step in bringing ourselves closer to Him. This is why St. Augustine says that the light of the glory cannot arrive except by walking along the dark trails of faith²⁷². Dark, because the truths they propose for us to believe are above our poor, limited intelligence and reason, although not against it; but as for true, secure and indescribable as God himself proposes for us, the truth in essence, which can neither deceive Him nor us, and the holy Church, his visible organ, makes us sure of that.

991 If faith supported itself only in the testimony of men, it would be uncertain and unsteady, because the knowledge of men are very limited and they easily form erroneous concepts of objects, and also because they are not always as sincere as they should be in communicating the truth which they know, so that can be deceive him and deceive us. But God is whom faith supports itself on; the infallible truth and infinitely perfect; who knows the things as they are in themselves, and announces them as he know them, and would no longer be God if he could deceive himself, through lacking the perfection of infallibility nor would He be able to say that He is good and faithful if he would induce us to error. And thus we have to conclude that our faith is strong and unbreakable since it stands on such a solid foundation.

992 For that reason, everything in us must cede to the authority of God, our judgment, reason, intelligence, and even the evidence of our senses. Believing in the truths that He proposes to us, however dark and impenetrable they may be to our intelligence.

993 And this is very much based in reason, beloved children; because since there is nothing in us that we have not received from God, we must sacrifice our will to Him, in order to love what He wants, fulfill his precepts and reject what he forbids to us. Our understanding has to be no less submissive to his authority, to believe the truths that He proposes for us, however recondite and impenetrable they may be to us. And as you could not say the will was waiting on God for all things but rather wanted to do more of what was in line with His inclinations, in the same way the understanding would not be sufficiently humbled to the authority of God if it would not admit more truths than those it can reach with its reason.

994 Beloved children, that is the tribute that God has the right to demand of his creature. The most righteous and indispensable tribute with respect to us, and the most glorious with respect to God, because man, believing through the word of

²⁷² Augustinian thinking, predicated on ideas very evident in the teachings of the Saint, to wit: the necessity of faith to reach eternal happiness (cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Treatise on the Trinity* 13:7:10: PL 42:1020-1022) and darkness as an essential element of faith (cf. *ibid.*, 13:1:3, PL 42:1014-1015).

the Lord what He did not conceive, make the truth of God triumph over his spirit and reason.

995 And do not say that this submission is a blind, tyrannical servitude; because God, as the Apostle says, wants that our tribute be reasonable: *Your reasonable service* (Romans 12:1). According to St. Augustine, it allows us to use our reason to reach the knowledge of the first truth; and if it proposes to us to believe truths incomprehensible to our limited intelligence, it makes them obvious to us through the revelation²⁷³.

996 In fact, God has spoken to man and revealed to him the truths he is obligated to believe. This way he teaches us our sacrosanct religion, which is the word of God himself revealed to man, and carries written in the characters of divinity; in its establishment and astonishing spread throughout the world, in spite of the austerity of its doctrine and the war it declares on vices, and for its saintliness because it does not teach in its morality anything that does not lead man to the highest perfection; so that we would be like angels in the world if we followed His maxims and doctrines to the letter. Yes, beloved children, the holy religion is the support and backbone of the truth, which we must listen to in order to save ourselves because, as St. Jerome says, all those who do not sail aboard the boat of St. Peter are sure to perish²⁷⁴.

* * *

997 From this need and obligation to believe the Lord proposes to us through his church, comes the one of adapting our behavior to his practical teachings to ensure our salvation; since, as the apostle James says, in the same way as the body without spirit is dead, so is faith without works: *For even as the body without the spirit is dead; so also faith without works is dead* (James 2:26). Both faith and good works must come together for the work of our predestination, because there are not meritorious good works for heaven without faith, nor faith which acts for our salvation without good works.

998 It is true that faith can also survive with sin, since even the devils themselves believe and fear, as the apostle James says: *The devils also believe and tremble* (James 2:19); and the council of Trent pronounced anathema against those who say all mortal sins make you lose faith²⁷⁵. But how difficult it is not to reduce the value of this with the cold vapor of the passions!; because the passions, in order to race full speed without braking or finding problems in their path to overcome, introduce in the spirit of man, first, excessive confidence in divine mercy; then, it instills doubts concerning the eternal truths, above all those which can create the most fear in them, and finish by falling into the abyss of unfaithfulness. Is this not

²⁷³ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *On the True Religion*, 29:52: PL 34:145.

²⁷⁴ This thought seems to correspond to the already famous one of St. Jerome: "Qui salvatur, salvari in Ecclesia" (cf. ST. JEROME: *Commentary to Joel*, 3: PL 25:980).

²⁷⁵ Cf. Council of Trent, session VI, can. 28 in DENZINGER, 838.

what you ordinarily observe? You will see the souls that practice the virtues and good works holding increasingly steady in the faith; and, in contrast, those who have a disorderly life, given over to their vices and passions, begin to think about and criticize those articles of the faith which most intimidate and confront them; then they move on to disapproval of them; later they come to doubt them and finally end up fighting and denying them.

999 May it please God, beloved children, if we would not see this confirmed so frequently in these times! The freedom and unbridled passions, the insatiable desire for material goods and the unquenchable thirst for riches that we observe in our society, the effect of the lack of love and fear of God, are undermining the spiritual edifice of the souls at its foundation, which is faith; and now it is not only the indifferent men lacking in religious feeling but even women, who the Church calls the devout sex²⁷⁶, are heard uttering words that clearly indicate they are losing the treasure of the faith.

1000 And what a great misfortune when you reach this extreme! Because this world, this vale of tears experiences so many disasters, miseries and misfortunes, what could bring our spirit the resignation and conformity, the peace and tranquility, but faith in the eternal truths that Religion teaches us? Yes, because God is our Father, who troubles us in order to purify us or so that we may acquire more merits; if He aids and helps us to endure with his grace; if the end to the suffering has to be eternal reward in the eyes of God, how strange is that the righteous find pleasure in their own suffering and can say with St. Theresa: The good that I am waiting for is so great, that I delight in the sorrows?²⁷⁷ But, on the contrary, if you lose this faith from the effects of sin, it follows that by seeing man submerged in so many miseries, they lose hope and being to suffer an advance hell in this world.

Good works then, beloved children, are the life of faith, as faith in turn is the life of the good works.

1001 The power and activity of the Christian comes from the faith, because the righteous live of the faith as the Apostle says: *The just man liveth by faith* (Romans 1:17); and from it his thinking takes its inspiration, the heart its affections, and the will its powers and most generous solutions. If not from faith, where did that wisdom come to the martyrs with which they confused the tyrants; the perseverance and magnanimity to reject to reject their flattery and threats, and the strength and joy with which they endured the greatest tortures? These extraordinary graces were not in them but the prize with which God rewarded their virtues and good works.

* * *

1002 And not only men, but even the peoples and societies that they form, owe their true greatness to the faith and its good customs. To convince ourselves of that, let us focus only on our own Spain. There was a time when its territory

²⁷⁶ Cf. RB Antifona al Magnificat del Común de la Virgen.

²⁷⁷ Cf. 562 above.

extended so far that the sun never set on it, the Lord granting that it would discover new lands where it could bring its civilization, language and plant its flag; its army was feared, its authority respected and it was considered the first European nation and even the queen of the world. But how much of that was its faith and how pure and religious its customs were? Its Monarchs know how to prevent the introduction of heresy in the country with an iron hand, and their example and laws based on those of God leading their vassals to the practice of Christian and civic virtues made them pleasing to the eyes of God and men. The towns preserved their traditions and religious practices with integrity; and the faith and religious feeling of the Spaniards was such that one could say their hearts were impenetrable shells against impiety. But what sorrow, how this precious gold was darkened and its shining color changed. *How is the gold become dim, the finest colour is changed* (Lamentations 4:1). What was the leading lady of the world has reached the point of being looked at indifferently by the nations; sees itself stripped of the greater part of its empire, forgotten and dismissed by the same peoples that Spain discovered and took out of savagery, establishing the Cross there and introducing them to the ways of civilization; and the once feared and respected Spaniard are now scorned and treated without consideration.

1003 And what you think this is due to, beloved children? Certainly there is no other cause than having distanced themselves from their God. Can you truly say that the faith of the Spaniards is as strong and stable as it was in other times? How far removed are its customs of kindness and honor today from the old ones?

1004 The true God is not now the only God of the Spanish, since religious tolerance that authorizes other forms of worship is a part of its laws. For these now disregard the religious feeling of the nation and many times the towns are governed by do not attend the Catholic Church at all, even though it continues being the religion of the State. It tolerates the printing of the most grotesque insults against religion and morality, and the most obscene performances in theaters, cinemas and other public entertainments. They authorize the so-called lay schools, where they completely disregard Catholic teaching, allowing the children to grow up without knowledge or fear of God, and not displaying sufficient zeal in ensuring that the teachers in the State schools fulfill the instruction of the Catechism well.

1005 This state of affairs could do nothing less, beloved general, than cool and weaken the faith of our nation as the bad customs continue increasing. And it is no surprise that peace and tranquility flees from the country, as they can only be found by justifying the soul by faith in Jesus Christ our Lord: *Being justified therefore by faith, let us have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ* (Romans 5:1).

1006 However, what can you do and is your duty to do, beloved children, living in such an indifferent and corrupt society, to avoid the infection in your in your souls and keep yourself always united to our Divine Redeemer? Above all, keep watch over and preserve without reducing any of the priceless treasure of your faith, in spite of the scandals, bad advice and perverse doctrines they give you. Do not admit reasoning or distinctions in matters of faith; listen to the teachings

of the Church, which will speak to you by means of its Pastors, and you will sure of not going wrong, since the Lord says through St. Luke that whoever hears them, hears Him himself: *He that heareth you, heareth me* (Luke 10:16). Try to instruct yourselves well in the Christian doctrine and fulfill the obligation to teach it to your children, and adhere to the explanations your Parish priests give you about it. Read devout books and keep guard so that the poison of perverse volumes against faith or morality do not enter your houses. Run away from people you judge suspicious regarding this topic like you would from someone with the plague, and in accordance with the advice of St. John, do not receive them in your house or even greet them: *Receive him not into the house nor say to him, God speed you.* (II John 1:10).

1007 But as faith cannot survive without good works, adapt your lives, beloved children, to the evangelic precepts: do not lose sight of the examples that our Divine Redeemer and his Saints gave us, and in turn close your eyes in order not to see the scandals that can be seen everywhere you look. This way you will preserve your heart pure and faithful for God, becoming the good fragrance to Jesus Christ everywhere, as the Apostle says (II Corinthians 2:15), the cause of sanctification and salvation for other souls with your example and you shall finally receive the eternal reward in Heaven that the Lord has promised us, which is what your Prelate desires and asks for, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on the Second Sunday of Lent, 20 February in the year of our Lord 1921.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

28

St. Francis and the Third Order

(B. Seg 41) [1921], pp. 149-164

“For the glory of a man is from the honor of his father” (Ecclesiasticus 3:13)²⁷⁸.

To the faithful of our beloved diocese, and especially the children and devotees of our Seraphic Father St. Francis: Peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

1008 In these times, beloved children, men put so much effort in commemorating the dates of notable accomplishments, not only the honorable ones and those that glorify Humanity, but even those that are celebrated in sadness. Today one notes such great enthusiasm in all of them, and the days marking the principal events of life are celebrated with just as much rejoicing, and the hundred

²⁷⁸ Cf. in *Jersusalem Bible*: Sirach 3:11.

year anniversary celebrations and so-called golden and silver wedding anniversaries are multiplying. We, the children and devotees of the Seraph of Assisi, have a more justified reason for making the Lord happy, of singing hymns and to celebrate seeing the arrival of the seven hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the Venerable Third Order of Penance of our Seraphic Father St. Francis, which took place in the year of our Lord 1221.

1009 The Supreme Leader of the Church, , our Supreme Pontiff Benedict XV, teaches us this in his Encyclical on the Third Order, saying: "We believe the upcoming celebration of the seven hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the Third Order of Penance to be very timely, and leads us to recommend it to the Catholic world, with the full weight of our apostolic authority, not only for the obvious usefulness that it yields for Christian people, but also to something that refers to our self individually, since we remember with satisfaction that in 1882 we wore the holy tertiary habit. Raised now by divine consent to St. Peter's Cathedral, it is gratifying, given our devotion to St. Francis, to take advantage of this occasion to urge the faithful in the institution of this very saintly man, so suitable to the needs of the present times"²⁷⁹.

1010 The reigning Pontiff and his honorable predecessor, Leo XIII, of sacred memory²⁸⁰, with good reason indicate the Venerable Third Order as a solution for the evils of this period, as the Order was exactly that in a 13th century infested with heresy, bled dry by wars and consumed by their depraved customs. Our century, which suffers from identical evils, has to find precisely the solution for its recovery in it.

THE 13TH CENTURY AND THE THIRD ORDER

1011 Yes, beloved children, at the beginning of the 13th century it appears as if hell spewed out all its fury for the ruin and damnation of Humanity against Europe. The terrible heresy of the Waldensians rose up against the Spouse of the Immaculate Lamb, and set up as dogma the eternity of an evil force, the creator of the visible world, and took as a result the irresponsibility of man, fatalism, the injustice of the law and the right to revolution. They afflicted and devastated towns with internecine wars and fratricidal struggles, inciting and encouraging the hatred of some against the others; and the nations with invasions of barbarians, such as the Moors in Spain and the Tartars in Prussia and Livonia. But they undermined the foundations of society just as much by the unleashing of passions and corruption of customs they instilled in man.

1012 It is not surprising, then, that in such an atmosphere the temples were desecrated and ruined to finish with Catholic worship; the voice of the Pontiffs were stifled and scorned; Christian ideas were fought and attacked, and the children of the Church, joining their outcries to those of their Mother, asked as the Apostles

²⁷⁹ BENEDICT XV: *Sacra Propedium*: AAS 13 (1921), p. 33.

²⁸⁰ Cf. LEO XIII: *Auspicato Concessum*: ASS 15 (1882), p. 145-153. Cf. 1269, 1978, 2445.

did when facing the fear of perishing in the raging sea: "Save us Lord, for we are perishing!" *Lord, save us, we perish* (Matthew 8:25).

1013 But the conqueror of death and hell Jesus Christ said the gates of Hell shall not prevail against his Church (Matthew 16:18), and if there are trials and tribulations against it and her faithful children, it only to prove their merits, to make His power more evident; he designated two of his servants, Dominic and Francis, making their noble mission known to them through a vision in which both saw themselves presented by the Holy Virgin to the Lord who, irritated, was going to punish the world, as victims pleasing to their eyes and would reform society²⁸¹. And in fact, the two Patriarchs, with their preaching and example, were the hammer for the destruction of the heresy; the proclaimers of peace who ended the discord in the towns, and reformed the depraved customs of that corrupted society with the austerity of their lives.

1014 And the Seraph of Assisi brought about this *magnum opus*, beloved children, by means of the three Orders he founded, but especially and particularly through the call of Penance, which provided entry to everyone, whatever status or condition they might be, binding them and extending to include the entire world with his seraphic heart.

1015 In fact, through the Rule of this Third Order he instilled in the faithful his spirit of submission and obedience to the holy Church, and his unbreakable faith in its doctrines and teachings; a loyalty that merited that the Roman Pontiff would engrave these words on his grave: "Francis, Catholic man and all apostolic". *Franciscus vir catholicus et totus apostolicus*²⁸². He also instilled in them peace and brotherly charity, which must be practiced with everyone²⁸³, as the first of all the virtues, and from what the Lord said, had to be recognized by his disciples; the peace which the Seraphic Father greeted everyone through divine inspiration²⁸⁴, and which he preached without stopping to the towns, preventing wars between them on several occasions²⁸⁵. Similarly, he forbid excessive luxury and dangerous shows in this Rule, teaching them by practice his disregard for, and detachment from, the world and its pomp and vanities with his extreme poverty and his austere, severe habit, sufficient only to cover his nakedness.

1016 Oh the power of the grace of the Lord! With doctrines so opposed to the teachings, trends and passions of that perverted century, the Third Order was nonetheless received from its appearance with true enthusiasm, as St. Bonaventure declares, and worked a complete transformation of society.

²⁸¹ Cf. WADDING, L.: *Annales Minorum*, Vol. I (Quaracchi, 1931), 252-13ss.

²⁸² SPIRA, JULIÁN DE: *Officium Rythmicum S. Francisci*, ad I Vesperas, ant. 1, in *Anal. Franc. X* (Ad Clara Aquas, 1926-1941), 375. lin. 2-3.

²⁸³ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 1R 14, in works cited, p. 101; 2R 3:14, in works cited, p. 112.

²⁸⁴ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: Test 23, in works cited, p. 123; CtaA 1, in works cited, p. 60; CtaL, I, in works cited, p. 73.

²⁸⁵ Cf. 1C 23, in works cited, p. 156; TC, 2:4, in works cited, p. 534; LP 84, in works cited, p. 650.

1017 We can, then, do no less than confess with the Seraphic Doctor²⁸⁶, that is the work of the Lord, because the eminent saintliness of its founder, its rapid spread and advances in all social classes, and the admirable rewards of grace and saintliness with which it enriched the field of the Church are unchallengeable testimonies of the assistance of the spirit of God in its founding.

SAINTLINESS OF THE FOUNDER OF THE THIRD ORDER

1018 Yes, beloved children, the saintliness of St. Francis is the greatest glory of the Third Order, and the most unchallengeable testimony that it is a work of God.

And who rather than God himself, who appears to have intended to give us the most perfect copy of his most holy Son in St. Francis, shall be able to measure the immense height of his saintliness? Of his humility, the basic virtue of perfection, we can say that it was so profound that, according to the revelation made to one of his first children, he deserved to sit in the seat in Heaven that Lucifer lost with his pride and arrogance²⁸⁷. He considered himself to be the greatest of sinners and the most ungrateful to divine benefits, and with the same diligence and eagerness with which the proud man seeks honors, Francis rejected them. On one occasion, he even resorted to mixing mud in the road like a child in order to escape the cheers and honors an entire town was coming out to welcome him with; he preferred to be taken for simple rather than have his humility diminished. This was his characteristic virtue, the one which authors cite him for as an archetype and example. And he instilled humility in his children to such an extent that he wanted them to be distinguished by the name of Minors²⁸⁸.

1019 To gain in insight into his charity, it should be enough to know that the name the Church and the faithful gave him, calling him Seraph after the spirits closest to God who burn most ardently in the divine love. The Seraphic Father was consumed by those flames to such an extent that he deserved that the Lord inflict his sacred wounds on his body, which were like so many other craters giving vent to the volcano of blind love that burned in his breast. He became, as the Church says, the one who would inform hearts of this fire of charity, and the lack of which accounts for how cold the world is today. This love for which the Seraphic cried inconsolably and continuously after seeing the indifference of men towards reciprocating it, telling those us who asked him the reason for his weeping: "I cry because Love is not loved"²⁸⁹.

1020 From this charity was born the burning desire of salvation for all men, for whom the Divine Redeemer spilled his blood. To that end, he did everything

²⁸⁶ Cf. LM 4:6-7, in works cited, pp. 401-402.

²⁸⁷ Cf. LM 6:6, in works cited, p. 417.

²⁸⁸ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 1R 6:3, in works cited, p. 96. Cf. also 1C 38, in works cited, p. 165; LM 6:5, in works cited, p. 416.

²⁸⁹ Cf. TC 14, in works cited, p. 540. Cf. 350, 525 above; 1272.

for everyone in order to save them, as the Apostle says: *I became all things to all men, that I might save all* (I Corinthians 9:22). He cried with the afflicted to alleviate their grief; sought out with more than paternal diligence the poor sinners so that he could lead them onto the way of salvation with his urgings, warnings and above all the tenderness of his love; and taking pity on the poor souls sitting in the darkness and shadows of unfaithfulness, he led them to Egypt, where he preached the faith of Jesus Christ to the Sultan²⁹⁰, because there was room for everyone in his magnanimous heart and his generosity, compassion and love knew no bounds. For that reason, when he attained from the Lord the famous indulgence of Porziuncola in favor of the sinners, asking for confirmation from the Pope, who asked him in turn how many years he was asking for, he replied zealously: "Holy Father, I am not asking for years but souls"²⁹¹.

1021 What shall we say of his love for holy poverty? It was perhaps greater than any other saint has had for this virtue, which he called his queen and lady. And he longed for it so much that he asked for and obtained it from the Lord, for himself and his Order. No man has had an ambition for riches as great as the ambition the Seraphic Father had for poverty; it reached the extreme of feeling it was a sacred emulation, which made him shed tears when he saw another man who looked poorer than he did²⁹².

1022 And he was no less passionate about penance; obscuring its austerities to those of the recluses of the Tebaida.

It can be said his fast was perpetual, since he fasted for several extended periods per year, including the Church fast of Lent with such strictness that he scarcely ate more than bread and water. According to St. Bonaventure, the Seraphic Father treated his body as an enemy, granting it only what he could not deny it. So that he would not taste flavor in the food, he often sprinkled it with ash, and still drank barely enough water to satisfy his thirst, because he said it was difficult to satisfy the needs of the body without letting it take you to sensuality²⁹³. He did not even want to alleviate his strict rules in sickness, so that one of his friars had to warn him that he should not torture his body so much, which had always been meek and submissive; and the Holy Father, close to death, ended up asking forgiveness for having tortured his body so much²⁹⁴.

1023 If the Holy Father stood out in the practice of these virtues, and we would be able to call them characteristic of him, and we stopped to consider the other virtues of the Christian and religious life, we would discover that he has practiced them to an eminent and heroic degree which made him a model and example for the faithful.

²⁹⁰ Cf. Lm 3:9, in works cited, p. 512.

²⁹¹ FRATRIS FRANCISCI BARTHOLI DE ASSISIO: *Tractatus de Indigentia S. Mariae de Portiuncula*, c. 6 (Ed. P. Sabatier, Paris 1900), 15 line 25s Cf. 1140.

²⁹² Cf. LM 7:6, in works cited, p. 424.

²⁹³ Cf. LM 5:1, in works cited, p. 406.

²⁹⁴ Cf. 2C 211, in works cited, p. 351.

1024 And as the virtue has so much appeal and influence over the human heart, it should not cause us surprise, beloved children, the movement and transformation he worked in the lives and customs of men during that corrupt century; nor the enthusiasm with which the works of such a saintly man were welcomed, especially the Venerable Third Order he founded.

RAPID SPREAD OF THE THIRD ORDER

1025 If the saintliness of its Founder is an unchallengeable proof that the Venerable Third Order is a work of God, beloved children, its rapid spread and advances in all social classes offers just as much proof.

Its foundation had scarcely begun to become known when the general voice of the people, called the echo of the voice of God by the Fathers of the Church²⁹⁵, joined with the voice of the Pontiff to proclaim it one of the most powerful resources that the Divine Wisdom had for reforming society; its humble and obscure origin was not an obstacle, so that it would focus its attention on its task and welcome and embrace it with the greatest enthusiasm.

1026 Like the mustard seed of the Gospel, it grew quickly into a lush tree with much foliage, whose shade not only protected the peoples of Italy, the blessed land where it was born, but extended its roots and branches throughout all of Europe and even America, Asia and Japan experienced its beneficial rewards. It grew so much the number of Third Order friars in the New World, according to statistics done in 1686 had already reached 118,000.

1027 To general astonishment, it invaded all levels of the social hierarchy, the Court as well as the Army, the public offices and all the professions, and generous Christians were found it all of them who, faithful to the Rule of the Third Order, served as a model of the self-perfection of the secular state.

1028 We could cite a multitude of Emperors and Empresses, Kings and Queens of Austria, Constantinople, Spain, France, Portugal, Hungary, Poland, Sicily, Greece and other nations who honored him by wearing the habit of the Third Order beneath the royal cloak and put on the seraphic rope. Their example was also embraced by many princes, dukes and all sorts of nobles in all the kingdoms, among which our own nation distinguished itself, according to Wadingo, since in his time the congregation of Madrid already included over sixty princes and nobles of Spain; the number of Tertiaries in the land in 1689 reached the respectable figure of 25,000.

1029 It is not surprising then, that this aristocracy would emulate and also follow those in science, literature, oratory, arts, and the military. We can cite Christopher Columbus, Raimundo Lulio, Calderón, Cervantes, Murillo and so many

²⁹⁵ The expression *Vox populi, vox Dei* appears to be concealed behind these words of Father Luis. This sentence, of ancient tradition, appears already cited by Abad Alcuino, the private tutor of Charlemagne in his *Letter 166*, 9 (cf. PL 100:438).

others as examples that it would be too long-winded to list all of those who joined to their emblems and decorations the Habit of the Seraphic Third Order.

1030 But if this entire noble multitude greatly honors its Mother, the Third Order, there is no comparison to the glory added by the multitude of Pontiffs who wanted to wear their uniform, among whom we can cite the most recent Popes: Pius IX, Leo XIII, Pius X and the immortal Benedict XV. A countless number of Cardinals and Bishops also followed and continue to follow their example, taking great pride in joining to their purple robes and pontifical ornaments the sacred coarse wool habit of the Seraph of Assisi.

REWARDS THAT SAINTLINESS HAS YIELDED

1031 Taking into account, beloved children, the life of virtue that the Holy Founder connects to this lush tree of the Third Order; the fertility of the seraphic land on which it was planted in the vast, rich field of the Church; the careful cultivation given by its farmers, the children of the Seraph of Assisi, and the beneficial influences it receives from the example of the Tertiaries, we should not marvel at the plentiful rewards that saintliness has yielded and yields to Catholicism throughout time.

1032 Enriched by the Church with a variety of means and spiritual resources, appropriate for all the demands of life and social relations through its own condition and constitution, this institution has made the most brilliant rays of saintliness shine over all the conditions and hierarchal levels of the human species, without having been excluded from it by even the most agitated and delicate demands in society.

1033 Its children include, among others, the kings St. Louis, St. Ferdinand, St. Henry, and the two Isabels, the queens of Hungary and Portugal; among the nobles: St. Elzario, count and his spouse, St. Delphina; St. Conrad, gentleman; St. Joan of France, daughter of Luis XI, king of France, and later founder of the Congregation of the Annunciation. Among the priests, St. Ivo, parish priest and legal adviser; among the penitents, St. Rocco and the blessed Gerard of Villangera. Among the merchants; the Blessed Lucius, first tertiary. Among the craftsmen, the Blessed Peter of Sena. Among the Virgins, St. Rosa of Viterbo, St. Clare of Montefalcó, St. Colette, reformer of the second Order by order of the Pope; St. Angela of Mericis, later founder of the Ursulines school; St. Zita, the Blessed Viridian and the Blessed María Francisca of Cinco Llagas. Among the married women and widows, St. Francis of Rome and the Blessed Humiliana, Migulina, Paulina and Angelina. Among the repented and penitents, St. Margaret of Cortona, St. Hyacintha of Mariscotti and the Blessed Angela of Foligno. Nor does this fertile tree lack the beautiful flowers of martyrdom, since its children included: sixteen of the martyrs in Japan who died crucified, the Blessed Raimundo Lulio, martyred in Africa; Peter, the farmer, dead

at the hands of the Turks; Juan Moro, martyred in the land of the Tartars, and many others.

1034 In view, then, of such an admirable multitude of saints and crowned heroes, does it not seem to you, beloved Tertiaries, that with good reason we can tell you, as the Lord did to Moses, that the land you are on is holy: *For the place whereon thou standest is holy ground* (Exodus 3:5).

1035 There is no doubt, beloved children, in view of the admirable spread of the Venerable Third Order, that the vision in which the Lord showed to the Seraphic Father the multiplying of his children referred to the Order in a special way. The Seraphic Father explained it this way: "Do not fear, little flock, because the Lord has shown me that your number is going to multiply considerably. I myself have seen in a revelation the paths and public ways leading to this city of Assisi full of people of all states and conditions. To seek us out the French are coming, the Spanish are rushing, the Germans are running, the English are flying and all languages and nations are approaching in an immense multitude, looking to emulate us and follow our footsteps. The number, in short, of your brothers will be in the future ages so plentiful that it will exceed all figures"²⁹⁶. Proven by the eminent virtue of its founder, its admirable spread and rewards its saintliness has yielded, the Venerable Third Order is a work of the Lord, as St. Bonaventure says²⁹⁷. It is worth asking, beloved children, why there are not the same practical results the order always produced in our times.

1036 There is no doubt that the 13th century, when St. Francis founded this great work, suffered from the same flaws, vices and passions we lament in our own century; internecine wars that devastated it, the insatiable thirst for riches and the complete unleashing of the passions formed its peculiar and distinctive character. The need to channel and direct humanity gone astray from the paths of union, justice and morality inspired the Lord to turn to the great Father St. Francis for the foundation of his Orders, especially the Third Order, whose rule contained the solution to all these evils. Because the Order starts by calling those that profess it brother, so that they do not forget the unity they must have among them, forbids the admission of those who do not love harmony, and orders them to carefully keep the practice of charity themselves and the others, trying to resolve disagreements; try to let go of worldly things in their heart and make proper use of their goods, giving alms to their needy brothers according to their means, and caring for the sick. To save them from the bonds the common enemy uses to bind humanity by encouraging their passions, it prohibits them from attending dangerous shows, the dances, evil reading, immodesty and excessive luxury in clothing and recommend frugality and temperance in meals.

1037 After the peoples heard this evangelical doctrine from this providential man, who they venerated as a saint, and whose examples they were anxious to follow, they enthusiastically embraced it and reformed their habits, conquering

²⁹⁶ Cf. 1C 27, in works cited, p. 158.

²⁹⁷ Cf. LM 4:6, in works cited, p. 401.

the inclination of their heart that, although corrupted, was not perverted and still preserved the treasure of their faith. Therefore, the Third Order can say it was the main means the Divine Providence used made use of in reforming society in the 13th century.

1038 But will we be able to say the same of our unfortunate century? Certainly it imitates and overtakes that one in its vices and passions, but its lack of faith or at least its religious indifference and coldness fails to take advantage of the means the Lord provides it for its social reform. On the contrary, it looks on them indifferently, if not with scorn. Its independent and sensual spirit rejects all institutions which, like the Third Order of Penance, inhibit its abandon and license, and the mere name penance of this Order appalls them; without bearing in mind that the Lord says without penance it is impossible to save yourself. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the Third Order friars are also very numerous in our century. But does it not appear to you, beloved children, that for the most part they do not know from what spirit they are, or the spirit that must animate them, and ignore the obligations their Rule imposes on them. This is why someone who sees so few practical rewards in it and can say: *Thou hast multiplied the nation, and hast not increased the joy* (Isaiah 9:3).

1039 Try then, beloved children, those of you who have the good fortune of belonging to this Venerable Third Order, to go deeply into the spirit of the Seraphic Father, the leader chosen by God to lead his men to salvation, through the practical teaching of the evangelical doctrine, and those who do not form part of his seraphic militia, hurry to put on your sacred cord, which as St. Bernardino says, is the one destine for measuring heaven, and the ladder for climbing to the glory as Lope de Vega say:

*Your cord is Jacob's ladder,
We have seen it, by the knots of its steps,
Climb up to the Empyrean sky
Not giant, but humble;
Because your divine arm
Raises devoted breasts
And humiliates proud breasts.*²⁹⁸

1040 This will be the way most pleasing to God and Father St. Francis to honor the memory of the 700th anniversary of the foundation of the Venerable Third Order, which has given so much glory to the Lord and been so beneficial to society.

And this is also what your Prelate and servant in Christ ardently desires, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe on the Day of the Impression of the Wounds of the Seraphic Father, 17 September 1921.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

²⁹⁸ LOPE DE VEGA: *Poesía a las Llagas*, in EIJAN, S. OFM: *Franciscanismo Ibero-Americano* (Barcelona-Madrid, 1927), p. 71.

29

On Mutual Charity

(B. Seg 42 [1922], pp. 39-52)

“Dearly beloved, let us love one another, for charity is of God” (I John 4:7).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: greetings, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

1041 Beloved children, the apostle St. John, leaning against the breast of the divine Redeemer on the night of the Last Supper, could go into the sanctuary of that divine heart and ignite himself with the fire the Lord himself says he came to bring to Earth: *I am come to cast fire on the earth* (Luke 12:49). There was nothing he beseeched his disciples for more regularly, nor commended them to do, than to practice charity, to such an extent they were surprised and asked why He always preached the same thing. The holy apostle answered: “Because it is a precept of the Lord and if you fulfill it, you have fulfilled the law”²⁹⁹.

1042 In fact, through the catechism you know the precepts of the Ten Commandments are all contained in the love of God and his fellow man, that is, in charity; because God, the beginning from which all things come and the end that all actions must be directed towards, is love, as St. John says: *For God is charity* (I John 4:8). We would not be able to glory in being and staying in Him as long as we do not offer him the worship and veneration, submission and love he demands of us in the first three precepts of his Ten Commandments; and also if we did not love, respect and help man, the child of God, the favorite work of his hands and inheritor of his glory, as the Lord commands us in the other seven precepts. But loving him for who He is, and our fellow man for Him, we are sure of remaining in God, and God in us, as the apostle St. John says, (I John 4:16), and with this we fulfill the entire law, as the Apostle says to the Romans that love is the fullness of the law: *Love therefore is the fulfilling of the law* (Romans 13:10).

1043 Nothing is more necessary, just and rational than the obligation to love God with all our heart, all our soul and all our strength, since in Him we live, and move and are (Acts 17:28). And what must amaze and confound us, beloved children, is that it still was necessary that the Lord impose this love on us by precept, so natural and due to our being. But our amazement must increase after seeing he also wanted to make the obligation of loving our fellow man carry the same obligation as this precept: *And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself* (Matthew 22:39). He loved us so much that he not only created us in his image and likeness, but also made us the heirs of his glory, like beloved children, and purified our poor human nature after its fall from the throne of the Holy Trinity, joining

²⁹⁹ Cf. ST. JEROME: *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, 3:9 in RB, 6th reading of 27 December (cf. PL 26:462).

with the Word in hypostatic union so that man could appropriately pay the debt for his sin and recuperate his lost rights as a son of God.

1044 It is not possible, beloved children, to love God without also loving man, His favorite work, through Him nor to love man with a true love of charity if you disregard the love of God. Both loves are like beams that emanate from the same light, like flowers from the same stem.

1045 Through these two acts of the same love, we are associated to the life of God and known as his true disciples: *By this shall all men know that you are my disciples* (John 13:35).

1046 Once, when humanity was like in its infancy, man needed the Lord to multiply his precepts from the law given by Moses to restrain its disorderly movements and regulate its actions; but now that man has come of age and raised to the rank of Christian and son of God by the Word incarnate, he was given over to his own heart, owing to find in the love of God and his fellow man his only and universal law, which embraces and summarizes all his duties and obligations to them.

1047 Of these two precepts of love that sum up the law of God, we shall occupy ourselves today in the love of fellow man, for finding more obstacles to that love in our heart, the effect of his passions and inclinations towards vice following the sin.

1048 The work and effect of the original sin, beloved children, were to divide and separate man from God and begin the battle with his fellow man and even himself, leading to the greatest misery; because man was created for God and his heart could not have tranquility until it rests in Him, as St. Augustine says³⁰⁰, and without the mutual love of men, peace is impossible, and the world become a poor imitation of hell.

1049 The work, then, of Jesus Christ Our Redeemer, the God of love (I John 4:16), *God is charity*, was of union and charity, pacifying everyone, stopping the enmities between them and reconciling man with his Eternal Father and each other: *And might reconcile both to God in one body by the cross, killing the enmities in himself* (Ephesians 2:16). Reconciling, says the Apostle, both the Jewish and Gentile peoples and uniting them in the mystical body of the Church, he returned to God his eternal Father by the Cross on which he redeemed the people and destroyed, or perhaps through his passion and death, the enmity among men in himself. So now there is no difference, as the Apostle says, between Jews and Greeks, servants and freemen, men and women, because we are all one in Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:28).

This admirable union, beloved children, makes humanity like a single family or single body of which we are all limbs, with Jesus Christ as the head.

1050 The linking together and interdependence we admire in the human body, where each limb carries out its function without disrupting the others at all; all of them hurting when one becomes ill and diligently helping until it is cured,

³⁰⁰ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Confessiones* 1.1: PL 32:661. Cf. 351 521, 663, 966 above; 1510.

and the unselfishness with which each takes only enough food for carrying out its mission, without adversely affecting the others, is what we have to imitate and secure ourselves, as limbs of the mystical body of the Church, for the good order and fulfillment of the precept of the Lord. Because, if you consider man for what he is himself, or as a Christian, relations and bonds for union exist between both that form the links of a chain that strengthens our charity.

1051 In fact, St. Augustine says that every man is the neighbor of his fellow man and, as men, we all have the same origin and acknowledge the same Father who is God³⁰¹. And in order that we all have the same heart, St. John Chrysostom says that we were all composed of the same nature, with a similar body and soul; we inhabit the same earth and feed ourselves from its products the same way³⁰²; therefore, the difference between nobles and plebeians, rich and poor, wise and ignorant, in no way exempts us from the mutual love we must have; on the contrary, the graces and favors which the heavenly Father uses to distinguish some creatures must serve them to employ them for the benefit of their fellow man, since the we have to consider our neighbor as ourselves because he is our brother: *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself* (Matthew 19:19).

1052 However, if by reason of our origin and nature we are obligated to love each other mutually, how much more so for being brothers in Jesus Christ, whose sacrosanct religion joins men together with bonds stronger than those of nature? Because as Christians we are re-created by the baptism; we have the same Father in God and the Church as our Mother; we feed ourselves from the same sacraments; we share equally the inheritance of heaven and we are limbs of the same body, whose head is Jesus Christ.

1053 Cordiality and unity must reign between us then, beloved children, so that we are mutually supportive of one another. The authorities and dignitaries should use them for the benefit and usefulness of their brothers to maintain the order that ensures their peacefulness and well-being; to those the Lord has granted the gift of intelligence and wisdom, by employing these graces in teaching, advising and guiding their fellow man on the path of good; the rich, by protecting them and taking care of their needs to alleviate their poverty, because they are like administrators of the divine Providence and fathers to the poor; and in sum, we must do everything for everyone to obtain their salvation as the Apostle says: *I became all things to all men, that I might save all* (I Corinthians 9:22).

1054 What happiness and well-being the world would experience if, as the Lord commands, we all loved each other! There would be no quarrels or discord because the superior would not abuse his authority, nor would the subject or inferior rise up against him, inspired by the spirit of charity that balances and sustains societies. The opposing camps and factions, which inflame the spirits and bring hatred and enmity even into the bosom of the families, would be cut off at the root; each individual would satisfied or content with their fortune and would

³⁰¹ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Sermon 90*, 7: PL 38:563.

³⁰² Cf. ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: *First Homily to the People of Antioch*, 12: PG 49:33.

respect and not have ambitions for the goods of their neighbor, but instead would defend them as if they were their own, because they would receive a share of the benefits from that. To conclude, beloved children, the practice of charity for your fellow man would make the world like an advance version of heaven, with justice, peace, order and morality, the foundation for well-being and the moral and material progress of nations, reigning over it. To the contrary, the absence of this virtue, which the Divine Redeemer calls a new commandment – *A new commandment I give unto you* (John 13:34) –, causes restlessness, disorder, evil and fierce, fratricidal battles which bring ruin, afflictions and desolation to families, towns and society. We have a quite recent example of this in the horrifying European war, which has completely ruined nations and brought afflictions, mourning and abandonment to countless families. Therefore, not carrying out this divine precept turns the world into an advance version of hell.

1055 And the Lord demands this love of our neighbor to such an extent, beloved children, that we cannot even please him or achieve our salvation without it. As the Apostle says, although speaking the language of the angels to us, even if we had so much faith that we could move mountains, even though we would spend all our days in prayer, even though we would subject our body to fasting and mortification, none of that would serve for anything without charity: *If I have not charity, it profiteth me nothing* (I Corinthians 13:3).

THE COMMANDMENT OF CHARITY

1056 Nonetheless, beloved children, the repugnance our badly inclined heart feels towards the practice of this virtue is great, and so are the excuses it offers for the fulfillment of the precepts.

Some say: How is it possible that I love the ones who have offended and insulted me; those who try to damage me by every means possible, and those who I find repulsive for their unsociable character? And certainly, if we look at man for what he is in himself, yes, many times we would have reason to detest instead of loving him; but we have to look in God, of whom he is the image, and at the price of his pure blood he spilled for him on Calvary, and it is this same Lord who commands that we love him through Him. We do not have to focus, then, on the characteristics of the being, nor in the titles he may have so that we love him; it is in God, through God and for God³⁰³ we have to love him, and no one can deny He who is our Father and our God.

1057 Other pretexts are that the offenses received from the neighbor are so serious it is impossible to forget them, and not having room in your heart for your enemies. But they must bear in mind that God does not order impossible things of his creatures, although for their salvation he demands sacrifices repugnant to their

³⁰³ Cf. 351, 524 above; 1151, 1195, 1307.

passions, and however serious the injuries received were, they shall always be far removed from those the Lord received from the Jews and receives from our sins. He responded to them by asking his eternal Father for forgiveness for all of us, excusing us by saying that we knew not what we did: *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do* (Luke 23:34). And so that no one tries to excuse themselves under the pretext of not being able to imitate the infinite perfection of the Living God, the Lord shows us a multitude of examples of men of our nature who, in the midst of the worst insults, offenses, and slanders, enduring torture and death at the hands of their enemies, knew, as St. Steven did, to ask the Lord not to hold that sin against them: *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge* (Acts 7:59).

1058 There also is no shortage of people who say the ease of forgiving the offenses is a motive for our enemies to become more insolent by judging that our act is faint-hearted and cowardly. But how much to the contrary, beloved children! Because for the heart of the man in whom the Lord has engraved the gratitude, these mercies are like burning arrows which light the fire of charity within them and ends by converting the rapacious wolf into a gentle lamb.

1059 Our Creator is likewise the creator of the law and cannot impose on us any precept which we cannot fulfill; therefore, all these and other pretexts that are pride and arrogance and advise revenge, will never prevail against the eternally strong and steady commandment of Jesus Christ, who says you shall love your neighbor: *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself* (Matthew 19:19).

* * *

1060 But how must we love our neighbor? The measure the Lord sets for this love for us, beloved children, is the same that we profess to ourselves: *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself* (Matthew 19:19). Therefore, it must be a sincere, heartfelt and effective love, one that is made evident in works.

1061 How much interest and concern we display in trying to secure our well-being, usefulness and benefit in everything! We desire and seek to be esteemed and held in high regard, in accordance with the advice in Ecclesiasticus, which says: "Take care of your good name, because this shall be more permanent to you than a thousand great and precious treasures" (Ecclesiasticus 41:15)³⁰⁴. We also want that others be benevolent and indulgent in bearing our faults, and even more that they go unnoticed by them; all effects of the sincere, heartfelt love we profess. Because we love our neighbor in the same way and with the same interest, as St. Augustine says: *Attende quantum te diligis, et sic dilige proximum*³⁰⁵.

1062 How many arguments and troubles we would avoid by following this rule of charity: Since we have to live in society and all of us, without exception, are riddled with faults, and we think and are different from one another in everything,

³⁰⁴ Cf. in the *Jerusalem Bible*: Sirach 41:12.

³⁰⁵ Cf. St. Augustine: *City of God*, 1:20, where he declares: "Regulam diligendi proximum a semetipso dilector accepit" (cf. PL 41:34).

this has to be a motive of great mortification for everyone; the infinite wisdom of the Lord intending it that way in order to purify and sanctify us. In the same way we want the others to put up with us and desire the their charity toward us, let us practice it with our brothers, being benevolent and indulgent with them, and this way we shall fulfill the law of the Lord as the Apostle says: *Bear ye one another's burdens; and so you shall fulfill the law of Christ* (Galatians 6:2).

1063 But this still is not enough, beloved children. It is also necessary that our charity towards our fellow man is also made known through works: giving them comfort in their afflictions, a cure for their ills and assistance with their poverty. Is this not what we desire and look for with so much interest for ourselves? If our spirit is abased and afflicted by some tribulation, how much diligence do we show in seeking the consolation of some friend by pouring out our heart to him? If we feel ill, we want others to help us and promptly and diligently apply the necessary remedies to cure us, and in our poverty and need, how good we know it is to express them to move our fellow man to compassion and find help in them! Very well: let us have this same concern towards our brothers, whom we must love not only in word, but also and mainly through works: *Let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed, and in truth* (I John 3:18).

1064 How pleasing and delightful life in society would be, beloved children, if all men loved each other and we lived as brothers! *Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity* (Psalm 132:1). Although there would be poor and rich men, as it can be no other way, since the theory of equality is a myth, because the Lord says: "You shall always have the poor among you" (Matthew 26:11); but without the existence of the interest that separates men so much, nor egotism and ambition, there would not be factions and divisions; worldly goods would be called common because, imitating the early Christians, we would help each mutually, charity would cover our eyes to the faults of our neighbor and feelings of envy, hatred and resentment, the cause of so many disturbances in society, would be banished from our hearts. But, unfortunately, everything happens to the contrary: the despicable interest breaks the bonds of unity and love even among the closest friends; envy and ambition corrode the entrails of men and light the fire of discord, which consumes and destroys families and peoples; people look on the disgraces and misfortunes of their neighbors with indifference and the hardened heart of men makes them insensitive to any feeling of commiseration, and in this way the world is marching to its complete ruin.

1065 However, how do we cure such great evils? Only the fire of charity, as the Lord says he came to set aflame on earth³⁰⁶, can purify it from so much misery and make the hearts of men burn with the same divine love, and through God, the love of their neighbors.

1066 On our part, beloved children, let us try to love each other mutually, as the apostle St. John orders us, for charity is a precept of God: *Let us love one another,*

³⁰⁶ Cr. Luke 12:49.

for charity is of God" (1 John 4:7), and in this way we shall fulfill the will of the Lord, contribute to social peace and shall be happy temporarily and eternally, which is what your Prelate desires, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the Sunday of the 50th Anniversary, on 26 February of the year of your Lord 1922.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

30

The Christian Family

(B. Seg 42 [1922], pp. 151-168)

"A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can an evil tree bring forth good fruit"(Matthew 7:18).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: greetings, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

1067 There is a general regret among all thinking men of Christian sentiments, beloved children, when considering the dizzying speed with which society is rushing to the abyss of its ruin and damnation along the path of religious indifference, licentiousness and the most depraved customs. The crass ignorance of the most elementary truths of religion in the majority of people, even those who presume to be learned; the unrestrained appetite for material goods and pleasures, without thinking of the afterlife at all; the breakdown of customs, even among women, and the lack of respect, if not rejection, of all authority, all this makes one fear the most complete ruin of this perverse society without a solution from high that may straighten and direct its footsteps to the way of good.

1068 However, if we want to inquire about the cause and origin of this deplorable state of society, we will necessarily have to focus, beloved children, on the behavior, the way of ruling and governing families in present-day society. Yes, because the family is the base and society depends on it, that it will be prosperous and happy when the families that make it up are strong and powerful through compliance with the law and the fear of God, or degraded and lost like in the present, the effect of the depraved customs in the family. As the Apostle says, if the yeast is pure, so is the dough also, and if the root is holy, so are the branches (Romans 11:16). But no bad tree will ever give good fruits, as St. Matthew says: (Matthew 7:18).

1069 Oh, admirable power of the family! In the end like a work of the divine wisdom, which places at the top of it the most august and indisputable authority on earth, after that of God, the father; absolute, but without despotism and tempered

with the sweetness of love. And at the bottom, the most noble of servants in the child who, obeying from love, does not feel the weight of the scepter of parental justice, but blesses it beforehand as a means to assure his happiness and glory. But to connect even more their union, the woman was established as a powerful mediator, who the father could not deny for being his wife, nor the child for being his mother, to whom after God he owes his life for having given him her blood, milk, heart and life itself.

1070 It is not surprising, then, that the common enemy has tried to take control of the family by means of unfaithfulness and lack of religious feeling, in order to take over society and achieve its depraved goals of ruin and damnation. And to that end he has tried to separate the man, the chief and head of the family, from the family as much as possible by adding to his multiple businesses and occupations the uncontrolled longing for pastimes and diversions in gambling, casinos and other centers of damnation which make him neglect his duties and damage family life.

1071 The infernal enemy has also injected with his venom the woman, always a model of religious feeling, devotion, zeal and vigilance over the family, making her forget her reserve, neglect and abandon her religious practices and not attend to the education and training of her children, who she sometimes puts in the gravest danger of condemnation by encouraging their passions and not separating them from the dangers.

1072 With this behavior by the parents, beloved children, we do not have to be amazed that the enemy has so many converts among the youth. "How do you expect me, father," a young libertine asked me, "to act differently if I never saw a good example in my house?" From that source come the uncontrolled passions that one observes in young people of both sexes; the even greater lack of reserve and modesty in the women, the lack of fulfillment and ignorance of their religious duties and the insubordination and lack of respect of all authority.

1073 Is this not, beloved children, the portrait of the majority of families in our present-day society? For their reform, it is advisable to remind them of the nobility of their mission, the reciprocal duties of each one of its members and the virtues that have to make them great, strong and useful to society, which we are going to occupy ourselves with in this sermon.

MISSION OF THE FATHER

1074 Oh, beloved children, if the man would consider the nobility of his mission at the head of the family! Because the authority and royalty of his fatherhood cannot be compared to the greatest authorities on earth, not even royalty, no matter how much brilliance, splendor and grandeur that covers them. Because if all of them come from God, the source and origin of all authority, as the Apostle says, *For there is no power but from God* (Romans 13:1); but fatherhood is founded

in the absolute dependence that the son has on him as the creator of his being, after God, which adds to man his creative power by granting him the prerogative of reproducing himself in other beings similar to him, and to his providence by making him responsible for his nourishment, direction and care. In the same way that the Lord acts on the universe, He wants the man to support that in the family. Can you conceive of a greater authority and position?

1075 Another consideration, beloved children, that will also make his greatness known to us is this: as the Catholic marriage represents the union of Christ with his Church, with Jesus Christ as the head, the man is in the family in the same way. However, how many and how great are the prerogatives of the head in the human body? While each of the limbs have functions and perfections that are their own, the head brings together and summarizes all of them; it also has superiority over the other limbs which it rules, directs and governs, since as the center, the life influences and forces for carrying out their functions leave from the head and are distributed to the other limbs. All this is for the Church and for ourselves, its limbs, and our divine head Jesus Christ; and the father is the same with respect to his family.

1076 The intelligence of the father, the maturity of his advice and the example of his actions ensure the perfection of the family and establish him as the centre of strength of its members. The authority resides in him, and therefore he regulates, organizes, defends, warns and punishes for the good (as in the beginning) the individuals of his family. And in him, through him and by him, as in the beginning, God wants his life and well-being to come from the family.

1077 Yes, beloved fathers; your authority is sovereign and revered due to its origin, since you represent God, and is the most absolute and independent, recognizing no limits beyond what is forbidden by the Lord. But take in consideration the great responsibility that governing your family demands. You are surrounded by souls which take their support from your own; by hearts which are intimately united to your own, and by lives which place all their safety, protection and strength in you; act then in a manner that you do not disappoint their hopes or the noble designs of the Lord for you and your family. You have tied your infinite wisdom to it with the strong link of love, so that through it you treat your spouses as partners and not as slaves, your children as fathers and not as tyrants, and this love sweetens the bitterness that comes from being banished in this vale of tears and the ones inherent to the state of marriage and the care the education of your children demands.

1078 Oh, if everyone would understand the nobility of your mission and the tremendous responsibility it imposes, how fortunate and happy would your families be! Because seeing your concern and care in helping the needs of their body and soul, they would happily deposit in you all their confidence and love, respect and venerate your authority. They would be your honor and crown and you would deserve the applause and blessing of society, whose happiness or misfortune depends on the families which compose it.

MISSION OF THE MOTHER

1079 But the noble and difficult mission of the father in the family needed, beloved children, an aid and support that ensures the effects of his education on the children. The sacred text says it was not a good idea for man to be alone, and after the Lord gave him a companion who resembles him and made her the mother of his offspring, he wanted to share with her the great responsibility of the education of his children. Therefore if the man is considered as the king of the family, the woman is the queen, albeit with the due dependence on her husband. And if man is the head of this social body, the mother carries out the functions of the heart, being the helper and comfort of her husband and the refuge and protection of their children.

1080 The primary concern of the wife should and has to be to value her appeal towards her husband, for his good and those of her children, guiding them onto the path of virtue and saintliness, and arrange the wise and correct administration of her home.

1081 The secret means she can use to conquer the will of her husband and make him practice good is love; the appeal that God has supplied for the good of the family. This is why St. Paul, in his letter to Titus, asks him to advise the young women to love their husbands (Titus 2:4). Such is the strength and appeal of this love, that even if the man moves as far as unfaithfulness, the faithful woman sanctifies him as the Apostle himself says to the Corinthians: *For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife* (I Corinthians 7:14). An example of this is St. Cecilia, who converted her Gentile spouse Valeriano into a fervent Christian and sealed his faith with her blood³⁰⁷, and St. Rita of Cascia, who changed her husband into a gentle lamb after she endure a true martyrdom because of his evil nature³⁰⁸.

1082 Yes, Christian wives; you shall fulfill the noble mission of saving your spouses entrusted to you by the Lord through the practice of love and the virtues. Since the scent of virtue is so appealing for everyone, who instinctively move to imitate it, what influence will you not exert over the heart of the one who gave himself to you without reservation: You have to try to win over his will with submission and obedience, to soften his displeasure and troubles with kindness and sweetness; the lack of moderation of his nature with patience and silence and to be modest in your dress, prudent and reserved in your behavior with others, quiet and hardworking in your homes and economical administrators of the interests of the family.

1083 Do not believe that extraordinary luxury, or your lavish hair style, or the ornaments and jewels are ties which unite you more intimately to your husbands. They are more likely to be the cause of troubles and arguments in the marriage

³⁰⁷ Cf. RB., 4th, 5th and 6th readings of 22 November. Cf. 920 above.

³⁰⁸ Cf. *Life of Saint Rita*, cap. 1, n.2, in *Acta Sanctorum*, May, t. V, p. 226.

instead, for the suspicions they can breed and the extravagance and extraordinary costs involved. Convince yourselves that the main ornament that makes a woman lovely, and especially the married woman, is modesty and reserve, which has inestimable value and they give you the influence necessary to lead your husband on the path of good.

1084 But the married woman does not only have to secure the salvation of her husband but also shares with him the responsibility for the education of their children, on which their salvation depends. Since the Lord does not bestow children only to populate the earth, but first and foremost so they may enjoy Him in Heaven, a goal the parents should aim for with all due care and vigilance, attending to their instruction and correction and to serve as a norm for them through their example.

1085 However, this religious instruction corresponds to the mother in a special way, because of the greater influence she has over her children and since she is entrusted with the child in its earliest years, and must be the teacher who teaches the child to know, love and serve God from the moment the child is capable of using their reason. She has to shape, so to speak, the heart of the little one; because, like soft wax, it is possible to engrave ideas and sentiments in the heart at such an early age that will be difficult to lose over their entire life, because as Solomon says in the Proverbs, *A young man according to his way, even when he is old he will not depart from it* (Proverbs 22:6). She must therefore make her child see that there is a Supreme Being who is the Creator of all that exists, in whom we live, move and are; that in one single God are three different and equal people, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; that the second person of this holy Trinity became incarnate for us, washing away our sins with his blood, and with his death on the Cross, He opened to us the doors to Heaven to us, closed before for us by the sin of our first parents; and that this Lord has to be the Supreme Judge who judges our works, giving us the reward or eternal sorrow according to them. The mother also has to try to instill in the heart of her child a great horror of sin, the only and true evil; imitating Blanche, the mother of St. Louis, king of France, who, while cradling him in her arms told him, "I would want more, my child, to see you deprived of your kingdom and even dead in my arms than to see you fallen into mortal sin"³⁰⁹.

1086 The mother has to join this instruction, the base of religious and social education of the child, to correction, in accordance with the advice of the Apostle to the Ephesians: *Bring them up in the discipline and correction of the Lord* (Ephesians 6:4), because the lack of correction is the cause of young people abandoning themselves to all their whims and excesses. But she has to be prudent, knowing how to distinguish in punishing the faults committed out of malice from those by frailty or lack of reflection; and joining to the determination of character to the sweetness and kindness that wins the heart of the child, so the correction does not exasperate them but instead makes them recognize their guilt and correct themselves, in accordance with the advice of the Apostle who says: *Provoke not your children to*

³⁰⁹ Cf. *Life of St. Louis I*, Chapter 1, n. 6; and *Life of St. Louis II*, Chapter 1, n. 10, in *Acta Sanctorum*, August, Vol. V, pp 543 and 574, respectively.

anger (Ephesians 6:4). And in case the angered father maximizes the punishment of the child, the mother should not forget her role as the mediator between them, easing the penalty without diminishing the paternal authority.

1087 But I said that in addition to the instruction and correction of their children, the parents have to try to serve as examples for the education of their children, so that they do not destroy with one hand what they are building with the other. The children have to receive this most directly from you, mothers of the family, since you are the mirror that they continuously look at and they repeat your words like an echo. If you want your children to be devout, pious, humble, uncomplaining and respectful, you must lead by example, for this is the best preacher and its power of persuasion is irresistible.

1088 By acting this way, you are fulfilling your noble mission of being the comfort and support of your husbands and guide your children along the path of salvation like angels.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE CHILDREN

1089 If the obligations and responsibilities of the parents in educating their children are great, the veneration and respect that you, beloved youth, owe to the creators of your existence who, after God, you are indebted to for everything you are and have. This obligation the Lord not only engraved in your hearts, as your parent engraved their love in their children, but also expressly recorded it in his holy law as a solemn precept, *Honor thy father and thy mother* (Exodus 20:12). And what can be more reasonable than to reciprocate love with love? There is no other currency with which you can pay back love than with love. So if the love of the parents is so great it does not exclude any sacrifice for the good of their children, and forgetting about themselves, they sacrifice their rest, peace, health and even their life for them, how will the children ever be able to pay back such a great debt to the creators of their being, if not by fulfilling this precept of the Lord: You shall honor your father and mother?

1090 But the merciful Lord, to encourage more the fulfillment of this precept, even offers a reward in this world; promising a long life to those children who honor their parents and all sorts of good fortune: *That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest be long lived upon earth* (Ephesians 6:3).

1091 However, what does this honor have to consist of? First, beloved children, in paying them the respect they are due. In your parents you have to look to God, whose paternity they represent, and He receives the honors you pay to your parents, as well as the instances of lack of submission and respect, as if they were made to Him. Therefore, if you fear God, you should honor and respect your parents in Him and through Him, since the Lord commands us to do this: *He that feareth the Lord, honoureth his parents* (Ecclasticus 3:8). You have to show this respect by speaking to them modestly and humbly; listening and receiving submissively their

warnings and punishments; suffering their shortcomings patiently and trying to hide them from others; carefully avoiding all that may sadden them; coming to their defense when other are slandering or persecuting them; helping them with their needs; being their comfort and support in old age, and diligently attending to them during their illnesses so that they lack for nothing either physically or spiritually until they close their eyes at death and give them a Christian burial.

1092 But you especially have to show them respect by always being obedient to them as the Lord commands you through the apostle St. Paul, saying: *Children, obey your parents in all things* (Colossians 3:20). This is so reasonable that St. Peter Chrysologus says: "A child stops being one when he lacks obedience to his parents, and becomes like a monster of nature, unworthy to hold a place in it"³¹⁰. And truthfully, if you look at the beings in nature, you see all of them are subordinated and keeping the due order of inferior to the superior, which serves as a rule and example for man who, as a rational and intelligent being, should defend this submission and dependence arranged by the Lord more than anyone.

1093 And look at what the Apostle says they have to obey in all things³¹¹, taking for granted that there will not be parents so heartless and ignorant of their duty that they order their children to do whatever against the Law of God. This is what limits their authority and the case when you must answer them respectfully: "It is not justifiable to obey men against the will of God"³¹².

1094 I told you, beloved youths, that the Lord, to encourage you towards respect and obedience towards your parents, promises you a long life and good fortune in this world. But experience will also teach you that inevitably the children of your children receive what they did with their parents; and to act against this precept is a sin the Lord does not wait to punish in the other world. We have an infinite number of examples of this; but it is enough to mention the curse that fell upon Ham, the son of Noah, for having lacked respect for his father and mocking him, and left Ham and his descendants subject to the insulting servitude of his brothers³¹³. And Absalom, the son of David, ambitious for the kingdom of his father, rose up in armed rebellion against him and proclaimed himself king; but the Lord ridiculed his intentions with a terrible defeat of his armies, and arranged that in his hurried flight he was left hanging by his hair in a tree to be killed by a general of David's army who ran him through with a spear³¹⁴. These are powerful examples that should make you tremble, beloved children, fearing the justice of the Lord that demonstrates itself to be so terrible in punishing this sin, even in this world.

1095 Love your parents, then, as in fairness you are obligated to because they are the representatives of God with respect to you. Honor and respect them, listening to the instructions of your mother, as Solomon says: *My son, hear the*

³¹⁰ ST. PETER CHRYSOLOGUS: *Sermon 123*: PL 52:537.

³¹¹ Cf. Colossians 3:20.

³¹² Acts 4:19.

³¹³ Cf. Genesis 9:25.

³¹⁴ Cf. 2 Samuel 18:9-15.

instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother (Proverbs 1:8), so that the Lord may shed his graces abundantly upon you, for doing what is pleasing to divine eyes, being kind to your parent and exemplary and useful citizens to society. *That grace may be added to thy head* (Proverbs 1:9).

THE FAMILIES OF TODAY

1096 If the individuals making up the families faithfully fulfilled the respective duties the Lord imposes on them, and look to the divine family of Nazareth as the model He gives them as the model for imitation, what good fortune, peace and happiness would the world enjoy, and how these families would influence even the material progress of society! But, unfortunately, there are few solidly Christian families that are not contaminated by the poisonous virus of unrestrained freedom, which the common enemy has tried to infiltrate them in order to turn society upside down and separate it from Jesus Christ.

1097 It has managed to separate the man of the house from the family, where members of the family fatigued from their work found their rest, the solace and comfort of their hearts and their sorrows and afflictions were alleviated. Instead, they have taken him to other centers, which are called of culture and civilization, to the detriment of his religious feeling and faith, increasing his vices and passions and reducing his conjugal and paternal affection. How many fathers, unfortunately, today live their lives in the casinos, taverns and other centers of damnation, completely forgetting their most solemn duties! How many poor wives cry inconsolably over the lies, squandering of money and abandonment their husbands leave to them and their children! How many children do you see without money, badly spoken, disrespectful and outrageous, the effects of the bad example of their parents and the lack of education and correction they should have given them!

1098 The damages these fathers give rise to are incalculable, beloved children, not only to the families but also to society, which cannot expect more of their descendents than individuals who grow ever worse over time, and are the humiliation and dishonor of society.

1099 There is no doubt that prudent and virtuous mothers can moderate these bad effects. But tell me, is not the abandonment of children by mothers and neglect of their education unfortunately also very common today? Like faith and devoutness, which always were characteristic of women, many women are being lost, contaminated by the infection of indifference everywhere you turn; it happens when they are lacking in the virtues that inhibit the passions and devote themselves to pastimes, diversions and vanities, forgetting their duties and the seclusion proper to the married woman, which recommended them so highly on the day of their betrothal. And thereby they look at the attention the education of their children as an unbearable burden and entrust it to strangers or, even worse, they abandon their children to their whims and cravings.

1100 What can you expect of a society where the heads of the families that make it up ignore and failing to carry out such sacred duties? And what shall become of their descendants so lacking the necessary education? It is an enormous disgrace for children to be born of such parents, who place them in the gravest danger of damnation; but that would be for them, as the Lord says through Moses in the book of Exodus: soul for soul. *Life for life* (Exodus 21:23). From that, one can deduce that if the children are lost through their guilt or negligence, the parents shall also be damned with them.

1101 Beloved children, thinking of the future of this society saddens and horrifies us, observing the religious ignorance of youth and, as a result, the unleashing of their passions; the lack of submissiveness and respect for all authority, their provocative and blasphemous language and the lack of self-respect and modesty even in the young people. What can we expect from and what will the generations be like who are born from this one? The family is the source that forms the society and homeland. If it is perverted in its intelligence, corrupted in its heart, mean and despicable in its blood, neither material progress nor the greatest inventions or wisest laws will be enough to hold back the degradation of society and the ruin of the homeland.

1102 What is the remedy, then? Only by returning to Jesus Christ and practicing his holy doctrine, beloved children, will we have a cure for the ills of our society. Let us all focus our gaze on the model of the Holy Family the Eternal Father gives us all to imitate. Let the young people learn from the Child Jesus by his submissiveness and obedience to Mary and Joseph: *And was subject to them* (Luke 2:51). Let the mothers learn from the Holy Virgin by the seclusion, industriousness, and all-encompassing dependence on the Patriarch St. Joseph. And you, family men, follow the steps of the holy Patriarch in his paternal efforts and concern in order to fulfill the most noble mission the Lord entrusted to him as the head of the Holy Family.

1103 If you do this, we will have Christian families that are the support and foundation of society; and after fulfilling this noble mission the Lord entrusts you with, you shall receive the reward that He is reserving for you in Heaven; which is what your Prelate and servant of Christ desires, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the day of the apostle St. Andrew, 30 November 1922.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

31

On the Spiritual Enemies

(B. Seg 43 [1923]), pp. 21-33

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he hath been proved, he shall receive a crown of life” (James 1:12).

To the faithful of our beloved diocese: greetings, peace and blessings in Jesus Christ our Lord.

1104 How rightly did St. Job say, beloved children, that the life of man is a warfare upon earth: *The life of man upon earth is a warfare* (Job 7:1). Warfare, yes, but in a perennial war; because his enemies and fight him and will fight relentlessly and without rest as long as his life lasts; time enough that they can make it their prisoner, because once life is over, they can do nothing against the soul, whose outcome is already determined!

1105 But what formidable, astute and well-armed enemies man to has face, beloved children! There is the world, whose charms attract the heart like a magnet; the devil, compared with the lion for his fury by the apostle St. Peter: *As a roaring lion* (I Peter 5:8), and the flesh, the worst of all, as the Catechism says, because we cannot rid ourselves of it and it plots with the other two to achieve our damnation and ruin.

1106 We are right, then, to cry out like the Apostles when they believed they would perish from the raging sea: “Save us Lord, for we are perishing!” *Lord, save us, we perish* (Matthew 8:25).

1107 But let it be understood that it is advisable for our justification that we suffer oppression, afflictions and temptation in the world because the soul is purified through them, like gold in the crucible; and our divine Redeemer also wanted to enter into his Kingdom by this path, to be our model and example. *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?* (Luke 24:26).

1108 Do not faint or grow weak in spirit considering our frailty and feeble powers; but if it is true that we are not capable of anything ourselves, as the Apostle says, and even less against such formidable enemies. But it is also true that we are not alone in this struggle but have the Lord on our side, with whose help we are capable of everything, as the Apostle himself says: *I can do all these things in Him who strengtheneth me* (Philippians 4:13).

1109 And we cannot doubt that the Lord wants to help us because He himself, who is the infallible truth, says to us through St. John: “You shall suffer pressures in the world, but trust in me because I vanquished the world” *In the world you shall have distress: but have confidence, I have overcome the world* (John 16:33).

1110 What does matter greatly, beloved children, is to be alert and watchful, as the apostle St. Peter warns us: *Be sober and watch* (I Peter 5:8), since this way the tribulations and persecutions will not leave a mark on our spirit, strengthened by

the grace, but on the contrary will increase our merit and the reward that, according to the apostle James, is promised us in Heaven: *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he hath been proved, he shall receive a crown of life* (James 1:12).

1111 However, as St. Gregory says: “The evils that you foresee are less disturbing when they arrive; nor do the spears you see coming wound you as much” (Homily 35)³¹⁵, it is advisable that we concern ourselves, beloved children, with considering the usual cunning arguments of our enemies and the points where they frequently attack us so that they find us forewarned and ready for combat, which is what we propose to do in this sermon.

1112 This fierce war that the world declares against the true disciples of Jesus Christ should not surprise us, because the Lord himself warned us through St. John: You shall suffer persecution in the world because there is no servant greater than his master, and if they persecuted Him, they shall also persecute us: *If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you* (John 15:20).

1113 As the Christian life is a continuous reproach to that of the worldly and the example of the Christian virtues reveals and throws into sharp relief their own excesses and passions, they strive to bring them over to their side, to make their behavior honest and quiet their conscience, attacking each one according to his principles and inclinations. They try to make those people who are not firmly grounded in the truths of religion, they try to make them lose what little faith they have by using sophisms and errors or at least introduce doubt and suspicion into their spirits, so that they receive with prejudice the light the Lord informs them of through his ministers, and fall into indifference and skepticism. Yes, beloved children, religious ignorance is one of the main causes that the unfaithful make use of to gain more converts. And however great the paradox may seem to you that we would argue about ignorance in a century that presumes to so much erudition and progress and so many inventions, it is nevertheless true that these material advances that are blessed by religion often distances men from it. Conceited and presumptuous, they now believe they are capable of everything and look with disdain and scorn on the dogmatic truths they cannot understand with their poor reason; and try to communicate their skepticism to others with impious and malicious writings which fascinate and seduce many poor, ignorant people.

1114 But if their poisoned spears cannot make a mark in those who are well grounded in the faith, the worldly then try satanic jokes and criticism against them to dissuade them from following the path of good out of an excessive regard for what other people think of them. They judge their acts of humility, submission and respect to come from hypocrisy and weakness of spirit; their modesty and seclusion, from stupidity and lack of civilization; if they carry out works of charity, they brand them for seeking popularity and a good name, and as for mortification and penance, in addition to considering them imprudent, they make them the object of their jokes and satires. This happened to father St. Francis who, after one

³¹⁵ ST. GREGORY: *Homily 35 of the Gospels*: PL 76:1259.

of his brothers saw him numb from cold during a severe winter, asked him if he wanted to sell him a little sweat, to which the Saint replied he had already sold it to Jesus Christ our Lord³¹⁶. And in the same way, some youths were making fun of a poor friar, telling him: "Father, what a disappointment for you if there is no Heaven," and the friar replied: "The disappointment will be yours, my children, because there is a hell".

1115 If the worldly do not succeed in dissuading the good from walking along the path of good and the practice of virtue this way, either, they then try to dazzle them with the false brilliance of material goods and riches and promoting vanity and arrogance with honors and ranks, which attempt to give to their followers what the devil also suggested and offered in his temptations to the Divine Redeemer. And this is unfortunately where he gains the most converts, beloved children. The heart of man naturally longs for happiness, and if it is diverted from the only way that can lead us to happiness, which is virtue and the practice of good; believing that he is finding that in these false goods the world offers, he races anxiously to satiate himself with them. But he very quickly experiences the emptiness they leave afterward and is convince they are more like thorns which puncture the heart and those who love them will never receive any fruit from them. *He that loveth riches shall reap no fruit from them* (Ecclesiastes 5:9).

1116 Do not take the world for conquered if the children of God turn their backs to the false goods they offer, but instead, imitating the tyrants who, after seeing how the Christian rejected the good and pleasures they offered them, turned their fury upon them and tried all sorts of persecutions and tortures to subdue them and make them abandon their beliefs; in the same way the world lays siege to them from all sides with insults, slanders, threats and all sorts of humiliations, as the divine Redeemer already warned us and also told us not to be fearful and have faith, because he had conquered the world: *In the world you shall have distress: but have confidence, I have overcome the world* (John 16:33). And if God is with us and aids us with his grace, who can overcome us? *If God be for us, who is against us?* (Romans 8:31). Not the tribulation, anguish, hunger, nakedness, danger, persecution or the sword shall be able to conquer us, but instead everything will be overcome through the love of the Lord that loved us so much, as the Apostle himself says (Romans 8:35-37).

1117 But the world is not the most formidable enemy for us, beloved children, because even though we live in it, we can easily detach ourselves from its illusions and charms, understanding its line and vanity. We have to have greater prevention and care in escaping and distancing ourselves from the cunningness and deceptions of our common enemy the devil, who turns himself into an angel of light to more easily drag us to our ruin and damnation.

1118 When the devil attacks us with infernal fury, beloved children, even more than our damnation he intends to go against the will of the Lord, which is

³¹⁶ Cf. 2C, in works cited, p. 237; TC 23, in works cited, p. 546. Cf. 1282.

what saves all of us and brings us to knowledge of the truth, as the apostle St. Paul says (I Timothy 2:4).

1119 His arrogance cannot view indifferently how man, by nature inferior to the angels, occupies the seat which he lost by his rebellion against God: and in spite of having achieved that man would also lose the right to the glory by disobeying the Lord, God himself has again opened his doors to man, sending his own Son for their rescue. From that comes the desire and determination to have vengeance on the Lord; but since that is impossible, the effort to ruin the reward of the precious blood of the Redeemer, losing the souls for whom he spilled His blood. A terrible enemy, beloved children, since, in spite of his fall, he preserves the exhaustible resources of his angelic nature so his power and strength are great and his activity and insight enormous. Therefore David calls the infernal spirits mighty: *The mighty have rushed in on me* (Psalm 58:4), and Jesus Christ Our Lord called Satan strongly armed: *A strong man armed*³¹⁷ and the prince of this world: *The prince of this world* (John 12:31). This is why the apostle St. Paul tells us that we do not battle only against the flesh and blood, or against men and the passions, but against the devils instead, evil spirits who are called princes and authorities and rectors of this world of darkness: *For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and power, against the rulers of the world of this darkness* (Ephesians 6:12).

1120 And what means does our adversary use to tempt us? First, he studies in depth the weak part of our soul and directs his well-aimed shots there; like any skillful leader who in order to attack a fortress examines and looks for the point that offers the least resistance, they usually tempt us with the vices they see we are most inclined towards. If they discover in our heart a spark of excessive love for the creatures, or an aversion and repugnance towards them, they encourage the fire of passion in it right away, which eventually turns into a devastating volcano that makes the love or hate reach the point of madness.

1121 Secondly, they do not often propose in the beginning any clear and obvious evil in order not to prejudice us against it, but rather propose something that has the appearance of good; that way, obviously and with slight flaws which sometimes pass unnoticed in unrefined consciences, it goes making our heart incline more and more towards passion, infiltrating the poison of the vices in it, until it becomes their slave. In the manner of a foul and deadly vapor, slipping in and mixing with the air and imperceptible to our senses, it goes on insinuating its venom into the heart.

1122 And finally, he ties and wraps up those he manages to make fall in his webs, like the spider and the fly, into the bonds of presumption making them see that the mercy of the Lord will not let them be lost, or out of desperation, like Cain, suggesting to them the idea that due to the enormous side of their sin they cannot expect forgiveness³¹⁸.

³¹⁷ Cf. Luke 11:21-22.

³¹⁸ Cf. Genesis 4:13.

1123 We would truly have reason to doubt our victory, beloved children, in such a terrible struggle battle between unevenly matched fighting forces if we were only counting on our strengths, since we are not capable of anything by ourselves, as St. Paul said. But the Lord is there for us, and with him we are capable of all things as the Apostle says: *I can do all these things in Him who strengtheneth me* (Philippians 4:13). And He will not allow us to be tempted above our strength: *Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able* (I Corinthians 10:13). With this hope, St. Anthony the Abbot, when a multitude of infernal spirits in horrible forms presented themselves before him to tempt him, told them: "If you were able to do as much as you show, any one of you alone would be enough against me; but since you cannot do more than what God permits you, that is why you assemble such a mob"³¹⁹.

1124 Nor should it surprise you, beloved children, that the Lord allows such a rough test of his creatures because Jesus Christ himself, our model, also wanted to be tempted to encourage us in the battle and teach us the way to fight against our enemies, at the same time making us see the usefulness that temptation yields for us since, when resisted with the help of grace, it is followed by the prize and crown of the glory. For that reason, the more pleasing and acceptable the being is to God, the more embattled he is by his enemies, as the angel St. Raphael made clear to Tobit, telling him: "And because thou wast acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should prove thee" (Tobit 12:13)³²⁰. And the Lord wanted to make known to us the same in the temptations and humiliations he allowed St. Job to suffer at the hand of the devil, and this is why, after being proven, like gold in the crucible, temptation yielded such great worldly and eternal goods³²¹.

1125 We must not then, beloved children, fear the devil much, who is compared by St. Augustine to a tied-up dog who can only bite someone who voluntarily wants to approach it³²². Because, in fact, the Lord tied him and his holy Cross held him, so that he could not do any damage except to the degree someone wanted to deliver themselves to him. Better that we should fear ourselves, whose corrupt nature gives weapons to the enemy to conquer us. This is why it joins forces with our rebellious flesh, whose uncontrolled appetites it encourages and stimulates so their shots can be more accurate against their prey. And the reason why the Catechism teaches us the flesh is the worst of all the enemies of our soul.

* * *

1126 And in fact, beloved children, because we can flee and save ourselves from the world and the devil more easily; but with our soul imprisoned in this

³¹⁹ Cf. ST. ATHANASIUS: *Life of St. Anthony*, 9; PG 26:858. Cf. 774 above.

³²⁰ Reading of the Vulgate considered an addition by the Jerusalem Bible.

³²¹ Cf. Job 23:10.

³²² Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: Sermon 37, 6: Pl 39:1820 (cf. in RB, 4th reading of the 4th Sunday after Pentecost). Cf. 774 above; 1333.

corruptible body, whose inclinations and passions fascinate it and drag it towards evil, who will be able to free it from the dangers and eternal death it is leading us to: *Who shall free me from this body of death?* (Romans 7:24).

1127 How many victories has the common enemy won over man throughout time, by exciting and encouraging his passions and uncontrolled appetites? Our first parents were tempted by greed with the forbidden fruit and it succeeded in making them disobey the Lord and be thrown out of Paradise. Inciting men to satisfy their sensual pleasures, it also succeeded that the flesh corrupts its ways³²³, as the sacred text says, and that is why the irritated Lord sent the deluge which did away with all Humanity, except Noah and his family, the only ones found to be righteous. The infernal spirit also succeeded with the inhabitants of the cities of Pentapolis by exacerbating their passions to such an extent that in order to purify the land of so much corruption, the justice of the Lord made fire rain down from Heaven and reduced the cities and all their inhabitants to burning ashes³²⁴. And what crimes and excesses did they not also produce in David and Solomon, men so full of God's spirit, lighting the fire of voluptuousness in their hearts and inciting their passions?

1128 But do we not have enough experience ourselves of the enemy's efforts, united with our corrupt natures, to lose ourselves? And if this was not enough, the condition of our degraded society shows us that quite clearly enough, which rushes at a dizzying pace in search of sensual enjoyments and pleasures. And now not only the carefree people who have little fear of God do but even those who pride themselves on being devout are seen attending indecent shows without reservations, and not even forbidding their daughters to attend, and wearing provocative, indecent fashions everywhere, including to the Church, without embarrassment or reservations.

1129 This is how, beloved children, the devil makes us of the incentive of pleasure to blind and pervert men; or even more so, we will have to say this is the passion for which men, captivated and obsessed, deliver themselves into the slavery of the devil. Yes, because however great the power of this malign spirit may be, he cannot force us against our will; and he could never achieve his attempt to make man lose himself if man would stand up to his temptations.

* * *

1130 The apostle St. Peter urges us to do that, beloved children, telling us: "Brothers, be sober and watch, because your adversary, the devil, like a furious lion, goes around you looking for those he can devour; you must resist him strong and steady in the faith". (I Peter 8-9).

1131 Our situation is certainly critical and dangerous, surrounded by so many formidable enemies, who battle us relentlessly and tirelessly; this is why St. Job said

³²³ Cf. Genesis 6:12.

³²⁴ Cf. Genesis 14:8; 19:24-25.

the life of man on the earth is a warfare: *The life of man upon earth is a warfare* (Job 7:1). But the apostle St. Paul, after showing us how hard the battle we have to sustain will be because of the power and fury of our enemies, supplies us with the weapon with which we have to defend ourselves and the way of acquiring the necessary strength to achieve victory in prayer³²⁵. This is what the Divine Redeemer commanded us to ask also in the pray of our Father: Lead us not into temptation³²⁶.

1132 And if we know how to wield this weapon of defense, beloved children, victory will always be ours because, having the Lord on our side, nothing will be able to overcome us, not even the cruelest enemies. Not the moon, not the devil, not the flesh with its cunning wiles, shall manage to triumph over those who shield themselves in prayer. On the contrary, temptation will serve them as a means of showing their love and faithfulness to the Lord, resisting it with his grace, and they will achieve with it the prize and crown of the glory. *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he hath been proved, he shall receive a crown of life, which God hath promised to them that love him* (James 1:12).

This is the grace, beloved children, that your Prelate desires for itself and for you, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the first Sunday of Lent, 18 February in the year of our Lord 1923.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

32

On the Apostolic Ministry

B. Seg 43 [1923], pp. 185-195

“God, who will have all men to be saved”
(Timothy I 2:4).

Venerable priests, our collaborators in the pastoral ministry, and all the beloved faithful of our diocese.

Peace and blessings in the Lord.

1133 Our beloved Jesus, who came to redeem all men and wishes nothing so much than we all arrived at the understanding of the truth and saved us: *God, who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.* (I Timothy 2:4), to perpetuate his noble mission among men, established the Ministry, giving his disciples as his successors the same authority he received from his Eternal

³²⁵ Cf. Ephesians 6:10-20.

³²⁶ Matthew 6:13.

Father: *As the Father hath sent me, I also send you* (John 20:21). And he sent his divine Spirit upon them, which showed them the light and granted them the graces and assistance necessary for undertaking their most noble mission.

1134 With the Church established in this way, the Apostles spread out everywhere in the world, so that the good word of the Holy gospel would reach everyone and its divine light enlighten even those who were seated in the shadows and darkness of death and the paganism of the Gentiles, to direct our steps on the ways of peace and salvation: *To enlighten them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death: to direct our feet into the way of peace* (Luke 1:79). Not even the powers on earth could impose silence on them, so that they would not preach the doctrine of the Crucified; because, as St. Peter said, to obey God comes before obeying men; not even the tortures or death itself, with which they all sealed the truth of the evangelical doctrine they preached.

1135 And the Apostles followed the uninterrupted chain of the Ministers of the Lord who through time, in all lands, are pronouncing the same Holy Gospel and extending the kingdom of Jesus Christ over the entire world, without paying attention to obstacles or being intimidated by persecution or exempt from sacrifices, even of life itself.

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1136 Venerable priests, by the kindness of the Lord, he wanted us to also form part of this number. And he selected us from among thousands, and invested us with the same authority that his Apostles had so that, like concerned shepherds, we would run in pursuit of the wayward sheep to lead it back to the fold³²⁷. We would keep it away from the poisoned pastures its enemies present, leading it to field of the Church, where it can satiate itself in the wholesome and healthy pastures the doctrine of Jesus Christ offers and satisfy its thirst by giving it the water of the divine grace: *I have chosen you; and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit* (John 15:16).

1137 Much, then, the Lord asks for and the Holy Mother Church expects, venerable priests, of our apostolic zeal and indefatigable evangelical labor! And certainly never has it been more necessary in perhaps any other period that the ministers of the Lord redouble their efforts and intensify their apostolic work as it in at present; because today not only do you have to try to attract those who live distanced from Jesus Christ, wrapped in the errors of idolatry and heresy or by being Gentiles, so they may know Him and follow Him, but our main task has to consist of returning so many Christian souls to the fold of the Divine Shepherd who live apart from him. In fact, do you not see how great is the number of Christians in name only, who have received the Baptism but are unaware of what spirit they are and completely ignore the doctrine of their Master? How many Christians

³²⁷ Cf. Luke 15:4; Cf. 1831.

are not embarrassed that they content themselves and believe it is enough to be Christians in hiding, being tolerant in public with doctrines and customs that are most contrary to morality and religion? And does it not also seem to you that the routine breaking of the divine Law, the rejection of the precepts of the Church and the depravity of customs that one observes in Christians today demand of us that we redouble our zeal to achieve the reform and salvation of the souls of these wrongdoers? Yes, venerable priests, even though there are ripe fields overseas to harvest among the unfaithful, for those fortunate apostles who the Lord calls with a special vocation; it is no less important here what you offer us in those countries, the center of Christianity in other times and today fallen, if not already into apostasy, into the greatest coldness and indifference to religion, considering it to be something suitable only for children and women.

1138 With good reason then the Roman Pontiff, the father not only of Christians but also of all men, since we are all redeemed in the Blood of Jesus Christ, of whom the Pope is the his Vicar on earth, raises his voice to ask all of us to work zealously in this highest and most noble mission of leading souls to the fold of Jesus Christ³²⁸, which the majority live so far removed from.

1139 This is a highly pleasing task to God, beloved children, since this way we are collaborating in order that He intended in our creation. Yes, because if he took all things from the nothingness for his glory: *The Lord hath made all things for himself* (Proverbs 16:4), but, distinct from the other beings, the only one which can bless and praise the Lord in his way during time is man, whom the Lord created in his image and likeness, providing him with an immortal soul capable of knowing him, loving him and serving him. He wanted to make him the heir to his glory, so that during life he would consecrate himself in his service and in heaven enjoy the same blessing. Therefore, He desires nothing so much as the salvation of all men: *God, who will have all men to be saved* (I Timothy 2:4). That is why when they were disinherited from heaven for not complying with the divine precept imposed on our first parents, the Lord did not hesitate to send his own Son for our redemption and rescue, who by taking on our nature could appropriately pay our debt and return to us the lost right to the filial relation with God and his inheritance of the glory: *He that spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all* (Romans 8:32). What then, beloved children, shall be the value of the souls when the Lord appreciates them so much that he gave his only Sun for them and He suffered the most atrocious tortures and the insulting death on the Cross for their rescue?: *Who gave himself a redemption for all, a testimony in due times* (I Timothy 2:6).

1140 With good reason the saints, inflamed with the zeal of divine love, did not exempt any sacrifice, even of their own lives, to achieve the salvation of souls. How many hardships, insults, slanders, persecutions and tortures did the Apostles endure to introduce the religion and bright the light of faith to souls! The apostle St. Paul refers to his imprisonments to the Corinthians, the times when he was

³²⁸ Cf. 1831.

flogged and stoned, the shipwrecks he endured and the dangers of all kinds he was exposed in his continuous excursions to spread the faith (II Corinthians 11:25-26). And the faithful imitator of the Apostles, St. Francis of Assisi, in his ardent zeal for the salvation of souls, when he obtained from the Lord and his Holy Mother the great indulgence of Porziuncola and went to the Pontiff for its confirmation. When the Pope asked him how many years he was asking for, he replied zealously: "Holy Father, I am not asking for years but souls for Heaven"³²⁹. The same ardent desire for the salvation of men inflamed the heart of St. Ignatius of Loyola to the degree he did not hesitate to say: "If he knew that by dying you then achieved your salvation, and by lengthening his life in order to work for the salvation of souls you were not as sure of salvation, he would prefer to remain uncertain of his salvation to achieve that of his brothers"³³⁰.

1141 How well the Saints understood, beloved children, that whoever saves is a soul is determining the destiny of his own!³³¹ It would be an insult to the Lord for us to even think that He might abandon and let be lost to damnation whoever is supporting his desires by working to lead to Him the souls he created for his glory and rescued with his precious blood.

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1142 It is this spirit then, venerable priests, that we have to try to be sure animates all of us who have been called by God with special vocation, in order to continue the work of our divine Redeemer working for the salvation of souls; each one according to the grace the Holy Spirit has passed on to it. He distributes his gifts according to his divine approval; granting to some the gift of wisdom, as the Apostle says; to others, science; to some, the gift of miracles; to others, prophecy; to some, the discretion of spirits; and finally, to others the gift of languages (I Corinthians 12:8-10). With these weapons, the Apostles and first disciples of the Lord battled against the authorities of hell who, having conspired with the powers on earth, attempted to prevent the saving effects of the doctrine of Jesus Christ. A vain undertaking that served more to extend and spread the doctrine of the Crucified, more esteemed the more it was persecuted! And not even killing its messengers could extinguish it because, as Tertullian said, the blood of the Christians was the seed by which their number increased and reproduced itself³³².

1143 We have to try to not receive in vain these graces of the divine Spirit, which He passes on to us all the time, as the Apostle urges us, saying: *Receive not the grace of God in vain* (II Corinthians 6:1); and to work with ever greater zeal and

³²⁹ FRATRIS FRANCISCI BARTHOLI DE ASSISIO: *Tractatus de Indulgencia S. Mariae de Portiuncula*, c. 6 (Ed. P. Sabatier, Paris 1900), 15 line 25s. Cf. 1020 above.

³³⁰ Cf. in RB 6th reading of 31 July.

³³¹ Cf. James 5:20.

³³² Cf. TERTULLIAN: *Apologetica Adversus Gentes*, 50: PL 1:603. Cf. 1179.

interest in the conversion of sinners and so that Jesus Christ may be known and loved by all.

1144 Perhaps in no other period than the present have the efforts of the ministers of the Lord been so necessary in Catholic propaganda; because if the Gospel has already been preached all over the world, the so-called modern erudition has upset the intelligence, allowed arrogance and depravity to infiltrate into hearts and made men blindly embrace the error and lies that flatter their passions and repeat the *I will not serve* of Lucifer to Jesus and his doctrine.

1145 Intensify your zeal in preaching, venerable priests, and in order to make it fruitful, pronounce the divine word with unction and fervor, simply and without rhetorical flourishes. On the contrary, all your effort and work will be in vain and useless because it will not carry the blessing of God of having to make it fruitful, because, as the Apostle says, the one who plants is nothing, nor the one who waters it, but rather the one who makes it grow, which is God: *Therefore, neither he that planteth is any thing, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase* (I Corinthians 3:7). St. Teresa of Jesus, who had already lamented that the sermons were not yielding as much reward as before because the preachers were not stirred and beside themselves with the love of God, like the Apostles³³³, what would she say in our times? If you want your preaching, beloved priests, to yield many rewards in souls, bear in mind and put into practice what the Seraphic Father San Francis orders his children to do in his Rule, saying: "Preach the vices and virtues, the pain and the glory, with the briefness of a sermon, because the Lord used the abridged word upon the earth"³³⁴.

1146 In addition to this ministry of preaching, many other ministries are entrusted to you, beloved priests, for the salvation of souls; because as fathers, you have to direct, govern and reprimand the faithful; as doctors, you enlighten with your intelligence so that people may know the precepts of the Lord well and the way of practicing them; as judges, in the court of penance, you hear the humble confession of the sinners, and forgiving them, you return them to Jesus Christ; as mediators of the people towards God, whom you have appease by offering upon the altar the bloody sacrifice of his Holy Son and, above all, as exemplary models who teach the faithful to the practice of all the virtues, since without the example your preaching would serve for nothing for them, and would more likely be rejected instead.

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1147 However, beloved faithful, even though the Lord entrusted the main mission of securing the salvation of souls to the Priests, do not believe that you are any less obligated to work, each one in his own sphere of activity, in spreading

³³³ Cf. SANTA TERESA: *Libro de la Vida* 16.7, in *Complete Works of St. Teresa* (BAC, Madrid, 1962), p. 67, Cf. 360 above.

³³⁴ ST. FRANCIS: 2R 9:3-4, in works cited, p. 115.

the faith and making Jesus Christ and his holy doctrine known to men. Having understood that the secular ministry today is of the utmost importance, above all in Catholic nations, because, with the faith of the faithful more subdued, they focus more on the example of the lay brothers and listen with greater attention to their sermons than those of the Priests, whom they suppose have a material interest in their doctrines and teachings.

1148 Every time then, beloved children, that the unfaithful make satanic efforts to de-Catholicize the people, ridiculing their beliefs by means of the press, painting and stage, with slander and by all the means their depraved malice suggest to them, we have to combine all our efforts, the Priests as well as the lay members, both men and women, since everyone has to be apostles of the faith that we profess in holy Baptism, to defend it and spread it in public and in private, by the word and in writing, refusing to be swayed by excessive concern for the opinions of others, without any fear of the authorities on earth or from hell. In imitation of St. Peter and the other Apostles who, not obeying the tyrants who were forbidding Jesus Christ to preach, told them: "It is more advisable to obey God than men". *We ought to obey God more than men* (Acts 5:29). Happy if we can achieve the conversion of some souls, because whoever saves a soul determines the destiny of his own³³⁵. And if we would have to give our life in the battle and combat like the Holy Martyrs, it would not be to lose it, but to win it in a happy and fortunate eternity, which your Prelate and servant in Christ desires both for itself and for you, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on 30 November in the year of our Lord 1923, the holy day of the apostle St. Andrew.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

33

The New Commandment

(B. Seg 44 [1924], pp. 37-48)

"This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

1149 The Governments of nations and the men of State, beloved children, are making supreme efforts studying and projecting in continuous conferences the means of compensating the incalculable damages the despotism of some, the insubordination of others and the egotism and ambition of the rest have brought to society. As they attempt to cure or avoid the effects of evil without stopping to think about its true cause, they thereby render those means ineffective and even impotent to cure these ills of society, which is taking gigantic strides towards

³³⁵ Cf. James 5:20; Cf. 1831.

its ruin and damnation. Yes, they make laws, establish agreements, and impose criminal sanctions; but at best all this can do is make man act out of need or fear without making him change of his own free will at all. It is therefore necessary to resort to another law and a higher mandate, who man obeys and submits to readily and with his entire will. And this law, this mandate cannot come from anyone else, beloved children, than the Supreme Being, for whom all things exists and in whose hands are the hearts of all men. And He inclines them as he pleases to act according to his holy will, without detriment, however, to the freedom he granted them after creating them, so their works would bring credit or discredit to them.

1150 However, this holy law that the Lord gave to his creatures and engraved in their hearts is not very complex, beloved children; all of it reduces to the precept of love. A precept which the Divine Redeemer calls his own: *This is my commandment* (John 15:12), because the part that refers to their fellow man was so forgotten and misunderstood by men they came to believe they should not love others beyond their own friends and should hate their enemies: *Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thy neighbor* (Matthew 5:43), an error the divine Master corrected by teaching men they should also love their enemies, to do good even to those who hate them and pray for those who persecute and slander them: *But I say to you: love your enemies: do good to them that hate you and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you* (Matthew 5:44).

1151 A sublime precept, beloved children, in which is written the peace of the world the Angels proclaimed when the Savior was born³³⁶, the bearer of a priceless benefit.

All men then, especially those entrusted with the government of peoples and nations, should focus their attention on this precept of love if they want order, justice, morality and peace to reign in society. Since charity is the only bond that unites men with one another, no matter how distant and opposed they may be, every time they love they do it only in God, through God and for God³³⁷, whose love does not accept any man who does not love his brother as well: *And this commandment we have from God, that he, who loveth God, love also his brother* (I John 4:21). Precepts that the Divine Redeemer unites with each other, so that when asked one time what was the first of the Commandments, He replied: "The one of loving God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind"; and then immediately added: "And the second, similar to that one, is that you shall love your neighbor as yourself". *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself* (Matthew 22:39).

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1152 To get us excited about practicing this virtue, beloved children, the reason advanced by St. John to his disciples will have to do. When they asked him why he always prayed for the same thing, that everyone love each other, he replied:

³³⁶ Cf. Luke 2:14.

³³⁷ Cf. 351, 524, 1056 above; 1195, 1307.

“Because it is a precept of God and by fulfilling it, we fulfill the whole law”³³⁸. And in truth the ten precepts of this divine Code called the Commandments of the Law of God all reduce to charity. The first three raise us to the love and service of God and making the remainder reflect back on our fellow man the benefits and impulsive currents of the divine love towards us and of ourselves towards God.

1153 But, in addition the fundamental reason that it is a precept of God, we have to value charity over the other virtues as the queen of them and the object and end to which they all refer³³⁹. And its value is so great that all the other virtues, gifts and graces, no matter how eminent, pale in comparison. In the same way that all shapes disappear in nature when the sun is hidden, leaving the beauty of the beings veiled, their vigor goes out of them and their lives dim, leaving the universe as cold as corpse in the dead of night, the most sublime gifts lose their splendor, the virtues are left sterile, graces disappear, the supernatural life succumbs and the soul is left with a terrifying solitude, without light, head and life when charity is lacking.

1154 Since it is so necessary, the Lord engraved this precept of charity in the heart of man after creating him to be passed on to his descendents. As the descendents multiplied and charity grew colder in them, with the aim of perpetuating his holy law, he wrote it down with his finger on stone tablets and gave them to Moses to proclaim to his people, whom he wanted to reproach for their hard heart by giving them the law written in stone³⁴⁰. But as this was not enough to keep charity from dying out in the hearts of man, who reached the point of believing they should hate their enemies, the divine Redeemer Jesus renewed this law in his spirit, giving it his ultimate perfection and placing among the first maxims of his holy Gospel that He calls his own the precept of charity towards your fellow man: *This is my commandment, that you love one another* (John 15:12).

1155 Such is the excellence of this virtue, beloved children, and the terms of the law with which the Lord orders us to love our neighbors. A strict and exact law; an indispensable law which does not permit excuses and exemptions from it; a most just and reasonable law in the way it is based on the relationship of man towards God and the relationships he has towards his fellow men.

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1156 From these relations towards God emerge, in fact, the love we owe to our fellow man, as a work from the hands of the Lord, formed in his image and likeness and rescued at the price of his blood.

1157 Yes, beloved children, when the Lord, with his all-powerful word, took from the nothing everything that exists in the world and the heavens, he did nothing more than prepare the beautiful palace he wanted for the most perfect

³³⁸ Cf. 1041 above.

³³⁹ Cf. 1183, 1393, 2359.

³⁴⁰ Cf. Exodus 24:12; 31:18.

work he decided to create, which was man, and gave it his spirit, saying: *Let us make man to our image and likeness* (Genesis 1:26).

1158 Oh, how sublime and high a rank that of man!, beloved children. He is eternal like God; one in his nature, although composed of body and soul, as God is in essence, and his soul is provided with three powers, as God is the Trinity personified, to be able to join with Him and knowing, loving and serving Him in this world, and then enjoy Him for all eternity in heaven³⁴¹.

1159 The Lord, then, loves this king of creation so much that for all eternity he thought of him: *Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love* (Jeremiah 31:3), crowned him with glory and honor: *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor, and made him just below the Angels: Thou hast made him a little less than the angels* (Psalm 8:6). He looks after him with so much concern and diligence that he assigns one of his angels to watch over him and severely punishes their enemies, telling the people of Israel: "Whoever touches you, touches me in the apple of my eye". *For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of my eye* (Zechariah 2:8)³⁴².

1160 But the Lord showed how great his love for man was in his redemption after the sin. He who had not forgiven the angels for their rebellion but immediately flung them into hell, nevertheless took pity on of the weakness and misery of man after he fell from his state of innocence, the victims of the deceptions and astuteness of Satan, jealous of his fortune. As it was impossible for man to appropriately pay for their grave sin of infinite malice, the Lord wanted to give himself this satisfaction; the second Person of the Holy Trinity, taking on our nature and covering himself in our flesh, with the price of his priceless blood as the blood of the Son of God, and with his passion and death, he paid the debt owed by Humanity and seized his victim from hell, returning to man the life of grace and restoring him to his love.

1161 What more could we ask of the Lord? But the Son of God did even more; not able to endure that his love would be physically separate from us, he instituted the holy Sacrament of our altars, in which he gives us his body, his soul and his divinity in order to be our companion and comfort in this exile and the food which strengthens our soul to fight against our enemies until we attain the perfect and eternal union with God in the glory.

1162 If God loves man so much as his work and conquest, could we stop loving Him as well? Should not what is worthy of the love of God also be worthy of our own? Yes, beloved children; and do not forget that, as the apostle St. Peter says, charity between us must reign over everything else: *But before all things have a constant mutual charity among yourselves* (1 Peter 4:8). Similarly, the Lord teaches us to ask him for the forgiveness of our debts through the generosity of our heart in also pardoning those of our debtors, which is greater proof of love. *And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors*³⁴³.

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³⁴¹ Cf. 529, 966 above; 1177, 1351.

³⁴² Cf. in *Jerusalem Bible*: Zechariah 2:12.

³⁴³ Matthew 6:12.

1163 However, beloved children, if our relations with God oblige us to love our neighbor for Him, we must also love him due to our mutual relations.

Whether it is to consider the man for what he is in himself or in his status as Christian, both qualities are a bond that must strengthen the link of charity within us.

1164 We all came out equally from the hands of the Maker himself, for he does not make any distinction between people. He gave all of us the same nature, with similar hearts and souls, and gave us the same earth to live on, which produces the same food for everyone. The differences we observe between rich and poor, healthy and sick, wise and ignorant, are conditions with which the great Father of families attends to the primary goal of the salvation of every one, for which he created man. And he wants the poor, with their mortification and patience, eating the bread kneaded with the sweat of their brow, as it gives credit to them in the inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven, which the Lord himself says is for the poor. Worldly goods give the rich man the means to redeem his sins by giving alms; or they reward what his justice cannot pay in the other life. He wants whoever is granted health to work in order to earn his sustenance and employ his strength in his service, without abusing them for sin. He brings the sick to Heaven by the way of suffering and resignation, proving the merits of some in this way and preventing that other could lose their way if they were healthy. He grants wisdom to some in order for that to bring them to know him and establish them as guides who may bring many souls to his service, while He leaves others in their ignorance of worldly sciences, which could make them arrogant, so they are better served by their simplicity of heart.

1165 No one, then, should become arrogant about the goods, favors and graces received from the Lord, who grants them according to his holy will; nor judge themselves to be more than their brothers who do not receive them, as this is also by the will of God, who secures the good of the souls of his children in both cases. On the contrary, these differences must serve as a bond of union linking both of them together, so no one can do without the service of their brother.

1166 But if by our brotherhood as children of God, we should love each other mutually, this love should increase our rank as Christians; since as such we all form a single mystical body whose head is Christ. As the limbs of the human body always maintain so much interdependence between themselves and care for and help each other with such exquisite concern, we must do everything for everyone in the same way, as the Apostle says: *I became all things to all men*, (1 Corinthians 9:22), lifting the fallen, helping the needy, consoling the sad, attending to the sick and correcting and advising whoever may need it. And whoever does not act to attend to his brother, out of enmity, antipathy, egotism or other malevolent ends, he is a rotten and dead limb spiritually; because whoever does not love is dead, as the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ says: *He that loveth not, abideth in death* (1 John 3:14). And he can not pride himself on being a disciple of Jesus Christ, since he lacks the spirit of charity, the sign by which He says his disciples have to be known.

1167 What a pitiful sight society presents today, beloved children, due to the lack of fulfillment by some and the ignorance of others of this divine precept! The bloodiest and most savage war the centuries have ever witnessed ended just a short time ago; and even though they say peace is restored and hostilities have ceased, and it seems true for all the conferences and lobbying, but true peace is not appearing anywhere and it seems more like the world is growing deaf to the spirit of discord. In addition, the ambition and insatiable desire for profit have made people ignore and neglect the pitiful cries of the poor and needy who are now exasperated and rising up against their oppressors. Rebellion and insubordination have taken the place of submission and obedience, and now authority is not respected if not for the fear of being punished. With the Law of God ignored, they also scorn human laws and only the rule of force prevails. The most separatist doctrines are freely spread and divulged, upsetting the intelligence and causing the greatest possible disorder among families and peoples. In a word, unrest, disorder and anarchy prevail everywhere and in all social classes because, by disregarding Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth and life, and the true light which enlightens all men who come to this world, as St. John says (John 1:9), man is left in darkness, which the common enemy takes advantage of to disturb his intelligence, corrupt his heart and take it from precipice to precipice until the abyss.

1168 The only means that this depraved society has, beloved children, to cure these ills which afflict it and have no human solution, is to return to Jesus Christ and make sure to faithfully fulfill his holy Law, the law of Love. Yes, only this, teaching us to love and fear God and the way of serving Him, can instruct the human intelligence to discover the fallacy and lies of the doctrines which try to distance man from his ultimate end; and with its precepts referring to love of their fellow man, prevent man from embracing anarchic principles, which cause so much upheaval in society, giving rise to hate, enmity and resentment among brothers.

1169 The established authorities must work tirelessly so that the law of God, the beginning and foundation of the other human laws, is faithfully fulfilled if they want them to be respected; so that the principles and ideas contrary to justice and order which cause so much upheaval disappear, and peace and unity among citizens reign among nations. This is the unity which produces the happiness of the people and makes up their strength and power. This unity that was so desired by our divine Redeemer that he insistently asked his Holy Father to provide this for us, saying: Holy Father, keep in your name, those who you gave to me ... make them all be together as one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You (John 17:11 and 21).

1170 This unity which shall also be a sure guarantee of eternal happiness, beloved children, which your Prelate desires both for itself and for you, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the Sunday of the 50th anniversary, on 2 March of the year of our Lord 1924.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

34

On Scandal and Good Example

(B. Seg. 44 [1924], pp. 169-179)

“In all things shew thyself an example of good works” (Titus 2:7).

1171 Beloved children, the inclination to evil which remained in our nature as the effect of original sin and the incentives which lead us to evil through the scandals and bad examples we observe everywhere are so great we could join the apostle St. Paul in lamenting about finding dangers to our souls everywhere, in the sea, the city, the country and even on the part of our own brothers³⁴⁴, from whom we should receive nourishment and strength for the practice of good and carrying out the virtues in accordance with the advice of the Apostle to Timothy: *In all things shew thyself an example of good works* (Titus 2:7).

1172 The example is so powerful and attractive that we can scarcely remove its influence on us; it seduces us and draws us even more powerfully the greater the influence the people we receive it from have over us. This is why the Son of God, even though He could have rescued man with any one of his works, for being of priceless value and therefore more than sufficient to appease the divine Justice, nonetheless wanted to live among us for thirty three years to present himself as a model and example in the practice of all the virtues we should carry out. He tells us through St. John: “I have given you the example so that, as I have acted, you may also act the same way”. *For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also* (John 13:15)³⁴⁵.

1173 But woe, beloved children, how far the Christians today are from the spirit the divine Master instills in us? How frequently we hear from their lips maxims and doctrines opposed to the Gospel, with which they seduce the unwary and ignorant, flattering their passions; and with their customs and outward appearance, more pagan than Christian, are the cause of scandal to their brothers, whom they should instruct with their virtues. This is why instead of being the good fragrance of Jesus Christ towards God, as the Apostle says to the Corinthians (II Corinthians 2:15), they more likely provoke the indignation of the Lord and are the cause of the ruin and eternal damnation of a multitude of souls.

1174 Beloved children, we must run from similar scandals; but that would require us to separate ourselves from society and retire to the deserts because the entire world is devoted to evil, as the apostle St. John says: *The whole world is seated in wickedness* (I John 5:19). And this is impossible from any perspective in general, in view of our condition and status, because the world needs righteous souls all the more who, with the example of their holy lives, counteract the bad examples and outrages of the worldly.

³⁴⁴ Cf. II Corinthians 11:26.

³⁴⁵ Cf. 272 above; 1237.

1175 The serious insult this sin does to God and how damaging it is for the souls is very important to all of us who consider ourselves good, so that we run from it like a deadly plague.

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1176 To give an idea of how bad examples and scandal displease and insult God, we must understand that He loves and man desires his salvation. But since this is not possible, we can deduce it from his works that benefit man.

1177 He created us for his glory, not only in time like the other beings, but in eternity as well. To that end, he formed us in his image and likeness, giving us an immortal soul provided with three powers capable of knowing, loving and serving Him³⁴⁶. This soul, a wrongdoer of the only precept He imposed on it, was rescued by the Son of God, coming down from Heaven to earth and taking on the human nature so that He could give satisfaction to the divine Justice, which the sacrifices of the entire world would never have been able to appease. He appeared as a simple being, as someone completely subject to his parents over thirty years, which he used to teach us practically the carrying out of all the virtues necessary for our salvation. And in the first three years of his mortal life, he demonstrated his divine teaching, instructing men in his heavenly doctrine, the only way that lead us to our heavenly homeland, both publicly and privately, and enduring fatigue, hard work, tiredness, and no shortage of rejections and persecutions. But even all that did not satisfy the yearning of the divine Heart to shows us His love; and the desire for our redemption to be plentiful and overabundant took him to the extreme of suffering unprecedented insults and tortures and to give his life on a cross, so that his blood, his priceless blood, would be the price of our redemption. This is why St. Hilarius says the rescue cost as much as if man was worth the same as God³⁴⁷.

1178 You will understand then, beloved children, the insult done to God by whoever seizes the souls that He rescued at the price of his blood through their bad examples and scandals and diminishes the reward of his redemption. This is a greater outrage, as San Bernardino says, than the Jews spilling the blood of Jesus Christ³⁴⁸, because the blood spilled then served for the redemption of men, while the disrespect they commit today on the person of Jesus Christ, in addition to renewing his death, renders his reward useless, places an obstacle in the path of fulfilling his desire and, inasmuch as they are capable, try to destroy the edifice raised at such great cost by the Lord.

1179 The damage that bad examples and scandal do to religion is also greater than what it suffered with the persecutions by the tyrants in its earliest days, because those wars served to increase the number of Christians. This is why Tertullian said the blood of the martyrs was the seed that produced fruits one

³⁴⁶ Cf. 529, 966, 1158 above; 1351.

³⁴⁷ Cf. ST. HILARIUS: *Treatise on Psalm 136*, 15: PL 9:776.

³⁴⁸ Cf. ST. BERNARDINO: *Sermon on the Conversion of St. Paul*, 3: PL 183:361-362.

hundred times over³⁴⁹; but scandal, without torments, tortures or any bloodshed, on the contrary dazzling with riches and offering pleasures, wages a more lethal war on the church when its poisoned spears are covered with everything that flatters the passions. With great reason St. Hilarius said: 'May it please God that we would have to deal with the tyrants and persecutors, who put our faith to the test with tortures. The Lord then would give us the grace of sustaining our faith against these outside enemies; but here we have to struggle with domestic enemies, who live with us, who are of our same religion and perhaps even in the same house, which makes their blows more terrible and well-aimed, because friendship, flattery, caresses and promises induce and drag us along until they make us succumb to sin'³⁵⁰.

1180 Beloved children, is this not what continuously takes place? With godless speeches against religion and satires and jokes about their devotion, some make the devout withdraw from doing good, practicing the Sacraments frequently and attending religious functions, seizing from God the glory they could receive from it. Others, publicly breaking divine and ecclesiastical precepts with the greatest cynicism and audacity, living licentiously and scorning the days sacred to the Lord, induce many to follow their bad examples. Many, suggesting and exciting the passions of hatred, revenge and injustice, rip from the hearts of their brothers the beautiful feelings of charity; the virtue which the Lord says we must have to be known as his disciples. But even more lamentable, beloved children, is when the bad example and scandal are on the part of women, due to the greater damage it causes with her influence over the heart of man. Today, unfortunately, the woman, who should be the example and model of the family and is devout by nature, lives so enslaved to fashion, in spite of the fact it is so indecent and outrageous, that the woman appears to have lost her modesty and reserve, daring to appear in the immodest dresses that they wear today even in the temple of the Lord and approach the holy altar. Fulfilling our duty, all the Prelates have raised our voices condemning the scandalous nakedness in which woman appear today in society and prohibiting them from entering the house of God dressed in that manner. But their blindness is so great that many women have not respected their Pastors while others, holding their soul in low esteem, have even said they would stop going to church if they were prohibited from entering it because of their dress. Oh, such inconceivable madness, beloved children! What would the apostle St. Paul, who ordered the women to cover their heads in order to enter the temple out of respect to the Angels that worship God there³⁵¹, say and do in our times, after seeing them so desecrated by the faithful?

1181 How rightly we would be able to lament and cry out with the apostle St. Matthew: *Woe to the world because of scandals* (Matthew 18:7). Yes, woe to our

³⁴⁹ Cf. TERTULLIAN: *Apologetica Adversus Gentes*, 50: PL 1:603. Cf. 1142 above.

³⁵⁰ Potential poetic translation of the ideas of St. Hilarius concerning the subject. (cf. ST. HILARIUS: *Commentary on Psalm 118*: 7 and 8: PL 9:575; *Commentary on Psalm 54*, 7: PL 9:350-351).

³⁵¹ Cf. I Corinthians 11:5-10.

society perverted and corrupted by scandals! It suffers greater damage from them even than the battles it has to maintain with the devil himself; because as a spirit, the devil cannot visibly force man to sin, and thus uses the creatures themselves for that purpose, who induce them to imitate their scandals, from not fearing them as much as they fear the devil, even though they receive greater damages from them.

1182 However, beloved children, if God loves man so much, if we are his inheritors and we belong to him by an infinite number of titles, what pain will it not cause his Sacred Heart to see us separated from us by sin, and with what rage and fury will he treat the ones who snatched away his possession? For that reason, if our conscience tells us we have been the occasion of scandal for some people, let us consider ourselves very much obligated to give them a good example in the future and pray for them all our life so they may be saved. And let us be humble in the presence of the Lord, asking his forgiveness for the offense we committed against him, seizing the glory he should have received from those beings. And in order that, even if out of fear, we reject this horrendous sin of scandal, we shall also consider how damaging it is to our soul and how God punishes it.

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1183 There are also the virtues we could call of the first order, virtues such as humility, the basis and foundation of the perfection; zeal, for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, characteristic of the ministry and for which the prophet Daniel says the righteous shall shine like stars in the perpetual eternities³⁵²; above all the rest, charity, from which the other virtues are ordained³⁵³, and the only one that does not conclude its goal in this world, but instead will be in full effect in Heaven. And there are the same among the vices and sin, scandal being the most horrendous and abominable to God, because its venom and malice does not contract and contort man internally like the other sins, but instead shows itself externally and infects however many others approach the person contaminated with it.

1184 And the Lord abhors it so much that St. John Chrysostom says that if God forgives other, more serious sins, he nevertheless does not let the sin of scandal pass by without receiving the deserved punishment³⁵⁴. The words of the Lord himself through Ezekiel confirm this: "I will make," he says, "the scandalous man an example of punishment, so he may disappear from the midst of my people". *And I will make that man an example, and a proverb, and will cut him off from the midst of my people* (Ezekiel 14:8). And in that way, he very severely punished Eli for not correcting his children, who were carrying out scandalous acts robbing the flesh of sacrificed victims³⁵⁵, Jeroboam because he sinned and made the people of

³⁵² Cf. Daniel 12:3.

³⁵³ Cf. 1153 above; 1393, 2359.

³⁵⁴ Cf. ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: *Adversus eos qui apud se habent virgine subintroductas*, 8: PG 47:506; *Quod regulares feminae viris cohabitare non debeant*, 5: PG 47:522.

³⁵⁵ Cf. I Samuel 2:29-35.

Israel sin³⁵⁶; Jezebel who for her outrages was devoured by the dogs³⁵⁷, and David by taking the life of the newborn child of his sin, and many other disasters he and his people experienced, in spite of the Lord having forgiven him for his repentance, as the prophet Nathan said³⁵⁸.

1185 And how justly, beloved children, does the Lord display so much anger against this sin! Because if the divine Redeemer was the victim of the Justice of the his Eternal Father through saving souls, not to mention that he forgave sacrifices, suffering, tasks, tortures and even his gave his own life to save us from slavery to the devil and the gates of Heaven to us, what offenses and affronts will he not receive from the ones who seize the victim rescued with his own precious blood from his hands? And the Lord will not only feel obligated by the loss of these souls to condemn them for the sins committed as an effect of the scandals they received, but even more for the insult to his precious blood and shall ask his Eternal Father with greater cause than Abel for vengeance against those who, not content with offending him, undertake to make others lose themselves. The ones he laments for through St. Matthew, saying: "Woe to the world because of scandal" (Matthew 18:17), because the offense is very difficult to repair for the long chain of sins that follow it and their disastrous consequences. We could also say this is the origin of the majority of crimes that inundate the universe and similarly that the greatest evils inflicted on the Church throughout time come from the scandals created by its evil children and the heretics Arius, Luther, Calvin and others by which so many souls were lost and will continue to be lost until the end of time.

1186 But if scandal and bad example produce such disastrous results in everyone, what will it not do to the children and innocent souls in whom, like any seed scattered in virgin land, it sprouts and so easily bears fruit? Do you not hear from their lips, when they can scarcely speak, rude and scandalous and, most horrifying of all, even blasphemous words? Do you not notice their lack of respect, reserve and modesty? Well, they learn it mainly from you, the parents of the family, because for your children you are like a mirror in which they continuously look and copy all your actions themselves. And with respect to the scandals that can come to them from outside, you are obligated to avoid them as much as possible, and to correct them, scold them and punish them so that they may know what is evil and reject it.

1187 However, beloved children, so that you may better understand how this sin offends God and how you must reject scandalizing the children out of fear, focus on these terrible words through St. Matthew: "But whoever shall scandalize," He says, "one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for a millstone to be hung from his neck and cast him into the bottom of the sea" (Matthew 18:6). Terrifying words that should make us tremble and take great care to avoid falling into such a sure demonstration of disapproval.

³⁵⁶ Cf. I Kings 13:34.

³⁵⁷ Cf. II Kings 9:36.

³⁵⁸ Cf. II Samuel 12:13-19.

1188 Understanding, then, the seriousness contained in the sin of scandal, the insult done to God by it and its disastrous consequences in the souls from everything that has been said, let us very truly repent for what offense we may have given and try in the future to be models and examples of virtue and attract, with words and acts, many souls to the Lord so that our own souls may shine like stars in the glory. A grace which your Prelate and servant in Christ desires both for itself and for you, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the first Sunday of Advent, on 30 November 1924.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

35

Following and Cross

B. Seg 45 [1925], pp. 37-46

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me"(Matthew 16:24).

1189 Admire, beloved children, and be full of astonishment that the Lord, who wants and desires the salvation of all men: *God, who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth* (I Timothy 2:4), and that we are also obligated to serve, as the work of His hands in whom we live, move and are³⁵⁹, as our beginning and ultimate end; admire, I say, that the Lord says to us through St. Matthew: "If any man who wants to come after me". Well, Lord, is this not our only and only obligation on earth? Did you yourself not tell us that only one thing is necessary and that is salvation?

1190 Yes, beloved children; but the Lord, who gave man the understanding and will so that he would know, love and practice good and reject evil, left each and every man free to act in accordance with his own will, in order that man would deserve through his works the eternal prize that the Redeemer had conquered for him with his passion and death, or eternal punishment for his unfaithfulness. With good reason, St. Augustine says that He who created you without you shall not save you without you³⁶⁰, because to enter through the gates of the Glory, opened to the human race by the Savior, man now needs, after the sin, to deserve through his works his justification and salvation.

1191 If our first parents had remained faithful and obedient to the precept of the Lord, we would have surely enjoyed his divine presence, as our mission on earth would be fulfilled, since He created us for this purpose. But today, in spite of our redemption, the salvation of our souls has to be the payment for our good works,

³⁵⁹ Cf. Acts 17:28.

³⁶⁰ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Sermon 169*, 11: PL 38:923. Cf. 1226, 1353, 2128.

and so the apostle St. Peter tells us: "Try to make true your vocation and choice through your good works". *Wherefore, brethren, labor the more, that by good works you may make sure your calling and election* (II Peter 1:10).

1192 Man abused his freedom and will, separating himself from God by fulfilling it, and it is necessary in every respect that these powers are subject to the service and will of the Lord, for attaining its ultimate end.

1193 However, since our sinful nature makes it so difficult for us to find the path of salvation, the divine Redeemer wanted to make it easier for us by offering himself as a guide and during his life among us; and raising the banner of the holy cross, he calls us and invites all to follow him. But look and see that he does not want soldiers forced into his militia, only volunteers who follow him through love, saying through St. Matthew: "Any man who wants to follow me..." (Matthew 16:24).

1194 But how and in what way do we have to follow Jesus Christ? We have to deny ourselves and carry our cross, beloved children, following his example. This is also what He himself tells us through St. Matthew: "If any man wants to follow me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24).

These are exact and indispensable conditions, beloved children, which we must not forget and we are going to occupy ourselves with now.

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1195 God, who created man in his image and likeness so that we could appreciate Him for all eternity, who sent his own Son to the world to rescue man, taking on the human nature, wanted that all mankind would follow and assimilate this divine Model, not recognizing as his own those in whom he did not see the image of his Holy Son. However, beloved children, to achieve this likeness with Jesus Christ, it is indispensable in every respect to remove from this old man, carnal and worldly, and dress him again, created in justice, holiness and truth, separating him from the vices and passions which degrade man and imitating the virtues and examples of the divine Master. And the love of self and self-will was the beginning of the ruin and damnation of man, from our first parents having listened and given credence to the false words of the common enemy, who told them: "You would be like Gods, knowing good and evil, if you ate of the tree forbidden by God"³⁶¹. For that reason, Jesus Christ demands self-denial as the first condition for those who want to follow him, wanting only to fulfill the will of God and placing their love in Him in such a way that everything they love, within themselves or among others, be only in Him, through Him and for Him³⁶².

1196 And because our body and soul has been invested in Jesus Christ in the baptism as the Apostle says to the Galatians: *For as many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ* (Galatians 3:27); that, having the spirit of Christ, lets our heart be possessed by the same affections of the Word made flesh

³⁶¹ Cf. Genesis 3:5.

³⁶² Cf. 351, 524, 1056, 1151 above; 1307.

and pervaded with the same feelings of the Living God; *For let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus* (Philippians 2:5), that is, his inexhaustible charity, deep humility, sweet modesty, his justice, mortification, devoutness and all the other virtues He practices, who came as the Master to teach us, in order to be able to say through the Apostle that Christ lives in us³⁶³.

1197 This is the way, beloved children, we will be able stand up against the formidable internal and external enemies who struggle and strive to separate us from God. Yes, because the infernal spirit does not give up nor will he give up in this undertaking as long as our endurance lasts; not so much for jealous of our future happiness as for the desire to go against the will of God. And our refined love of self, our perverse will and uncontrolled appetites and inclinations towards the vices will always wage war on us, to prevent our submission and conformity to the will of Jesus Christ, who commands us to renounce whatever opposes his holy doctrine and deny ourselves and whatever our sinful nature fancies in order to be able to follow Him on the way to salvation.

1198 And even though the struggle with such fierce and ferocious enemies is very unequal on our side since, as the Apostle says, we are capable of nothing by ourselves; but we are invincible and capable of anything, as the Apostle himself also say, in God who is with us and for us: *I can do all these things in Him who strengtheneth me*" (Philippians 4:13).

1199 To inspire us, then, to overcome the obstacles that face us when following Him, Jesus Christ shows us, beloved children, the example of countless Saints who are of our same nature, subject to the stimulation of the same passions and inclinations towards vice, surrounded by them and even greater difficulties than we face for the practice of good, and nevertheless knew how to overcome everything and, what is even more difficult, overcome themselves and deny themselves to follow Jesus Christ. When Mary Magdalene, who had so passionately given her heart to the world, saw and knew Jesus Christ, she exchanged the object of her love to God to such an extent that she deserved to hear from the Lord himself that she had been forgiven many sins because she had loved greatly³⁶⁴. In the same way, St. Paul, who had so furiously persecuted the Christians before his conversion, heard the voice of God and exchanged his anger to zeal for the glory of the religion he hated and persecuted so much before. And the martyrs did not fear the tyrants, rejecting their flattering promises if they renounced Jesus Christ; and they even made it sweet to suffer for Jesus Christ, who was their life, and considered it their gain to die for Him: *For to me, to live is Christ; and to die is gain* (Philippians 1:21).

1200 However, are we not capable of doing ourselves what so many others could do, having the same assistance? This consideration, beloved children, inspired and gave encouragement to St. Augustine to overcome the difficulties he found in dominating his passions at the beginning of his conversion³⁶⁵; and it must

³⁶³ Cf. Galatians 2.20.

³⁶⁴ Cf. Luke 7:47-48.

³⁶⁵ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Confessions*, 8, 11: PL 32:761.

encourage us the same way in our battle against our own passions, until we manage to deny ourselves in order to live only in Jesus Christ and for Jesus Christ, the first condition that He demands of his followers.

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1201 But the Lord wants, in addition, that we follow him burdened with our cross, the symbol of mortification and penance. This is also the way that He wanted to follow to enter into his Kingdom, in order to encourage us by his example to walk along this way, the only path left for saving ourselves after the loss of innocence.

1202 Yes, because man has only two ways to achieve his salvation; the way of innocence, mild, lovely and delightful but very few go by this path, since man unfortunately loses this treasure when the use of his reason arouses his passions, and the common enemy makes use of them to rush him into the abyss of sin. And once sin is committed, only the cross remains to man as the last resort to save himself from the wreckage in which all humanity would perish hopelessly without mortification or penance.

1203 Yes, because the Lord himself, who tells us through St. John that whoever was not reborn by water and the Holy Spirit cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, also declares to us in St. Luke that if we do not do penance for our sins, everyone will perish: *But except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish* (Luke 13:5). In this way, the wall of separation that sin has built between God and so can only be demolished with the pick of mortification and penance and the crowbar of the cross.

1204 And therefore they are both so necessary and on the same time so repugnant to our nature that it repudiates them. The Lord imposes them on all without distinction so, willingly or by force, that we follow Jesus Christ along on the way of mortification and with the cross that may lead us to eternal life.

1205 For that reason you will see, beloved children, that there is no one in the world without suffering and their own cross, since the Lord wants all of us to be saved. But his infinite wisdom distributes the trials and tribulations of his creatures according to the forces of his spirit and the assistance he want to grant them, so that no one can complain with good reason of not being able to bear the cross the Lord sent them. The more perfect the creature, and the more he loves and serves God, the heavier the cross placed upon him, in order that the reward is greater in Heaven.

1206 The Saints understood this design of the Lord very well, and only had ambition to endure and suffer for God. We see that St. John of the Cross, after the Lord asked him what reward he wanted for his works and mortifications, answered him: "Sir, to suffer and be rejected by You"³⁶⁶. In the same way, St. Theresa of Jesus wished to suffer or die³⁶⁷; St. Mary Magdalene of Pazizi, to suffer and not die in

³⁶⁶ Cf. in RB, 6th reading of 24 November.

³⁶⁷ Cf. in RB, 6th reading of 15 October. Cf. ST. THERESA: *Book of the life*, 40:20, in works cited, p. 176. Cf. 396 above; 1507.

order to suffer more³⁶⁸; and the Seraph of Assisi, who believed himself abandoned by God when he had nothing to endure.

1207 How many different ways of evasion the worldly have! They shy away from enduring and suffering, considering the tribulations as proof of abandonment by God; and they even come back against him, considering that He does them an injustice by mortifying them, without taking into account that, by virtue of one single mortal sin we may have committed we deserve hell, and everything that is not one of those torments is a benefit of the Lord.

1208 Even more than what He intends with the tribulations he sent us is to purify us like gold in the crucible, not only to ensure our salvation but in order that our glory in Heaven is greater. But the carnal, worldly man does not understand things that are from the spirit of God, as the Apostle says: *But the sensual man perceiveth not these things that are of the Spirit of God* (I Corinthians 2:14), and in the same way the sick person rejects taking the medicines to make him healthy because they are not pleasing to his palate, they are repulsed by and would reject if they could, the sufferings and tribulations that God sent him for his good.

1209 In order to inspire us to suffer and carry the cross, the Eternal Father presents the model of his Holy Son, who was betrayed, insulted and slandered, flogged, spit on, crowned with thorns and died on the cross for us; and it appears to tell us, like Moses: Look carefully and act according to the example I have shown you: *Look and make it according to the pattern that was shewn thee in the mount* (Exodus 25:40). And he says this to all of us, righteous and sinners alike, without distinction or exception because we have to all follow Jesus Christ by the way of penance and burdened with the cross.

1210 The one who believe themselves righteous, because no one who has offended God can take their justification for granted, saying to the Holy Spirit: *Be not without fear about sin forgiven*, (Ecclesiasticus 5:5), and the Apostle St. Paul says of himself: "My conscience is clear, yet that does not make me justified; because it is the Lord who has to judge me" (I Corinthians 4:4), and even more because through mortification we atone for the slight faults and it also preserves us from falling into many others, thereby increasing the grace of the Lord in us.

1211 But if the Lord even calls on the righteous and wants them to follow him, burdened by the cross, on the way of mortification, how necessary will it be for us then, beloved children, poor sinners that we are? It is so important for us, as you have seen, that it is impossible for us to reach salvation without it, while it ensures salvation for us; because the Lord will never reject, as the royal Prophet says, the contrite and humbled heart: *A contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*. (Psalm 50:19).

1212 Let us welcome then, beloved children, and embrace this last resort, the Holy Cross, which we shall take us between the stormy seas of this world to the safe port of our eternal salvation. This is what your Prelate and servant of Christ desires

³⁶⁸ Cf. in RB, 6th reading of 30 May. Cf. 1507.

both for itself and for you, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the second Sunday of Lent , on 8 March of t he year of our Lord 1925.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

36

The Promised Messiah
(B. Seg 45 [1925], pp. 169-180)

“If thou didst know the gift of God” (John 4:10).

1213 Once again, beloved children, we arrive at the days when our Holy Mother the Church calls and invites us to the mortification, meditation and prayer, in order that we shall reflect well and engrave in our mind the indescribable mystery of the coming of the Messiah to the world, taking on our human nature for our redemption and moving our hearts to reciprocate to the Lord with the gratitude due such a priceless benefit.

1214 We already have with us and enjoy the company of that Lord who the Prophets announced so many centuries before, and for whose appearance the entire populace cried out with the Patriarchs, asking that the heavens open and the clouds would rain down the Righteous One, who had to reconcile us with God, erasing our debts with his blood: *Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just* (Isaiah 45:8).

1215 Oh, if we would know how to make the estimation due such a great benefit! *If thou didst know the gift of God*” (John 4:10). But, oh sorrow, the festivities with which the Church commemorates the great mysteries of our redemption the Christians ordinarily use as pastimes and entertainments; and worse still, in devoting themselves to all sort of excesses and sins; everything but paying attention to the urgings of their Holy Mother the Church and going deeply into the spirit that inspires it. Does it not appear to you, beloved children, that we could with good reason lament with Jeremiah that if the world is full of iniquity and abominations, it is because there is hardly anyone in it who concentrates on his heart and meditates on the eternal truths: *With desolation is all the land made desolate; because there is none that considereth in the heart* (Jeremiah 12:11).

1216 We at least, beloved children, are part of the number of faithful children who listen and put in practice the urgings of the Church, preparing with mortification and meditations the paths where the Lord comes to take possession of our souls. And for that reason, we shall carefully consider who the Messiah is who comes to us. The object of His coming. How He appears in the world. And the duties that such a unique benefit imposes on us.

1217 The Messiah who came to us, beloved children, as the Evangelist St. John says, who came back like an eagle from a flight that penetrated deep into the inaccessible light throughout all the centuries, is the Word, the Son of God³⁶⁹; he exists through all eternity; equal in everything to his Eternal Father, the true God of the true God; who, without ceasing to be God, became what he was, that is, man, taking on the human nature through the work of the Holy Spirit in the holy womb of the Virgin Mary: *Incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto, ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est (Symbolo fidei)*.

1218 God in his eternity resolved and decreed to show himself externally (*ad extra*) through the marvelous creation of a world which would give him glory and sing hymns of praise to this kindness, wisdom and power. And in fact he created from nothing everything that exists. And the heavens sang his glories and with its loveliness he proclaims the heavens to be the work of his hands. *The heavens shew forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of his hands* (Psalm 18:2).

1219 But this was not enough to satisfy his kindness and infinite love for the creatures. He wanted to raise them from their innate baseness to join them more intimately to Him, forming something like a chain, in which He is the first and last link, as its beginning and its end. And as the man is, let us put it this way, the center of creation because, according to St. Thomas, he is a composite of all the things, and has spiritual substances with regard to the soul and elements of all the other beings in his physical substance, becoming something akin to a small world; for that reason, God selected man in preference to the angelic spirits for this union dictated. *For no where doth he take hold of the angels: but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold* (Hebrews 2:16).

1220 It was the duty of the Word, the Son of God, then at the time determined by his eternal wisdom, to take on the human nature, joining together with it through hypostatic union, because the divinity and the creature, keeping their different characteristics, came to be a single divine person.

See here, beloved children, the Messiah which the Prophets proclaimed so many centuries in advance, and whose appearance the people of Israel were crying out for so eagerly.

1221 Oh and how great is our rank, beloved children! It is true the Lord created us as something less than the Angels; but it is also true he lavished and crowned us full of glory and honor, as David says, establishing us over all the works of his hands and raising man to the throne of divinity: *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor, thou hast made him a little less than the angels And hast set him over the works of thy hands.* (Psalm 8:6-7).

How great should our gratitude towards the Lord be, beloved children, if we would consider his love and special fondness for us with the proper attention! *If thou didst know the gift of God³⁷⁰* (John 4:10).

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³⁶⁹ Cf. John 1: 1-14.

1222 But what object did the coming of the Messiah have?

Look, beloved children, at the divine plan of the Incarnation of the Word, made clear by the Lord to the angelic spirits so they would worship the Living God: *And let all the angels of God adore him* (Hebrews 1:6). It awoke such jealousy and anger in Lucifer and his followers after observing the human nature, inferior to their own, exalted to the throne of God, that it led them to rebel against the Lord, and want to scale His throne and make themselves likenesses of the Almighty: *I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God...I will be like the most High* (Isaiah 14:13-14). But, oh miserable souls, they wanted to measure their powers with the Omnipotent and he hurled them from the summit of the glory to the abyss of hell, transformed into horrible and terrifying devils, without giving them time for conversion or making amends.

1223 From then on, that infernal spirit plotted to drag man to his damnation; and deceiving our first parents by telling them that by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree they would be as gods, knowing good and evil³⁷⁰, they induced them to shatter the divine precept and left them deprived of grace, dispossessed from Heaven and of the right to the Glory for which they were created.

1224 It appears that Lucifer must have been proud of this triumph achieved over man; not so much for their damnation as for having gone against the designs of God. But oh unhappy one! Did he perhaps ignore that nothing and no one can resist against the absolute will of God? When this infernal spirit, then, believed that he had also separated man and his descendants from God forever, that was the exact time for the divine Providence to express to the world his eternal decree of the union of the Word to human nature. In the punishment imposed on the infernal snake for having deceived and seduced Eve, the Lord says to it: "I will put enmity between you and the woman and between her descendants and yours, and she shall break your head". *I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head* (Genesis 3:15). The Lord showed the sympathy and pity he exercised with man for falling from his state of grace, not out of malice and arrogance like Lucifer, but through being seduced by Lucifer instead, who took advantage of his weakness and feebleness. At the same time, the Lord ruined and confounded the plans of the devil by making him see that the woman who had served the devil for the damnation of the human lineage would the same one who, by giving birth to the divine Messiah who would come to redeem the world, would crush his head, that is, would destroy his power by the virtue and power of her divine Son.

1225 From that happy moment for Humanity, beloved children, man recovered his rights as the child of God and inheritor of His glory, albeit if its gates would still be closed until the time his Redeemer opened them, which would be appropriate payment to the divine justice for the sin of man.

³⁷⁰ Cf. Genesis 3:5.

1226 How eagerly, then, was the world waiting for the coming of this Redeemer Messiah! The Prophets never ceased to continuously pray to Heaven to open its doors and for the clouds to rain down the Righteous One: *Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just* (Isaiah 45:8). But it was necessary for Humanity to do penance first in order to purge the sin of unfaithfulness of its first parents, preparing the ways for the Lord in this manner and understanding that they also had to give appropriate satisfaction to the Lord for their present sins with faith in the future Messiah and his priceless merits, since to save himself in the future, man would need to have his good works accompanied by the infinite merits of the Redeemer; because, as St. Augustine says, whoever was brought up without him, or without his mediation, will not be saved without him, that is , without his cooperation³⁷¹.

1227 For this reason, the Lord wanted four thousand years to pass before sending the promised Messiah to the world, who through his torments and insulting death on the cross, would redeem man of his sins, due to all of his acts being priceless as the works of the Living God.

1228 And finally the one sent by God appeared, causing such happiness and rejoicing, that in spite of over nineteen centuries having passed now since that happy event, the entire world celebrates it with growing enthusiasm every year.

1229 Beloved children, our mother the Church invites us to this commemoration during these days; and it wants you to focus closely, for our imitation and as an example, on the form and conditions this Messiah wanted to come into the world.

* * *

1230 The Jewish people judged that their Savior would come with great pomp and majesty, displaying his power as the King of Kings and Lord over those he dominates: *The King of kings, and Lord of lords* (I Timothy 6:15), and blinded by this conviction, they did not recognize him in spite of seeing his miracles; and still stubbornly continue in their blindness to reason.

1231 But, as the judgments of men are far removed from the plans and designs of God, it was not enough for the salvation of man that his Redeemer opened the gates to Heaven for him, because his evil inclinations and sinful nature would send him rushing into the abyss of vices and passions to his damnation, this divine Messiah wanted to establish himself as a model and example in the practice of each and every virtue which man must carry out to achieve his eternal salvation.

1232 See here that in order to teach us to rid ourselves of all the worldly things to which are our hearts are so attached and that thereby separate it from God, the only object of its love, the Lord wanted to be born in such poverty and abandonment from others that his poor Mother lacked even a shelter and his birth

³⁷¹ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Sermon 169*, 11: PL 38:923. Cf. 1190 above; 1353, 2128.

went unnoticed by the world. The Lord of all things had only a manger for a cradle, some straw for a mattress and the breath of some animals for an overcoat. Oh, what a cathedral of sublime humility the Sovereign Master chose, beloved children, to teach us the practice of the virtues we have to carry to achieve our salvation!

1233 From that he taught, first, obedience, since we lost the rights of children of God through the disobedience of our first parents, and that rebellion infected us, so to speak, with the spirit of independence and insubordination. And he is telling us silently that he has been obedient to the death: *Becoming obedient unto death* (Philippians 2:8), and not come to do his will, even though it is most holy, but the will of his Eternal Father who sent him instead: *Because I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me* (John 6:38). To overcome our displeasure in subordinating our will to the will of others, even though they are superiors, the Lord abided by obeying his own creatures: *And was subject to them* (Luke 2:51).

1234 As it was pride and arrogance which sent the rebellious angels falling into the abyss and cause the ruin and damnation of men, this divine Model wanted to teach us the practice of humility, the basis and foundation of all perfection, the only means to please God and obtain his grace; and therefore they are so dumbfounded and abased that being The Lord, he became a servant; being God, he became man, and being the Creator, he became a creature: *But emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man* (Philippians 2:7).

1235 And since we need penance for our salvation, the only resort that can save us from the wreckage after the misfortune of losing innocence, since we can only enter the Kingdom of Heaven through one of these doors, this divine Model chose to be born in the most extreme poverty and suffer its effects of cold, nakedness and rejection, which already made him, as Isaiah says, the most vile and despised of men right from the cradle, a man who endured great pains and who knows through experience what it is to suffer: *Despised, and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity* (Isaiah 53:3).

1236 In view of the obedience, humility, poverty and sufferings of the Living God, how shall our pride and arrogance not be confused, subordinating through God our will to all human creatures and enduring with resignation and patience the trials and tribulations that the Lord wants to send us as payment for our sins?

1237 Our beloved Redeemer compels us to do this, who appears to be telling us from the manger: "Everything I do is to give you an example, so that as I have done, you shall also do". *For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also* (John 13:15), and this divine Messiah obligates us so much by making himself our model and example³⁷².

* * *

³⁷² Cf. 272, 1172 above.

1238 Yes, beloved children, the way to show our gratitude to the Lord for having redeemed us at such great cost to himself, taking on our human nature and burdening himself with our miseries, has to be by engraving his divine teachings in our soul and copying and reproducing in ourselves the virtues He gave us such an admirable example of when he came into the world. This is also what the Eternal Father asks for and demands of us, telling all of us what he tells Moses: "Look closely and act according to the example I have shown you". *Look and make it according to the pattern that was shewn thee in the mount* (Exodus 25:40).

1239 It is not enough then, beloved children, to kneel at his feet before his humble cradle like the shepherds, giving thanks to him and offering testimony of our recognition of his coming into the world for our salvation. Instead we have to show ourselves as meek and diligent in learning and following the lessons that he gave us, imitating his poverty and doing without all worldly things in such a way that we suffer their absence with resignation if the Lord wants to take us by the path of poverty and if He instead takes us along the path of abundance, we do not put our hearts into them either.

1240 Let us also bow our heads to the yoke of obedience, because He intends for all of us to be dependent on each other and wants us to see his holy authority and will in that of our superiors.

And, finally, that we embrace mortification and penance, patiently enduring the humiliations and rejections.

1241 In this way, beloved children, we shall be credited for being among his faithful disciples and ensure our eternal salvation, which your Prelate desires both for itself and for you, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the first Sunday of Advent, on 29 November in the year of our Lord 1925.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

37

The Business of Salvation

(B. Seg 46, pp. 37-46)

"What must I do, that I may be saved?" (Acts 16:30).

1242 What is necessary for me to do to achieve my salvation? This question the jail guard asked St. Paul is the one that we must ask ourselves, beloved children, all the time and under all circumstances in order to make wise decisions about the only and most important business of our life. Nevertheless, people are thinking about less about this in every respect, as if we were settled into living as residents

of this world. And when this idea does cross the imagination, its rejects it as a bothersome and untimely thought.

1243 If you would ask this question, beloved children, to the many people who go rushing around looking to satisfy their passions in dangerous pastimes and entertainments, and do not aspire to anything more than what the world calls goods, that is the honors, riches and ranks, there is not they would undoubtedly scorn and consider you lunatics or fools. And truthfully they are the mad one, since this world cannot give the happiness which the human heart aspires to; on the contrary, in these false goods, they find emptiness, unease, and torture.

1244 But even when man finds some satisfaction in them, tell me: How long it will last? As the Lord says through St. Matthew: What use would it be to you, even if you win the entire world, if it comes to the detriment and loss of your soul? *For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?* (Matthew 16:26).

1245 So that we may focus on and engrave in our mind, beloved children, this fundamental truth of the importance of our salvation, our Mother the Church calls us to seclusion and meditation in this holy time of Lent; because the Lord demands this condition to communicate with and speak to the soul: *I will lead her into the wilderness: and I will speak to her heart.* (Hosea 2:14)³⁷³. And in this solitude the soul can attain, even in the midst of this noisy world, if it lives and united and elevated in God, shall hear the voice of the Lord, who by means of his ministers will make know the vanity and lies of worldly things and instill the value that it must make of its eternal salvation.

THE MOST IMPORTANT BUSINESS

1246 In truth, even though men may be oblivious of it for the most part and leave the business of their salvation to the last minute, and there are fools who do not want to pay attention to it and reject it, devoting themselves to the enjoyment of their passions and who therefore have to perish: *Let us crown ourselves with roses, before they be withered* (Wisdom 2:8). It is the truth, beloved children, that there is nothing more important and of such fundamental consequences for us than this business.

1247 And why not, if it deserved the attention of a God, and was its object in the plan of creation?

In fact, the heavens adorned with all its shining stars; the land with its countless variety of trees, plants and flowers that make it beautiful and the infinite number of animals of different species that populate the air, sea and land, what other end do they have, after the glory of God, but the service of man? And man, created by God in his image and likeness: *Let us make man to our image and likeness* (Genesis

³⁷³ Cf. in the *Jerusalem Bible*: Hosea 2:16.

1:26), what other end and activity could be imposed on him than to love and serve his God, who destined him to enjoy Him throughout all eternity? What a high and most noble end, beloved children, and what an incomparable and infinite reward for man!

1248 But if we consider what the Lord did for man to raise him up from his fallen state and opening the gates to heaven to him once again, we will better understand how much he loves and desire our salvation, and the esteem we should hold him in.

1249 Yes, because in order to save him from the infinite abyss that the sin had opened between man and God (insurmountable to the human nature), and reunite with him again, the Lord sent his only Son to world, taking on the human nature: *God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we may live by him* (1 John 4:9). As the Living God, He could give full payment of our sins to the divine justice, born into the greatest poverty which he embraced his entire life; enduring the hunger, thirst and inclement weather, the jokes and persecution of the people and death on the cross, after unprecedented tortures, which left not a single healthy part of his sacred body. As if this was not enough, he founded his Church as a new paradise, made fertile by seven sources of grace in the Holy Sacraments, so that man would find the cure for his weaknesses and the secure gateway to his salvation in it.

1250 But even this not all, because to further assure our salvation Jesus wanted to remain with us in his Church throughout the centuries, staying with us through the sacraments to be our guide, comfort and nourishment, and strengthen us in the path we have to walk along to reach the gateway of the Glory.

1251 However, what more could the Lord do for us, what greater proof could he give us of how much he desires our salvation? *And after this, what shall I do more for thee, my son?* (Genesis 27:37). And did he not make this known to us quite clearly, beloved children, what our soul is worth and how much our salvation matters?

1252 If the worldly people, then, have so much concern for and interest in material matters and business, which are transitory and perishable, even when they can only briefly enjoy those goods they obtain, what diligence will be right for us to put in assuring the salvation of our soul, a business of such vital interest.

BEING UNIQUE AND IRREVOCABLE

1253 A terrible alternative, beloved children! We either have to bet eternally happy or eternally disgraced. There is no middle ground or neutrality in this matter.

The businesses they talk about in the world, or can be corrected when they go wrong, or recover their loss in another matter; but not so when dealing with the salvation or loss of the soul, which decides the death of the man with an irrevocable sentence.

1254 The difference between the businesses of the world and that of our salvation is that the former are external businesses more than ours, since the norm is that others will enjoy their good success, since our life is so short; but not so in the business of salvation, whose happy or unfortunate result is so exclusively our own that only we have to experience it. We cannot confide to someone else, as often happens in worldly businesses that can be discussed with outside help; with salvation, the most our fellow man can do for us is help us with their prayers, but the work and responsibility are exclusively our own, just as the result is exclusively ours as well.

1255 Does it not seem to you then, beloved children, that it is extremely foolish to not pay attention to our only and vital business, and put all our attention in the worldly businesses which have so little for us to value? And how much greater that folly would be to completely forget and reject this business of salvation and only have ambitions for goods which are transitory and perishable?

1256 If we would think, as the Savior said to Martha, that only one single thing is necessary, the salvation of the soul³⁷⁴, and we would consider well what this eternity is we are heading towards, where we unquestionably will receive the prize or punishment for our works, how differently would we behave, beloved children! Then we would understand well the meaning of those terrible words of the Lord through St. Matthew, when he says: What use shall it be to man to win the world if he loses his soul? *For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?* (Matthew 16:26). And truthfully then we would not put anything before the business of our salvation, which is the only one whose consequences are irreversible and eternal.

1257 Oh if we could only hear, beloved children, the laments of the condemned people confessing their error! The easy and simple means they had to save themselves, by making use of the divine aids, graces and inspirations, and disdained to use until their last-minute attempts, the preference they gave to worldly businesses which they were so absorbed in that it made them forget the business of their salvation, tortures their soul and makes them cry out: "Then we have erred from the way of the truth and the light of justice did not shine for us, nor did the sun of intelligence illuminate us. *Therefore we have erred from the way of truth, and the light of justice hath not shined unto us, and the sun of understanding hath not risen upon us.* (Wisdom 5:6).

1258 What penance, then, would these reprobate souls not do, beloved children, if they could return to the world and make amends for their past errors? But the sentence is irrevocable and eternal will be their suffering.

A terrible truth, beloved children, that should make us tremble and live carefully, to assure our and only business of salvation, one we ordinarily think of so little.

³⁷⁴ Cf. Luke 10:42.

THE NEGLECT OF SALVATION

1259 If we take a look at society, beloved children, we will be convinced of the lack of esteem this important business has after observing the behavior of the majority of men. This is due to the lack of reflection, because there is hardly anyone who considers within themselves the eternal truths: *Because there is none that considereth in the heart* (Jeremiah 12:11).

1260 Do you not see how many men are so intent on their material business that they scarcely have room for rest and calmness, even sacrificing their health in exchange for obtaining a handful of gold with which to spend their life? Will they think much of the business of their eternal salvation? So, what shall we say to those who would do anything to attain high positions, ranks and honors, without compensating for the means to do so? Perhaps they will bear in mind that all will end shortly with an extremely strict judgment that determines your fortune for all of eternity? And what to consider of the ones who, as the Apostle says, made their stomach their God: *Whose God is their belly* (Philippians 3:19), and those who take their delight in wallowing like disgusting animals into the afterlife, and in the unhappy end to their pastimes and affairs, which without any doubt lead them to their eternal damnation?

1261 With good reason, then, the apostle and evangelist St. Matthew laments that there are many who enter by the front door, and walk along the spacious and delightful road that leads to damnation, and very few who are accurate in finding the narrow door and path that safely lead to eternal life: *For wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction ... How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life, and few there are that find it!* (Matthew 7:13-14).

1262 However, beloved children, these unfortunate souls who put their pleasures and passions before their eternal salvation will not be able to excuse their terrible behavior by saying the struggle they have to sustain against the world and its passions for the service of the Lord was intolerable for them, because He himself tells us: "Your yoke is gentle and your burden light": *For my yoke is sweet and my burden light* (Matthew 11:30). In truth, this violence that must be done to our rebellious passions to subdue and subordinate them to carrying out the Law of God, is all tempered by the calmness and satisfaction that fulfilling our duty produces in the conscience. A calmness and peace that the followers of the world devoted to their vices and passions do not enjoy in any way; because the gnawing worm of the conscience continuously torments them, even in the midst of their pleasures and entertainments, embittering their existence with remorse, a prelude to what they shall later feel eternally in hell.

1263 Let us be sensible then, beloved children, and continuously meditating that we are in this world in passing, because this is not our life. Let us adapt our behavior to the rules that the Lord outlines for us in his holy Law, so that we assure our salvation, the most important and only business for us, since the vision and pleasure of the Lord for all eternity depends on it, the end for which He created us and which your Prelate and servant of Christ desires both for itself and for you, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the Sunday of the 50th Anniversary, 14 February of the year of our Lord 1926.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

38
700th Anniversary of the Death of St. Francis
(B. Seg 47 [1927])

“God is wonderful in his saints” (Psalm 67:36).

1264 Beloved children, we were writing this Pastoral Sermon, dedicated to extol the glories of the Seraphic Father St. Francis, with the intention of publishing it in the Advent, when the Lord tested us with a painful and very serious illness that put us on the edge of the grave. We did not think in any way that we would ever be able to speak to you any more; but the Lord deigned to hear your pleas in our favor and restored our health, undoubtedly so that, by using our time in his service better, we might assure our eternal salvation. May a thousand thanks be given to the Lord, and to you, beloved children, through whose mediation we were granted this benefit!³⁷⁵

1265 We were saying, then, that the wheel of time, with its rapid and dizzying movement sweeps, crushes and pulverizes all before it, with even the greatest Empires powerless to put up resistance against it, and now only their memory remains. As the material works are destroyed at the hands of man, in the same way it also buries in neglect the honor and greatness in which man trusted; and even his name, however greatly it was revered, feared and esteemed it was, is buried in neglect. Only virtue with its heroic works immortalizes man, beloved children, without the action of time being able to diminish its greatness at all, nor erase its memory.

1266 We have good proof of that in the event that is moving the entire world this year³⁷⁶. Seven centuries ago a man died in Italy, apparently despicable to the world, since neither his ancestry nor his talents, gifts and physical traits recommended the man the people called the *Poor Little Man of Assisi*. Nevertheless, his memory is lasting through the centuries with an ever-increasing love and veneration, and all the societies consider him their most distinguished benefactor.

1267 And he was and he is the Seraph of Assisi, a support of the church according to the vision of Innocent III, who saw him holding up the walls of the Basilica of St. John Laterna with his shoulders³⁷⁷. And a benefactor of the entire world, for the reform he introduced in individuals and society with his spirit of charity, poverty and mortification, the effective antidote with which he cured the

³⁷⁵ Cf. 237 above.

³⁷⁶ Cf. Pius XI: *Rite Expiatis*: AAS 18 (1926), pp. 153-175.

³⁷⁷ Cf. LM 3:10, in works cited, p. 398.

hatred and enmity that was devouring that society and its thirst for material goods and pleasure, vices that characterized the 13th century.

1268 Our own society also suffers from these same ills, beloved children, annihilated by egotism, division and anarchy; and rejecting his vision of heaven, it only deals with seeking its satisfactions and material goods and pleasures.

1269 This why the spirit of the Seraphic Father is, as Pop Leo XIII³⁷⁸ pointed out, the only one which can restore our society as it did in the 13th century. And for that reason, we must study it in depth and let it pervade us in order to imitate it.

SPIRIT OF CHARITY

1270 The purpose and task of man upon earth is none other, beloved children, than to love and serve God an angelic service to which all other occupations have to refer and subordinate themselves. But unfortunately man, instead of going beyond the creatures through the knowledge of his creator and becoming inflamed with his divine love, puts his affections excessively in them, establishing the creatures as his end, and thereby the one who was created to be the king of the universe becomes a slave.

1271 From this came his coldness and indifference in the service of God; a lamentable state which the world had arrived at in the 13th century, as the Church says in the prayer of Father St. Francis. In order to remove man from that state and inflame the divine love in him, the Lord brought back the signs of his own passion in the Seraphic Father so that he was the proclaimer of the mercies of the Lord³⁷⁹.

1272 In fact, the flame of divine love burned so strongly in the heart of the Saint and he was so afflicted to see the ingratitude of men towards the Lord, that he shed many tears and complained by crying out loudly, because Love was not loved³⁸⁰.

1273 Who would be able to express in words, says St. Bonaventure, how much Francis loved God?³⁸¹ Apparently he had nothing in common with the creatures, and living in this world was already transformed by love into one of the blessed of heaven.

1274 This divine fire permeated him like material fire permeates combustible bodies and the mere mention of the love of God aroused and excited this fire in his heart more and more. His mind was focused on his beloved one, all the creatures were like mirrors in which to contemplate his beauty and kindness, steps on the ladder for him to use to go back to the union and contemplation of the object of

³⁷⁸ Cf. Leo XIII: *Auspicato Concessum*: ASS 15 (1882), pp. 145-153. Cf. 1010 above; 1978, 2640.

³⁷⁹ Cf. in BR, Prayer of 17 September.

³⁸⁰ Cf. TC 14, in works cited, p. 540. Cf. 350, 525, 1019 above.

³⁸¹ Cf. LM 9:1, in works cited, p. 435.

his love³⁸². From that came his continuous ecstasy and rapture, when the strength of this spirit seized and lifted his body up through the air, longing to join together with his loved one. And wishing to communicate to everyone this fire of the love for God which his heart burned with, he told his disciples: "Be everything for love and act always for love" and this was the constant theme of his speeches and sermons, of his canticles full of heavenly poetry and his maxims revealing the fire which consumed him. And lamenting the indifference of men towards his God, he often says, "Oh, the blindness of mortals who do not love the Source of all love!"

1275 The contemplation of the love of God towards his beings, which he took to the extreme of taking on their nature to save them, giving his life for them and, in order to dwell always and more intimately with them, he established the Holy Sacrament whereby he gave them his own body as nourishment; this consideration made the Saint mad with divine love and to devote himself to the greatest austerity and penance to demonstrate his reciprocation to the Lord; and this to the extreme that in death he would believe he must ask forgiveness of his body for how much he had mortified it³⁸³. But his spirit was not even satisfied with that, because he was not content with anything less than giving his life for the Beloved: and to that end he undertook a journey to Africa seeking martyrdom³⁸⁴.

1276 His chest was essentially a volcano of the fire of divine love, and to give him relief, the Lord opened five wound in his hands, feet and side, making him into his own living image³⁸⁵; when they appeared, they made sinners feel remorseful, aroused the fervor of the lukewarm souls and everyone longed to follow and imitate him.

1277 The charity of St. Francis, then, was the flame which set fire to the love of God and his fellow man in the cold, egotistical society of the 13th century.

But through his poverty, Francis did no less to help and alleviate the insatiable thirst that society felt for material goods, the effect of their rejection of the only good, which is God.

SPIRIT OF POVERTY

1278 Beloved children, man was created by God so that he would be happy for all eternity, with serene vision and pleasures, feels an innate inclination to desire and search for his good fortune and well-being which can only be found in service to God. And if he does not know God, or goes without God to satisfy this yearning to be happy, he avidly seeks material goods, in which he wrongly believes he can find happiness! How many victims of this deception there have been in centuries

³⁸² Cf. 2C 165, in works cited, p. 325; LM 9:1, in works cited, p. 436.

³⁸³ Cf. 2C 211, in works cited, p. 351.

³⁸⁴ Cf. LM 9:5-8, in works cited, pp. 438-442.

³⁸⁵ Cf. LM 13:5, in works cited, pp. 463-464.

as indifferent and lacking in religious feelings as the 13th century and the present one!

1279 For this reason, then, the Lord also sent the Seraphic Father St. Francis into the midst of that materialistic society, in order that he would teach, with his evangelic poverty, the practice of doing without worldly things and to look first to God, who knows, can and wants to pay the services of man, meeting all his needs with largesse. This way we find everything in God and this is why the Saint continuously cried out: My God and all my things!³⁸⁶

1280 And Francis lived by doing without all worldly things and enamored of poverty, much more than worldly individuals are attached to their material goods.

After hearing in the Gospel: "Do not take gold, nor silver, nor any other currency in your bag; not a sack, nor two tunics, nor shoes or a cane", he cried out with great joy: "This is what I was searching for". And immediately he disposed of his clothes to cover himself with a wool tunic, tied a rough cord around his waist, threw away his bag and took off his shoes to begin to follow the apostolic life with the greatest perfection³⁸⁷. And St. Bonaventure assures us that during his life he always contented himself with a single tunic and wore a rough cord around this waist³⁸⁸.

1281 From then on Francis began going from door to door begging for his sustenance. And once, having gathered the leftover food they gave him in a bowl, when he went to eat that garbage sitting on the ground, he found it so revolting he was about to throw it out; but forced himself and ate it with such satisfaction that he often said later, with great wit, that he had found himself a very good cook. And he from then on he did not want to eat bread that was not collected by alms, because he said that it ³⁸⁹was the Bread of Angels. He also endured the other inconveniences that go with poverty with the same satisfaction and joy.

1282 As for the habit of rough, coarse wool he wore did not protect him for the cold, once he was numb and shivering from cold when Angel, his close brother, happened to see him and as a joke, since he was one of his friends, asked him if he wanted to sell him a few drops of sweat, to which the Saint replied: "I do not sell my sweat to men, because I have sold it to God at a better price than the one you would pay me"³⁹⁰.

1283 He practiced poverty with such strictness, and loved it so much that when he saw some beggar who appeared to be poorer than he was, he was moved to the point of shedding tears, because he did not want anyone to be poorer than him³⁹¹. And he was wedded to it, establishing it as the basis and foundation of his Order³⁹², as the first religion that professed poverty in common, because although

³⁸⁶ Cf. 553 above, note 109.

³⁸⁷ Cf. 1C 22, in works cited, page 155; LM 3:1, in works cited, p. 393.

³⁸⁸ Cf. LM 7:1, in works cited, p. 421.

³⁸⁹ Cf. LM 7:8, in works cited, p. 425.

³⁹⁰ Cf. TC 23, in works cited, p. 546; 2C 12, in works cited, p. 237.

³⁹¹ Cf. LM 7:6, in works cited, p. 424.

³⁹² Cf. 2C 55, in works cited, p. 263; LM 7:6, in works cited, p. 424.

it was previously known and practiced by the monks, they nevertheless did not profess it in common.

1284 Such a rare and admirable example of poverty caused hilarity and scorn in some people, who took Francis for crazy and reached the extreme of throwing stones and mud at him³⁹³; but the appearance and words of the poor man of Assisi made a profound impression on others who were more reflective and well-intentioned in their hearts, and he went on working a great change in that society which longed for nothing beyond riches and idleness until then. There were many people from all different social classes and status who renounced the world and set out to follow the footsteps of Francis. The first one among them, as the cornerstone of the building of the first Order, the wealthy Bernard of Quintaval who, acting on the advice of the Saint, distributed his goods among the poor before wearing the habit³⁹⁴; and among the women, the young noblewoman Clare of Assisi who was the foundation of the second order³⁹⁵. But since it was impossible for many who longed to follow Francis to stop living in society, for their special status and conditions, the Lord came to the Saint through prayer and inspired him, as he said himself, to found a Third Order in which everyone could enter, no matter what their status or condition might be³⁹⁶; and the first ones to wear that habit were the Blessed Lucius and his wife.

1285 With these three Orders spreading rapidly not only in Italy but in other nations, they worked a great reform of customs in society, and therefore with good reason they can call St. Francis their father and reformer.

1286 But if he taught men to focus their mind and heart on God through the virtues of charity and poverty, and to hold worldly goods in low esteem because they distanced them from Him, he put no less effort in leading us, serving as the guide himself, on the way of mortification, necessary in every respect for eternal salvation.

SPIRIT OF MORTIFICATION

1287 After the sin of our first parents, beloved children, man experiences a continuous battle between his spirit and flesh. The spirit longs to live united to his God and be faithful in carrying out his precepts but the capricious and rebellious flesh, incited by the infernal spirit and flattered by the pleasures the world offers him, attempts to satisfy his passion, which the Apostle lamented when he felt a law in his limbs opposed to the law of the spirit³⁹⁷. By having to continuously struggle

³⁹³ Cf. LM 2:2, in works cited, p. 389.

³⁹⁴ Cf. 2C 15, in works cited, pp. 238-239.

³⁹⁵ Cf. LM 4:6, in works cited, pp. 401-402.

³⁹⁶ Cf. LM, 4:6, in works cited, p. 401.

³⁹⁷ Cf. Romans 7:23.

to subdue and subordinate the rebellious flesh to the spirit, the life of man is an ongoing warfare, as St. Job said³⁹⁸.

1288 For these battles then, in addition to the grace of God which he never denies to his creatures, man needs a virile and spirit and a powerful resolve to battle valiantly, to dominate his flesh and conquer the enemies who ally themselves with the flesh to make us lose our way. But in centuries as materialistic and sensual as the 13th and our present century, a powerful example was needed who would encourage and teach man to make use of the weapons of mortification and penance, the only ones with which the spirit can come out victorious in these struggles; and this model was Francis, known to everyone as the Penitent of Assisi.

1289 In fact, his mortification and penance was such that the mere consideration of it fills one with amazement and horror, since he had made an agreement to always act against his senses, even in their smallest desires. He carried out this resolution until his death because St. Bonaventure says: "When he seemed to have reached the peak of perfection and was already a fully heavenly man, he still searched for new reasons to mortify his senses, as if then he would begin to serve God"³⁹⁹.

1290 His nourishment and rest were so limited that, according to St. Bonaventure again, he barely had enough food or sleep not to die: Father St. Francis argued that it was very difficult to satisfy all the needs of the body without obeying its perverse inclinations at the same time. He ate cooked delicacies with difficulty and hardly any of them, and never without mixing in ash and a good deal of water so they turned out bland⁴⁰⁰. Once when he felt the urge to eat poultry, he went to a manure pile and grabbing a half-spoiled chicken, held it up to his nose, saying to himself ironically: "Take it, greedy; here you have the chicken meat you wanted to much; satisfy your taste and stuff yourself to your heart's content"⁴⁰¹.

1291 You could say his fast was continuous, because in addition to the Lent of the Church, he fasted for another six long periods. His rest was very short and he took it laying on the hard ground or sitting with his head reclining against the wall. He always walked barefoot and did all traveling on foot. In both summer and winter the coarse woolen tunic he wore served him for mortification, and when he was once asked how he could stand the cold wearing so little clothing, he replied, "If we, through the great desire for heaven that we should have, would feel ourselves touched inside by the call of this blessed home, we would easily endure this external cold"⁴⁰².

1292 He had such hatred towards his body that once when he was being mistreated by the devils, he told them: "In the name of the Almighty God, I tell you to use all the strength that my Lord Jesus Christ has given you, and mistreat my

³⁹⁸ Cf. Job 7:1.

³⁹⁹ Cf. Lm 3:3, in works cited, p. 509.

⁴⁰⁰ Cf. LM, in works cited, p. 406.

⁴⁰¹ Cf. WADDING, L.: *Annales Minorum*, Vol. I, 228-11.

⁴⁰² Cf. LM 5:2, in works cited, p. 407.

body, because I am quick to suffer⁴⁰³. This body is an unbearable weight on me, my worst enemy, the most perverse and rebellious of them; you, then, avenge me on it by punishing it⁴⁰⁴.

1293 If we were given, beloved children, to follow the mortified life of Francis step by step, and penetrate deeply into the sanctuary of his soul to know his inner mortification, we would see that the life of the hermits has nothing on him and that he was called the Penitent of Assisi with good reason.

1294 Such a rare example of mortification caused a great impression in everyone who saw Francis, and comparing their lives with that of the Penitent Saint, they were inspired to follow him on the way of penance to pay for their sins. This is why Francis also came to be the reformer of the voluptuous customs of his own century and those to come, because his example is lasting and shall last until the end of time.

1295 See here, beloved children, the model and example your mother the Church brings you for consideration, especially in this year commemorating the 700th anniversary of the death of this great Patriarch, our Father St. Francis.

1296 Let us try, then, to fill ourselves with his spirit of loving God and his fellow man; of indifference to worldly things and the use of mortification as payment for our sins and, in this way, achieve the salvation of our souls. This is what your Prelate desires both for itself and for you, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the Sunday of the 50th Anniversary, on 27 November 1927.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

39

On the Occasion of Advent

(B. Seg 47 [1927], pp. 173-177)

“That time shall be no longer” (Revelations 10:6).

1297 Taking a look at society, beloved children, and seeing the total religious ignorance of the majority of people; the scorn they display at any reference to the supernatural order and the glacial indifference of more than a few for Religion and its precepts, it is doubtful these people will believe they have an immortal soul, deserving by its works of the prize or eternal punishment in the other life or whether, comparing it to the irrational, they think there is nothing for them beyond this world. And for that reason they say: Let us crown ourselves with roses before

⁴⁰³ Cf. LM 10:3, en works cited, p. 443.

⁴⁰⁴ Cf. 2C 122, in works cited, p. 302.

they go away⁴⁰⁵; that is, let us enjoy whatever we can and not put any restraints on our passions, licenses and lasciviousness, since everything is finished for us when we die.

1298 Unhappy souls; what a terrible disillusionment they will suffer when they are finished with pleasures in time, and what a horrible awakening is in store when they close their eyes on the world and open them in eternity? They will rightly lament then, saying: We have strayed from the way of the truth, and the light of justice has not enlightened us, nor has the sun of intelligence risen for us (Wisdom 5:6)! But by then they will not be able to make amends for the errors they committed, because after life is ended, there will not be more time for penance: *That time shall be no longer* (Revelations 10:6).

1299 There is nothing surprising in the lack of concern one observes, beloved children, in the skeptics, whose god is their stomach and their idol the passions⁴⁰⁶, since they think they find their happiness in them, an innate desire in man, created by God to be eternally happy. Unfortunately this indifference and overlooking of his end and eternal destiny is so frequent in Christians who, in their baptism, swore to renounce Satan and his evil works and the world with its pomp and vanities to follow Jesus Christ in everything, and embraced his doctrine; this seems incredible because they have not lost their faith but it is inconceivable they hold their soul in such low esteem that they would put it at risk to be lost for all eternity.

1300 There are so many Christians we could call in name only that it is horrifying, beloved children, the thought of what society is going to be if it does not return to Jesus Christ and the countless number of souls the devil is seizing from our divine Redeemer.

1301 Because, in truth, when have you seen the indifference, and even disdain, with which many Christians today look upon the divine and ecclesiastical precepts? Do they have much interest apart from fulfilling the Easter precept? Do they not miss hearing the Holy Mass on the required days on the flimsiest pretexts? What shall we say of the education that family men today give their children? How frequently the children see their parents each going their own way, without caring for their children at all! And the result of all this are the excesses and passions going out of control, and being able to say, as in the book of Genesis, that all flesh has corrupted its ways.

1302 Unfortunately, today you cannot cite the Spanish woman as a model of modesty and integrity because they could not dress more outrageously. And it does not matter that we Prelates and Priests can cry out against these abuses because they do not pay attention to us; not even the Roman Pontiff, who never misses an opportunity to reprimand and condemn great scandals, up to forbidding entrance to the Vatican to whoever does not wear a long dress and have their breast and arms well covered. But what disgrace! The women of today lack true faith and religious feeling, they believe they have not sinned in this matter and they

⁴⁰⁵ Cf. Wisdom 2:8.

⁴⁰⁶ Cf. Philippians 3:19.

are justified in wearing whatever fashion dictates and establishes, no matter how scandalous it may be. Oh, and what a tremendous punishment awaits in the other life for whoever favored and spread those fashions! But a great many fathers and mothers will suffer just as much who consent and even force their daughters to dress so indecorously, under the pretext of not wanting them to be ridiculed or to be attractive to the world; without thinking that the opposite happens most of the time, since the formal and sensible man, when looking to marry, tries to look for a young woman to be with who combines the qualities of religious feeling, industriousness and modesty, the only ones that will make for a happy marriage. And if he does not focus on these, how much worse for him and for his wife, since they will surely be very unfortunate, as is usually the case.

1303 Beloved children, our society is walking with giant strides to paganism, imitating its depraved customs which are so contrary to the Christian spirit. Look at around and you will see the performances and entertainments that today appeal to the people are generally the most indecent and scandalous; among them is boxing, reminiscent of the Roman gladiators; a sport that is not only opposed to Christian charity but even to humanity. Nonetheless today they call men philanthropists and even form societies for protecting the animals; but, on the other hand, they take great pleasure in injuring and even killing men with their fists. What an aberration, beloved children! And what is most striking and shows the low level of morality we have reached is that, after viewing such an inhumane entertainment, they not only do not prohibit it, but applaud and even promote it by spending considerable sums for it.

1304 What great degradation we have reached, beloved children! We are truly going through disastrous times full of dangers, especially for the poor young people, whose passions are carrying them to follow such a devastating current.

1305 Redouble your vigilance over them, family men! And let every one of you, beloved children, pray to the Lord with the Holy Mother Church, that the infernal spirit, who wanders the world for the damnation of souls, be hurled into the abysses.

You Father and servant in Christ blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

Segorbe, on 4 December 1927.

40

On Lack of Enthusiasm

(B. Seg 48 [1928], pp. 33-41)

“But because thou art lukewarm, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth” (Revelation 3:16).

1306 The Lord uses these terrible and terrifying words to express, through St. John in his Revelation, how much He abhors and is displeased by the souls who are lukewarm in their enthusiasm, as he says he will begin to vomit them out of his mouth. This indicates that although He has not completely withdrawn himself from them, they displease him so much he is ready to reject and repudiate them from his service. If this still does not involve the eternal damnation of these souls, it nevertheless indicates that his divine providence is abandoning them in a certain sense, bestowing on them only the necessary graces he denies to no one; but he is withdrawing from and rejecting them, with the repulsion and repugnance that causes him to vomit: *I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth* (Revelation 3:16).

1307 Because the Lord loves us so much, beloved children, He was not content with creating us and making us the heirs of his glory, so when our first fathers had lost it through sin, he did not hesitate to send his own Son to our rescue: *He that spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all* (Romans 8:32), he wants and demands of us the reciprocation of his love for that. But not just any love, which the heart shares with others, but a fervent love which completely consumes man, so that he loves with all his heart, all his soul and all his strength: and loves all the creatures but in God, through God and for God⁴⁰⁷.

1308 And this love, like any burning fire, the Son of God brought to the world as He himself says through St. Luke: *I am come to cast fire on the earth* (Luke 12:49), and it is his burning desire that the souls ignite with this love as reciprocation of his divine love. That is the way he wants to be loved, one which does not allow divisions in our heart, nor weakness or lukewarm enthusiasm towards Him and in his service, preferring cold or sinful souls to the lukewarm ones, because the former recognize their wicked state and therefore come out of it more easily: "I hope you are cold or hot," the Lord says, "but because you are lukewarm I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:16).

1309 St. Gregory says hot souls are those which burn in charity or love of God: cold souls whoever is in mortal sin and admits his sin, and lukewarm the ones who, although they are in sin, do not want to admit it and pretend to be good⁴⁰⁸. What a terrible moral sickness this last group of souls suffers, beloved children, and how difficult it is to cure because they do not admit it and therefore do not apply the remedies. This is why the Lord with good reasons puts lukewarm souls behind cold ones in His love.

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1310 What a lamentable state this lack of enthusiasm is, beloved children! And how abominable it must be when our Divine Redeemer, who gave his life for us and wants all of us to be saved: *God, who will have all men to be saved* (I Timothy 2:4), says they are nauseating his divine heart, and that is why He is in the process

⁴⁰⁷ Cf. 351, 524, 1056, 1151, 1195 above.

⁴⁰⁸ Cf. ST. GREGORY: *Regul. Past.*, par III, c. 34: PL 77:94.

of vomiting them out of him. What a terrible threat! Because where will the soul that God rejects go and who will give them refuge? This consideration made the royal prophet David tremble and cry out to the Lord: "Do not leave me, my Lord and God; do not distance yourself from me" (Psalm 37:22). If the damned, whose principal torment is their separation from God, would be permitted to come to this world, beloved children, and devote themselves to the service of the Lord, working towards making amends for their lives in order to receive forgiveness and grace, what degree of fervor and zeal would consume them, in order to demonstrate their love and gratitude to the Lord? And how they would be amazed by and reprimand in others any weakness and lack of enthusiasm in the service of the Lord? "Oh, men", they would tell us, "if you only knew of the good your are losing and the evil to which your lukewarm ways are leading your soul, how much fervor and enthusiasm you would serve the Lord with"!

1311 This indifference in his service is so displeasing to God that the divine Spirit says through Jeremiah: "Cursed be the man who does the work of God carelessly or with lack of enthusiasm" (Jeremiah 48:10). What a terrible threat, beloved children!

1312 Do you understand well what the curse of God involves and means? He, who many times hears and confirms the curses that parents direct against their children when they provoke their anger with their misbehavior, how much displeasure and indignation do you think the lukewarm and reluctant souls must cause him, when he utters such horrifying words against them?

1313 But the most horrible aspect of this moral illness, beloved children, is that they do not know it. Because the lukewarm soul, by not committing the serious offenses he sees others fall into, thinks he is already righteous and puts himself ahead of the others, saying like the Pharisee: "I thank you, Lord, because I am not like other men: thieves, unjust, adulterers" (Luke 18:11). With this secret complacency about himself, he lacks humility, the foundation of perfection, and does not pay attention to acquiring the other virtues, and less for doing penance, which he consider unnecessary because he does not believe he is a sinner. But he would think differently if he bore in mind that the Lord himself in the Book of Revelation, after acknowledging the good works of the Bishop of Ephesus and the works and persecutions he endured with great patience for Him, nonetheless reprimanded him for letting his initial fervor and charity wane, and orders him to do penance and go back to his previous state of zeal and fervor, under pain of imposing penance Himself, with the punishments he would send him to cure his lack of enthusiasm (Revelation 2:2-5).

* * *

1314 It is advisable then, beloved children, to know the causes of such damaging evils as indifference, in order to be forewarned and reject them.

It is the first lack of faith. Yes, because if we had it well in mind that we came from God, who created us for the glory, and that we have to return to Him to give a strict accounting of all our actions and received the reward or punishment for them from Him, and both have to be eternal, our zeal and interest in perfecting our works would certainly be very different, so they would be pleasing to His divine eyes. Would we perhaps be feeble and lukewarm in our service to God if we knew that shortly we were going to present ourselves before his divine court? Certainly not. And for that reason the Lord says to us in the book of Ecclesiasticus: "Remember your last end and you shall never sin" (Ecclesiasticus 7:40)⁴⁰⁹.

1315 Another cause of weakness and lack of enthusiasm in the service of the Lord, beloved children, is an excessive concern with worldly businesses, which regularly absorb so much of men's attention that they say they have no time to occupy themselves with things related to the soul; and they even rob the Lord of the day He has reserved to be sanctified and use it for their work as well. How advisable for them are the words of the Savior to St. Martha, when he reprimanded her for her unnecessary concern over household things, telling her: "Martha, Martha you are very attentive, and worry and become upset over many things when there is only one that is necessary" (Luke 10:41-42). Yes, beloved children: yes, the only thing necessary for man is to save his soul, since he was created for that, and none of the goods that he hoards in this world is going to serve for anything in the other life, now very near at hand. It is true that man does not have to neglect work for this reason, which God imposes as a punishment for his sins, but you must take it and offer it as penance and do not neglect the things related to the service of the Lord because of work. This is what the Seraphic Father St. Francis instilled in his children, not even wanting them to neglect the spirit of prayer and contemplation for the sake of studying the arts⁴¹⁰.

1316 We could provide many other causes, beloved children, that influence the lack of enthusiasm and indifference of men in the works of service of the Lord, but we will limit ourselves to telling you that primarily they are the uncontrolled passions encouraged by the bad examples and scandals that are continuously seen and make men withdraw from the practice of good.

1317 The sin of our first parents left the hearts of men so inclined towards evil, beloved children, and so weak to resist the temptation of the enemies that through the fervent stirring of his excessive appetites and the powerful influence that bad examples wield over him, he is increasingly relaxing his efforts in the service of the Lord to the point of being incapacitated to work with the required application and enthusiasm in a work as important as his salvation.

1318 Quite rightly, then, the Divine Redeemer laments over the world because of the scandals. *Woe to the world because of scandals* (Matthew 18:7), because not only do they seize those the souls who willingly follow the perverse maxims of the

⁴⁰⁹ Cf. in *Jerusalem Bible*: Sirach 7:36.

⁴¹⁰ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: *Letter to St. Anthony*, in works cited, p. 74.

enemy tyrant, but also makes many others withdraw from the perfection that He demands of everyone. There is so much to regret about this, beloved children!

* * *

1319 The level of disorder and upheaval in society is so great in this point that, like the Apostle, we can lament with good reason that there are great dangers for our soul in everything everywhere. Yes, because you neither see, hear, nor experience anything but scandals anywhere, and not just coming from the carefree people that form part of that world, and thereby do not want to pray to the Divine Savior: *I pray not for the world* (John 17:9). These scandals are even coming from women who want to pass as devout yet you see them follow the corrupting trend of society in their customs, fashions and entertainments, without warnings or preaching being enough to make them stop, since whoever tells them and whatever the style is has greater force for them than the divine word and will. These are truly lukewarm souls, beloved children who want to combine the service of God with that of the world: the ones the Lord says he will begin to vomit from his mouth. *I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth* (Revelation 3:16).

1320 Will you tell me what we have to do, then, to assure our salvation?

I reply with the same words the Savior said to that doctor of law who also asked this question: "What is written in the law?", and the Lord replied: "You shall love," he answered, "your God and Lord with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength". "If you do this," the Lord said, "you shall live for all eternity" (Luke 10:25-28). Yes, beloved children, this is the first and main precept of the Law, which summarizes it and to which the remainder of the Law refers; therefore, we assure our salvation if this is fulfilled. But tell me: will someone whose heart is occupied with a thousand stupid and vain things of the world be able to pride themselves and promise that they love God with all their hearts; and also whoever has his heart excessively involved in the creatures? How will someone be able to say they love God with all their soul when they put their own at risk for all eternity, knowing that God loved it so much that in order to save it he sent his own Son to His death on the cross? They could not love God with all their strength when they do not much make effort to conquer their passions; and by not condemning the worldly, keeping the pangs of their conscience silent, continue their corrupted customs, making themselves contemporary at the obscene shows, scandalous dances, indecent fashion and all that the world, the satellite of the devil, requires of its own kind.

1321 None of these can presume, beloved children, of fulfilling this precept as God commands; and justifiably can fear being among the number of lukewarm souls who the Lord detests.

1322 We ask, beloved children, that the divine Spirit who inflames our heart with the fire of his holy love that Jesus Christ came to bring to the world in order that, purified like gold in the crucible, and following the footsteps of this divine

model, we may triumph over the obstacles facing our sanctification and we will achieve the eternal happiness that He created us for.

This is what your Prelate and servant in Christ desires for itself and for you, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the first Sunday of Lent, 26 February of the year 1928.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

41

The Dignity of the Christian

(B. Seg 48 [1928], pp. 173-186)

“For the Spirit himself giveth testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God. And if sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:16-17).

ARE YOU CHRISTIANS?

1323 See here, beloved children, a question the Catechism asks, and one which everyone would answer affirmatively without hesitating. The honor and dignity this title gives us, that I do not believe you can find anyone among those reborn with the water of the holy Baptism that does not pride himself and glory in it. It declares us to be children of God the Father and heirs of his glory; brothers of the Living God, His Son, who became incarnate and died for us and who, through his love, makes us living temples of God, the Holy Spirit.

1324 This noble title, beloved children, also makes us brothers of countless heroes of Christianity; some martyrs, who bravely confessed their faith before tyrants without being intimidated at the sight of the beasts, or fire, or the horrible tortures invented by the executioners to destroy their bodies, in spite of many of them being tender youths and delicate damsels. Other heroes are wise doctors, who enlighten the world with their admirable science and doctrine, and finally, the multitude of saints of all social classes and status, who were the good fragrance of Jesus Christ everywhere with their virtues and examples and attracted countless souls to his service.

With good reason then, every one us can and should glory in belonging to such a heroic and glorious family.

TO WHOM DO WE OWE THIS GRACE?

1325 As the Catechism declares that we are Christians, we add: by the grace of God. In fact, the grace of God and only the Lord in his infinite kindness granted us this priceless favor. He thought of us through all eternity and we loved him throughout all eternity and were attracted to Him, having mercy on us, as He said to Jeremiah: *Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore have I drawn thee, taking pity on thee* (Jeremiah 31:3).

1326 Have you ever reflected, beloved children, on how extraordinary and unique this grace is? How many thousands of creatures would be born the same day as us! Of those, some would see the light among the unfaithful, others would be the children of heretic parents and finally, others would have the misfortune that their parents were parents but in name only, living in all other respects like the unfaithful. However, what merit could there have been in us, beloved children, to have this favored status? We all came into this world stained by the same original sin, and there could not have been any personal worth or lack of worth in us then; only, then, through the mercy of God, whose judgments are mysterious, was what chose us and drew us to Him, as He said to Jeremiah: *Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore have I drawn thee*⁴¹¹. And who knows if the prediction of our later miseries, greater perhaps than those of others, would be the motive that would turn the mercy of the Lord in our favor?: *Taking pity on thee*.

GREATNESS OF THIS BENEFIT

1327 Certainly the greatest of the benefits that we have received, beloved children, from the liberal hand of God is to be called to Christianity.

Truly great was giving us this being, with preference over so many other creatures the Lord could have created, who would perhaps have produced more glory than ours; and just because this was a benefit common to all men does not make it any less deserving of our acknowledgement. Even greater than this benefit was the Lord having canceled the debt of the sin of our first parents, by which we lost the right to eternal life, by sending His own Son for our redemption: *He that spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all* (Romans 8:32), since without this benefit of Redemption, our creation by the Lord, says St. Ambrose, would have served for nothing due to our souls perishing eternally later⁴¹². However, still greater than this benefit for us was being born in the bosom of Christianity of Catholic parents who secured our rebirth through the holy Baptism; so that from the children of anger and slaves of the devil we were from original sin: *And were by nature children of wrath* (Ephesians 2:3), the chains that our cruel enemy had

⁴¹¹ Jeremiah 31:3.

⁴¹² Cf. ST. AMBROSE: *Expositions on St. Luke*, 2:41: PL 15:1649; *Exposition on Psalm 118: Sermon 16*, 40 and *Sermon 20*, 19: PL 15:1512 and 1566-1567, respectively.

imprisoned us with were broken through Baptism and we were received into the arms of our Heavenly Father, recognizing as his children and heirs to his glory. Could there be, beloved children, any greater stroke of fortune and happiness for us than this? Would it not have been great enough if the Lord had deigned to admit us as His slave? But not, that was not enough for his preferential love towards us, but he wanted to make us members of the mystical body of the Church, whose head is Jesus Christ: *Your bodies are the members of Christ* (1 Corinthians 6:15), cleansing our souls with the regenerative waters of the holy Baptism, the only door by which you can enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, as Jesus Christ himself says: *Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God* (John 3:5).

1328 Admit then, oh Christians, I will say with St. Leo the Pope, the excellence of your position; and remember that, now removed from the power of darkness, we have been moved to the light and knowledge of God and his eternal Kingdom, through our Lord Jesus Christ⁴¹³.

1329 However, if the world values and shows off its riches, nobility and positions, greater than these, without any comparison, are the richness, nobility and position which honors and distinguish the Christians, made children of God and heirs of his glory.

1330 But understand, beloved children, that nobility obligates us so we must not content ourselves with taking the name of Christians and glorying in it, but instead put all our effort into fulfilling the duties inherent to such an honorable title.

DUTIES OF THE CHRISTIAN

1331 Beloved children, the Christian has two inescapable obligations to fulfill. First, he has to reject evil and act for good, as the royal Prophet says: *Turn away from evil and do good* (Psalm 33:15). And this is by virtue of what we promised through our godparents in the Baptism.

1332 Our Mother the Church, after the all-embracing power it received from Jesus Christ, had expelled the devil from us by means of exorcisms, and before pouring the wholesome water of the holy Baptism over our heads, solemnly asked us: "Do you renounce Satan, his works and all his splendor?", as if to be to sure of us before administering the holy Sacrament that we would faithful to Jesus Christ. Because our Mother the Church is so knowledgeable of the power of the infernal enemy that, albeit reduced by our Redeemer, was not completely eliminated so that man, by enduring the attacks of the enemy with his temptations and resisting them with the help of the divine graces, would acquire and increase his merits for eternal life. Knowing similarly the satanic determination and the efforts the enemy

⁴¹³ Cf. ST. LEO: *Sermon* 23, 5. PL 54:203. Cf. 482 above.

makes in order that man lose himself, not so much through the hatred and envy that he has so much as to go against the will of the Almighty; for that reason, the loving Church warns us of this beforehand in order that we may resist strongly in the faith, as the apostle St. Peter says: *Because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist ye, strong in faith* (1 Peter 5:8-9).

1333 Yes, beloved children, there is much to fear from such a cruel enemy, and even more when he allies himself with other, no less formidable adversaries, the world and the flesh, and by mutual consent they declare war on us, each one attacking us where they know our weakness is greatest. With good reason then, the apostle St. Paul recommends to us to be sober and watch ourselves in order not to fall into temptation: *Be sober and watch* (1 Peter 5:8). But look, our fear does not have to be so great as to discourage us, because St. Augustine tells us: "The devil is like a tied-up dog who can bark but can only bite someone who voluntarily wants to come close to him"⁴⁴. This is why the secret of our victory or our defeat is in the use of our will, on which all our good and evil depends; and this is why one holy Father says: "If there was no individual will, there would be no hell"⁴⁵.

1334 Beloved children, this is what the man fearful of the infernal enemy and no less of his own weakness and misery, finds himself obligated to do by virtue of his condition of being Christian; that is, to stay away from evil, as the royal Prophet says: *Turn away from evil* (Psalm 33:15). But he will not just fulfill his duties as a Christian, but has to work for good as the same Prophet David says: *Do good*⁴⁶.

1335 However, if we have been raised to the highest position of children of God through Baptism, and as such we owe Him our submission and obedience, which all the beings of creation offer to his name, and not straying whatsoever from the laws that the Lord imposed on them. And how fair is that tribute that He demands of us, not only for being our Creator and Lord, but still more for deigning to look after us and wanting us to call him our Father?

1336 As children of God, then, our main, and I would even say only, duty is to fulfill his holy will in everything and for everything. This is what our divine Redeemer taught us and what we continuously ask for in the Lord's Prayer, saying: "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven"⁴⁷. And truly there is nothing more perfect, holy, or pleasing to the divine eyes that we can do in this world, beloved children, than the complete conformity of our will with the divine one; because, having been created by the Lord for Him and his glory, we must depend on his holy will in everything.

1337 But what is it the Lord wants and orders us to fulfill for his glory and our salvation? The divine Master teaches us by saying: "If you want to enjoy eternal life, keep the Commandments": *But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments*

⁴⁴ ST. AUGUSTINE: *Sermon 37, 6*: PL 39:182o. Cf. 774, 1125.

⁴⁵ ST. BERNADINO: *Easter Day Sermon 3, 3*: PL 183:29o.

⁴⁶ Psalm 33:15.

⁴⁷ Matthew 6:1o.

(Matthew 19:17). The precepts of the Ten Commandments, beloved children, which the Lord engraved in the heart of man after creating him, and without there being another proclamation of this Law, which was therefore called natural law. But, as man was ungrateful to God, breaking his precepts and forgetting his benefits, the Lord again informed man of his divine precepts, delivering them to Moses on Mount Sinai, written by his hand on stone tablets, to reproach the people for their harshness and stubbornness⁴¹⁸. Terrified then by the miracles and marvelous signs the Lord worked in the proclamation of his Law, they promised Moses they would faithfully comply with whatever the Lord ordered them; but unfaithful to their promises, they were distancing themselves little by little from God, and forgetting his precepts, they fell into the most abominable errors and corruption, which brought them to the point of worshipping false gods. With humanity in this condition, the Lord sent his own divine Son made man to redeem it; and he again informed us and ordered the fulfillment of his divine precepts contained in the Ten Commandments.

1338 As you see, the express will of our Heavenly Father, expressed so repeatedly to men and to whose fulfillment the divine Master obligated us, under penalty of leaving us deprived of the eternal glory that He bestowed upon us by rescuing us from the power of darkness with his holy passion and death. Therefore, observing it is the first duty of the Christian and the main good work that he must carry out.

1339 But look, beloved children, merely fulfilling the divine precepts is not enough for us as Christians; such an honorable title demands plenty more of us. As Christians, we are limbs of Jesus Christ, who is our head, and we have to live joined to Him through an extremely intense faith, strong hope and ardent charity⁴¹⁹. We must also be inspired by his spirit and imitate him and fully follow all of his maxims and examples, as the Eternal Father expressly commands us: *Look and make it according to the pattern* (Exodus 25:40). Yes, his humility has to destroy and kill the spirit of arrogance and pride in us, beloved children, the cause of our damnation and ruin, as it was for the rebellious angels in Heaven and for our parents in Paradise; his submission and obedience has to serve as our model to subordinate our judgment and will to that of our superiors, seeing in all authority that of God, from whom it derives. His poverty has to teach us to disregard and even reject worldly goods that cannot satisfy the heart of man; on the contrary, they are thorns that pierce us, as the Divine Master says. His sufferings and patience has to make us resigned to the trials and tribulations, which are the path of penance that those of us who have sinned must necessarily walk along to ascend to Heaven: and finally, we have to try and imitate our divine model in all the virtues in which he gave us an example, in such a way that, by identifying with Him we can truly say, like the Apostle: "But now we are not the ones who live, but rather Jesus Christ who lives in us: *And I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me* (Galatians 2:20), because you have to understand that our salvation depends on this conformity with our

⁴¹⁸ Cf. Exodus 24:12; 31:18. Cf. 1154 above.

⁴¹⁹ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: *Prayer Before the Crucifix of St. Damian*, in works cited, p. 24.

Lord Jesus Christ; so, as the same Apostle says to the Romans: "The Lord justifies and glorifies those who have foreseen and determined their destinies in accordance with the image of his holy Son" (Romans 8:29-30).

1340 These then are the obligations we took upon ourselves in our Baptism, beloved children. We have to stay away from evil, fighting valiantly against the enemies of our salvation; and practice good, which consists in doing the will of God, who orders us to carry out his divine precepts and adapt our life to that of our divine model Jesus.

HOW ARE WE FULFILLING THESE DUTIES TODAY?

1341 The answer to this question would have been very unfavorable, certainly, for the majority of those who call themselves Christians today and are Christians only for having received the holy Baptism.

1342 It truly causes great pain and sorrow to have to confess that the number of true disciples of Jesus Christ is very small today.

1343 The infernal spirit certainly does not need to intensify his efforts to seduce souls in these times, since the majority of people voluntarily and even happily follow his diabolical insinuations. Do you not see the thrill and even frenzy with which they pursue immoral entertainments, where modesty and innocence is lost? Does it not strike you seeing how women today wear the most indecent and scandalous fashions without remorse or scruples, in spite of priding themselves on being devout? They try to authorize it by claiming that society demands it, without taking into account at all that all that is contrary to the renunciation of Satan and his works, his pomp and vanities, they made in the Baptism. It is useless to say that many of the fashions are an invention of the devil or his satellites which, without being flattering to the person, only serve to scandalize the public and make many people who follow them lose their health and even their lives; because they are so obsessed and blinded on this point that they ignore the urgings and recriminations of the Roman Pontiff, the Prelates and the Pastors of their souls. Woe to the world because of scandals! *Woe to the world because of scandals* (Matthew 18:7).

1344 Tell me then, beloved children, if the majority of Christians leave unfulfilled the promises they made in the Baptism to listen to the infernal enemy, so that any enchanting siren seduces them, how shall they keep the Commandments of God and try to imitate their model Jesus Christ, which they are obligated to do by professing as Christians?

1345 It is painful what happens with regard to this point! Quite a few ignore these Commandments of God, which are the law which they must adapt their life to and by which they have to be judged. Others think and say that all that God commands is carried out by not killing and robbing. And the others could care less about fulfilling them, and even reject and brand the ones who observe them faithfully. They blatantly profane the day of the Lord, working on it just like the

other working days, without those who can and should prevent them from doing so taking any action; and instead of sanctifying it as God orders, the time is spent on immoral entertainments and all sort of excesses and sins. Children now no longer show the veneration and respect they owe to their parent, and the latter are greatly to blame for allowing their children to address them familiarly, as if they were equals; and mainly for the bad example they give through abandoning the obligations of the family and the spouses doing as they please, each one living their own way. And what shall we say of the licentiousness of the young people, the immodesty and lack of honor of the maidens and the general corruption of customs in all of them? The state of society today is such, beloved children, that I do not believe it is very much different from the cities of the Pentapolis, upon which the Lord sent the fire that consumed them⁴²⁰. He is also showing us his wrath and indignation now with the great calamities being experienced everywhere; but they still attribute this to natural causes, not seeing the hand of God in it. Is this not the plain truth of what is happening today?

1346 However, if the majority of people comply so badly with the precepts of the Lord to which their profession as Christians obligates them, does it seem to you there will be many who truly intend to follow the footsteps of Jesus Christ? How will the ones possessed of the arrogance of Satan imitate the humility and obedience of the divine model when they always have his *"I will not serve"* on their lips? How will they imitate his mortification and patience, if they feel horror at the prospect of suffering and only aspire to entertainments and pleasures? How will the ones who blindly follow their whims and demands escape from the contagion of the world for the one Jesus Christ spoke of if they are not begging to have Him in their heart? How will those who do not aspire to anything more than doing what they like form their will in everything with the will and help of God? Oh, beloved children,, if the Eternal Father shall predestine and glorify only those in whom he sees the image of his holy Son, as the Apostle says to the Romans, what shall become of the many Christians in name only, so plentiful today in society? A frightening thought, beloved children, and why I urge you that we work for our salvation, with fear and trembling, as the Apostle says, by keeping what we promised in the Baptism, and imitating our model Jesus, who must be our Savior.

This is what your Prelate asks for and wishes, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the holy day of the apostle St. Andrew, in the year of our Lord 1928.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

⁴²⁰ Cf. Genesis 14:8; 19:24-25.

42

On Salvation

(B. Seg 49 [1929], pp. 39-50)

“God, who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4).

1347 In all the admirable words of creation shine the power and wisdom of the Almighty, who created all men from nothing and the Maker himself, after contemplating them, saw and said they were very good. *And God saw all the things that he had made, and they were very good* (Genesis 1:31). But these creatures, after the glory of God the main end the Lord intends in His creation, had no other mission than the service of man, and that is why they end in this world: however, not so with man, the king of Creation, because provided with an immortal soul and created in the image and likeness of God: *Let us make man to our image and likeness* (Genesis 1:26), his only and exclusive end is to know, love and serve God in this world and enjoy him after this life in the life which has no end.

1348 But what a misfortune, beloved children, for this happiness was lost so quickly by man through the shrewdness of the infernal spirit who, jealous of his luck, made him shatter the precept of the Lord by infiltrating into him the arrogance and pride which had sent him to hell: You shall be”, he told them, “like gods, knowing good and evil”: *You shall be as Gods* (Genesis 3:5). In fact, with their disobedience they came to know evil, unknown to them until then, and were stripped of the grace and friendship of God, cast out from the Paradise of delicacies and disinherited of the glory; but of the good nothing remained now but the bitter memory of having lost it, and without human solution.

1349 Nevertheless, the infernal spirit could not nor should not prevail over the will of God, depriving Him of the glory he should received from man, his favored work, in time and throughout all eternity. By means that neither man nor even the angels could imagine, the Lord gave Himself as appropriate payment for the sin of man, making the Word incarnate for us, eliminating with this blood the decree of our eternal damnation and returning eternal life to us with his death.

VALUE OF THE SOUL

1350 The value of any thing must be judged by the esteem and appreciation shown it by the most intelligent men and the price given for it. However, beloved children, as it is God himself who holds man in such esteem that he delivers his own Son for the salvation of his soul, so that, by taking on the human nature, enduring and suffering death on the cross for him, an appropriate payment of the debt contracted by man’s sin, what value could we think of placing upon our soul,

since the blood and life of the Living God was given to rescue it? As the blood and life given for it was priceless, its value must be priceless as well, beloved children.

1351 In fact, the soul is the living image of God: *Let us make man to our image and likeness* (Genesis 1:26) Immortal and eternal as God, one in essence and a trinity in its powers, as God is one and a trinity. Its intelligence makes its capable of knowing the beauties and perfections of God, as much as is possible for the human being, and the Lord has distributed it among its creatures, making a scale of the beings of creation to go up to its Maker. His memory continuously reminds us of the benefits received from the Lord and His divine precepts; and both powers move and inspire the free will of man to love and serve God⁴²¹, the beginning and end of all things, and similarly gives man as the reward in the eternal glory: *And thy reward exceeding great* (Genesis 15:1).

If the value of our soul is so great and it is held in such esteem by its Creator, how could its salvation not matter?

THE IMPORTANCE OF SALVATION

1352 However important the matters which men can occupy themselves with during their life may be, beloved children, none of them or even all of them together has as much importance to him as the salvation of his soul. Because the profits that the others can bring him never stop being transitory and perishable; because he will only be able to enjoy any of the honors, riches, positions, the ordinary objects of his aspirations until his death, which breaks all the ties and links of man upon the earth, and stripping him of however much he possessed in the world, leaves him only as the owner of his soul of his good and bad works, for his reward or eternal punishment. How clearly will man see then, from the light of the blessed candle, the vanity and lies of worldly things, for which he forgot and even scorned the practice of the virtues whose reward he could enjoy for all eternity! Clearly, he will then know how rightly the divine Savior said that only one thing was necessary: the salvation of the soul: *But one thing is necessary* (Luke 10:42). What would he not do and how much would the man give then to be able to correct his past errors and assure his salvation: *Or what exchange shall a man give for his soul?* (Matthew 16:26). But, beloved children, the time for repentance and forgiveness has already arrived and the divine Justice shall then give what he deserved for his works, the reward or eternal punishment: *That time shall be no longer* (Revelation 10:6).

1353 What truly matters, beloved children, is to look seriously at the issue of the salvation of our soul. This issue is exclusively and particularly our own, one we cannot entrust to anyone else because it has to be our own good works that clear the way for us to go through the gates to Heaven that our divine Redeemer bestowed

⁴²¹ Cf. 529, 966, 1158, 1177 above.

upon us, and, as St. Augustine says: "Not even the same that raised us without us will save us without us": *Qui creavit te sine te, non salvabit te sine te*⁴²².

1354 This business is, in additionally, not like businesses of the world, which in some way can correct the mistake if there is an error; because this is eternal, despite its importance there is no more time for negotiating it than during the life and, with that concluded, there is no longer any possibility of correction or making amends since, as it says in Ecclesiastes: "Whichever way the tree falls, to the South or the North, there it shall remain" (Ecclesiastes 11:3). With St. Augustine understanding that the place of salvation was to the South and the place of damnation to the North⁴²³, the soul will remain in the state of salvation or damnation it is found in at death for all eternity.

Does it seem to you, beloved children, that the salvation of our soul is a business of fundamental importance?

DIFFICULTIES IN SECURING IT

1355 The first to oppose the salvation of our soul is the infernal enemy who, furious with God and envious of our fortune, attempts to go against the will of the Lord who wants our salvation, and to that end maximizes his efforts, deceiving us with a thousand shrewd tricks and exciting our passions with the aim of getting us to rush with him to hell.

1356 Our own nature, sinful and inclined towards evil as a result of the sin of our first parents, also opposes it. Is that in fact not the repugnance we feel in triumphing over our evil inclinations and to practice the virtues, especially mortification and penance, which are necessary for our salvation? The practice of good is very laborious and tedious to us, because of how difficult it is to ascend to perfection while the passions and vices are dragging us towards the precipice of evil with formidable and alluring force. The apostle St. Paul himself was lamenting feeling in his limbs a law which was repugnant to his mind and induced him to sin: *But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, that is in my members* (Romans 7:23). And the holy Apostle exclaimed: Unhappy man I am! Who will save me from this body of death? (Romans 7:24).

1357 Add to these also the bad examples and scandals of the worldly, who little by little are undermining the foundations of religious feeling in the souls, making them lose their fear of God and even distance themselves from Him through sin. And just as with the serpent and Eve, it deceives them, making them think there is reason to fear eternal death: *No, you shall not die the death* (Genesis 3:4), because

⁴²² The exact phrase of St. Augustine is "*Qui ergo fecit te sine te, non te justificat sine te*" (ST. AUGUSTINE: *Sermon 169*, 11: PL 38:923. Cf. 1190, 1226 above; 2128).

⁴²³ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Exposition on Psalm 47*, 3: PL 36:534-535.

the mercy of God is infinite and there is time to repent and do penance for your sins before death.

1358 Oh, how many problems, traps and mistakes there are, beloved children, that appear to oppose us on the way of salvation! With good reason the apostle St. Peter calls our attention to it so we have advance warning and watch out for ourselves, because our adversary the devil is always around us, searching for whoever he can devour: *Because your adversary the devil...goeth about seeking whom he may devour* (I Peter 5:8).

How then shall we save ourselves from such fearsome enemies?

MEANS FOR ACHIEVING SALVATION

1359 The first means we have for facing the shrewd tricks and ruses of the devil is the holy fear of God which, as Solomon says, is the beginning of wisdom⁴²⁴. This consists in knowing how to save ourselves, because the human sciences will not serve man for anything at all if in the end he loses his soul, because: "The qualified science is the man ends in grace; because when the day is done, the one who saves himself knows, and the one who is not saved does not, that he knows nothing"⁴²⁵.

1360 This holy fear, then, makes us stay away from sinning and restricts the fulfillment of the divine precepts; as we see in the elderly Eleazar who, after being advised to eat the meat prohibited in the law to avoid death, replies: "Although now I escape the torments of men, I cannot avoid the hand of the Almighty whether dead or alive" (II Maccabees 6:26). And St. Bernardino says: "As the wind disperses the clouds, so the fear of God does to the carnal lusts"⁴²⁶. This is why the royal Prophet asked the Lord to if he would pierce his flesh with his holy fear: *Pierce thou my flesh with thy fear* (Psalm 118:120). The Lord himself tells us through Jeremiah: "I shall put my fear in your heart, so that you do not go away from Me". (Jeremiah 32:40)

1361 But the struggle and battle over our salvation comes to us not only externally through the infernal enemy. We also carry the fuel for eternal death within ourselves with our lusts and passions; in addition, we have to make use of mortification and penance and work for our salvation with fear and trembling, as the Apostle says to the Philippians: *With fear and trembling work out your salvation*. (Philippians 2:12).

⁴²⁴ Proverbs 1:7.

⁴²⁵ These verses by an anonymous author very possibly belonging to the school of Spanish Franciscan mystics, includes in the composition a Spanish refrain that originally sounded like this: "He knows that he is saved; the other does not know anything" (cf. *First Encyclopedic Hispano-American Dictionary*, Vol. XIX, London, p. 23)

⁴²⁶ Cf. ST. BERNARDINO: *Sermon on Cantares* 54, 12, in PL 183:1043-1044)

1362 There is no doubt beloved children, that the business of salvation is difficult, since the divine Savior himself tells us: "The Kingdom of Heaven is acquired through violence, and only whoever does so can reach it"⁴²⁷. The way that leads to it is very narrow and so is the gate which gives access to it. And He urges as well that we enter through the narrow gate: *Strive to enter by the narrow gate* (Luke 13:24).

1363 We have to bring our evil passions under control then, beloved children, fight our sinful inclinations, reduce the senses to servitude and suppress the disorderly movements of our self-regard; in a word, we have to do violence to ourselves to attain the King of Heaven. But is this the way, beloved children, we ordinarily treat this extremely important business?

NEGLIGENCE IN THE BUSINESS OF SALVATION

1364 If we focus our attention, beloved children on the way that most men behave in general, we have to agree that, or believe that for them, the same as for the animals, everything ends in this world, or that is what both the righteous and sinners convince themselves, albeit with greater or lesser degrees of purification in the other life, that we all would have to be saved equally in the end, trusting in the infinite mercy of the Lord for that purpose.

1365 But are these unfortunate one perhaps ignoring that God would not be God if he was not equally infinite in all his attributes and perfections and therefore, and if his mercy is infinite, then his justice must also be infinite? But He exercises mercy with the sinner during his life for the desire of the Lord is to save him, and the justice starts to exercise its rights once his life is over, because with death the time for man to earn merit and beseech forgiveness comes to an end: *That time shall be no longer* (Revelation 10:6).

1366 Blind, then, are those unhappy souls in their error, and without looking at more than the earth, some look to satisfy their longing for happiness in material goods and riches, where they think they will find it and spare no means, lawful or unlawful, nor take any respite or rest in order to obtain them. Possessed by vanity, others long for honors and positions, considering they will find in them (honors) the esteem and universal praise of the people; and the rest, their eyes and heart fixed on the subject, only want to give satisfaction to their sensual and carnal appetites, in orgies and immoral entertainments, indecent and scandalous fashions and everything that their corrupted heart fancies and desires.

1367 It is difficult to pull these souls out of such a deplorable state, beloved children, because they turn their eyes away from the good examples given by devout individuals and close their ears to their warnings and advices, more often looking with disdain and scorn on the ones who for the love of God do not follow and imitate them in their depraved life.

⁴²⁷ Cf. Matthew 11:12.

1368 Oh, what a terrible disillusionment they shall suffer at the time of their death! When they see those they dismissed and scorned as idiots in life saved and blessed, they will cry out as the book of Wisdom says: "How foolish of us, who took your life as madness, and your end without honor, and your fortune among the saints. Then we were the ones who missed the true way" (Wisdom 5:4-6). Such remorse, beloved children, is just so many unfruitful and sterile tears, because they will not be able to erase their unfaithfulness and sins now, because the time to receive merit has ended.

1369 We are not then, beloved children, among the number of those unfortunate souls. We prize greatly the treasure of our soul, which we carry in the fragile vessels of our bodies, as the Apostle says. We do not make our poor soul a slave of our body, which has to be submissive and subordinate in everything to the soul, which is and must be its ruler. We understand its value well, and what the Lord has done to save it, and do not leave out any means in order to emerge victorious in the continuous and terrible battles we shall have to wage against our enemies and even against ourselves, to assure the salvation of our soul, the only important business for us, since the Lord gave us life for this purpose.

This is what your Prelate desires for itself and for you, beloved children, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the first Sunday of Lent, 17 February of the year of our Lord 1929.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

43

Respect and Obedience

(B. Seg 49 [1929], pp. 181-192)

"Obey your prelates, and be subject to them.

For they watch as being to render an account of your souls" (Hebrews 13:17).

1370 The Lord so loves man, the masterpiece of the Creation and desires his salvation so much, beloved children, that to assure it against the terrible enemies who stand against it, the world, devil and flesh, he bestowed his holy angels with incomparable power over these enemies, so they could rule, lead and govern man as he made his way through this world to eternity. And not only this but the Word himself, who became incarnate for the redemption of the world, also wanted to establish himself as the model and example for man, in order that he would learn the practice of the virtues necessary for securing his final aim.

1371 But as the Divine Redeemer, having carried out the will of his Eternal Father, had to leave this world, he perpetuated his noble mission by establishing

the holy Church, governed by his Supreme Pastor, your Vicar, supported by a multitude of other prelates and pastors, who in turn watch over the portion of the flock entrusted to them, similarly assisted by the priests, ministers and their collaborators.

1372 The Lord wants the faithful to have the utmost veneration and respect for all of them, since He himself does not call them servants, but friends instead: *I will not now call you servants... But I have called you friends* (John 15:15), because, as Jesus Christ himself says, *for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth; because all things whatsoever I have heard of my Father, I have made known to you*. The Lord identifies with them in that way, taking whatever his ministers do as if He does them himself, saying through St. Luke: "Whoever hears you, hears me; and whoever despises you, despises me, and whoever despises me, despises Him who sent me" (Luke 10:16).

1373 Your affection, veneration and obedience must be great towards the ministers of the Lord, beloved children, who in fulfilling their noble mission watch over and try to secure your eternal salvation. And you shall attain that by loving and obeying them as fathers in everything like submissive children.

* * *

1374 Beloved children, man is moved to respect and love his fellow man because of the qualities, dignity and benefits that they yield. And by following this reasoning, how great should your respect, veneration and love be for the ministers of the Lord, your prelates and fathers?

1375 They are the ones truly sent by God for the salvation of the world and of whom the Lord said: "As my Father sent me, I also send you: As the Father hath sent me, I also send you..." (John 20:21). A very high and noble missions, beloved children, because in imitation of the Savior, who came to destroy the power of darkness and give eternal life to man who was dead from sin, his ministers, to whom he passed on his divine authority, also inhibit the activity of Satan upon men and seize from hell an infinite number of souls to whom they give the shelter of their protection.

1376 And the Lord does not limit this authority and power to any one people or one nation, nor a family bloodline or caste of men, although the apostles would be considered as such in the beginning, who heard the answer given by Jesus Christ to the woman from Canaan when she asked Him to cure her daughter who was possessed by the devil, telling her: "I was not sent but for the sheep that are lost to the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24). For that reason, after the Apostles and disciples of Judea knew that the Gentiles had also received the word of God, they put the apostle St. Peter in charge for that, who had to explain the following to them: "I found myself praying in the city of Jaffa (Joppa) and in ecstasy I saw a great canvas descend towards me, sustained by its four corners in heaven, completely full of animals, quadrupeds, beasts, reptiles, and flying animals, and at the same

time I heard a voice that said: 'Get up, Peter, kill and eat'. I replied: 'Lord, I never eat disgusting things'. The voice from heaven responded to me: 'Do not call what God has purified disgusting', and repeated it a second and third time. After the vision disappeared, three men from Caesarea came in search of me, which the Spirit told me would follow without fear. The head of the family who called on me said that an angel had appeared to them and ordered them to seek out Simon Peter in Jaffa, who would tell you the things necessary for your salvation and that of your family. Well, when I began to speak, the Holy Spirit descended upon them as it descended in the beginning upon us. If, then, God gave them the same grace in the same way that He did with us, who was I to oppose the designs of God'?

1377 Having heard these things, the Apostles and disciples were calmed and glorified the Lord, saying: and then God also granted the Gentiles penance for attaining eternal life (Acts 11).

1378 In fact, beloved children, after the Lord passed on the mission he received from his Eternal Father to his apostles, and in them to their successors, he did not limit it to anyone, but instead told them: I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth; go then and preach to all the peoples, teaching them to keep all that I have commanded you, and I shall be with you every day to the end of time (Matthew 28:18-20). Making it understood to them that as He had come to redeem the entire human race, who had sinned with Adam, they must extend his mission of salvation in the same way to all peoples, without any restriction. This is why the Apostle said to the Romans: "I owe everyone, Greeks and barbarians, wise men and the ignorant; this way I am also ready to preach the gospel to you who live in Rome (Romans 1:14-15).

1379 A very high and noble mission, beloved children, that the Lord did not want to entrust to his angels and bestowed upon St. Peter and the apostles, and in them all their successors until the end of time.

1380 Have you reflected on and considered at some time how eminent and sublime this position is? The ministers return to the soul in the baptism the right to the glory lost by the original sin, which everyone took upon themselves from our first fathers. They also make the divine Spirit descend upon the souls in confirmation, which passes on the strength and courage necessary for us to come out victorious in the continuous battles we have to wage against our enemies. They lift the soul in its weakened state after the sin, forgiving them however many and how serious the sins were, since the Lord says to them through St. John: "Whoever shall forgive them their sins, they shall be forgiven, and whoever shall refrain them, they will be retained" (John 20:23). And He also says through St. Matthew: "Whatever shall bind you on earth, will be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall undo on earth, will also be undone in heaven" (Matthew 18:18).

1381 This is a great authority, beloved children, and an incalculable benefit for us, because, without it, most people would neither make use of redemption nor baptism, for seeing us continuously fallen into sin, the effect of our great weakness and misery.

1382 But as great the authority is in these Sacraments the Lord bestowed on his Apostles and Ministers, the authority he granted them to consecrate his holy body and blood is incomparably greater. This Sacrament was established on the night of the Last Supper, to remain with us throughout all time as he had promised.

1383 How rightly, then, St. Ambrosio said that nothing is more excellent in this world than the priests⁴²⁸, because their profession, the same Saint said, makes them similar to God. And St. Ephrem adds that priestly dignity is superior to all imagination⁴²⁹. Innocent III also says that, as the priest is established between God and man, he is below God but superior to men⁴³⁰. And St. Dionysius the Areopagite also adds: "Whoever says priests, speaks of a being divine in every way, since his dignity, more than angelic, is divine"⁴³¹.

1384 Beloved children, from this you can see the great veneration and respect the Saints held for the priests. St. Athanasius tells us of St. Anthony the Abbot that, in spite of St. Anthony himself being venerated by kings, feared by devils and obeyed by the beasts themselves, his veneration of the priestly status was such that whenever he saw a priest, he fell to his knees and would not stand up again until he had kissed his hand and received his blessing⁴³². The Seraphic Father St. Francis did the same, because he said he saw the Son of God in them, and they were his lords. And the Saint added that if he found himself on a path with an angel and a priest, he would first kiss the hand of the priest and then venerate the angel⁴³³.

1385 However, if the dignity of the priest as a minister of the lord is so respectable and venerated, how much greater must be that of the Supreme Leader of the Church and his brothers the Prelates, since the former is the Vicar of Jesus Christ and the latter the successors to the Apostles?

1386 The venerable mother María of Agreda says she knelt before the Holy Virgin Mary and asked her for the blessing to the Apostles, and did not speak to instruct the faithful without her permission⁴³⁴. The great emperor Constantine, attending the Council of Nicaea, remained standing until all the Fathers of the Council had taken their seats; and when they gave him permission to be seated, he took the last place in a humble chair⁴³⁵.

1387 What admirable examples these are for the faithful, beloved children? Especially, in these times of coldness and religious indifference where the peoples are imbued with the separatist doctrines of equality and liberty and take them to

⁴²⁸ This phrase is a literal quotation from the treatise *De informatione Episcoporum* (cf. PL 139:171). The treatise was attributed for a long time to St. Ambrosio but now, in the Migne edition, it is considered the work of Pope Sylvester II (cf. PL 17:598).

⁴²⁹ Cf. ST. EPHREM: *De Sacerdotio in Opera Omnia*. Ed. Gerardo Vofsio, Vol. I (Rome, 1589) p. 1.

⁴³⁰ Cf. INNOCENT III: *Sermon III in the Consecration of the Pontiff*: PL 217:658; *De Sacro Altaris Mysterio*, 1:9: PL 217:780.

⁴³¹ Cf. ST. DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE: *Epistle 8*, 6: PG 3:605-606.

⁴³² Cf. ST. ATHANASIUS: *Life of St. Anthony*, 67 (Evagrii version): PG 26:938.

⁴³³ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: Test 9, in works cited, p. 122. Cf. 2C, 201, in works cited, p. 345.

⁴³⁴ Cf. V. AGREDA: *Mystical City of God*. Imp. Pablo Riera, Vol. VII, Barcelona 1860, p. 198.

⁴³⁵ Cf. EUSEBIO: *Life of Constantine*, 3:10: PG 20:1066.

extreme of not respecting any authority, not even paternal, treating parents as if they were their equals, and they censure, criticize, disregard and even reject the warnings the ministers of the Lord make while carrying out their duty, even though they are Prelates. And if they find a fault in them (the kind that, being men, they cannot be exempt from), they exaggerate and spread them to the four winds without bearing in mind what the Lord says: "You do not want to touch my anointed ones", the name he gave his ministers in the Book of I Chronicles. And he also says through David in his Psalms: *Touch not my anointed* (I Chronicles 16:22). This is why whoever does so can well fear suffering the indignation of the Lord and deserve the damnation that Ham drew upon himself for having mocked his father Noah after seeing him naked⁴³⁶.

1388 Respect and venerate, then, blessed children, the ministers of the Lord, who can apply in a special way the words He says through Zechariah: *For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of my eye* (Zechariah 2:8)⁴³⁷.

1389 Veneration and respect, are not the only things that are owed to and deserved by the priests, ministers and representatives of our divine Redeemer, beloved children. The faithful must also profess submission and filial obedience to them.

OBEDIENCE

1390 Obedience: see here, beloved children, the virtue whose practice is most distasteful to human nature, because for its observance man has to declare open war on everything he holds most dear, namely: his self-regard, his judgment and his will.

1391 This was the litmus test the Lord used to test the faithfulness of our first fathers. But Satan infiltrates his "I will not serve" into them which rushed him to the abyss and also made them rebels to their Creator.

1392 That is the reason why the main lesson the divine Master gave us on after coming to this world to redeem man was obedience, telling us: "I descended from Heaven not to do my will, but the will of my Father who sent me". *Because I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me* (John 6:38). And he set us an example of obedience his entire life, living for thirty years as a dependent of the Holy Mother and the Patriarch St. Joseph, as if the Creator of heaven and earth was a mere child: *And was subject to them* (Luke 2:51).

1393 An admirable virtue, beloved children, which preserves and guards the soul against many evils and fosters wise decisions in its ventures under the leadership of whomever the Lord has put there to govern and rule them. This raises and increases the merit of your good works and, as St. Thomas says, is the foundation and cause of all things meritorious, because nothing has merit before

⁴³⁶ Cf. Genesis 9:21-25.

⁴³⁷ Cf. in *Jerusalem Bible*: Zechariah 2:12.

God except insofar as it conforms with his divine will⁴³⁸. And St. Augustine adds that nothing pleases God so much as obedience⁴³⁹. Obedience is one of the foremost virtues, intimately connected and joined together with charity, the queen of all the virtues because the testimony of love that we profess to God has to be founded precisely in the fulfillment of his holy will, expressed in his divine precepts. This is why the Lord tells us: "If you love me, keep my Commandments. *If you love me, keep my commandments* (John 14:15). A virtue that also assures us the victory in the continuous and terrible battles we have to wage against the enemies of our salvation, because Solomon says in Proverbs that the obedient man will sing of victory: *An obedient man shall speak of victory* (Proverbs 21:28).

1394 This obedience, then, has to be given to every superior, beloved children, because as the apostle says, there is no authority that does not come from God: *For there is no power but from God* (Romans 13:1). And in particular you must make an extra effort and practice obedience more with the authorities the Lord has put in his Church to govern and direct the souls: the Pontiff, the Prelates and the priests, through whom the Lord passes on his gifts and graces that are bestowed in the holy Sacraments, which was established to attend to all the needs of man related to his sanctification and eternal salvation.

1395 In fact, beloved children, if his authority and position is, as we have seen, the greatest of all things on earth, what submission and obedience will not be owed them, who represent the same God that takes whatever his ministers do as if done by Himself, saying: *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me* (Luke 10:16)?

1396 But in addition, if the honor and position that God raises his ministers to is great, the responsibility they are taking on in the guidance of souls, which they have to answer for before God is just as great; and this also requires gratitude on the part of the faithful towards them that must be shown with submission and obedience to their orders.

1397 The obedience of the faithful towards their Prelates and ministers of the Lord must be prompt, blind and voluntary; it does not allow for delays or hesitation, reservations or excuses, and not be done as something they are forced to obey but with satisfaction and even joy instead, as if they were obeying God himself⁴⁴⁰.

1398 Are the representatives of the Lord obeyed today in these conditions, beloved children? For many people, His obedience and orders are so much dead script and not worth considering! Beloved children, both the Roman Pontiff and the Prelates and others entrusted with the direction of souls have tried in a thousand documents to raise the voice of alarm and alert to distance yourselves from the abyss the enemy is attempting to push you towards with indecent and scandalous fashions, their nakedness sending so many young women to the tomb and perhaps

⁴³⁸ Cf. ST. THOMAS: *Summa Theologica*, 2-2, q. 104 a. 3.

⁴³⁹ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *On the Good of Matrimony*, 23:30 and 24:32. PL 40:393-395; *City of God* 13:12; PL 41:385-386.

⁴⁴⁰ Cf. 124-126 above.

hell. Similarly, the immoral and anti-Christian performances that include dances, movies, boxing matches and others where the souls certainly find the opportunity to offend their God but, unfortunately, our voice is lost in the void, beloved children. The furor and frenzy that has been aroused for the delights, entertainments and pastimes is such that now not only the indifferent individuals, but the even the majority of those who want to pass as religious believers, are trying to be tolerant towards evil, under the pretext that in order to live in society you have to adapt yourself and follow the current trends and customs of everyone else, at the risk of falling into ridicule.

1399 Oh, beloved children! There is no doubt that you need more bravery and heroism in these times than in others to show yourselves as Christians before society; but keep in mind that it is not the world who will judge you but Jesus Christ, the Judge of the living and dead, whose law, the same as it was, is and evermore shall be until the end of time.

1400 If you want the, to assure your salvation, beloved children, be obedient and listen meekly to the instructions of your fathers, the ministers of the Lord, and do not reject the laws of your mother, the religion: *My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother* (Proverbs 1:8).

1401 This way the Lord will fill you to overflowing with blessings, which strengthen you to overcome the obstacles the enemies may present against you on the way of good, and surely you will arrive at the gate of eternal glory. This is what your Prelate and servant in Christ desires for itself and for you, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the holy day of the apostle St. Andrew, on 30 November 1929.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

44

On Matrimony

B. Seg 50 [1930], pp. 33-47)

“One body and one Spirit; as you are called in one hope of your calling” (Ephesians 4:1).

1402 Beloved children, when the Almighty Lord created all beings from nothing, he marked each one for the mission they should carry out in the plan of his divine Providence, for the good order and harmony that he wanted to reign in the world. For the inanimate beings he set fixed, invariable laws they would fulfill necessarily. To the animated but irrational beings, He gave the instincts suitable for the aims of their missions so that they would inevitably fulfill them. And to man, whom he established as the king of the Universe and wanted to be like a summary

of all Creation, he gave being or existence like the inanimate beings; the instincts to feel like the animals, and the intelligence and wisdom of the Angeles, giving him a rational soul with three powers, memory, understanding and will, which would make him like God and capable of knowing him, loving him and serving him. For these services, man was obligated to reward him by appreciating Him for all of eternity.

1403 But since the occupations man has to take care of to fulfill his mission on earth are so numerous and varied, the Supreme Makes calls and determines the destiny of each one, with a special vocation, to a status He wants man to serve by fulfilling the obligations inherent to it. Some men he raised to the noble position of the priesthood so they may instruct men in the divine precepts and lead them to the gate of eternal salvation, investing them, in addition, with his divine authority so they may use reinstate to his friendship whoever might have strayed from Him through transgression of the Holy law and also administer the other Sacraments he established for the salvation of man. The Lord calls other, with special vocations, so they continuously use his divine praises, making up for the missions of those who are so absorbed in worldly businesses that they neglect the business of their souls; and also inspire their zeal in various way so they try to attend to the needs of their brothers. But the Lord calls most to the state of matrimony, raised to a Sacrament by Jesus Christ our Lord, in order that in Him and with his blessing the number of his faithful servants and residents of the Heavenly homeland both increase.

1404 The Apostle calls this Sacrament great because it represents the union of Christ and his Church and we are going to offer you a few reflections on it, beloved children, so that you appreciate its significance and greatness and the obligations inherent to it in order that those among you who have already embraced this state realize how to fulfill those obligations and whoever feels called to it are duly prepared to welcome it.

* * *

1405 For every important matter with fundamental consequences, beloved children, men should try to be ready and prepare themselves beforehand with due reflection so that their decision is wise and well-guided; this applies even to dealing with businesses, where an incorrect decision can be rectified to some degree. But how much more reflection and consideration will be necessary to decide a matter of such vital importance and major consequences, both time and even eternally, as the state of matrimony?

1406 As there is great danger that the devil can deceive you by using your passions, beloved children, you have to ask the Lord in prayer many times that He grant you the necessary lights and inspiration for a wise decision in such an important matter. And do not doubt that the Lord, who from all eternity has determined your destiny for the status he wants you serve him, will clearly make his holy will known to you in several ways, but mainly through the inclination of

your heart, always provided that you, beloved children, place yourselves without concern in the hands of the Lord.

1407 Once the will of the Lord is known and calls you to the state of matrimony, the diligence you put into the selection of the person with whom you unite your fortune is no less important. Do not focus so much on physical appearance or social position but more in the gifts and moral conditions of the person, because the former easily change and the latter disappear or are lost, with the risk of discord and differences of opinion in the matrimony arising without them, while the good qualities and virtues make the bonds of union between the spouses grow tighter and tighter.

1408 Do not disregard or ignore, either, the advice and reflections your parents give you in this matter, under the pretext that you are free to choose. Because perhaps from being obsessed or even more blinded by your passions, many times you will not see the abyss opening up beneath your feet, which the creators of your existence, who have greater interest in your good than anyone, will try to save you from.

1409 After this, beloved children, also convince yourselves that the best preparation for obtaining the blessings and graces of God in the Sacrament that you are hoping to receive is the practice of the virtues. The Holy Spirit himself says in Ecclesiasticus: "The good wife is the portion of whoever fears God, and shall be given to the man for his her good works". *A good wife ... to a man for his good deeds* (Ecclesiasticus 26:3). Be such good men then, beloved children, so that the woman who has to be your spouse may be whatever you desire. If you want her to be humble, obedient, reserved, industrious and chaste, do not be content with urging the practice of these virtues, but practice them so she can learn from you, thereby giving her an example of them. And similarly you young Christian woman, if you desire a modest, virtuous, faithful, hard-working, family-loving young man for your husband, stay away from the immoral and corrupt current that today is sweeping away most young woman, who think of nothing more than fashions, entertainments and idle pursuits, the majority of them forgetting and even ignoring the obligations appropriate to women that later they have to practice all their life as heads of the family. See, beloved children, this way of behaving is unbecoming, because the judicious and virtuous young man, when choosing a wife, focuses more in the moral qualities, the only ones that can make them happy later in the marriage.

1410 Everyone should think of the obligations they are going to enter into, very serious obligations by the way, for they are going to need much grace from God, but He certainly grants them to those who receive the holy Sacrament of matrimony with the proper willingness and preparation.

1411 Whoever has been called by God and already embraced the state of matrimony should focus closely on the greatness of this Sacrament, in order to hold it in the proper esteem.

1412 Its origin goes back to the Heaven on earth itself when God, seeing that it was not a good idea for man to be alone, inspired a dream in Adam and by taking one of his ribs, formed Eve, the first woman from it and blessing them, He joined them together in marriage, saying, "Grow and multiply". *Increase and multiply* (Genesis 1:22).

1413 And if we consider the nature of matrimony, we have to say that it is a conjugal society between man and woman that obliges them to lives inseparably united for their entire life. A union and society, beloved children, that Jesus Christ raised in his Church to the position of Sacrament of the new Law. A Sacrament the apostle St. Paul calls great because it represents the union of Jesus Christ with his Church: *This is a great sacrament; but I speak in Christ and in the church* (Ephesians 5:32). Yes, because as Jesus Christ joined together with the Church in his Incarnation, taking on the human nature to form a single person with it and a union of charity, passing on to it his grace and love, in the same way the Sacrament of marriage joins two people together who had no mutual relation before to form one flesh between them. *They two shall be in one flesh* (Matthew 19:5), and it also confirms the spiritual union of the hearts which produces a mutual love of one towards the other.

1414 Such is the nature of Christian matrimony, beloved children, whose holiness the divine Redeemer wanted to show by attending some weddings in Cana in Galilee with his Holy Mother, at whose request the Lord worked his first miracle in favor of the married couple by converting water into wine, which they were lacking to serve their guests⁴⁴¹.

1415 If in the old law, matrimony did not go beyond being a civil contract, celebrated with some religious ceremonies by the Jews, in the new law and grace it was raised to the rank of Sacrament by our divine Redeemer. This gives it grace and sanctifies those who receive it with the proper willingness and preparation, that is are in a state of grace, while whoever receives it in sin profanes the Sacrament, committing a sacrilege and depriving themselves of the graces that it confers, so necessary for fulfilling the very serious obligations imposed by this status.

1416 However, as we said before, with the Christian marriage representing the union of Christ with his Church, the spouses must take this union as the model and imitate it perfectly to fully carry out their duties. The eternal Word, Jesus Christ our Lord, was joined together inseparably with the Church, taking on the human nature, which he will not leave for all eternity and will be with his wife the Church, as he Himself says, until the end of time: *And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world* (Matthew 28:20). In the same way, the union of the spouses through the Sacrament of matrimony is also inseparable.

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⁴⁴¹ Cf. John 2:1-11.

1417 The indissolvable nature of marriage was categorically shown by the divine Redeemer when, tempted by the Pharisees as to whether he would say it was justifiable for the man to leave his wife for any reason answered them by saying: "Have you not read that He who created man in the beginning made the male and female sexes? For this reason the man shall leave his father and mother and join together to his wife, and they will be two in one flesh. What God joined together, let no man put asunder". When the Pharisees insisted by saying to him: Why, then, was Moses ordered to give a petition of divorce to the woman and abandon her?" The Divine Master answered: "Moses, paying attention to the hardness of their hearts, permitted you to leave your wives; but in the beginning it was not that way" (Matthew 19:3-8).

1418 Not only in the Law of grace, then, is matrimony viewed as an unbreakable bond, but as our divine Redeemer says, it was always viewed as such from the moment it was initiated in Paradise by God, the creator of this alliance. As the Lord says: *What there God hath joined together, let no man put asunder* (Matthew 19:6).

1419 The enemies of the Catholic Church have worked very hard throughout time to obtain that the Church authorize the dissolution of the marriage. But this effort was in vain, because as a Sacrament, matrimony is of divine creation, against which nothing or no one can attack.

1420 There have been many threats and great persecutions of the Church for this motive. King Henry VIII of England tried to have Pope Clement VII annul his legitimate marriage to Catherine of Aragon to marry Anne Boleyn, a maid of honor of the Queen. Unable to obtain from the Pope what he wanted by any means, he cruelly persecuted Catholics and reached the point of separating England from the Roman Church. Nevertheless, such great disasters did not greatly influence the feeling of the Pontiff one way or the other, so that we would accede to what he could not grant. Because if the Church, due to very serious causes, could decree divorce or separation of the married couple, the bond of matrimony, which no one can dissolve for being of divine creation, would remain untouched.

1421 The enemies of the Religion, so plentiful today, beloved children, work in vain then in seeking laws which authorize the dissolution of marriage, claiming freedom of the man and free love as the pretext, because human laws can do nothing against the divine Law, and those laws that are not based on or opposed to it are annulled and discredited.

1422 Have you considered, beloved children, what would become of society if these perverse doctrines and wicked laws were carried out? What would become of the poor woman? Left to the whim of her husband, she would no longer be the lady of her house, and would not go beyond being a slave, like among the savages, the object of brutal pleasure for the man, a slavery which the Christian marriage saved her from. And what would be the fate of the poor children of such unfortunate unions? With the bad example of their parents, lacking affection, education and protection from those who gave them life, with good reason we could expect they

would be vicious and degraded men, damaging to society. But the dissolution of the marriage would not yield any advantage for the man, either, because, as the woman would also be free to abandon them, what woman would want to suffer the bad temper and mistreatments of many men, that only Christian women, strengthened by the bond of matrimony, would endure with admirable resignation and patience?

1423 Oh, and what horrible confusion and disorder would strike society if marriage could be dissolved! But no, beloved children, you cannot correct or rectify God; and after creating man and woman, He joined them together in an inseparable bond, and blessing them, gave them the mission of raising children who would serve them on earth and appreciate Him afterwards in heaven.

* * *

1424 What an admirable mission this is, beloved children! Because the Supreme Maker, who took whatever exits from nothing and formed man from the mud of the earth and instilled in it a soul created in His image and likeness, wanted to associate man to the creative powers in a certain way, because even though his divine omnipotence gave life and being to his creatures, he values the conjugal union as an instrument for reproducing the human lineage. And he said so to Noah and his children as they left the Ark: "Grow and multiply and fill the earth". *Increase and multiply, and fill the earth* (Genesis 9:1).

1425 But it is not just earth that the parents of families have to people with their descendants, because God did not create man only so they would serve Him on earth but also wanted them to praise and appreciate Him afterwards in Heaven; and therefore the primary mission and obligation of parents is to raise their children for Heaven.

1426 In performing this mission you have to bear in mind the mutual faithfulness you must have and promised at the foot of the Altar in the presence of the Lord, who blessed your matrimonial union by means of his minister. Do not forget either that after giving yourself to your spouse, you are not free now to do what you like with your body without seriously insulting them, in addition to the major sin you would commit against the sixth commandment. Do not forget that your state does not exempt you from fulfilling this precept of the Law of God that He gave to all of us without distinction. And even with great distaste, I nevertheless want, in carrying out my duty, to warn you to avoid, beloved children, the very serious sin you would commit against the designs and will of God by preventing conception, the main end of marriage. This is a sin, beloved children, that people usually do not pay much attention or confess to, perhaps out of ignorance, but since the obligations of the status appropriate to each one does not excuse their ignorance before God, I am convinced this sin is the one which sends the greatest number of people to hell at the same time as the nations are losing people and their Governments are now worrying about the diminishing birth rate. This is why our

government in Spain has reached the point of proposing rewards to parents of large families.

1427 There is nothing I can say to you about such a delicate point, but I do beg you to think and examine closely your obligations, in the presence of God, so that you are not separated from God on Judgment Day.

* * *

1428 We said elsewhere that the union of Jesus Christ with the Church, the model of the Christian matrimony, was also a union of charity, passing on through it the grace, gifts and love of the Lord. In the same way, the spiritual union of the hearts of the married couple is confirmed through the Sacrament of matrimony, a union which produces the mutual love and communication of goods. Oh, blessed union that yields so many benefits for the couple as well as their children!

1429 The apostle St. Paul gives to the spouses the rule of love you must profess, which is none other than the same love that Jesus Christ had for his wife, the Holy Church: *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church* (Ephesians 5:25). However, Jesus Christ loved his wife the Church so much that He gave everything for it, including his death, as the same Apostle says, to make it holy and glorious; he attends to all its needs, nourishing it with his own flesh and blood, and passes on his treasures and graces. Well, married couples must love each other in the same way; with a strong and constant love that does not decrease through the ups-and-downs, annoyances, and works that come with your state: you must always be ready and willing to sacrifice one for the other, above all when the Lord visits you with illness, without thinking of your well-being and health; both of you share a great concern in providing for the sustenance and other needs of your family, the husband with interest in working for it and the woman administering and distributing the reward of the sweat of her poor husband with prudent economy.

1430 But where you have to intensify your watchfulness and diligence even more, beloved children, is in the Christian education of your children if the Lord deigns to grant it to you. Take into account that they are not so much your children as they are of God, who is the true Father and Lord of all creatures. You are only like tutors who He has entrusted his children to so that you teach them to know him, love him and serve him, in order that one day the Lord can take them to the glory, where they will occupy the seats which Satan and his satellites lost for their rebellion against God. For that purpose, do not forget that the religious instruction you give them is accompanied by your good example, without which all your lessons and warnings will fall on deaf ears. Be fearful, beloved children, of the very strict accounting the Lord must demand of the education you will have given to your children. For this reason, you must watch very carefully with the aim of separating them from bad company, the usual cause of the damnation of young people.

1431 In summary, whoever has been called by God to the state of matrimony, have it understood that the Lord wants you to sanctify it as so many others have

sanctified it before, who we venerate today in the altars. For that purpose, the men who still have not embraced this state, ask the Lord for guidance and his graces, give yourselves credits in the eyes of women with your good behavior and practice of virtue; and whoever already finds themselves in the state of matrimony, love each other mutually, maintain the faithfulness you promised, embrace the unpleasant burdens that come with matrimony, try to be good parents to your children and in this way you shall be praiseworthy members of society and above all, blessed by God in time and in eternity. This is what your Prelate and servant in Christ desires, who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the Sunday of the 50th Anniversary, 2 March of the year of our Lord 1930.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

45

On Teaching the Christian Doctrine

(B. Seg 50 [1930], pp. 204-219)

To our beloved parish priests, the assistants of aid for the parish and members of religious orders of this diocese, greetings and the grace of Jesus Christ Our Lord upon the teaching of the Christian doctrine.

1432 To comply with the regulation issued by the Sacred Congregation of the Council, though a special official letter in the name of the Holy Father, happily reigning, in his *motu proprio* (on his own initiative) of 29 June of 1923⁴⁴², which placed the guidance and promotion of actions related to teaching the Catechism on the entire Church, we had to send a comprehensive questionnaire to the parish priests and their assistants of aid for the parish on all those point concerning which We had to inform the previously mentioned Sacred Congregation. All of them referred to the effort being made in the diocese regarding the instruction of children in the Christian doctrine.

1433 The questionnaire was answered with the due diligence and faithfulness. Reading the replies immediately prompted a desire within us to speak to all of us who dedicate themselves to teaching the Catechism at present. The aim was to make a simple reflection regarding the answers that would contribute to the greater success of this meritorious effort of teaching the children the most essential and necessary Christian truths of our sacrosanct Religion.

1434 Speaking to the parish priests and their assistants, to the members of religious orders of both sexes to convince them of the importance of teaching the Catechism would be pointless, the same as doing nothing more than repeating concepts already expressed in our circular letter of 2 November 1923, published

⁴⁴² Cf. AAS 15 (1923), pp. 327-329.

to emphasize as well as regulate this teaching⁴⁴³. In addition, it is enough to remember recent events, such as the apostolic constitution *Acerbo Nimis*⁴⁴⁴ and the *Catechism* of St. Pius X, the incorporation in the Canon Law Code of the majority of the precepts of that Constitution, the *motu proprio* of the present Pontiff with the creation of the official letter which we already alluded to before, so that, without needing to comb through older regulations, which the Church does not lack, we are convinced of the significance that this parish ministry bestows upon this subject today.

1435 On the other hand, the pained complaints about the indifference of parents towards their children attending the teaching of Catechism in the responses from many of our parish priests are conclusive proof that their mood is the fundamental reason behind this neglect, and therefore to its success as well.

1436 We also do want to recall the source from where the obligation to teach Christian doctrine is born. We would see the necessity of doing so if there were instances of negligence in teaching the doctrine, but the word of the priest, which has guaranteed the answers to the questionnaire, unanimously tell us that the ecclesiastical orders on this point are carried out in all the parish churches and, if there are regrettable deficiencies, they are caused by those who should have the greatest interest in there not being deficiencies, the ones who must receive the immediate benefit of the teaching, caring very little about attending.

1437 We are only going to deal with one point of the teaching of Christian doctrine in the parish churches of our diocese among the various points, some of them already mentioned, from which we could consider the issue. This one touches on the practice of this instruction, since we are proposing to make some indication of the problems that are expressed in several answers to the questionnaire. If these indications will not reveal anything new, they will at least show our interest in collaborating with whoever carries the laborious job of teaching the Catechism.

INDIFFERENCE OF PARENTS TO THE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION OF THEIR CHILDREN

1438 The parish priests make this statement almost unanimously and we do not doubt its truthfulness for a moment. We know the indifference that unfortunately rules on religious issues in most of the parish churches, but we also have to declare that in none of them does that indifference, which we think could be better be called lethargy or neglect, go so far as hostility against religion, which is an advantage within the indicated evil. Hence, the conclusion we have to take from this must be a strong intention to use this advantage, and the way to do so will be by making up for that parental indifference towards sending

⁴⁴³ Cf. 2220-2223.

⁴⁴⁴ Cf. ASS 37 (1905), pp. 613-625.

their children to the teaching of Catechism with the effort of going to look for the children since they, in most if not all cases, do not object to what the priest or teacher bring them.

1439 We understand how tedious this job of looking for people would have to be in those parish churches with widely scattered population or extended boundaries, but fifteen minutes or a little more is enough to cover most parish churches in our diocese, and for this small inconvenience, you shall hopefully be fully compensated by the satisfaction of seeing the parish church surrounded by all the children during the teaching of the Catechism.

1440 This system of having the teachers of the Catechism going around town before the time for starting the instruction will be not be any novelty if established, since other places use this method precisely for counteracting the indifference of the parents and the natural inclination of the children to stay out in the streets or plazas playing, without remembering that is may be time to go to Catechism at the church.

1441 We are all convinced that the times have changed for many things, and experience teaches us there is a change in attendance at the Catechism by using this method. A reminder of the time by the parish priest in church and ringing the church bell to announce it used to be enough for the children to come but that is no longer enough. If those who teach the Catechism do not want to resign themselves to being alone in the room by themselves, the methods of recruitment have to change, too.

CENSUS FOR THE CATECHISM⁴⁴⁵

1442 For greater success in what we were just speaking about, a precise census of the children in the parish is a great help. This is not difficult with a little patience, albeit it is a task for parish churches with many inhabitants but much less in smaller ones, like those found in the diocese. After a brief time living in the diocese, the priest personally knows his parishioners and this greatly facilitates the effort of assembling the census, beyond the parish church books of baptisms and deaths that provide the census made year by year.

BROTHERHOOD OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

1443 To help look for children before beginning to teach the Catechism, in order to collaborate with the parish priest to overcome the indifference of the padres towards the religious instruction of their children and be able, whether the Catechism census is large or small, the priest can count on his assistants and

⁴⁴⁵ Cf. SACRED CONGREGATION OF THE COUNCIL: *Decree of 16 April 1924*: AAS 16 (1924), p. 431.

substitutes during absences and illnesses in this task. The indicated brotherhood is a suitable remedy, since its members must be conducive to all those and other services.

1444 The level of interest the Church has in wanting this Brotherhood in all the parishes is enough evidence to convince us of the fact that this is one of the named brotherhoods indicated in the Canon Law Code (canon 711) essential for taking care of the common services for which they are established.

1445 In the responses to our questionnaire, thirteen brotherhoods appear as founded and we can already imagine that our beloved parish priests are not going to be satisfied with this number after the efforts of our very honorable predecessors, their Excellencies Aguilar, Cerero and Masanet (may he rest in peace)⁴⁴⁶, and those we made ourselves in order to establish it in the parish churches. Several parish priests, after our inquiry into this matter, responded with the promise to either find one or make an effort to achieve it, and we hope they do not neglect that in the interest of their own parishioners.

1446 The poverty of the people or the scant interest they show in devout practices are the reasons given in many answers to doubt the success of a foundation, and of course we acknowledge the weight of these replies.

1447 But regarding poverty, if that is the sole reason, we do not see sufficient reason to stop trying to carry out the foundation. It would undoubtedly be much better if each brotherhood could pay a reasonable quota so it could obtain teaching materials such as wall charts, projectors, books of expanded knowledge for the instructors and prizes for the children, but you do not have to look on this as the main end of the Brotherhood. The first thing to look for in it is the interest of the parishioners in this teaching, without caring how few people there may be at first, something which the brotherhoods will achieve with their activities. Later, to make whoever signs up pray with special honors for the success of teaching the Catechism, and thirdly, make the qualified ones offer their collaboration by coming to teach and for all of this, not to forget to ask for money as they see fit.

1448 A greater difficulty comes from the coldness of the people towards religious matters, but even so we do not believe that any parish church is so abandoned by the mercy of God that it does not count on a nucleus, albeit small one, of devout people. You have to start with them, by making them see what a great work that teaching the Christian doctrine is and the extraordinary interest of the Church in this Brotherhood as the complement to it, until you persuade them to be the founders. And if even these few people refuse to do so, then you would have to go with your eyes set on the older boys and girls of the catechism as the means for breaking the ice in their parish and get the younger children to attend. In order that they attend, you have to work through the means we indicate or other ones that are suitable until you are able to interest, even if it may only

⁴⁴⁶ Cf. LLORENS, P.L.: *Episcopologio de la diocesis de Segorbe-Castellón*, Vol. II (Madrid, 1973, pp. 503-519, 520-528; 529-535).

be to start with, a few people in this teaching and the Brotherhood will be very appropriate as means to this end.

THE CATECHISM

1449 For the benefit and unity of the teacher, both the instructors and Brotherhood could provide, as well those who are being taught need a text of catechism as a guide. By the mandate of the Illustrious Massanet (may he rest in peace), and then repeated by Us, the catechism that should be used in the diocese is the one by His Holiness Pius X, not that of Father Vives, as some people told us is the one currently being used in their parishes. The latter is, in fact, in effect, but it is effective in fact, not by law.

1450 There is no doubt the Prelate of the Diocese has the right to indicate the Catechism to be studied in the schools of his diocese, as Article 87 of the Law of Public Education expressly recognizes, but both the parish priests and we ourselves know what the prospects of success would be if they had wanted to carry out that law, from not having suitable instructors for it. This fact, together with there being three or four inspectors in the diocese who would have to be dealt with, undoubtedly, and in spite of what was decreed, has made the previously mentioned Catechism of Father Vives come to prevail in the public schools of the Diocese in practice. We also have to add that this text, due to its age and widespread use, could be the same one the professors studied themselves when they were children, which makes teaching it easier and is usually by memorization, and from that comes their passiveness in making the change.

1451 We find ourselves, then, facing two Catechisms, which could cause confusion among the children about the Catechism, if they hear in school the response to the same question in different words in school. As the purpose or ends we must look for before anything else is that they teach and learn the Catechism in the schools, the text is secondary, as long as it does not contain dogmatic and moral errors and that the parish catechism be a complement to that of the school today. If the teachers do not adopt the preferred version, prudence and the success of this teaching advises us that the parish church adapt to the school version.

1452 However, from the responses to the questionnaire, one can deduce that, thanks to God, all the teachers in our diocese are Catholics and the majority of them are devout. Perhaps this could result in those teachers who were ignorant that there was a Catechism indicated for the diocese by the Prelate and after knowing of it would have or will adopt it. We give the Parish Priests, then, the responsibility to take note of this and, wherever our designation may be obeyed or adopted, to also put the previously mentioned text of Pope Pius X in the catechism of the text, since there would not be any reason to postpone carrying out the mandate in this case.

WEEKLY VISIT TO THE SCHOOLS

1453 Since we just finished mentioning the public schools, we want to say a few words about the weekly visit of the parish priest to them for the review of religion and morality.

When we asked the parish priests if they made that visit, some answered that they did not, or not weekly, due to having absolute confidence in the teachers as reliable in their duty to teach the Christian doctrine. There were others who did not go, either, because they thought the professors were going to supervise their work and this would be the cause of friction.

1454 Article 11 of the Law of Public Education records this right of the weekly visit by the parish priest to the school to make reviews of Christian Doctrine and Morality. There was one teacher who wanted this right to be declared invalid based on a Royal Decree of 5 May 1913, which denied the local educational Boards the right they had enjoyed until that date to test the students, the teacher basing his action on the fact that the parish priest, as a member of the local Board, had to follow the same order as the other Board members. Our venerable brother the Bishop of Avila brought an appeal against that interpretation, basing it, among other reasons in that the parish priest acting as the parish priest could not be prevented from exercising the right of the previously cited Article 11, although he would have the same limitations regarding other educational subjects as the other Board members. The appeal was resolved as was justly to be expected, by ordering through Royal Order of 29 October informing the teacher who initiated the proceeding on 5 November not to give the parish priest any problems in the visits that Article 11 authorizes.

1455 With this law still in effect, it seems to us that you should not stop exercising it just because the teachers may be reliable in their duty of teaching Christian doctrine and also Catholics. In our judgment, the reason that lends weight to this visit, not only for being a good idea to exercise a right that may be banned to us the day after tomorrow, but because the teachers, many of them practicing Catholics as they state, have to flatter whoever the immediate spiritual head of the parish may be to confirm he is worthy of proceeding on such a fundamental point of education up to the point of applauding him before his pupils, praise they should not refrain from offering after verifying the progress of the children in religion.

1456 And if dealing with teachers who intend to cause friction about the visit, we believe prudence in explaining to the teacher the intention of using that right and to fulfill the right of the visit has to reduce, if not eliminate, the feared danger. Of course we advise our beloved parish priests to not have the habit of practicing it for the first time without having given the teachers advance notice. It will also reduce, and the parish priest has to be especially careful of this, of not appearing as a policeman or judge, but rather as an assistant to the teacher in teaching this subject, and if deficiencies are noted, correct them by pointing to

the lack of application by the pupils, admonishing them so they learn the lessons of their professors better.

It will be a good idea to make use of these weekly visits to notify the children of the Catechism at the parish church the following Sunday.

PRIZES

1457 And finally there is no lack of people who tell us that the attendance for the teaching of the Catechism would increase if prizes were awarded among the children.

Really, all prospects of reward, even more so if it is immediate, inspires people to act and if you see this in older people, it is even more pronounced among children because they are still not using their reason as the driving force of their action for any motive more elevated than a tangible prize.

1458 But for people who are not experts in this work of the Catechism, we have heard that the prizes have to be something the children desire. They say the distribution of religious stamps or little medals, the most common and least expensive prizes, to everyone who attends or drawings for them and other more valuable prizes, does not influence either the attendance or the sense of fairness that is now blooming in the children. The prize that has the most influence is the one given to whoever deserves it. Hence, they are abolishing the drawings and awarding of religious stamps to everyone and adopting the system of credit tokens of points for application and attendance, so the children acquire from the bazaar of Catechism those objects in which they are interested, the fairest and most appropriate system for inspiring them.

1459 But money is needed more for buying objects for the bazaar which they do not have, so one would have to think of some other means that would not involve spending money and provides the same inspiration the bazaar attempts to achieve.

1460 We are going to propose one means, albeit one that involves spending money but can be reduced and serve for many years without costing any more. It involves the credit tokens already mentioned and some sashes or ribbons of fabric indicating a hierarchy of those who have them over the others. The sashes for the boys could be based on the military hierarchy, from second lieutenant to general, and those for girls on the nobility, from baroness to duchess.

1461 These credit tokens, made from aluminum today so they last longer, only cost a little bit and if even that small amount is too much to spend, someone in the parish church with a little bit of skill or builders can substitute for it by making them out of unusable cardboard boxes. The collecting of points obtained

with these tokens and required for possessing each sash will give them the right to wear them for the entire next month.

1462 The children will be able to wear these sashes or bows, as each parish priest sees fit, not only in Catechism but in other activities as well, and we believe that will inspire the children and even their parents to send them to Catechism to see them wear this sign of application and perseverance.

1463 To collect the amount, and perhaps even more that the tokens and sashes will require, the parish priests could make use of certain psychological moments when their parishioners seem most receptive to it.

1464 Without a doubt, the people usually feel more generous during the Christmas season and the festivities of the Patron Saints of the towns. A collection during those days for the Catechism in the High Masses in our opinion would bear results, even more when the donors were made aware it was to benefit their own children.

1465 These ideas for the greater success of teaching the Christian doctrine in the parish we just explain will undoubtedly be improved on by our beloved parish priests, something which we would be very satisfied by, since in formulating them we had no other interest beyond trying to get rid of the obstacles to this effort in which the Church has placed such great hopes. If we obtain any result in this sense, it will be reward enough.

1466 And now a few words to the members of the religious orders, whom we want to have dedicate themselves to this instruction, those who are dedicated to education.

1467 The members of the religious orders know very well the canon laws authorize the common members to be summoned to teach the Christian doctrine to the people, mainly in their churches, when their help in this ministry is needed. We do not believe this need has arrived yet and neither have the parish churches where there are members of the orders declared to us that it is needed.

1468 But if we are not going to change the present situation, we can at least earnestly address the following plea to you, although we realize in advance that you already do so: do not neglect to teach your children religion, who must have this subject in the forefront of their education.

1469 The students frequently go more regularly to the schools of monks and nuns; and this way the benefit they can obtain regarding religious instruction is greater.

1470 You must have a special goal of instilling in both male and female students, particularly the most outstanding ones, the desire to pass along to others their knowledge of the Christian doctrine, so that assistants for the parish priest in teaching the catechism may come from these schools.

1471 Of course there are few parishes where this good can arrive, given the small number of schools being run by the religious communities, but at least the problem of the instructor was solved thanks to this collaboration.

Given in Segorbe, on 10 December 1930.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

46

Anniversary of the Council of Ephesus

(B. Seg 51 [1931], pp. 61-68)

To our beloved priests and the faithful of the diocese; greetings and grace in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

ON THE 1500 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE COUNCIL OF EPHEBUS

1472 A city in Asia Minor, Ephesus, famed in ancient times for the temple and pagan cult worshipping the false goddess Diana there, returns to be evoked this year in a special way throughout the entire Catholic world: not exactly for that celebrity we just alluded to, but rather for its inextinguishable renown in the annals of the Catholic Church. Nothing more remains today of the Ephesus of Diana than the ruins of the temple to this false goddess, while the Christian Ephesus shall always preserve the great ecclesiastical accomplishments it witnessed.

1473 The inhabitants of this city, evangelized by the Apostle of the people St. Paul who lived there for close to three years, received the doctrine of Jesus Christ that he preached in such numbers and with so much fervor that, according to the testimony of St. Luke (Act 19:24-26), there scarcely remained followers of the false deity in the city and even in much of Asia. It reached the extreme that a silversmith named Demetrius, who earned his living making miniature temples and little statues of Diana, instigated a riot against the Apostle because his preaching of the true religion was ending his business.

1474 This preaching, as well the letter to the Ephesians by the Apostle, the mention the evangelist St. John makes of the Ephesian Church in his *Revelation*, the first of the seven he speaks of⁴⁴⁷; the venerated and ancient local tradition in Ephesus that the Mother of God lived with that evangelist; each one of these events alone would be enough so that this city would have a permanent place in the history of the Church. But we still have to add, beloved children, another fundamental

⁴⁴⁷ Cf. Revelation 2:1-7.

motive that makes the city immortal; the celebration of the third Ecumenical Council in Ephesus in 1431.

1475 Our beloved priests especially know the utmost importance of this Council, whose 1500th anniversary the Supreme Pontiff wants to commemorate, for Catholicism.

The Ecumenical Council of Nicaea was held, where the innateness of the Son of the Father was defined in order to not leave the Arianists any subterfuges for defending their heresy of the inferiority of the Word with respect to the Father⁴⁴⁸. But many writers and Holy Fathers of that period wanted to preserve and defend this same definition at the same time to give a rational explanation of the question: how the Son, innate to the Father, took on the human nature and it plunged them into hesitant explanations. A new heresy began to emerge, championed by Nestorius, undermining the root cause of the divine motherhood of the Holy Virgin and, at the same time, negating in reality the quality of God to Jesus Christ and consequently of our redemption at the cost of divine blood⁴⁴⁹.

1476 Nestorius did not deny, at least in name, that Jesus Christ was God but, trying to explain how the human and divine natures were joined together in Him, he distinguished two persons in the Word made man, the divine and human, now joined together in him by the period of time the Word stayed in man as in a temple, for the union of emotions and among the two persons, divine and human, whether for the instrumental service the human person offered to the divine one occupying it, or for a type of honor that benefits the man for his alliance with the Word, or finally as a communication of names by virtue of which they called man God and Son of God (ST. THOMAS, q. 2 a. 6)⁴⁵⁰.

1477 Nestorius had all these ways for explaining the Incarnation of the Word, and they clearly indicate that for him, the union of the divine nature to the Son of God with the human was just a merely moral union, and just as it was not appropriate to call Christ, if accepting those arguments as valid, anything more than a bearer of God and not a true God, the Holy Virgin did not have to be held as anything more than the woman who gave birth to a man and not a God. In the same vein, to say that Christ suffered and redeemed us, we would have to understand that it was not God who endured that suffering for us, but rather the human person who that God was making use of as his room or instrument upon whom those sufferings fell.

1478 But, just as Arrius, in his denials of the consubstantiality of the Word with the Father, found a St. Athanasius who was the tireless revealer of his heresy, and a Council of Nicaea which would condemn his falsehoods and establish the true doctrine, Nestorius had opposing his errors a St. Cyril of Alexandria and the Council of Ephesus which, with another word, *hypostasis*⁴⁵¹, as precise as *homoousion*⁴⁵² as

⁴⁴⁸ Cf. DENZINGER, 54.

⁴⁴⁹ Cf. DENZINGER, 111a.

⁴⁵⁰ Cf. ST. THOMAS: Summa Theologica, 3 q. 2 a. 6.

⁴⁵¹ Cf. DENZINGER 111a and 114.

⁴⁵² Cf. DENZINGER 54.

for the first Council, confounded the founder of the new heresy. It established a perennial and unchangeable bond in which the joining together of his two natures, divine and human, was carried out in Jesus Christ and was the stone wall against which the cunning arguments of the ancient and modern heresies crashed, at the same time it left the Queen of Heaven and Earth in the most high and noble position of Mother of God and ourselves with the invaluable mercy of having been redeemed from the slavery of the devil by the precious blood of a true God.

1479 But it was not just those alone; there is yet another reason why that assembly of Fathers and Prelates who met at the Council of Ephesus was so important.

Already in those first centuries of the Church, a truth was being obeyed and proclaimed in times in which many who called themselves Christians were unknown, denied or attacked: the truth of the primacy of the Roman Pontiff.

1480 We have already indicated who the main combatants were in the conflict over whether the Holy Virgin could be given the name of the Mother of God. On one side was Nestorius, who denied this prerogative and St. Cyril who tirelessly defended her, and both wrote various letters and documents in support of their respective points of view without being able to convince the other, and therefore the two decided to go to Pope Celestine.

1481 This approach to the Roman Pontiff clearly indicates to us the feeling of both adversaries, nothing other than thought that the decision of the authority they were bringing their conflict to could rule in their favor or against them without further appeal.

1482 But if that confirms that priority, it was even more clearly proven by the presence in the Council of Ephesus of two official emissaries from the Pope and by the declaration made by the personal representative of the Supreme Pontiff Celestine, the presbyter Philip, in the third session with the unanimous assent of the council fathers, in these words: "No one doubts, but it is known by all that the holy and blessed Peter, prince and head of the Apostles, the pillar of the faith and foundation of the Catholic Church, received the keys to the Kingdom of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Savior and Redeemer of the human race, and the authority was given to forgive and retain sins which, for now and forever, live in their successors and carry out the judgment"⁴⁵³.

1483 We indicate this, then, as another one of the plentiful rewards of the Councils, whose 1500th anniversary we are commemorating, this other truth affirming that the mother and teacher of all the Churches is the Roman Church and the Primate is its Pontiff.

1484 After this brief summary we just finished, now it will not seem strange to any of you, beloved children that the most Holy Father shows desires that the entire Catholic world commemorate in a special way the anniversary of that Council this year, which honored itself with the definition our loving Mother, the Virgin Mary,

⁴⁵³ DENZINGER, 112.

and gave us the security that it was divine blood which rescued us from the power of darkness, at the same time it marked for all Christians where the true succession of St. Peter is and the supreme Authority of the entire Church over those who want to be of Jesus Christ.

1485 However, beloved children, all the commemoration, so that it may be beneficial, has to have determined ends, with the object that our heart and mind would be directed to them, and for the commemoration of this Council, we are going to point you towards, or better, present you with the ones the Holy Father wants to be recorded: So not only the priests, but also the faithful made learned by them, remember the Council of Ephesus, its doctrines, the dogmas which were defined there and the eminent men who stood out at the Council: may the public be moved to appreciate the supernatural life, today so cold or completely neglected, an effect of the naturalism which has infiltrated everything; and make this commemoration revive the devoutness of the faithful towards God and his Holy Mother and the love and obedience towards the Supreme Pontiff⁴⁵⁴.

1486 And as suitable means for securing these goals, we consider it advisable, beloved children, and therefore order our beloved priests, especially the ones who have responsibility for the curing of souls, that the preaching to the people in this year, on the most appropriate days, such as the holy days of the Lord and the Virgin, on one or several depending on your judgment, to base your talks or sermons on events of the Council of Ephesus, expanding on what we have recorded in this Letter and directing the practical urging to bring the spirit of their listeners to what the Holy Father is aiming for as indicated above.

1487 They will also promote in the devout associations, particularly of the Lord and the Marians of their parishes, the celebration of general communions which the main intention of those approaching the Sacred Table is to pray for the needs of the Apostolic Chair in general and especially because the towns of the East are returning to the bosom of the Holy Roman Church, whose primacy shone so brightly in the Council of Ephesus.

May this be a guarantee of the happy success of the wishes of the Holy Father in our diocese the blessing of Heaven, which with all our heart we give you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on 10 May of the year of our Lord 1931.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

To our beloved members of the diocese, greetings and grace in the Lord.

⁴⁵⁴ PIUS XI: *Letter to Cardinal A. Sincero*, of 25 December 1930: AAS 23 (1931), pp. 11-12.,

1488 After the address of the bishop to the faithful, beloved brothers, which summarized in a way that left no room for doubt, he indicated to you the reasons why those who truly, and not in name only, want to call themselves children of the Holy Mother Church have an obligation of coming to remedy the material need Catholic worship and its ministers are going to be placed by one of the many plunderings of the Catholic Church over its twenty centuries of existence. We believe nothing more remains to be said to you concerning that obligation.

1489 But the words, although undeserved, your Pastor wants you to hear, not collectively but individually, we have decided to speak to you, beloved brothers, even if we are not doing anything other than repeat concepts contained in that address.

1490 As you know, from next January on, if the Providence in his noble designs does not correct the terrible agreement that will affect the social life of the homeland and its true spiritual progress even more than the material life of the priest by not continuing to give to the parish churches what the State was giving them, albeit laughable for how meager the amounts were, to support a minimal amount of the worship due to God. This worship could not be paid, at least unless your generosity comes to cure this serious flaw.

1491 Do the beloved members of our dioceses want to their parish churches to close, those oases of peace and consolation that each of us preserve so many pleasant memories of, and see them in perpetual desolation? We cannot resign ourselves to believe that.

1492 Whoever lives in the town and one day received in their parish church the priceless title of the children on God and heirs to his glory through the generous waters of the Baptism, and renounced Satan, cannot consent to let the latter triumph by seeing the good Father who banned him forced to flee from the parish for not being able to remain there with the decency and honor due his divine Majesty; whoever, on that unforgettable day marked with white stone in the path of his existence, his face shining with joy, the best children's parties for their finery, the heart covered in purity and surrounded by parents and relatives, approached for the first time to take part in the sacred invitation of the Eucharistic Communion, they will not allow that He who gave them everything on that memorable day, and as many times as they desired afterwards, shall not receive in compensation, if not all then a small part of the goods of every one so they can continue in the tabernacle, this being the dream of their children and grandchildren who anxiously wait for the beautiful moment of their First Communion to come; whoever, at the time of putting their lives on a new course, not alone but in the company of a strong arm they can lean on for support for the young girls, or a companion who soothes the roughness of work for the young boys, came to the holy altar of their parish church in order to sanctify their loves through the sacrament, which mutually attracted them to walk away united along the stony path of this vale of tears, they will not let a church be closed they left with that appealing sanctified

love; whoever, and this will be everyone in the parish since there are hours and days of tribulation for everyone in this world, and in the midst of the hardships, with all the sources of consolation closed, without a single beam of light to guide them or a single drop of balm to comfort them, without any opening where the hope for relief or consolation can be seen, they crossed over the threshold of the parish church to fall on their knees before the God of love and all the consolation present there, or before the Mother, the consolation of the afflicted, or before the Patron Saint of the town, the valued intermediary for whoever received in the troubled periods or the conformity of the will that alleviates the hardships or the greater gift of making them disappear, they cannot commit the sin of ingratitude of allowing that parish church to close so that no one else can cross over that threshold in the future for not coming with their alms to keep it open; whoever is crying for loved ones, where but in the parish church do they truly ease their pain when so often in the peace and recognition of the church they raise their prayers to God for them or on the anniversary days when you collectively send your prayers? And will those people who love the comfort of the prayers, recommended and praised by the saints, not want to pay tribute and ask the saints for their fervent intercession in the recognition of the parish?

1493 If the virtue of religion, as he told us in the cited address to all the Prelates, obliges the faithful to pay tribute to the Holy Trinity, for the mediation of our adorable Redeemer and the intercession of the Holy Virgin and the Saints, the inner and outer worship, private and public which is due him for his infinite majesty; if the awareness of the Christian position, which makes each one feel his character as a living member of the Church and obliges you to the personal and collective participation in carrying out the liturgical worship; if the priceless value of the humble contribution offered to the Church by which the faithful make their contribution to the realization of the spiritual and supernatural ends and the spread of the Kingdom of Christ among men, were not all good enough reasons by themselves to encourage us to put whatever means are at our disposal so that worship in the parish churches is not interrupted, inspiring others with the emotional attachment that we indicated before and do not want the North wind of our indifference to dry out the tree laden with goods of all kinds that a parish church open for worship has above it.

* * *

1494 But it is not only the budget for worship that is going to disappear at the end of the present year; if God does not remedy it, a portion of the parochial clergy is going to be left without funds on that date within two years; note that this is not two years from now, but within that time period, all the ecclesiastical personnel of the diocese.

And to remedy this new disaster, it is necessary that good Catholics in deed and not just in name attend.

1495 It is fair to think of you that you do not want to, but instead you will inspired to not allow your church to see your church closed, so that your little children may receive in the wholesome waters of the Baptism in it, so that they can be children of God and not slaves of the devil from their very first days; that for them and yourselves, you long to invigorate their souls with the bread of the mighty, which is Jesus Christ received in the Holy Eucharist; you want for them to set themselves apart from the irrational souls when they form the household nest, so that the blessing of the priest descends upon them, sanctifying their mutual loves; you desire that the minister of the Lord is the one who gathers all your prayers for the loved ones who have disappeared from this world, and join them to the merits of Christ, when in his holy hand he takes the sacred Host and sacrifices it to the Father as the propitiatory victim for them; but for all this, as you know, the priest is needed, specially dedicated to these services and the only true minister of them in the ordinary way.

1496 For this reason, in the address mentioned before, one of the several reasons we Prelates were giving you to encourage you not to neglect the divine worship and his ministers, was the mission of the priest, the holy ambassador of God closest to the faithful, whose indoctrination, sanctification and spiritual government he carries out and secures through the diversity of his ministries, and the authorized representative of Christian society before the presence of the Almighty, whose spirit, voices and acts of petition and atonement he offers in the name and ministry of the Church.

Not only, then, the worship but also the priest who offers it needs your help, my beloved brothers, as an obligated consequence of everything we just indicated.

1497 The hatred of all the sects opposing the name of God has been unleashed today against its authorized representatives, and many people who called themselves Catholics have joined their voices to those sects. To give some reason behind this contradiction in what they call themselves and how they speak, they claim they are not going against God and religion, but against clericalism instead. Do not believe them, they are wolves, even though they wickedly want to disguise themselves in sheep's clothing, and if the light of reason alone would not be enough for us to discover for ourselves how absurd the difference is, these words of Jesus Christ, the God and founder of the religion, to his Apostles, ministers and representatives should be sufficient: "*He that despiseth you, despiseth me*"⁴⁵⁵.

1498 The present lack of devoutness, the child of the ungodliness that twenty centuries ago proclaimed, *We will not have this man to reign over us*, "We do not want to have This Man (Jesus Christ) reign over us"⁴⁵⁶, has these same desires and knows that the flattest and best path leading to that end is to discredit His ministers, destroy and annihilate them if that were possible, and a sure means of annihilation is to make their material life impossible.

⁴⁵⁵ Luke 10:16.

⁴⁵⁶ Luke 19:14.

1499 Apart from their prestige, it is your turn now to defend this material life with your generosity, beloved children, so that the priest does not disappear from your parish church, and unfortunate is the town which does not continuously, or at least frequently, have the watchful gaze of the shepherd of souls and the warmth of his paternal heart over it. Dupanloup refers to one day when a few parishioners said to the Bishop of Orleans, whom they went to on a holy visit: "Please send us a priest, so we do not go back to being beasts!", a phrase that contains in itself all the priceless value of having a priest in a parish church.

1500 It could be that someone might believe this phrase is exaggerated, but God does not want to be forced to repeat a bitter experience today to whomever perhaps looks indifferently on this aspect of helping your parish priest, so that he can live in the parish church.

1501 I already know that many of our beloved parishioners can tell us they are poor with good reason, but in order to ease the force of that reason, we are going to put forward this other statement: that all or nearly all the priests of the diocese are also poor with respect to their personal finances. Therefore, as poor men, they have the advantage of being able to better understand those who are like them, since the equality in their social condition among whoever they deal with brings with it that greater intelligence and, therefore they do not have to demand for their way of life but what they know from their own experience the poor can give. Everyone knows their lives have always been lived in poverty, virtually bordering on misery, and we do not have to ask now for any more than is necessary for them, and even this is taken to the limits of sacrifice for the good of your souls.

1502 When the poverty of a town reaches such extremes that the burden of supporting a priest would be truly unbearable, we already mentioned the advantage of having for at least frequently, and to do so, the solution has to be an association of two towns to support the priest, but this always has to be looked at by whoever appreciate the true value of what it means to have a full-time guide, adviser, and doctor of the soul, and the priest serves as a last resort for all this.

1503 We had thought of giving this sermon on the holy day of the Holy Virgin of Hope, as on that date we have our own hope that these words would not fall on infertile ground, making the worship of her divine Son, to Her and the Saint is not interrupted in any of our parish churches and that the priests in charge of them today, albeit with some sacrifice, can continue practicing their holy ministry, which is the guarantee of peace and material progress in society.

This is what your servant and father in Christ desires, who blesses you in the name of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in Segorbe on 18 December 1931.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

48
Anniversary of the Death of Christ
 (B. Seg 53 [1933], pp. 9-17)

“If any man will come after melet him take up his cross, and follow me”(Matthew 16:24).

1504 Beloved children: Dealing with Christians as you are, through the mercy of God, it would seem useless to ask you if you want to follow Jesus Christ, since you are obligated to so much by your godfathers on asking for the holy Baptism. And the honorable title of Christian that you pride yourself on, obliges you, and by Christian I mean disciple of Jesus Christ, whose faith you professed in the Baptism and are obligated to his holy service. A position above all positions, beloved children! One cannot compare it to any greatness on earth, not even of royalty; as St. Agatha of Sicily said to Viciano, who argued that being from such a noble and distinguished family she would find it insulting to practice the humble, servile life of the Christians. She replied: “Christian humility and servitude is much greater and more eminent than the proud and arrogant pomposity of the kings”⁴⁵⁷.

1505 Nevertheless, beloved children, taking notice of the way of life of Christians today, they are completely in accord with the practices and maxims of the world which condemned and anathematized Jesus Christ, it will not seem Christian to all those who one sees totally neglecting their religious duties, being tolerant of the indecent dress, shameless entertainments and enormous attachment to material goods, placing them before the goods of the spirit, if we say to them: “Is it perhaps because you think that by this path you can also follow Jesus Christ and save your soul? Do you not bear in mind what the divine Redeemer, the way, the truth and the life, tells us categorically? There are only two ways to salvation, innocence and penance, and whoever wants to follow him has to bear his own cross.

1506 Let anyone who wants to follow him! But are we not all obligated to follow Him since He is our Creator, Redeemer and Savior? Yes, beloved children, but the Lord wanted to provide us with the freedom to act, so that our salvation depends on whether our actions are worthy or unworthy of attaining it, by making use of his grace or abusing it and suffering eternal condemnation. If our first parents had been obedient to the precept of the Lord, we would have risen to Heaven when it pleased his divine Majesty, without going through death or suffering any punishment; but with this precept shattered, it still is not enough that our Savior Jesus redeemed us with his passion and most holy death. Instead we have to earn our place in Heaven through our works, bearing the cross in pursuit of our divine Redeemer as He Himself tells us: *If any man will come after melet him take up*

⁴⁵⁷ Cf. in RB, 4th reading of 5 February.

*his cross, and follow me*⁴⁵⁸. Whoever wants to follow behind me, let him take up his cross and follow me.

* * *

1507 Hail to the Cross, *our only hope*! Hail to the cross, our only hope and last resort for the poor sinners! If it was the object of hatred and ridicule for the Jews and Gentiles⁴⁵⁹, as the Apostle says, because criminals were hung from it, for us as Catholics, beloved children, it is an object of love, veneration and hope, because our divine Redeemer died on it for our rescue. Yes, the Saints loved it so much for that that when St. Andrew saw it, he cried out: "Oh, good Cross!, you were decorated by contact with the limbs of the Lord, desired by me for a long time, diligently loved, sought without pause, and at some time prepared with great desire, take me from being among men and take me to my divine Master, so that he receive me through you, He who redeemed me through you"⁴⁶⁰. The other Saints, without exception, loved the works, mortifications and tribulations that the cross represents so much that when they were not suffering terribly, they believed themselves abandoned by God; like the Seraphic Father St. Francis and his Capuchine daughter, St. Veronica Giuliani⁴⁶¹. St. Theresa of Jesus wished to suffer or die⁴⁶²; and St. Mary Magdalene of Pazizi loved the cross so much that her greatest torment was not having to suffer, and asked the Lord "To not suffer and not die in order to suffer more"⁴⁶³. Because the Saints, as true wise men, did not forget the lesson of the divine Master, who says: "Whoever wants to follow me, let them take his cross and follow me"⁴⁶⁴. And this by following the narrow path of mortification and penance, the only way we, as sinners, can ascend to heaven, since it suited Jesus Christ to endure and suffer death and passion and enter his glory this way, as he Himself said to his disciples who went to Emmaus: *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory* (Luke 24:26)? How can it stop being not only suitable but necessary to us, to welcome the penance and embrace the cross in following our divine Master in order to enter into Heaven?

1508 In addition, any single act of the life of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, as all of them are of infinite value, would have been enough to rescue us from the power of the enemy but he was not content with that. Instead, so that our redemption would be full and with the aim of being able to serve as a model and example for us so we could adapt our life to assure that salvation, which depends on our good works, he wanted to live among us for thirty three years, enduring all kinds

⁴⁵⁸ Matthew 16:24.

⁴⁵⁹ Cf. I Corinthians 1:23.

⁴⁶⁰ Cf. in RB, 6th reading of 30 November.

⁴⁶¹ Cf. in RB, 5th reading of 9 July (Service of the Capuchine Order). Cf. 1206 above.

⁴⁶² Cf. in RB, 6th reading of 15 October. Cf. ST. TERESA: *Libro de la Vida*, 40:20, in works cited, p. 176. Cf. 296, 1206 above.

⁴⁶³ Cf. in RB, 6th reading of 30 May. Cf. 1206 above.

⁴⁶⁴ Matthew 16:24.

of suffering and hardships and to finally die hanging from a cross after horrible tortures. If he had not established Himself as the our guide and master in the practice of the virtues and taught us the way of mortification, penance and love to the holy cross, do not doubt, beloved children, that many more souls would have perished for all eternity: for the distaste that we all naturally feel about mortifying our nature and self-regard, and because, if we were lacking this model and example, it would have been easier for the infernal spirit to make us stray from the way of the cross and penance that leads to Heaven and introduce us into the broad and spacious path of worldly pleasures which leads to the abyss of hell.

1509 This path, then, takes us very far from being able to glory in anything that is not the cross of Jesus Christ. Let us love it and live crucified with it for the world, and the world for us, as the Apostle says. *But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world* (Galatians 6:14).

* * *

1510 But ay, how far the majority of Christians are today from loving or even knowing the holy cross, beloved children; the mere name horrifies and terrifies them! Are there many Christians who want or even accept having to suffer today? The only enthusiasm and desire today is to enjoy and amuse yourself, practically joining the fools in saying, as the book of Wisdom relates: "Let us crown ourselves with roses, before they become withered"⁴⁶⁵; without noticing that this cannot satisfy the longing for happiness that man feels, as it is as fleeting and insubstantial as the worldly pleasures, and this why St. Augustine says: "You made us, Lord, for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in You"⁴⁶⁶. As long as enduring and suffering by bearing the cross in following Jesus Christ gives such satisfaction and pleasure to the soul, it is hard to see it satisfied except by suffering for God.

1511 However, since this way of the cross is, as we said before, the only one that can lead us to Heaven, the Lord, who wants the salvation of everyone, always takes us along it; and therefore every one of us will always have to endure and suffer in this vale of tears until the last days of our life. This is by the mercy of the Lord who wants salvation for all: *God, who will have all men to be saved* (I Timothy 2:4), we have to give Him infinite thanks, beloved children and tell with all our heart with St. Augustine: "Lord, here burn me, here cut me wherever you want; here do not take pity on me so that you forgive me in eternity". *Domine hic ure, hic seca, hic non parkas, ut in aeternum parcas*⁴⁶⁷.

1512 This is also why the Holy Mother Church, so interested in the salvation of its children, frequently reminds us of the need to embrace the cross of penance

⁴⁶⁵ Wisdom 2:8.

⁴⁶⁶ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Confessiones* 1.1: PL 32:661. Cf. 351, 521, 663, 966, 1048 above.

⁴⁶⁷ This phrase by a medieval author and attributed for a long time to St. Augustine, could be based in *Sermon 70* by the Saint (cf. PL 38:445).

and even obligates us to do so, especially during in Holy Lent, the period that we are going to enter shortly.

1513 We are not ignoring your cries, beloved children, because today more than ever before we need to receive penance, because in the sea of corruption we are navigating through only the last resort of penance can save us. As Jesus Christ said to the Apostles, the disgusting spirit with its scandals, immodesty and impurities can only be expelled through prayer and fasting: *This kind can go out by nothing, but by prayer and fasting* (Mark 9:28). With prayer, because that is the key that opens the gates of Heaven and the Lord cannot resist it, which is why He asked Moses, who was begging for forgiveness of his people, to let him punish them as they deserved⁴⁶⁸. And the fasting and penance, because it is so necessary and effective, that the Lord says through St. Luke: "If you would not do penance, all of you would perish". *Unless you shall do penance, you shall all likewise perish* (Luke 13:3).

1514 However, beloved children in the present year, the Holy Mother Church is demanding prayer and penance of us in a special way, because this year is the 1900th anniversary of the passion and death of our adorable Redeemer. An event above all extraordinary praise, which demands great preparation of us in order to celebrate it with dignity and honor and take from it the spiritual reward the Lord desires.

1515 This is a year of extraordinary Jubilee, beloved children, in which the Holy Father opens the treasures of graces to the faithful so that, once purified of their sins and inflamed in the love for He who gave his life on the cross for our love, let us follow our divine Redeemer, bearing our cross, to obtain eternal salvation. All those, then, who are in conditions of being able to make the pilgrimage to Rome, the only place one will gain the jubilee in this holy year, should pay attention to the call of His Holiness and go with all the due intentions, so that your soul is left completely purified of your sins by the holy jubilee. And those of you who find it impossible to go to the Holy City for this reason should not be discouraged because the Holy Father has already foreseen this and indicated those who, due to special circumstances, will be able to gain the Jubilee in their towns. We can expect with good reason more of the generosity of His Holiness who, in the following year, that is 1934, will not stop bestowing the same graces of Jubilee to the entire Catholic world, as all the Pontiffs have come to grant in the Jubilee years.

1516 Let us be joyful, then in God and show Him our devoted thanks for the benefit of the redemption we are going to commemorate, and we will secure as a reward the holy exercise of the Stations of the Cross throughout the year, if possible every day or at least Fridays and Sundays. This is the most pleasing to God after the holy Mass, and the most suitable for inflaming our heart with the love of a God who gave his life for our love and salvation by dying on a cross. This exercise has been the preferred devotion of all the Saints and devout souls, because in it we learn the practice of all the virtues that the Divine Master taught us and we make the

⁴⁶⁸ Cf. Exodus 32:10-14.

effort to bear the cross that He offers us and to follow Him with it along the path of bitterness which, for us, is nothing more than this world the Church calls with good reason the vale of tears.

1517 This way, beloved children, we confirm our will to follow Jesus Christ who says: "Whoever wants to follow me, let them take his cross and follow me. *If any man will come after melet him take up his cross, and follow me* (Matthew 16:24). And the Lord will fill us to overflowing with his graces, and with them we will be able to climb to a high state of perfection and later achieve the eternal Beatitude. This is what your Prelate desires for itself and for you, and who blesses you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Given in our episcopal palace of Segorbe on the Sunday of 70th anniversary, 12 February of the year 1933.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

LETTERS

INTRODUCTION

If the Autobiography is the most beautiful written work of Luis Amigó in a purely Franciscan sense, and the Sermons best display his pastoral side, his letters are the written documents in which the reader can most accurately sense his personality and his great love for the two congregations he founded. That is undoubtedly because the letter itself reflects the internal feelings of the person with uncommon transparency, whether for the spontaneity of the missive on some occasions or being a carefully considered response to difficult situations in life on other occasions.

This collection of letters written by Luis Amigó brings together absolutely all of the letters we currently possess, although we have been obliged to replace the proper names with the initial NN in some of them for reasons of basic discretion and prudence¹. By the way, we have not given up hope that other new letters may appear in the future. There is no lack of well-founded reasons for hope.

The letters, the vast majority addressed to his nuns and friars, show his active awareness of being the founder and his efforts as father for the work which the Lord wanted to found through his mediation. Nevertheless, it is surprising that despite having lived for almost fifty years after the foundation of his religious congregations, only one letter —and that one undated— to the respective General Superiors of his two congregations has been found². The fact that the general archives of both congregations were destroyed during the 1936-1939 war could help explain this situation, although we do not believe that is sufficient reason.

The Amigonian Question

It is relatively frequent in the history of the religious orders and congregations to find a difficult question that frequently becomes identified by the adjective form of the name of the founder. This frequently rises from the attempt to faithfully express the thinking of the founder or for the sensible desire of trying to interpret its possible evolution over time.

In the case of the Capuchin Third Order congregation of Our Lady of Sorrows – and the fact they will echo in the most interesting letters of Luis Amigó³ – the Amigonian question originates in an incongruous formulation of the initial

¹ Cf. 1554, 1563, 1696, 1703, 1716.

² Cf. 1960.

³ Cf. 1728-1735, 1737, 1749, 1753-1754, 1763-1771 and 1960.

constitutions. These said: "The congregation shall be composed of priest Friars and lay Brother Assistants, although in view of the works the Institute is dedicating itself to, the latter should be the majority"⁴. Despite that, the positions of Greater Superiors were reserved only for priests⁵.

The Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regular Clergy, given the uncommon proliferation of religious institutions during the previous century, saw an urgent need to establish order and clarity in them and on 28 June 1901 issued the Regulations by which those newly founded institutions must be governed and to which the already existing ones must adapt themselves⁶. As a result of the regulations, the congregation of the Capuchin Third Order of Our Lady of Sorrows, with a majority lay orientation, took on a more clerical character at the same time they were specifying the appropriate or specific end⁷. This gave rise to more than a little discontent, division and disorder among the members of the order, and even provided fuel for strange and sorrowful interference in the heart of the congregation, given the fact that it touched on the identity itself of the Institution⁸.

With good reason, then, we could call this the Amigonian question from the pen of Luis Amigó, from which sprouted a whole series of letters, full of energy and strength in their filial obedience to Rome but, above all else, models of refined judgment, moderation and paternal love towards the members of his religious orders.

Themes and Subjects

The core thinking of Luis Amigó is centered in the desire of achieving sanctification and salvation itself. This involves a total dependence on the Lord which, in the letters of the Servant of God, will accept in a special way doing the will of God, displayed externally in the form of justice, mercy and divine providences.

Drinking from the waters of the Seraphic Patriarch⁹, many times and on various occasions he will repeat to his nuns and friars in his letters: "I want you to be very holy for the glory of God, the honor of our Congregation and the salvation of the many souls which the Lord shall place under your direction and custody"¹⁰, a thought that we will find with very little variation in many other places¹¹.

⁴ Cf. 2462.

⁵ Cf. 2384, 2389, 2391, 2394.

⁶ Cf. *Normae, of 28-6-1901* in SCHAEFER, T.: *De Religiosis* (Rome, 1947), pp. 1102-1135.

⁷ Luis Amigó initially put as the specific goal for his children "the instruction of adults and young children in Arts and Sciences; service to the sick, especially in their home, and the regimen and direction of jails and prisons. (cf. 2360).

Based on the Regulations of the Sacred Congregation, dated 28/6/1901, the purpose was defined this way: "The education and moral uplift of those housed in the Reform and Correctional Schools" and other similar establishments, both public and private". Cf. AMIGO, L., *Written Constitutions, Adapted and Amended...* [Madrid, 1988], pp. 302).

⁸ Cf. 155 above; 1763-1771.

⁹ Cf. LP 108, *St. Francis of Assisi* (BAC Madrid, 1978), p. 676. Ibid, MP 65, p. 74.

¹⁰ Cf. 1820, 1835, 1883, 1892, 1916.

¹¹ Cf. 1598, 1720, 1736, 1790, 1810, 1814, 1883 and 1895.

Motivated by delicate and sometimes difficult situations we have already referred to, he will never tire of repeating and recommending brotherly union and charity, harmony and peace, understanding and love to his nuns and friars. His missionary and popular dimension is also shown very clearly, especially well developed in his letters as the Higher Superior of the province of the Precious Blood of Christ of Valencia, and those letters addressed to his nuns in the missions,

Of the rest, Luis Amigó reveals through his correspondence his profoundly Franciscan spirituality, his special devotion to our Lady of Sorrows, his relations with the Higher Superior of the Capuchin Order, his love for the two congregations, his interest in religious and apostolic education of his nuns and friars, his sound judgment and strength in the face of strange interventions, and his final thought, as crystallized in the circular letter of 3 May 1926, which can correctly be called his letter-testament¹².

Letter-Testament

To mark the imminent celebration of the General Chapters of his two congregations, on 3 May 1926 he sent a circular to his nuns and friars that without a doubt forms his spiritual letter-testament. It was written when his institutions had already carried out a significant activity over time, thus giving the letter sufficient historical perspective and coupled with the desire to state his final thinking, all of which makes it particularly interesting.

As with all the work of Luis Amigó it is woven around his central thought of the salvation: "Do not be afraid to perish among the cliffs and precipices that many times you will put yourselves in order to save the lost sheep, because you can be sure that if you manager to save a soul, you are determining the destiny of your own"¹³.

It later puts into relief the need of a serious Francisco education, with special emphasis on the virtues of humility, simplicity, charity and the apostolic zeal which characterizes the Seraphic Order.

Next it stresses the attitudes of gratitude and esteem for the Congregation, faithfulness to its mission, the need of brotherly union and charity, veneration and obedience to the Superiors, as well as faithfulness to the Rule and Constitutions of the Order. And, well aware of the ups-and-downs his two institutions had gone through, he ends by alerting about the always possible "temptation to walk looking for and finding other paths contrary to one marked and designated by God"¹⁴.

In summary, the letters reveal Luis Amigó as the obedient Capuchin, the loving father, the watchful pastor and, always, the simple friar Minor in brotherhood.

¹² Cf. 1828-1835.

¹³ Cf. 1831.

¹⁴ Cf. 1835.

1. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS*
Antequera, 23 November 1877¹

1518 Most Reverend General Minister: May the joy and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with You.

It is not without great pain and dismay that we can consider the state in which our small brotherhood finds itself due to the disturbances caused by some members of the brotherhood who are trying to introduce certain relaxations in the rule, which we must accept and be satisfied with to some extent; therefore we, the undersigned students of the previously mentioned Father NN.² (Anonymous), the main person responsible for this misfortune, moved to act not from passion or any other disorder beyond what is our conscience, we are informing Your Reverence of what we received and knew of him, in this period when we are still weak with respect to our education:

1519 1. His great desire to advance positions in the order, and his complete lack of application in fulfilling the job he was assigned by obedience.

1520 2. Without any permission from the Superior, and in the company of two women very close to him and received by the mercy of the old cloisters, he proposed to open a public school in our convent teaching the greater and lesser sciences. But once the Superior discovered that and he was unable to achieve his attempt, he has been taken by pride and arrogance and slandered the Guardian everywhere, principally in the town. After this our Guardian for the cause of reforming the convent and taking into account the abuse that was introduced by admitting lay brothers and of speaking not only in bedrooms but also in the cells of the friars, designated a suitable place for people to hold their conversations. The aforementioned people time and again branded him as unfair and without social manners, and are treating him that same way, without any respect and even less reverence up to the present day.

Truly desiring peace and tranquility, we are writing this letter to Your Reverence so that you may impose the appropriate solution.

May God preserve the life of Your Reverence for many years for His greater glory, at the same time as we beg your blessing.

FATHER FERMÍN OF VELLILLA.

BROTHER ANGEL OF VELLIZA.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.

* The originals and authenticated photocopies of all the letters of Father Luis are found in the Archive of the Vice-Postulator Father of his Cause of Beatification and Canonization (Godella -Valencia), folders A1 and A2.

¹ The original of this letter was written in Latin, as well as letters number 5, 19, 26, 28, 32, 74, 83 and 108. Luis Amigó brought the texts, also in Latin, cited in letters number 29 and 81.

² This father had been the teacher of Father Luis in Bayonne.

2. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS

Hano, 1 November 1880

1521 Most Reverend General Minister of the Capuchins.

Most Reverend Father: On this date the undersigned raise to Your Holiness the following plea:

“Holy Father: the undersigned Capuchin friars of Spain kneeling at the feet of your Holiness humbly beg of you, given the extremely serious state the foundations are going through on this Peninsula, and with Father Esteban of Adoain passed to a better life, that your Beatitude deign to appoint the Reverend Father Bernabé of Astorga as the General Commissioner, in whom all the best gifts of governing are recognized and in whose name and favor the decrees dated 11 January and 18 June of 1877 were issued by His Majesty the King, recognizing and approving the first foundations in this Kingdom³. For the greater honor and glory of God and the benefit of our souls, your most children await this concession and blessing of your Holiness”.

We believe it is a duty of conscience to bring up this plea, and confidently hope that Your Reverence will support this selection, in the security of the gifts which adorn our beloved Father Bernabé.

From the humble children of the Reverend Father:

BROTHER JOAQUÍN OF LLEVANERAS, Apostolic Commissioner
 BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL, Priest
 BROTHER FIDEL MARÍA OF ESPINOSA, Chorister
 BROTHER AGUSTÍN MARÍA OF ARÍNEZ ?, Chorister
 BROTHER MIGUEL MARÍA OF GORRITI, Lay Member
 BROTHER MANUEL OF SANTIAGO, Lay Member
 BROTHER FRANCISCO MARÍA OF PATERNA, Lay Member

3. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS

Massamagrell, 6 January 1884

1522 Most Reverend General Minister:

Beloved Father: Having received from the most Reverend Father Apostolic Commissioner the responsibility for overseeing and standardizing the Third Order congregations of Our Father St. Francis in the Valencia Region, appointing me (although unworthy) as Provincial Visitor⁴ to that end: and coming across several problems that are preventing me from carrying out my mission, I am approaching Your Reverend so that you may deign to show me how I should proceed; and

³ Cf. 38 above, note 24.

⁴ Cf. 60 above, note 38.

to consult, if necessary, the Sacred Congregation so that, with your reply, these questions would be defined and arguments avoided.

The problems I am facing are the following:

1523 First: Several congregations founded by friars of our Capuchin Order and governed by them for many years, have later come, by their own decision and without consultation, to separate from the jurisdiction of our Order and subordinate themselves to the Observant friars who, without counting on anyone, have taken charge of these Congregations. What should I do in this case?

Second: There are other congregations currently governed by the Observant friars, but not finding any book on them, it is impossible to be sure who founded them and therefore, whose jurisdiction they fall under, but, having found various facts and witnesses who declared they had been founded and governed by the Capuchins for a long time, the Brothers have approached us demanding and asking to be placed under our jurisdiction. What solution is there?

1524 Third: The majority of the Congregations are in this status; and even more, since some have been governed by Directors who one assumes, with enough foundation, were not delegated by the Capuchins or the Observers, how should the validity of the taking of the Habit and Professions verified up to the present day in these Congregations be considered?

1525 Fourth: In addition, after being driven from the cloisters, which is the starting point for all these confusions, since the monks did not take care of the Third Order, there has been a Provincial Minister who has authorized and appointed as Visitor of a certain Congregation the Parish Priest of the Church where the congregations is established, and those who followed him in that parochial position; this without paying attention to whether or not they were members of the Third Order. Is this legal? Can a person be a Leader of a Congregation, and therefore the one who awards habits and professions, who is not a Third Order member himself?

1526 This is, Reverend Father, the state of the Third Order in this Province, the old Kingdom of Valencia, due to the indifferences with which the friars driven from the cloisters have always looked at the Third Order; and these are the great obstacles or problems I am coming across at present for the increase and reform of the Third Order.

For this reason, then, and so that it does not hinder the great good that the Third Order is called to do here, if it is established according to the mind of Your Holiness, and for the rights of our Order to not be infringed upon, I approach Your Reverend so you may obtain from the Sacred Congregation the solution to the difficulties referred to above.

From the humble subject and impassioned child of the Most Reverend Father,

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Visitor of the Third Order

4. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 19 March 1885
 J.M.J. (Jesus, Mary, Joseph)

1527 Most Reverend General Minister.

Our beloved Father in Jesus Christ: It will only be right that the *Community of this Convent*, with the plausible reason of the Holy Papal decree of last 4 February⁵, lifts up to the paternal heart of Your Reverence this expression of our tender affection and unbreakable support.

It is true that the first few moments of such a pleasant surprised have gone by, the days that we celebrated that happy event have passed, but what will not quickly are the sweet emotions that flooded our heart: the memories are still present because the impression produced in our soul was so tender.

Those hearts which know how to feel, friars consumed by zeal for the glory of God, could not conceal the joy of that triumph, the greatness of this union in which the elderly witnessed the compensation for the offenses that lack of faith had spilled in the way of their life, and the young saw a new, safer and more beautiful horizon where they can direct their flight.

The significance within this union, the hidden secrets in this Apostolic Document, went unnoticed by the liberal government, and why not, if the Loving Heart of Jesus defended it?

1528 In this Decree, we see the Magna Carta of our rights because in our holy Religion, to obey is to rule; we have seen it as a glorious standard that the blessed hand of the Father-King raises inviting us to live, fight and die beneath the one and only discipline and dependence. This union is the destruction of the plans of liberalism, which only aspires on earth to destroy the empire of the Cross, and for many long years obliged us to endure a forced separation; and it is something more, most Reverend Father, it is like the return of the exiled people who, free from a miserable captivity, leaves from the modern Babylon which oppressed them to once again enter into their homeland and the house of their father.

This is our union that the Pope approves and blesses; this is the secret contained in the Papal Letters, so greatly desired, so greatly anticipated, and received with such great jubilation.

1529 To more solemnly mark this new happiness, some 80 monks met in the Convent as if by magic, and as if a single joy and single feeling was beating in all our hearts, it was a sight to see how we enjoyed ourselves and blessed our General Minister by praising the Lord who has so plentifully and abundantly spilled his heavenly blessings on the reborn Capuchin Order of Spain.

A sublime spectacle, beloved Father, a sublime and comforting spectacle, to observe so many and such fervent Capuchin friars in the beginning of our rebirth, so many and all of them so united and so enamored of the holy union which

⁵ Cf. 77 above.

has incorporated us into the universal Family, exactly fulfilling the words of the Prophet, *How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity*⁶.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus, to whom the glory of this triumph is owed, rewarding the efforts of our most Reverend General Minister!

The Sacred Heart of Jesus blesses our most Reverend Father Provincial Minister!

And may the sweet Divine Shepherd of souls take the Capuchine ewes under her care!

1530 There are no words that can duly enrich the Trinity for what was celebrated; it is enough to say that the Capuchin poverty exceeded itself, converting the altar into a heaven, to whose holy altars the children of the Divine Heart ran to renew their vows, promises and intentions in the presence of the heavenly sweet Spouse. Five thousand members of the Third Order, united to the Community, accompanied the Image and cheered Our Patriarch; and with the solemn Consecration to the Deified Heart of his new Patriarch, the religious portion of the festival concluded.

The celebration was just as great in the dining hall. The Decree and the portrait of Your Reverend were placed under a canopy at the head of the table. The three days were given over to reading and extraordinary dishes. Cordial and mutual greetings were exchanged between the provinces of Spain and Toulouse, whose honorable Superiors were present with us, and there was no shortage of enthusiastic exhortations to the prosperity of this union and for the entire Seraphic Capuchin Religion.

This is a summary of how much we enjoyed ourselves and, having the pleasure of informing our most Reverend General Minister, it is our intention to have him share our joy, and offer him all that we are, convinced that our union will always be true and one of his best credits for our eternal gratitude.

1531 Beloved father, receive the expression of our heart, while your humble and faithful children beg devotedly for your blessing.

Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Definitor and Guardian.

Brother Pedro of Usún, Provincial Definitor and Teacher of Novices.

Brother Antonio of Orihuela, Provincial Definitor

Priests

Brother Rafael of Bélgida.

Brother León María of Ubago.

Brother Carmelo of Aldaia.

Brother Blas of Ollería.

Brother Fermín of Velilla.

Brother Vicente of Benimantell.

Brother Leonardo María of Destriana.

Brother Bernardo María of Cieza.

Brother Francisco María of Orihuela.

Lay Brothers

Brother Félix of Cornudella.

Brother Francisco María of Paterna.

Brother Clemente Feliciano.

Brother Benito María of Coria.

⁶ Psalm 132:1.

Brother Antonio María of Antequera.
 Brother Luis of Pamplona.
 Brother Francisco of Lucena.

Brother Juan of Benissa.
 Brother Félix of Almoines.
 Brother Modesto of Zela.

Brother Luis of Massamagrell signed for two Brothers who do not know how to sign their names.

BROTHER JOAQUÍN OF LLEVANERAS.
 Capuchin Provincial Minister.

5. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Montehano, 26 March 1885
 Heart of Jesus!

1532 Most Reverend General Minister:

His Excellency and Reverend Dr. Mariano Rampolla, the Apostolic Nuncio in Madrid, received with great joy that the decree of union officially prescribed by the Reverend Father, would be celebrated very solemnly, granting to that end 100 days of indulgences for each act of the ceremony held on occasion of the union⁷.

Therefore, even though the proclamation was officially made in the Arenys de Mar convent, and the Triduum had been celebrated there, according to the orders of the most Reverend Father, nevertheless, since the same thing had to be done in other convents while the distinguished Nuncio had established that, so that the document of union would be proclaimed in accordance with the law, it had to first be received from the Holy See through the Nuncio, the decree of union and the letters of the most Reverend Father were solemnly proclaimed in our convent of Massamagrell on the 6th of this month, with many professed brothers and local superiors in attendance, some eighty (80) in number. To settle the agreement of obedience and unity in charity and brotherhood, the new Superiors of the Province of Toulouse, whose combining of French and Spanish friars could be called common historically, were insistently asked to deign to attend the formal ceremonies of the union. Thus there were as many as Frenchmen as Spaniards, or better said, the fortunate children of the very Reverend Father, and as many of the most recent arrivals as the oldest in his service, who celebrated the union of the Order in holy peace.

1533 I cannot in any way perfectly describe, most Reverend Father, all the displays of maximum enjoyment, extraordinary joy and total consolation we were able to contemplate through the solemn celebration of the union of the Order. Truly the entire brotherhood of Capuchins remained in something like a holy intoxication

⁷ Cf. 77 above.

of the heart during the festivities of unity. O what a truly happy day! Oh, what a holy festivity, in which the children, strictly speaking all but orphaned from the Father and Supreme Shepherd for almost eighty years, were finally freed from this captivity and could return to the paternal house and receive the sweet embrace of your Reverend Father!

1534 On the 8th, the last day of the festivities, the entire regions near the convent of Massamagrell celebrated the consecration of the Province of Spain to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, attending *en masse* and with great devotion. Even though the convent is located out in the open, countless numbers of people during the entire day visited the Sacred Sacrament exhibited for public veneration there and received the Holy Eucharist. All the Third Order friars of the area nearby by the convent happily praised the consecration of the Spanish Capuchins in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, as if it was something of their own, and the strictest unity of the Seraphic Order.

Due to the large attendance of faithful, the early evening ceremonies were held in part outside the church in the fresh air. There were three thousand (3000) Third Order friars there from the Order itself wearing their habits and eighty Capuchin Minors. Before the multitude, Father José Calasanz, my beloved brother, extolled the repeated mercies of the Sacred Heart of Jesus towards the Seraphic Capuchin Brotherhood. A solemn procession through the fields then took place, with the three thousand Third Order friars, congregated around the banners of their respective brotherhoods and singing countless hymns and canticles with incredible happiness and great devotion, were proclaiming the triumph of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the wholesome unity in the Lord. Eighty Capuchins preceded the image of our Seraphic Father St. Francis, with the Provincial Ministers of Spain and Toulouse leading the procession, completely united and in total charity under the shadow of our Seraphic Father. Finally, the procession now concluded, the Provincial Ministers of Spain and Toulouse with the Spanish Definitors knelt on the steps of the altar with lit candles, surrounded by a circle of Capuchins and Third Order friars, and performed the solemn consecration of the Province of Spain of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and sealed the eternal agreement with great solemnity before the most Holy Sacrament.

1535 The new Moderator of the Province of Toulouse, together with his second and fourth Definitors, took extraordinary pleasure in the festivities of the union attended by the entire Spanish brotherhood because they personally, being the closest to us geographically, were the first witnesses of our union with the entire Order and by means of my brother were like a unifying link or closest to the fact of the union of the Spaniards with all the provinces of the order. Precisely for this and other reasons, they were welcomed with unanimous applause. With them in the public dining hall, all of us, brothers in heart and in word, we chanted time and time again with the entire Order: "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell

in unity⁸, with such an outpouring of brotherly feeling that, for the abundance of enjoyment and pleasure, sweet tears flowed from the eyes of everyone; while the Minister of Toulouse embraced the Minister of Spain, the Provincial Minister and Spanish brothers were embracing their brothers from Toulouse; the great brotherhood of Capuchins of the Americas, France, Italy and Spain, after so many persecutions and dispersions, were newly united and eating the bread of love in the dining hall of Massamagrell. Adorned with flowers, the photograph of the most Reverend Father and the decree of union were similarly placed on top of flowers.

Most Reverend Father, this is the way the extremely happy pact of union was celebrated in the convent of St. Mary Magdalene of Massamagrell, where the union attempted for close to eighty years was held, under the protection of St. Louis, the bishop of Toulouse, whose body rests in the Basilica of Valencia, attended by the Superiors of his province of Toulouse, under the auspices of the sweet Patron Saint of the Spanish Capuchins, the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Good Shepherd.

Consequently, most beloved and venerated Father, for all these things I am grateful to give countless thanks to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary, and express my gratitude, in my own name and that of the Province, to the most Reverend Father and General Definers Council.

My pleasure and consolation are spilling over, beloved Father, because the concern shown by the most Reverend Father today was truly effective with your Spanish children. With the winter of filial indifference now passed, the storm is moving farther away and the cause that was stifling love is receding now, now the flowers are spouting in our land, now we have returned to the old times that were so fortunate for our Order.

1536 The encyclical letter of the most Reverend Father, *De Unione Hispanorum*, which we read in the *Analecta*, is like a summary of the mercies of God in favor of the Capuchins of Spain. Consequently, allow me, allow me I beg you, to give the most Reverend Father the most devoted thanks in my name and that of the Province for such a monumental work of charity and paternal affection, because it will be one of the main and most glorious documents for our Spanish Capuchin Brotherhood. I am not worthy of the responsibilities that, despite my insignificance, your Reverence has deigned to assign to me. I did what I had to do, useless servant that I am. On the contrary, I cannot accept with an indifferent heart the honors that Your Reverence brings to the memory of all the Brothers of the Brotherhood of the Spanish Capuchins, since the honor of Spain is the glory and honoring of my spiritual mother, that is the Seraphic Capuchin Order. Therefore, most reverend Father, while I humbly make clear my gratitude and that of the Province to the most Reverend Father and the most Reverend General Defining Council, humbly kneeling at the feet of Your Reverend and the General Defining Council with all my heart, all my mind, all my soul and all my strengths, conclude:

⁸ Psalm 132:1.

“Most Reverend Father Ministers and General Definitors, I, the Provincial Minister of the province of the Sacred Heart of Spain, together with my Definitors, kiss your hands, beg for your blessings, we give the most devoted thanks for the union, and we promise and declare in the presence of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary Mother of the Good Shepherd, and our Seraphic Father St. Francis, that we shall always live in true unity in all-encompassing submission, united to You and your Successors, not hesitating to expose life and soul thousands upon thousands of times before losing the most precious pearl of unity. And we will always be strong and tightly united around the one and only Successor of our Seraphic Father St. Francis, for the greater benefit of our souls and the entire Order. Amen”.

The humbly devout and obedient servants and children of the most Reverend Father.

FATHER JOAQUÍN OF LLEVANERAS.
Provincial Minister of Spain

Brother Javier of Arenys de Mar, Provincial Definitor
Brother Pedro of Usún, Provincial Definitor
Brother Antonio of Orihuela, Provincial Definitor
Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Definitor

6. TO FATHER JOSÉ OF CALASANZ,
ORDER OF FRIARS MINOR CAPUCHIN
Massamagrell, 16 April 1885
J.M.J.F. (Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Family)

1537 Most Reverend Father José of Calasanz.

My dear friend: The matter of the Capuchine Third Order nuns of Benaguasil is going well; the Constitutions I wrote for them are in the hands of the Prelate for his approval, and it is expected that within a short time they will be dealt with favorably.

I have some doubts regarding this issue and I wish that you might clear them up for me by answering the following questions for me:

1538 1. If we can take responsibility for the direction of the Congregation as Visitors, since the Diocesan Prelate was kind enough to give us this responsibility.

Answer, *Affirmative*⁹.

2. If the taking of the habit and professing by these Sister nuns requires authorization by the Order or if the authorization of the Ordinary Priest is enough.

⁹ Father José Calasanz of Llevaneras gives his answer on the same paper that Father Luis Amigó asks his question. We believed it was advisable to include the answers in the text of the letter itself.

Answer, the authorization of the Ordinary Priest is enough. More so they can earn more graces, the best thing is that Your Charities make them *successive* Third Order lay nuns before or after they take the habit.

3. As we can assume with some foundation the lack of authorization of Father Lorenzo of Molina, who presided over the taking of the habit by the current Sisters, would we be able to do a new taking of the habit in secret and proceed immediately to the profession of vows, in view of the long time the sisters have had this status and the notice or scandal that could follow from it?

Answer, To be safer, it is enough that during a festival to have them renew their profession and the Venerable Father at the same time, before intending to bless what they are lacking, and then renew their profession of vows in the same *secret ceremony*.

4. As the professed Third Order nuns are the ones who are attempting to enter in the Congregation, must they go through the full year of the novitiate or will they be forgiven some time, especially at the beginning where there is such a lack of personnel?

Answer, As long as it is Your Charity or another appointed Visitor of these Sisters, they can forgive as much time as advisable.

5. If any of the present Sisters, after meeting in the convent, would have taken the habit without any ceremony but is a secular Third Order nun, could the time they spent wearing the habit count towards the profession?¹⁰

Answer, *Ut in aliis responsionibus*.

None of these questions are pointless, Most Reverend Father, and I hope that you answer each of them as quickly as possible.

Things are going well, thanks be to God.

1539 Has the Venerable Father forgotten the assignments he made in the declaration of St. Ferdinand and St. Isabel of Portugal as Co-patrons of this Province, and the authority for the Third Order friars to receive communion on Christmas night?

Everything continues on its course.

Venerable Father, I respectfully kiss the hand of our most Reverend General Minister, and the least of your brothers and servants remains at your disposal.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Definitor and Guardian.

1540 My answers are *very certain*.

Regarding members of religious orders with simple vows, do not have scruples about the formalities under canon law, since there is nothing or almost nothing that would invalidate them.

¹⁰ The clearly shows that the first vocations came from the Third Order, a point which Father Luis Amigó confirms himself (cf. 68 above)

Keep your spirit up and press onward. God shall bless your efforts. May everyone persevere in doing good together and everything will get better every day.

A thousand regards to my beloved most Reverend Teacher Father. Tell him that the vestiture and novitiate of Father Sigismund are valid, but not for him to profess without having testimonials and if they delay in giving them to him, let us know. In any case, it is not necessary to prolong the profession, once he has the testimonials.

Yours truly, in Jesus and Mary.

J. CALASANZ

7. TO JAIME FERRÁN
Massamagrell, 7 July 1885

1541 Mr. Jaime Ferrán¹¹.

Dear Sir, and someone I consider a very distinguished gentleman: I have seen with great satisfaction the positive results of the anti-cholera vaccine that you discovered for the good of humanity, and therefore I can do nothing but congratulate you with all my soul, knowing as well that the charitable sentiments that inspire you has prompted you to generously offer to vaccinate patients in the asylums and relief shelters. I do not hesitate in knocking on the door of your generous heart to beg you to extend to this Community the noble offering that honors you so greatly.

1542 We are some 60 poor Capuchin friars who live from alms, as our Father St. Francis did¹², and cannot offer you anything other than our sincere gratitude and whatever our poor prayers are worth before God. The epidemic has ravaged parts of this Convent and our indispensable and frequent contact with infected towns puts us in constant danger. I am convinced, then, that you shall take into account our situation and will deign to vaccinate us, either yourself personally or by a person of your confidence, albeit that to do so will mean coming personally to this house, because we find ourselves in a quarantined area¹³ on the one hand, and the prospect of moving such a numerous Community made up of friars of all ages to another location presents serious difficulties. The inconvenience is still great, and also our request, but much can be done through the love of God and his illustrious benefactors always do so much in favor of humanity.

For this reason, I have the honor of offering to you my humble respects and esteem, your Servant who kisses your hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Definitor

¹¹ Dr. Jaime Ferrán is considered the discoverer of the anti-cholera vaccine.

¹² Cf. LP 15, *St. Francis of Assisi* (BAC, Madrid, 1978), p. 609.

¹³ Cf. 81 above.

8. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 11 January 1889

1543 Most Reverend General Minister: The undersigned Provincial Definitor and Guardian of the Convent of Capuchin Friar Minors of St. Mary Magdalene, in the Region of Valencia, most humbly expresses to the Most Reverend General Minister:

Several young people of this Province, inspired by a great zeal and charity towards their fellow man, wish to join together and form a religious Congregation of simple vows. With the profession of the Rule of the Third Order written by Leo X, and Constitutions adapted to the purposes of the Institution, they would dedicate themselves to the teaching of sciences, arts and trades; the government and direction of jails and prisons, and the assistance of the ill, especially at home.

To this end, they have the consent and approval of the Prelate of the Diocese, and the protection of the Board of Prisons of this City, which greatly applauds the idea.

Therefore the undersigned beg for Your Reverence to deign to bless this work, and grant general and broad authority so that all the Postulants of this Congregation can legitimately be sworn to wear the Habit of the Third Order, by their own authority or through delegation, who may at any time carry out this service in the Institute.

This grace I hope to obtain from the devout heart of Your Reverence, and may God preserve your life for many years for the good of our Order¹⁴.

Most Reverend Father.
 Massamagrell on 11 January 1889

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
 Provincial Definitor and Guardian.

Most Reverend General Minister
 ANSWER

Rome, 31 January 1889.

1544 We grant what you ask for in the present request, except for the right under canon law with regard to the decrees of the Holy See, principally the one which prohibits the Regular Third Order members from having a habit the same as those of the Capuchins. We bless the new Congregation in the name of Our Father St. Francis, asking the Holy Patriarch to receive it as his own, and we inform its members that they are taking part in the merits of our Holy Capuchin Religion.

BROTHER BERNARD OF ANDERMATT.
 General Minister.

¹⁴ Cf. 104, note 75 above.

9. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS

Orihuela, 9 January 1890

Jesus, Mary, Joseph and Francis (J.M.J. y F.)

1545 Most Reverend General Minister.

My venerated and beloved Father: On the 5th of January, we arrived at this Convent of Orihuela, finding there the majority of the friars and especially the Students had been attacked by the prevalent illness, of which, thanks to God, most of them are now free.

The mere consideration of the seriousness of the position of Lector that Your Reverend has entrusted to me, my ineptitude and inability for carrying it out, as I never went beyond being an average student, has me daunted and confused, and I would certainly have resigned it¹⁵ if I did not fear upsetting your Most Reverend. If perhaps your Most Reverend has formed another impression of me, I believe it my duty to express to you that I am one of the most useless and inadequate people you could have chosen for this position, since I scarcely know enough to be able to carry out my Priestly Ministry. Having stated that, I declare that I fully accept whatever your Most Reverend intends.

1546 As for the proposal I made to your Most Reverend to become the head of the Third Order Friars until there would be enough Professed brothers of perpetual vows to be able to elect a General Superior, a proposal that your Most Reverend did not seem to discount since you said to me that it seemed better to you than having Father Luis of León as the head of the Third Order Friars, since he was so young and that we would talk about this matter again when you went to Arenys. I am of the opinion that not only is it advisable but rather almost necessary to instill in this Institute the spirit that must inspire it, in order to fulfill the ends of its institution and also to prevent it from losing the purely Capuchin character of its foundation, through the introduction of others into its system and government¹⁶; or the Authorities may become upset with those who have made this Institute so pleasant, and how interested they are in it; or perhaps the discouragement of the friars if they are left unprotected may make an institution which can do so much good for souls disappear.

1547 I am also advising your Most Reverend that a provincial Representative came to see me the other day and told me that the Authorities of Valencia were very sorry about my separation, for the damage that it would produce in the Third Order Congregation to whom I promised so much, that they were thinking of addressing a

¹⁵ The scarcity of educational personnel (cf. 1550-1552) led to the designation of Father to the position of Lector, since the Capuchin province of Spain, founded just four years before, had just divided itself into three provinces, and the province of Toledo received the most inexperienced educators. These statements should not come as a surprise, then, or the resignation of the position of Lector, not only by the Servant of God, but also of his immediate successors. (*Minutes of the Provincial Defining Council of the Capuchin Province of Toledo, 1890-1893* in the Provincial Curia Archive of the PP. Capuchins of Andalusia).

¹⁶ Future events will bear out this premonition (Cf. 127-129, 155-156 above; 1732).

plea to Your Reverend and to His Holiness to grant that I would be the head of the Congregation until it was capable of standing on its own feet. I suppose they will not do that but, if they do, I want Your Reverend to know this first from me before anyone else.

With all these assumptions, I declare that I do not wish nor hope for anything other than to do the will of God in and for everything, which I state by means of the Most Reverend Father.

I am the humble and obedient child of the most Reverend Father.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Capuchin Minor (m.c.)

10. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Orihuela, 18 May 1890

1548 Most Reverend Father: With the better part of a year having now passed since the foundation of the Institute of the Capuchin Third Order Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows, and with several of them making their profession this coming June¹⁷, the writer of this letter, taking into account of that for the good order and system of the Congregation as they could enter into normal status from then on, appointing the Superiors in accordance with the conditions demanded in the Constitutions; and similarly so that the young friars who have finished their studies and can receive their Sacred Orders, it would be very advisable if you would authorize them so that may take their perpetual vows. I approach the Most Reverend Father requesting this grace, if possible, for all those who have taken the Holy Habit during the first year of the foundation and in the judgment of their superiors are worthy of wearing it.

1549 Similarly, if Your Reverence would grant general and broad authority to found and govern Congregations of the lay Third Order; but nevertheless subject to the jurisdiction and visit of the Prelates of the First Order.

This grace that the writer of this letter does not doubt in attaining from the kind, paternal heart of the Most Reverend Father and your recognized zeal for everything that looks to the greater glory and splendor of our Order, whose governance the Lord has granted you.

May God preserve your life for many years for the good of our Capuchin Order.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Definitor.

¹⁷ Cf. 132 above.

11. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Orihuela, 10 June 1890

1550 Most Reverend General Minister.

The undersigned Provincial Ministers and definitors of this Province of Toledo have read with pleasure the letter of the Most Reverend Father in reference to the Missions in Colombia, and we fully share in the same sentiments that inspire the Most Reverend Father, that our Capuchine Order should extend into the Americas and those people peoples know and love the Sacred Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ and his Holy Religion. Desiring to fulfill the will of God in everything and not to contradict the Most Reverend Father in anything, but only after meditating at length and discussing it collectively in order not to burden our consciences, we have decided to put forward the following points for the consideration of the Most Reverend Father, so that he may accurately judge and resolve them by whatever the noble and superior criteria he believes most glorious to God, and most beneficial to the souls.

1551 1. The number of priests in the Province is very small and insufficient for attending to the current needs of the Province, as there are no more than four to six priests in each Convent. Of these, two thirds are employed exclusively in celebrating the Holy Sacrifice of the mass and assist with the choir, because they cannot dedicate themselves to anything else, some for being very advanced in age and others by not being suitable for anything more.

2. As a result of this shortage, our Capuchin Religion is losing the prestige and rising progress it enjoyed in Spain in other periods, and making us odious to the Bishops because they ask us for Missionaries and we cannot grant any to them; to the Parish Priests, because they want us to help undertake their ministry to save the souls entrusted to them and we cannot serve them; and the towns, because they do not know the friars except when they go to beg for alms. That is making our system of life unsustainable, because the alms in kind are growing scarcer, there no alms from the indifferent, the alms from the Masses do not even cover the needs of each Community, and in many cases, forced a formal request for money so the friars would not perish. By using this measure, the Convents with a few exceptions, are burdened with debts that are very difficult to pay off afterwards.

3. Those who are gifted in some way are undertaking the various positions of the Province in their respective Convent and the others, if in Spain they are not doing anything more than that in Spain, it seems to us they will be more of a burden in the Missions than a relief to the Missionaries.

4. Among the useful priests, we doubt that any have a vocation of going to the Missions, with the exception of Father Eugenio of Carcaixent, who some time ago requested this grace and it seems that he still persists in that wish. We consider that sending Missionaries without any vocation to those faraway regions are likely to

produce bad results. There are some Brothers who express their willingness to take part in the Missions and enjoy robust health.

5. There is no reason to except an increase in the number of priests in three of four years, because the students are not over nineteen and twenty years old, and those are not the four for whom the Most Reverend Father has granted superior permission. Of them, two have to take the Theology course and the other two will not be able to dedicate themselves to preaching because they are delicate.

1552 Most Reverend Father, it seemed necessary to explain this in good conscience to the Most Reverend Father, with the aim that in a matter of such importance he may act by making a wise decision, and we are resolved to fulfill whatever the Most Reverend Father indicates.

We pray to the Lord to preserve for many years the precious life the Most Reverend Father, and we humbly kneel to ask your paternal benediction.

Brother Fermín of Velilla, Provincial Minister.

Brother Luis of Massamagrell, 1st Definitor

Brother Salvador María of Paradas, 2nd Definitor

Brother Francisco María of Benamejí, 3rd Definitor

Brother Francisco María of Orihuela.

12. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Orihuela, 28 November 1891

1553 Most Reverend General Minister.

Most Reverend Father: Never would I decide to disturb your paternal attention if I did not have some very strong reasons for doing so which, in good conscience, I believe I must explain to you.

The existing Community in this convent is made up of close to 90 people, including the Seraphic school which accounts for 45 of them, and this is without counting the additional Fathers and family members we constantly have here. Until now, the alms that were collected this summer have been a little bit short and that was felt by the chronically ill and those who were less mortified; but we have reached a point where it is absolutely impossible for me to carry on in the form the Provincial Father is urging me; because he, despite taking 30 coins for each child and collecting good alms, which is something I know, as last year he brought in ten thousand *reales* and I can prove that; in addition, having two free masses, he has absolutely denied me financing of the indispensable expenses of this Community: I went to the Vicar Father to see if it was possible to get something out of him this way, and he denied me anything at all, and this way it is impossible to continue on this path, because the expenses of the Community, despite tightening the cord with the intention of seeing the flesh changes color and the Community continuously complaining to me, are six time greater than the earnings.

1554 The Community, to take the standard average (in agreement with the Seraphics) needs between three to four thousand *reales* monthly, and today we can count on income of 800 *reales* a month and fall far short. I cannot save this deficit, not even not going out for Lent, as I have done up to this point and shall also do this year, God willing and I cannot do anything more than express to the Most Reverend Father the conflict found here, because the Students are bad towards the Seraphics and the Seraphics are bad with the Students and Lay Brothers; there is an insult to God all the time, whispering about everything and it is necessary to cut that off.

I am ready to send all the administrative materials of the convent, or the cheating I am subject to, which will not go below one hundred coins today, not counting having to bring two pieces of coarse woolen material for tunics he bought here and now does not want, and another one for habits, which will amount to another thousand reales of debt for me. This is what occurs to me now to tell to the Most Reverend Father. On another day, I will write in good conscience about more noteworthy things.

I will be very pleased to find that Your Reverence is well and knows that he is praised in the poor prayers of the lowest of all his subjects.

NN. GUARDIAN¹⁸.

I accept and agree with what is stated by the Guardian Father, without prejudice of writing more extensively on my own behalf to the Most Reverend.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Vicar

13. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Orihuela, 2 March 1892
Jesus, Mary, Joseph and Francis (J.M.J. y Fco.)

1555 Most Reverend General Minister.

Beloved Father: I have never liked to disturb the attention of the General Superiors, continuously busy as they are in a thousand matters of the utmost importance and even less when the matters I would inform them of are disagreeable. For this reason, I have always kept a profound silence, even in my own matters, resigning myself to endure and suffer and certainly more than a little before I come to the Superiors with complaints.

Today, however, seeing the turn that things are taking in this Convent, and fearing disturbances, I come to the Most Reverend Father compelled by necessity,

¹⁸ Although this letter was personally signed by the Guardian Father, we omitted his name—which we shall do with some others – for reasons of discretion and prudence.

and concerning something that now it is now impossible for me to calm the agitated spirits of the friars with the policy of reconciliation, which I have had to make much use since I began leading this Convent, to declare to him what the situation is and the causes of this agitation so that your Most Reverend, with your acknowledged sound judgment, may provide what he considers most opportune in the Lord.

1556 The economic situation of this House is becomes increasingly troubled, as the result of the large number of people there and the shortage of resources which, with the reduction in the number of priests and the general poverty in the towns, increases every day. This is the reason why the Guardian Father, who does not want to contract debts which would be difficult to pay off, decided some time ago, after having spoken with the Provincial Minister about the meals during the Lents of abstinence and other economies beforehand, to reduce the meat apart from them to six pounds for the midday meal and dinner. This is what we were practicing when the most Reverend Father Calasanz held the position; because even though the Guardian Father was not living in the House, he had forbidden me from increasing the amount of meat, so the only thing I could do and did to improve the sad condition of the food was arrange that they serve the six pounds of meat in the midday meal, and eggs and salt cod for dinner. Father Calasanz arranged then to give the Community enough meat and gave permission, if necessary, to ask for alms in money always provided any time there was need and this one was very legitimate. Of course, one thing led to another and the alms yielded very little; and for that little bit the poor Brothers had to suffer a great deal and gave the people some reason for admiration, which convinced me that it is not advisable nor should we use this means in Spain.

1557 The Guardian returned and continued Father Calasanz had indicated there were still some resources, but from the time they were exhausted and the Community began to go into debt, he again arranged to reduce the daily meat to five kilos, which is the ration today. This measure is certainly damaging to the Community, physically and morally considered, because not all of us have equal strengths or spirits; and from this the weak and sickly are resentful and everyone in general complains and whispers.

1558 But if one weighs and studies the issue, the Guardian is not to blame in this, in my judgment, although he is not exempt from blame either, when the Provincial Minister, who crowded so many people together here, contrary the provisions of the Apostolic Decrees and the clear intention of the Seraphic Father, also retains the entire income of the school and others such as, for example, the six thousand *reales* a Father driven from the cloisters bequeathed us the year before.

This would not be brought up, nor would anyone notice it, when one knows the Provincial Minister had many expenses or was helping the Convents and there were no needs here; but as no one believes the first and does not feel the second and knows the Guardian of the House has no resources and the Provincial Minister is not helping him; from this rises the general disagreement of the friars and the complaints. And the worst is they ordinarily come to me, and as I, due to

my position, understand but I cannot nor should I do anything; and suffer the unspeakable for it.

1559 Seeing then, the state of our House and knowing from those who come from the Convents in Baetica (Andalusia) about the disturbances and waste of food there, I can only admired the wise inclination of the most Reverend Father about the uniformity that should be secured in all the Convents regarding food. But it is not being secured; as with so many other things of greater significance that demand an effective and quick solution under penalty of losing what little prestige is left to us, especially in Andalusia where in another period our Order flourished, after the deplorable scenes that are continuously depicted there.

1560 Given now to write, I would have wanted to say a great deal to your Most Reverend so that you would know well our sad situation; but, as with many things it is not advisable to entrust them to the Postal Service, I did not do so, and prefer to let them pass in silence. What I am saying to your Most Reverend is that I cannot understand how a Superior can show be so indifferent and impassive to the saddest and most unpleasant situations; and to say, as this Provincial Father has heard from me more than once, that all he wants is to pass his three-year term as best he can, and whoever comes after him can arrange things. A maxim with which, in my opinion, the only thing one achieves is to do irreparable evil.

I repeat that I am sorry to disturb your Most Reverend, and even more for giving you unpleasant news, but you already know that I have no one else that I can come to, except to the Venerable Father as a father.

With no further comments, the least of your subjects reverently kisses your hand and kneels to receive the blessing of the Most Reverend Father.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
1st Provincial Definitor.

14. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Orihuela, 20 March 1892

1561 Most Reverend General Minister.

Most Reverend Father: With great emotion, I am picking up the pen to make known to you some of the many faults which unfortunately are apparent in this Province of Toledo. Your Most Reverend should not be surprised this letter does not come through the prescribed formal channels because I have to warn you that I am very tired of having to state these and other shortcomings to the Provincial Father, which are very essential as I see it, and it still remains to be seen if they are reprimanded as they should be. This is the reason why I am addressing your Most Reverend.

1562. The shortcoming that I am informing the Most Reverend Father of are those of the choir member Brother NN., and involve the following:

1. Not attending any morning act of the Community for most of the year, primarily the prayer and not even mass on many days, without any good reason to excuse him; I have consulted two doctors, both of whom have talked with him and know him perfectly, and they both tell me that not only is it not detrimental to rise at that hour, but in fact is very favorable to your health; I have passed this information along to him several times and despite one of the choir members calling him every morning, he spends most mornings of the year sleeping in his bed; I have tried all prudent means and always have done and am doing your holy will. Many days he does not hear mass, not infrequently he does not receive communion on the indicated days, and many of the days that he does receive communion, he lacks that preparation appropriate for a member of a religious order.

2. He is very fond of speaking with women, which is the reason why I had to remove him from teaching the Catechism; but that has not stopped him from doing so any moment he can and in the church itself. I can certify this legally myself and so can the sacristan and others. I have reprimanded several times for this fault and despite that, he has not stopped. Yesterday the person responsible for the vestry complained to me of having seen him in the door of the church, undoubtedly for that reason, because he went away from the Convent secretly.

3. To top it all off, today I ordered him to do the wash with his companions and he told me categorically twice that there was no way he was going to do it, and did exactly as he told me; the truth is that this is his attitude quite frequently and in the time he has been under my jurisdiction, he has always done whatever he wanted, but never displayed the cynicism towards me he did yesterday. And not only towards me, since afterwards he went to the wash room and insulted the person in charge, who came to alert me that he did not want to do the wash with them, and even threatened him.

1563 I have stated these shortcomings many times to the Provincial Father, so he might take the necessary action, and we are still waiting in vain for him to do so once, not with this friar or with others. He has adopted the system of not opening his mouth about anything, and I believe he will complete his three-year term the same way. And how strange is it, Most Reverend Father, that our Order has arrived at such sad and deplorable ends? The person who I speak of came to the Convent with two other choir members without having wanted to take the profession because they were not worthy of it, yet after two or three months of being here and continuing their same behavior, the Provincial Father gave them the solemn profession and this without the opinion of the Guardian and Community, and without the opinion of anyone and knowing of the behavior of the choir member mentioned before, he also gave him the profession of the Sacred Order. It is a widespread saying in this community that the day he is made a Priest, he will be the scourge of the Prelate and Community wherever he may go.

It seems to me, most Reverend Father, that I have a duty of conscience to declare these events to you, which could cause the Order a great deal of trouble. I do not want to bother you any further, because if I had to make the most Reverend

Father aware of how much has gone on and is going on in this unfortunate Province, this letter would be never-ending.

May God preserve the life of the Most Reverend Father for many years to govern and rule this Capuchin Order.

NN. Guardian.

I confirm what the Guardian Father has declared as Definitor and Vicar.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.

Called as an advisor for this case, I declare what is stated in the preceding account to be true.

BROTHER FIDEL OF ALZIRA
Missionary

15. TO FATHER JOSÉ OF CALASANZ, OFM. CAP. (CAPUCHIN ORDER)
Ollería, 28 August 1894

1564 Most Reverend Father José Calasanz, General Visitor

Beloved Father: In answer to the different points you ask me about in your circular letter, dated 22 August, I must reply to Your Reverence:

First, some time ago, or at least since the Fathers NN. and NN. were transferred to this Community, this House has not enjoyed a single hour of calmness and peace; because acting as one and with Father NN. joining forces with them, they have formed a triumvirate which has caused major disruptions and inconveniences inside and outside the Convent. The spirit of these friars is they consider themselves to be vigilant observers of the rule, do not see anything other than faults in others, and always walk around whispering about them whether they are subordinates or Superiors; and even more so about the latter, not only within the Convent but also with the lay brothers themselves.

This will be proved by the letter they wrote to the Provincial Father, making a thousand foolish remarks about the Superiors, and gave this document to the lay brothers so they could copy it and, authorized by their signatures, send it to the Provincial Father. The draft was read by some people, including the new Parish Priest of the town, who does not want to have anything to do with any friar even in a painting, and he has taken it as his reason to speak whatever he wanted and felt like, saying that there is no friar holier than Father NN. in the Convent and the rest are lax in their observance and practices. Those Fathers have taken common cause with this priest, and only to ally themselves with the enemies of his Order, and give

them weapons to defend themselves against their Superior they will prove to the Most Reverend Father the love, zeal and interest they would have for him.

1565 In view of their communication with some lay brothers that was detrimental to the Order, I was required, after much suffering and various complaints from the same outraged lay brothers with the guilty conscience they were showing me about what they had heard, to impose on them a formal precept of abstaining from conversation with the lay brothers, and from the three walking together, as they had always done until now. They not only have not complied with that rule, but disregarded it and openly displayed that defiance to the lay brothers, in order to estrange them from the Superiors.

The Provincial Vicar Father was well informed about all of this, from what they had said about him, and what he was able to see for himself. For all those reasons, you will understand the advisability of removing these two fathers from the school, where they were responsible for the first and second year courses of Latin, and in addition were performing that duty very badly, as it is very much the case that beginning the case is what is now being carried out. We have nothing to do with the rest of the province, thank God, because we are also not maintaining correspondence with anyone.

1566 Secondly, the schedule your Most Reverend indicated in a letter some time ago continues in practice and we practice everything that is possible in a House destined as a Seraphic School like this one.

Thirdly, outside of what has already been described, I do not have to complain about, thanks to God, any disobedient or insubordinate acts with respect to the other friars.

Finally, I can assure that to my knowledge, no one from here has written to the expelled friars, nor have they addressed us for anything.

For this reason, I gave thanks to the Most Reverend Father for sending the life of Blessed Diego, that he has deigned to send us, which I like a lot and read in the dining hall.

I would like to do the month of souls here, with some ceremony, and for that I would like if you would obtain permission for me to celebrate a sung Requiem mass, except for the classical ones during the month.

Without further comments, dispose as you wish of the least of your subjects, who truly love you.

Brother SERAFÍN OF BENISSA.
Vicar.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Definitor and Guardian.

16. TO FATHER JOSÉ OF CALASANZ, OFM. CAP.
Ollería, 24 December 1894

1567 Most Reverend Father José Calasanz, General Visitor

Beloved Father: To mark the present Christmas holy days, I am writing you to the Venerable Father to congratulate you and express to you my wish that you enjoy them in happiness and the Lord fills you with blessings and grants you more health, if he wills it, to continue working in his glory.

I am sorry that the Venerable Father has retired; but I hope that, nonetheless, that we Spanish Capuchins will always find themselves with the very strong support of the Venerable Father, and a loving father whom we can approach in our moments of doubt, since he has a great heart and will know how to forget the miseries of those who were his children. I, for one, am taking the liberty of begging you take on this work for me, when in my doubts and business of the positions that you entrusted to me the obedience to the Venerable Father in whom I have absolute confidence.

I know from the Most Reverend General Minister that you have been very seriously ill in Madrid but that you are feeling better, thanks to God. May the Lord return you good health as soon as possible so that you may continue your Apostolic Visits!

Without further comments, may the Venerable Father dispose as you wish of the least of your brothers, who kisses your hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.

17. TO THE BISHOP OF ORIHUELA
Ollería, 6 November 1897

1568 Your Excellency and Illustrious Grace:

The undersigned Provincial Definitor and Guardian of the convent of Capuchin friars of Ollería, in the diocese of Valencia, with all due respect and obedience to your Most Eminent Grace.

Stated: Commissioned by your superior, in union with another Father, to secure a new foundation of our Order in this region of Valencia, and knowing that in Monforte¹⁹, a town in that diocese, there existed a convent of Alcantarine friars which could serve that purpose; having on the other hand news that the town had wished for along time for the establishment of a Religious Community in it, we appeared there in order to make certain it possessed the necessary conditions and explore the wishes of the inhabitants. Having confirmed that, although ruined to a certain degree, it could very well be used, and both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities were equally enthused in their desire for the foundation, I approach your Most Eminent Grace begging that you deign to grant the corresponding permission and authorization to proceed to the installation of the foundation.

¹⁹ This refers to Monforte del Cid-Orito (Alicante).

The grace that awaits you is deserved for the pastoral zeal which inspires your Most Eminent Grace, and may God preserve your life for many years.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.

18. TO THE PARISH PRIEST OF MONFORTE
Ollería, 7 November 1897

1569 Reverend Parish Priest of the town of Monforte.

The undersigned Provincial Definitior and Guardian of the convent of Capuchin friars of Ollería sincerely states: In fulfillment of a superior order, and to promote the glory of God and the expansion of our Order, I am thinking to establish a community of Capuchin friars there in the historic convent found in that town. In fact, having done the appropriate procedures, seeing that the convent meets the conditions our Order, and the inhabitants would enthusiastically welcome the establishment of the a religious community in the town; and finding that the owners of the building are favorably inclined and ready to transfer it, I do not hesitate in coming to you, who displays so much zeal and interest for the good of the parishioners, asking for your consent and approval to carry out this work, which has to be so pleasing to God and so useful and beneficial for the faithful the Lord has entrusted to you.

The grace that awaits you is deserved for your kind heart and pastoral zeal, and may God preserve your life for many years.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Definitior and Guardian.

19. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Ollería, 11 January 1898

1570 Most Reverend General Minister.

Most Reverend Father: Having received from the Most Reverend Provincial Minister and Definitors the mandate to achieve a new convent precisely in this region of Valencia – a mandate that could equally have been given to the Brothers of our convent in Baetica (Andalusia), who just recently founded in the city of Granada – but you have entrusted to us the responsibility that we work tirelessly and with all our determination so that this foundation be completed as soon as possible. May the Lord bless the wishes of our Defining Council and our effort. And in truth, a few

months after we received this assignment, the opportunity arose for us to acquire the existing convent in Monforte del Cid, a town in Alicante province.

In that convent founded by St. Peter of Alcántara, St. Paschal Baylon wore the Franciscan habit and did his novitiate and, his solemn profession issued, he truly lived in an edifying way for decades.

But one part of the convent, and a substantial amount of the countryside surrounding it, was sold by the Government and passed to private ownership and must be recovered through civil purchases, the same as with several other annexes to the convent in another period.

Therefore, Most Reverend Father, to avoid any inconveniences that could perhaps arise, we beg to your Most Reverend to grant us the authority so that all the public documents for the purchase can be signed, with authority delegated, in the secular names and surnames of three or four brothers, taking into account the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Most Eminent and Reverend Bishops and Regular Clergy of 7 May 1883 regarding those matters.

To the Most Reverend Father, from your very obedient children in the Lord.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Definitior and Guardian.

BROTHER JOSÉ OF MONÓVAR.
General Custodian.

20. TO FATHER JOSÉ OF CALASANZ, OFM. CAP.
Barcelona, 24 January 1898

1571 OBSERVATIONS STATED BY THE FRIARS LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL AND JOSÉ OF MONÓVAR:

1. They consider the division of the current Province of Toledo into two different ones, establishing one in the region of Valencia, and the other in Andalusia to be necessary in every respect. This is based on different natures that make the peace and unity of the friars impossible; this can be observed even in the elementary schools, despite the urgings of the spiritual Leaders and lectors²⁰.

2. The scant interest the Provincial Father acknowledges having concerning the Valencia part of the Province, taking personnel from there and leaving the houses in the Valencia region short of the personnel who were assigned to them by the Defining Council.

3. To destine all the personnel from Valencia for the missions, without having the tact to send even one friar from Andalusia, or at least so it seems; we noted that

²⁰ Cf. 143, note 97 above; 1580, 1584, 1586, 1589 and 1613.

one friar, on leaving for the Mission, said publicly and wrote the Provincial Father that he was sending him there as revenge for certain complaints he made about him when he was his Lector.

4. Despite the fact all the natives of Valencia were offering so many good services in Andalusia, we note that some Andalusia-born friars never missed an opportunity to belittle and discredit the friars from Valencia and their homeland. As a result, all of them who are based in Andalusia have been desiring this division very intensely for some time.

1572 5. We can assure you it has not been the Valencia friars who have prompted this antagonism; proof of that is that, despite being the majority in the chapter, *pro bono pacis* (for the love of peace) they gave the vote to a friar from Andalusia; one more item to note about this division and antagonism since the current Provincial Minister was selected, is that this was never noticed during the period when Father Monóvar was Vicar or the term of the most Reverend Father Joaquín as Provincial Minister. Therefore it is not reckless to declare that it is the Andalusian friars who gave rise to and promoted this division with their prejudices, criticisms, rumors, etc. And to such an extent that, even as the Provincial Father had urged the friars towards unity on a certain occasion, in the following re-creation he himself was the one who began to slander the Valencia friars, and prompting one of them to call attention to not being satisfied with what they had been given to do until then.

6. We believe that this division can be made very well by assigning to Andalusia those friars who are not from either one of those provinces, if they do not have an aversion to going there.

7. We would appreciate and consider it very advisable that if this division is made, it is set up in the same form it was before; that is, by Regions, adding to Valencia the province of Castellón which belonged to it before and at the same time return the title to the Province of the Blood of Christ, which was given to it by the Blessed Patriarch, Juan of Ribera.

1573. 8. We understand the need for a Seraphic School, and everyone also understands that, including those who were opposed to it before.

9. From the beginning of the government of the current Provincial Father, he was known for his strong opposition to the Seraphic School by several acts; this is why the Guardian Father made a plea to the Defining Council to appoint a Director for running the School, with his understanding that referred only to the material part of the Convent. This was granted, with the Council appointing Father Francisco of Valencia as Director and Father Laureano of Massamagrell as Deputy Director, who were keeping the Provincial Father informed in everything and for everything. With the situation standing that way, he never stopped exaggerating the shortcomings of the children, which was resolved by the expulsion of some of them; similarly, they were not taking advantage of their studies enough to compensate for the sacrifices the Order was making; and to corroborate his assertion and justify his attitude, on his second-to-last visit he began to make the children translate that

were not suitable for the level of the course they were taking. Backed by these reasons, he decided to break up the School, claiming to the Defining Council that he was properly authorized to do that, although the Council opposed him without presenting any document that would accredit him.

10. As all the friars of the Province were aware of the actions of Father NN. in the Mission and his apostasy, they were surprised that the Provincial Father appointed him as his Secretary. There was no shortage of friars who called this to his attention in the visit and made him realize what had happened with this Father and, nonetheless, in the following Defining Council, he proposed him for Guardian to the Defining Council. After seeing that the Definitors were opposed to his appointment for those reasons, he claimed to be ignorant of everything and retained him as Secretary, gave him the position of Lector, and for a period had him as the President of the Residence in Granada.

11. While the Provincial Father created problems for admission with respect to education, etc. for applicants from Valencia, we positively know for a fact through the professors and the examinations I witnessed as a Definitor that in Andalusia, they admitted students without regard to qualification to the extent that almost all them had to start by taking courses in Latin, in terms of there are more Latin students today than philosophers, because according to the statement of a professor of Latin culture, there are 20 Latins, and worth noting that only one is used in Valencia. But that is not the worst, for in the frenzy to obtain vocations and take the novitiate, we positively know for a fact they went to the orphanages seeking them, and it is said there are some professed friars who do not even know who their parents are; and we can add that one of the novices who, was rushed into taking the Holy Habit by Father Diego, the Guardian of the Convent of Seville, against the wishes of the Teacher and had to be dismissed immediately because it was discovered he was sick from syphilis. This turned into a great scandal, because he went from the convent to the hospital, where the patients made fun of him, considering him as a member of the order.

1574. 12. As proof of the little interest the Andalusians have for the convents of the Valencia Region we can assure you that, on moving those convents to the ones in Andalusia, they took all the books they from our libraries and authorizing students for that as well. In the period when Father NN. was president of the Residence in Valencia, his expenses were so excessive that the Trustee of that city, taking an interest in the house, had to say that "it did not seem like the Andalusians had any other intention than to sack the convent of the Magdalene".

13. Without consulting the Defining Council, he made the appointments of Teacher and Deputy Teacher of Novices for the Seville monastery and various transfers of friars who were very essential in their convents, without later informing the Defining Council.

After the most Reverend General Minister had ordered a meeting with the Provincial Father, Definitors and Custodians before the General Chapter to deal with the matters that would be advisable to propose to the General Chapter, he did

not follow those instructions despite the fact that the second Custodian declared he needed to carry out that decision.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Definitor and Guardian.

BROTHER JOSÉ OF MONÓVAR.
General Custodian.

1575 Addition:

It would be advisable, any time there is a shortage of personnel in our Mission in Columbia, to move friars Casimiro of Alzira and José of Potríes there. They are currently in Chile, and will not be missed in the least since another Province has been given responsibility for that Mission.

If for the lack of personnel, even adding the neutral friars to Andalusia, this could not be created as a Province, it would be advisable to establish it under the rule of a Custodian, and declare Valencia a Province, which has more personnel and has given and presently offers more service both in Missions and the Province itself.

21. TO FATHER JOSÉ OF CALASANZ, OFM. CAP.
Ollería, 8 March 1898

1576 Most Reverend Father José Calasanz.

Beloved Father: It will have surprised your Most Reverend that I have not written you before, for taking part in the state of our matter of foundation; but after our discussion, I have had not a few incidents and conflicts to endure, and I did not want to write you until seeing the solution.

When I left Barcelona, I went immediately to Monforte with the intention of completing the matters related to the foundation of that and to execute the deeds. Everything was in order and the authorities and inhabitants were very enthusiastic, but I received a letter from the Reverend Provincial Father, dated 11 February in Cordoba, ordering me to suspend the foundation, as you can see from the attached copy I am sending to you.

1577 You cannot imagine the disruption this news caused me. I concealed what had happened as best I could from the Priest to avoid a conflict, and I immediately came to this convent to reach an understanding with the Provincial Father from here. I wrote him, saying: I could not believe that in the opinion of a Definitor, who must remember things very well, in two Defining Councils I had been given the assignment of securing a foundation in this region, without limitations on the location, or be obliged to submit the foundation I obtained for the approval of the

Defining Council again; and even more, I could not convince myself that, from the excited, interested looks, that I would have to ignore such formal commitments as the ones acquired with the Bishop, the authorities and the people, and with the owners of the convent. The good name of the Order and my own reputation would be badly damaged, and I could not nor should not consent to that.

The Provincial Father replied to me from Seville on 20 February, against leaving to my discretion the choice between the foundation in Alcoy or Monforte, but insisting in indicating his preference for Alcoy, as you will be able to see in the copy that I also am including.

1578 For this reason, then, so that they would never be able to claim that I merely followed my will after the fact, I again went through the procedures, approaching the Cardinal to see if the foundation in Alcoy, which we were considering a lost cause with good reason due to being unable to obtain the authorization of the Prelate over three months after the request was made, could now be achieved. I spoke to that end with the Cardinal, who I saluted on behalf of your Most Reverend, and reminded him of the matter that I was entrusted with; when I spoke with him about Alcoy, he found that so favorable that he told me to return the following day to pick up the petition, that it was now taken care of. And, in fact, on the fourth, the petition was given to me for the foundation, granted in these words:

“Valencia, 4 March 1898.

Granted as requested, on condition that a list of names of the members of the Religious Order who will form the Residence and the President is sent the Secretary of the Chamber, and that the original document in which the Reverend Provincial Father granted his permission for the foundation is also recognized, understanding that this foundation has to be carried out without prejudice to the parish rights. The Cardinal Archbishop of Valencia”.

1579 Of course I made the Provincial Father aware of all this, begging him to send, of course, the documents the Cardinal was asking for, and bearing in mind that, for the position of president, it was advisable, and that your Most Reverend had also indicated, Father Antonio of Valencia.

I also said to him to tell me what I should do with respect to Monforte, because the commitment is a great one. I do not know what he will answer, as now I have you up to date with what is happening; because if I have indeed endured a great deal up to now, I predict in the future even greater arguments, because my discussion with Your Reverence does not seem to have made a very good impression.

I have to let Your Reverence know that Father José of Monóvar and I have insistently asked for both foundations, taking into account that there is no available building in Alcoy and will therefore have to be a simple residence as long as they do not build a convent. This is why we were proposing that Alcoy be admitted as a residence convent of Ollería, since it is located in that district, and the convent of Monforte as an independent residence. Doing that would not impose any sacrifice for us, since we were not asking for more personnel than four friars between them and some brothers, which they have in Granada.

1580 We would greatly appreciate it if your Most Reverend could make the Provincial Father understand the reason that you are assisting us in this request; since the Valencia friars are complaining that, despite being the majority and carrying almost the entire burden of the Province, he does not pay them the attention due them. Once again, Your Reverence will understand the advisability of our separation for that reason²¹.

I am including a letter from Father Laureano so that you can see the status of the Monforte situation better. I also wanted to send you others that I received from some Fathers in Andalusia, declaring that they are extremely interested in the subject of the division, and begging me that I take an interest in it with Your Reverence and the General Minister. But ultimately, I am not sending you these letters in order to not increase the weight of this one too much. What I am sending you is the copies of the documents related to Monforte, which your Most Reverend asked me for, and the list of the fathers of this Province.

1581 I suppose you found out about the letter that the Most Reverend Father Luis Antonio of Porrentruy, the General Definitor, sent me asking for details and objects related to the life of St. Paschal. I said to him it I will have great satisfaction in pleasing him and will put all the resources at my disposal to obtain and send him all the details and information I possibly can; albeit that the setback in the Monforte situation now may take away some of the freedom to be able to please him as much as I want.

I stated to the Bishop of Orihuela what Your Reverence told me about the consent of the Provincial Minister of the Minors for taking possession of the convent of Monforte. He advised me it would not be advised that we take this step for making them see they were necessary and open their eyes; and we would not be careful because they cannot install themselves without his authorization, which in some way he had to grant them, and there always remained open to us recourse of demanding the price of the convent and taking possession of the convent of Biar which they took over from us after being admitted to our Order.

I have gone on too long in this letter, but I did so with the aim that you would be well-informed about our matters and be able to judge and inform the most Reverend General Ministers. Forgive me, then, and may the Venerable Father dispose as he wishes of the least of your subjects, who kisses your hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Definitor and Guardian.

²¹ Cf. 143, 1571 above; 1584, 1586, 1589 and 1613.

22 TO FATHER JOSÉ OF CALASANZ, OFM. CAP.
Ollería, 11 May 1898

1582 Most Reverend Father José Calasanz of Llevaneras.

Beloved Father General Definitor: I believe I already indicated to the Venerable Father that, when I was finalizing the matters relating to the foundation of Monforte (so much that there already is a Deed made for one part of the Convent), the Provincial Father ordered me, on his own initiative (*motu proprio*) or at the insistence of Father Fermín who, in his small-minded view, believes that it would be detrimental to the foundation of his Convent, to suspend the processes and work on the foundation of Alcoy. I complied with the will of the Superior, giving some kind of evasive excuse to the people in Monforte, although without dashing their hopes, and saw the Cardinal to speak with him about the foundation of Alcoy; and with such good luck that, of course, he granted me his permission. After the formalities were dealt with, the Residence of Alcoy was established and opened on the third day of Easter. The President Father Antonio and the Fathers Laureano and Serafín are now living there, along with two Lay Brothers.

1583 That was the status of the situation when the priest of Monforte wrote the letter to me I am copying for you. After his visit, I wrote the Provincial Father sending him a copy of the letter from the priest and telling him that it was now a foundation authorized by the most Reverend General Minister; and with regard to the very serious commitments we had already acquired, the greater part of the Convent is now ours; it would be advisable, and I asked for his authorization, to take possession of it on the day of St. Paschal (which would have raised spirits and been a great accomplishment). The Provincial Minister answered me with the letter I am copying for your Most Reverend, totally taking away all hopes, as you will understand, when he says there was no need to think of that until December, and wrote to the Priest to that effect. That was the same as saying that as long as he is the Provincial Minister, you have to give up any hopes; contradicting with it the promise he gave me in several letters and that on his authority I had in turn given to the Priest of Monforte that the foundation in Orito would be agreed on in the next Defining Council.

1584 This new detail will once again make known to your Most Reverend and the most Reverend General Minister how untenable this situation is and, therefore the need for our separation²². After the Valencia-born friars, we will be native of Galicia – as is often said – serving them to pick up the Convents, they have no consideration for us; and while they make a formal foundation in Granada without the authorization of anyone, and have four or five fathers in it and even project taking a course, they close our eyes and shut our mouth with a simple Residence.

In addition, the convents of Valencia can say they are without a Provincial Superior, since outside of the Official Visit, Father Ambrosio is so unconcerned

²² Cf. 143, 1571, 1580 above; 1586, 1589 and 1613.

about them that he has even reached the point of titling himself the Provincial Minister of Andalusia in public documents.

That indicated so much regarding the Valencia friars that in the Triduum celebrated to the Blessed Diego, no one was even invited, even for their attention, not even those of us who are Definitors, something which surprised the Superiors of Catalonia very much.

I am sending you two letters of Father José, who wants to see Your Reverence.

I have received many letters from the Valencia friars all the convents in Andalusia, pleading with me to work for the division and, for the love of God, not to obligate them to stay in Andalusia, because not a single one wants that.

I am sending you separately thoughts on the division, in addition to what I have said.

To Your Reverence from your most insignificant subject.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Definitor and Guardian.

P.S. Would your most Reverend tell the most Reverend Father Luis Antonio I will do what he asks and I am greatly pleased to be able to serve him?

23. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Ollería, summer of 1898

1585 Most Reverend General Minister.

Most Beloved Father: Through the content of these letters your Most Reverend will be able to see the contradictions the Provincial Father is falling into, offering the foundation for after Easter in some and most recently coming to refuse it as long as he is the Provincial Ministers; and similarly you will discover in them his intention to pay off the Valencia friars with a simple residence, which cannot be a convent for some years, and cover our eyes that way.

I believe that by proposing that the two residences of Alcoy and Monforte be admitted, I was not asking for anything ridiculous; even more so when I was not demanding any more personnel between both of them than they have in Granada, which does not seem much to ask to me, if you take into account that are more of us Valencia natives, and we have to be providing services in Andalusia while in the Convents of Valencia they have not even left us one Andalusian-born friar for display; in addition, if we were establishing two residences we could provide them with our own personnel, while they are founding convent so that we could pick up the positions for them.

1586 A shame and it will be a very great one, Most Reverend Father, that we may come to lose a convent with so much history and not do the foundation in

order to take advantage of the season for using the incomparable baths next to the Convent, and there are many friars who need them. Please do what you can, Your Reverence, so that the foundation is done, and the division that I see as becoming increasingly necessary²³. And every time that Father Eugenio is here to deal with the Mission, it would very advisable to move forward the division, which would suit everyone very well, in order to be able to attend the Chapter of Father Eugenio and arrange the appointments and matters of the Mission in it²⁴.

Yours truly,

BROTHER LUIS.
Guardian.

24. TO FATHER JOSÉ OF CALASANZ, OFM. CAP.
Ollería, 20 September 1898

1587 Most Reverend Father José Calasanz of Llevaneras.

Beloved Father: I received the letter from your Most Reverend and I give thanks to God and the Venerable Father for the singular benefit that the division grants to this Province and it will always be grateful for it. I could not take imagine the rejoicing which this news caused among all the Fathers who have been informed of it.

The foundations and conditions stipulated by the Most Reverend General Definitore seemed very wise and prudent to me, as they are directed at avoiding disagreements, leaving everyone with freedom of choice. The only thing that frankly, I do feel somewhat in disagreement with is that the province of Castellón is not being annexed to Valencia, because in my judgment it would have been advisable to do the division more by civil than ecclesiastical provinces, since the latter are going suffer a notable change when the Concordat is put into effect. Much like the province in question, which is going to form part of the diocese of Segorbe. Nevertheless, my opinion is not worth against anything compared to that of my Superior who see and weigh all the reasons.

1588 Regarding the Novices dismissed by the Provincial Father from the Convent of the Magdalene, four of them went with the Fathers who went to Colombia to form part of the Novitiate they are thinking of establishing there (now your Most Reverend can see they have given proof of vocation); and the others will be admitted as soon as they call.

I very much liked the idea your Most Reverend suggested of asking for dispensation from the Holy See so the time they already had spent in the Novitiate

²³ Cf. 143, 1571, 1580, 1584 above; 1589 and 1613.

²⁴ Luis Amigó was sending the General Minister paragraphs of various letters received from the Provincial Father.

would be recognized and it made me very happy. I will carefully save your letter for the proper time to notify the appropriate person if they want to ask this grace.

1589 While the Provincial Father has acted so arbitrarily towards our Seraphic School and Novitiate, now it turns out that Brother Leandro was in some town in Alicante province looking for vocations of children for the Seraphic School of Andalusia, according to what a gentleman told me when I was in Monforte. Now you see, most Reverend Father, how he has acted with us: while the Provincial Father abolishes the Seraphic School in Valencia, claiming to be authorized to do so by the most Reverend General Minister, they have several Seraphics in Sanlúcar without any authorization; and now they are seeking vocations for the in our territory. There is much to say, Most Reverend Father! Now you see how necessary taking the step of the division was²⁵.

1590 I don not know what Father Reus wrote to the most Reverend General Minister about his affiliation to one of the two future provinces but on my behalf, I dare to beg Your Reverence, so that he may propose it to the most Reverend General Minister, that, if possible, to add him to mine because, at the same time we would be able to provide a good service ourselves, I would also be doing an act of charity to his poor sister, plunged at present into a sea of afflictions caused by the illness of her son, the priest, who is her sole support; this why the nearness of her brother has to serve as a great comfort and, to the contrary, his separation from her is more painful.

Please tell the most Reverend Father Luis Antonio I will send him some photographs of Villarreal shortly. And that the photos of the Sanctuaries that you indicate to me I already asked for a long time and they have not deigned to send them to me.

To your Most Reverend from your most insignificant subject who loves you in Christ and kisses your hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.

25. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Ollería, 23 September 1898

1591 Most Reverend General Minister.

Venerable and Beloved Father: through the Most Reverend Provincial Father I have news of the agreement of the most Reverend General Defining Council which is deciding the division of the current Province of Toledo into the two old ones of Valencia and Andalusia; for that, and in the name of the Valencia friars, I give my most expressive thanks to your Most Reverend, as well as to the entire most Reverend

²⁵ Cf. 143, 1571, 1580, 1584, 1586 above; 1613.

Defining Council, and dare to go so far as guarantee that this division has to bring about greater glory for our Order in both provinces; and promote peace among the members of the Order by avoiding the arbitrary nature of decisions that we have lamented up to the present, of which your Most Reverend will not be unaware.

1592 All the friars very much like the wise decision to leave everyone with freedom of choice, since it would perhaps have been awkward and the cause for uneasiness for some if they were assigned to another province that was not their wish.

There is one grace I dare to beg your Most Reverend for and it is: if Father Reus was indifferent about whether to stay in one Province or the other, and if he has not asked to be in the Province of Andalusia, that he be assigned to Valencia Province.

1593 You will already be familiar with the decision of the Provincial Father to dismiss from our Novitiate of the Magdalene, without consulting the Provincial Defining Council, all the Novices who were not safe from military service; and absolutely forbidding the welcoming of any others who did not meet this condition in the future. It is very notable that he did not do the same in the Novitiate in Seville, where just a few days before they professed two novices who could not possibly save themselves from military service as their parents were very poor. In addition, the person who would advise the parents of the Novices if they wanted to save them from it was not allowed to do so. They had not thought of giving instruction to the Superiors of what they should in the event of a sudden conflict, and it only occurred to them to throw our Novices out in the street.

1594 They behaved the same way in our Seraphic School, making use of a thousand frauds and imposing themselves on the Defining Council, by saying they were authorized by your Most Reverend to close: and whether the Definitors liked it or they, they were determined to close it. And then it turns out they were admitting children with the name and habit of Seraphics in Sanlúcar without having a School or authorization by the Defining Council for that. And that just a few days ago Brother Leandro was in some town of Alicante province searching for vocations of Children for the Seraphic School of Andalusia.

1595 I had not wanted to communicate these things, and others that I am keeping to myself, to your Most Reverend because I do not think of myself as a passionate person, or from being more of a patient person and the target of their attack, that I did it out of spite. But I am saying this today to your Most Reverend so that you may be convinced one again of the justice with which the Valencia friars were calling out for the division that thanks to God and your Most Reverend is fact, and one for which we shall be eternally grateful.

To the Most Reverend Father from your most insignificant subject who asks for your blessing and kisses your hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Definitor and Guardian.

26. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Ollería, December 1898

1596 To the most Reverend General Minister Bernard of Andermatt and his Most Reverend General Defining Council of Our Order of Capuchin Minor Brothers, Rome.

Most Reverend Fathers: Among all our duties, we consider the main one is, as we have advised to treat, through God, first and collectively those things which redound in the good and honor of our beloved Province, making evident to the Most Reverend Father and Most Reverend General Defining Council, the statement of our submission and religious obedience, and at the same time show the great gratitude of the Province entrusted to us, by the great and enduring efforts assumed by the Most Reverend Fathers for their reconstruction.

Or all the things that we attempted to resolve in the presence of the Lord in our first definition meeting, and they will the foundation for this Province of the Precious Blood of Christ, and on which all its future grandeur is built, and the proper time we shall notify the Most Reverend Fathers.

And now we humbly implore your paternal blessing, an omen of the heavenly goods for us and our Province.

Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Minister.

Brother Fermín of Velilla, 1st Definitor.

Brother Melchor of Benissa, 2nd Definitor.

Brother Francisco of Orihuela, 3rd Definitor.

Brother Fidel of Alzira, 4th Definitor.

27. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Ollería, 21 December 1898

1597 Most Reverend General Minister.

Venerable and Beloved Father: Yesterday I received your pleasant letter of your Most Reverent, dated the 17th of this month, and today I just received the official letter that was indicated in it; but by mistake, since even though the envelope had my name, the Official Letter it contained was address to the most Reverend Father Ambrosio of Valencina, and I suppose that he will have received the Official Letter intended for me.

Due to that reason, not knowing who are the Definitor Fathers it will not be possible to meet with them as early as I wanted to and your Most Reverend intended, since I will have to wait until they send it to me from Andalusia.

I am grateful to the Most Reverend Father and Most Reverend General Defining Council for the attention and confidence they have shown in my humble self.

1598 For my part, I will try to work with all my interest in performing the duties of the difficult position you have entrusted to me, in order not to disappoint the expectations of the Most Reverend Fathers and promote the glory of God, the honor of our Order and the progress of this new Province of the Precious Blood of Christ.

And, in turn, I hope that your Most Reverend and the Most Reverend Defining Council will be the light for me that illuminates my ignorance, the strength that encourages me my weakness and the trustworthy guide that directs my steps. As soon as it is possible for me to meet with the Provincial Defining Council, I will keep your Most Reverend informed, and similarly of the agreements that are made in them.

Please greet in the my name the most Reverend Father General Definitors, and especially to Father José of Calasanz and Father Antonio. May the Venerable Father command as he wishes the last and least of his subjects, who kisses your hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister.

28. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Ollería, 25 December 1898

1599 Most Reverend General Minister.

Most Beloved Father: The solemn ceremony of the Birth of the Lord we are celebrating today invites your subjects of the Province of the Precious Blood of Christ, to beg with all the affection and filial sincerity in our hearts and filial sincerity for heavenly gifts to be bestowed upon your Most Reverend, whom we venerate as Father and guide so that, just as in the thirteen years you have been the head of the Franciscan militia bringing so much honor and splendor to the Order, you are now also supported by the heavenly graces so that you do not feel oppressed by the serious burden of your position but rather continue in this position, to which you have added so much glory and honor, or a greater one for many years to come.

Do not be surprised, most Reverend Father, if the current letter does not make any mention of the appointment of local Superiors or the advice regarding the Defining Council, since I did not receive the document with the appointments. Nevertheless, I immediately sent the document referring to the fathers of the province of Baetica (Andalusia) certified and without any delay.

Beloved Father, in your prayers please bear in mind all the brothers entrusted to my care, your servant, devoted in the Lord.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

29. TO THE CAPUCHINS OF THE PROVINCE OF VALENCIA
Massamagrell, 29 December 1898

1600 Reverend Superior Father of the Convent of Capuchin Friars of Orihuela, Beloved Father: The Most Reverend General Minister, using the powers granted by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regular Clergy, dated 30 September of this year, issued the following Decree, which I am transcribing literally so that Your Reverence may make this most Reverend Community aware of it.

“Brother Bernard of Andermatt, General Minister of the Order of Brothers Minor of St. Francis, the Capuchins, to our beloved Brother in Christ the most Reverend Father Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Minister of the newly established province of Valencia, greetings in the Lord.

Since the division of our Province of Toledo into two, that is Valencia and Baetica (Andalusia), has now been brought to a happy conclusion, using the powers benevolently granted us by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regular Clergy on 30 September of this year to appoint at the present time the Superiors of these new Provinces, by mutual agreement with our General Defining Council, by virtue of which we appointed and selected the Most Reverend Father Luis of Massamagrell as Provincial Minister; the Most Reverend Father Fermín of Velilla as 1st Definitor; the Most Reverend Father Melchor of Benissa as 2nd Definitor; the Most Reverend Father Francisco of Orihuela as 3rd Definitor; the Most Reverend Father Fidel of Alzira as 4th Definitor; the Most Reverend Father Fermín of Velilla as 1st General Custodian, and the Most Reverend Father Melchor of Benissa as 2nd General Custodian.

We declare that not only you, but also the remaining Definitors have been selected and appointed by Us, and we confirm them in their respective positions for the coming three-year term, in accordance with the Constitutions and Statutes of the Province.

We are ordering each and every Superior and Subject of the Province, by virtue of holy obedience, to offer the honor and respect due to you and the others selected, and to offer you their submission, obedience and worshipful devotion in all things concerning the Seraphic Rule. This we declare, approve and confirm here and now and in the best way.

Rome, in our convent, on 16 December 1898”.

BROTHER BERNARD OF ANDERMATT.

1601 The Fathers named in the above decree have now been summoned to appoint local Superiors and create the new families. Thereby we decide and order the following:

1. In the three days following the receipt of this Decree, let us reveal His Divine Majesty, with lesser exhibition, in our churches from 8.00 to 11.00 in the morning

and from 3.00 to 6.00 in the afternoon, with two friars keeping continuous vigil before the Lord, for the purpose of pleading for his divine assistance. In the same vein on those days, on uncovering it, the *Veni Creator Spiritus* shall be sung and these prayers recited: *Deus, Qui Corda*, etc., *Actiones Nostras*, etc. the prayer of the service of the Precious Blood *Deus qui per immaculatum*, etc., *Deus qui Ecclesiam tuam*, and the prayer of the Blessed Juan of Ribera.

2. To proceed correctly in all the agreements of the new definition and better understand the wishes of our subjects, we grant all of them our blessing and approval so they can state with complete freedom and filial trust everything that, in their judgment, would be most conducive to the good order and system of the Province in general, and the religious families in particular.

Given in our Convent of St. Mary Magdalene, on 29 December 1898.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister.

30. TO THE CAPUCHINS OF THE PROVINCE OF VALENCIA
Massamagrell, 1 January 1899

AGREEMENTS

1602 1. With the aim of begging the Almighty for the necessary assistance to undertake the impressive work of the restoring of our beloved Province of the Precious Blood of Christ, the most Reverend Defining Council has been so kind as to order, as the first of its agreements, that the Spiritual Exercises be done in all our convents. In order that the reward our friars get from them are more plentiful, it was decided that they be practiced in the following way:

The first time the priests will do exercises separately from the other friars in two different groups that will meet in the convents of St. Mary Magdalene and Orihuela, respectively. The first one in Massamagrell will begin on 15 January and end on the 24th, and half the Fathers of Ollería, two from the Alcoy residence and the two from Valencia must attend. The Most Reverend Defining Council has designated the most Reverend Father Fidel of Alzira as director of those Exercises. The second will take place in the convent of Orihuela and begin on 25 January and end on 3 February. The Director of these Exercises will be the most Reverend Father Fermín of Velilla and will consist of the Fathers from that convent, the Fathers from Totana, the other half from Ollería, those from the Montforte residence and the final one from Alcoy. The director of the Massamagrell exercise will be the most Reverend Father Fidel of Alzira; in the Ollería convent the most Reverend Father Francisco of Orihuela, and the most Reverend Father Fermín of Velilla in Orihuela.

1603 2. As a means of preserving and increasing the reward of the Holy Exercises, so that they strengthen the seraphic spirit in us even more with the plentiful gifts the Sacred Heart grants to its fervent and devout followers, the most Reverend Defining Council greatly wishes and assigns that in all our Convents and Residences they practice the day of withdrawal as a community on the first Friday of the month, advised by the Seraphic Manual for the Novices and Convents of study. To be able to use the privilege of celebrating the votive mass of the Sacred Heart on that day, it was decided that the customary congregation will be done in the morning, after the post-conventual mass, during which the Lord will be visible with lesser exposure.

1604 3. Considering that the future of the Province depends greatly in the correct direction and development of studies, the most Reverend Defining Council seriously examined this extremely important matter and, without prejudice to establishing their bases, method and extension in a separate regulation, has agreed as a start to distribute the courses as follows:

The convent of Totana is designated as the school for the Choir members who need to study some preparatory courses after finishing the novitiate before they begin philosophy, and first year students in that subject.

The Choir members studying the second and third year of Philosophy will be at Orihuela. The two years of Dogmatic Theology will be studied at the convent of Olleria and the students of Moral Theology will be placed in the provincial convent of St. Mary Magdalene.

1605 4. In fulfillment of what is ordered by the most Reverend General Minister and his Defining Council, and understanding the urgent need for the Seraphic School at this time in which religious vocations are so scarce, it was decided to establish the Seraphic School in the convent of Monforte as soon as possible after its restoration is finished.

1606 5. The Most Reverend Defining Council wishes to promote the arts and services among us as much as possible, so that our brothers would acquire more education in carrying out their obligations and be doubly useful to the Province and that they try to study their aptitudes and provide them with the means to perfect them.

1607 6. Whenever the supply of coarse woolen cloth is the responsibility of the Provincial Minister, as it is of the greatest importance to secure the uniformity of the color of our habits as well as good quality and inexpensive cost of the fabrics, it was agreed to re-establish the old custom of this Province of manufacturing the cloth in one of our convents; and for this purpose, the convent of St. Mary Magdalene was chosen by being the residence of the Provincial Father.

1608 7. To attend to the care of the ill as the Rule orders us and fraternal charity demands, as it is very difficult to find in our convents all those comforts and cares that being ill demands, primarily for being so difficult to isolate them from the communal life, and to simultaneously cut off the abuses that could be introduced by some people demanding care that they do not really need and is

only given to the sick, it was thought to meet this need through the creation of a provincial infirmary that brings together all the conditions that science requires and would be compatible with our state. With this proposal, we are not trying to introduce anything new into our Order, since our old Fathers already had them and they currently exist in the better organized Provinces.

8. The convent territories or districts have been laid out in the following way:

.....

.....

1609 9. To pay better attention to the needs of the convents, especially in the poorer guardianships, and develop among us the spirit of religious charity that must reign among the children of the same regular province, it was decided that the Guardians, once the alms are exhausted, should alert the most Reverend Provincial Father, both of the needs of their respective convents and the remaining articles in them, so that the Father mentioned before may distribute them according to the needs of the other convents.

Similarly, the missionaries of the Custodianship of the Americas will be obligated to give a detailed accounting of the incoming and outgoing alms to the most Reverend Provincial Father, and place all the surplus at his disposal so he can direct them to the needs of the Province.

1610 The Residence of Valencia is declared by the most Reverend Defining Council as the Provincial Residence, and the Fathers in them will be subordinate to the most Reverend Provincial Father.

With respect to collecting alms in kind it was agreed that what is not consumed in the Residence would be for the Convent of Massamagrell, leaving the Reverend Guardian Father of this convent free to have recourse to the benefactors of Valencia for all the needs of the convent.

1611. Finally, the Most Reverend Defining Council wishes to promote the Missions among us, which has always been the special grace of our Order and has distinguished it throughout history, in preference over any other kind of preaching.

To that end and in order to designate the best-suited personnel to be involved in them, the most Reverend Guardian Fathers will approach the most Reverend Provincial Father, who will have available the priests who, depending on the circumstances, could be suitable for giving them.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

31. TO THE CAPUCHINS OF THE PROVINCE OF VALENCIA
Massamagrell, 3 January 1899

1612 We, Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Minister of the Capuchin Minor Friars of the Province of Valencia (interim, *a.i.*)

To our beloved children, the members of the religious order of this Province of the Precious Blood of Christ.

Greetings and seraphic blessings.

Venerable Fathers and beloved Brothers:

Speaking for the first time to Your Charities, we want above all, fulfilling a sacred duty, to further increase your gratitude to God, the Giver of all good, by whose liberal hand we have received the invaluable benefit of the restoration of our province of the Precious Blood of Christ Our Lord, so desired by all.

The usefulness and moral and material advantages from this division of the Province of Toledo into the two old ones of Valencia and Andalusia are not lost on any of Your Charities.

1613 The difference in temperament, character, customs, etc., that one observes in individuals from different provinces and the innate love in man for the country and land he was born in cannot help but produce certain differences among the brothers, and above all a pronounced preference for the things and people from his homeland, so that even without trying to have or wanting them, they give rise to something more than slight damages to the good order and government of the communities²⁶.

Our general superiors understood this, in their fair judgment and the interest and pastoral zeal for the good of the souls that God has entrusted to them, and it pushed them to agree to the general request the members of the religious societies were making and once again bring back the old Provinces of Valencia and Andalusia, which gave so much luster to the Order in another period by the virtue and knowledge of their children.

1614 In order, then, to show in some way our gratitude to God for such a great benefit and pay him the thanks due him, we decided to celebrate a Triduum of thanksgiving in all our convents as soon as possible, dedicating the first day to honoring the memory of our Founder, the Blessed Juan of Ribera; the second to our Mother and Patron Saint, the Divine Shepherd, and the third day to the Precious Blood of Christ, the holy title which honors our Capuchin Province, leaving to the responsibility and judgment of the local superiors the order and arrangement of the exercises that would be practiced on those days.

Having fulfilled our duty, venerable Fathers and Brothers, of paying God a tribute of thanksgiving for such a great benefit and of thanking the general superiors, in the name of and representing the Province, for their concern and

²⁶ Cf. 143, 1571, 1580, 1584, 1586 and 1589 above.

efforts on our behalf, it now remains to us to plead that you not cease praying for Us, upon whose weak shoulders the Divine Providence has placed the great weight of directing the Province.

1615 Our inadequateness is known to all of you; but we also believe it will not be hidden from you that we are inspired by the very best wishes and an ardent desire to promote in every possible way the greater glory of God and the growth in stature of our beloved Province of Valencia.

For the accuracy and the joyful success of the issues related to our position and office, we trust in the help and valuable cooperation of our Defining Council and the other superiors, with whose guidance and advices and, more practically, with the aid of the divine grace and knowledge, which the Lord never denies his representatives, we hope we are able to faithfully carry out the great obligations of this extremely difficult position that has been imposed on us by holy obedience.

And for the greatest encouragement and strength of our will in working for the good of our Province, we concentrate our hopes in all of you, beloved Fathers and Brothers. We have no doubt that you will take on the obligation that the grace received from God imposes on us to adapt our lives to the duties that we contracted with the profession and the model the Lord shows us in our Seraphic Father St. Francis, who could be one of the good and strong foundations of the newborn Province of Valencia.

1616 We must never forget that just as the strength and stability of a building depends to large extent on its foundation, our virtue and good example is the foundation on which the strength and stability of this moral building of the Province of the Precious Blood of Christ that is built upon us depends.

And if perhaps our zeal needs inspirations, let us remember, venerable Fathers and Brothers, of the saintliness and example of our elders like the most Revered Father Eugenio of Oliva and his companions, who laid the foundations for this Province and whom its saint and founder, the Blessed Juan of Ribera, venerated for his virtues so much that many times he took off his shoes and served them at the table in the dining hall. The reward of the virtues of these first Fathers were the venerable Father Ignacio of Monzón, Fathers Serafín of Alzira, Francisco of Requena, Angel of Valencia, Juan Bautista of Lorca, Francisco of Albarracín and Melchor of Orihuela, men of notable virtue and especially favored by Heaven with very special gifts of grace. The rewards of the virtues of those first Fathers were Brother Gregorio of Ibi and Father Antonio of Todoella, illustrious martyrs who ennobled the work of our missionaries in the Province of Santa Marta with their death. Fathers Antonio of Murcia, Luis of Silanes and Juan Bautista of Murcia, who with their knowledge and writings elevated the prestige of our Order so much; the lay Brothers Tomás of Tortosa, Brother Cristóbal of Petrel and José of Ollería, exemplary members of the Order whom Heaven distinguished with special graces for their quiet and penitent lives; the donor Brothers Miguel of Vistabella and Tomás of Mallorca, simple and angelical souls in whom grace took pleasure in living and carrying out astonishing miracles; in sum, all that endless series of

friars notable for their virtue and knowledge that fill the immortal pages of our chronicles.

1617 We continue following those footsteps of our ancestors and, by imitating them, we shall also serve God as instruments to bring about his adorable designs. We shall continue the work which they began and developed with so much glory and we will add to the brilliant history of our Province that will in no way be unbecoming to the ones before and will serve as an example for the instruction of all the members of the order in the future.

This circular, together with the copy of the testimonial reading of our promotion to Provincial Minister and appointment of Definitors and Custodians; with the table of families and agreements of the Defining Council, will be read in the public dining hall in all the convents and residences of our Province.

Given in our Provincial Convent of Massamagrell on 3 January 1899.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

32. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
5 January 1899

1618 To the most Reverend General Minister of our Capuchin Order, Rome.

Most Reverend General Minister: With this letter we are sending the table of families, distribution of positions and main regulations we took in the first Defining Council of our Province of the Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of Valencia.

1619 Having dealt with, by the way, the foundation of Alcoy in this defining council, the Definitors referred to the efforts and repeated requests with which the authorities of that city, both ecclesiastical and civil as well as benefactors of the Order, asked for the institution of a secondary school entrusted to our care as there are in other provinces of the Order legally. That is the condition so that, if they obtained this promise from us, we readily understand that the foundation of the convent will certainly come as a result.

For our part, weighing this in all due time, we did not want to give an answer until we informed your Most Reverend of all this and we hope for advice as well in a matter of such significance.

Presently, as your Most Reverend Father knows even better, it is difficult to find Religious Orders, even those which by the laws of its own Institute are minimally dedicated to this, that do realized the care and education of the youth in one way or another, and certainly with the blessing of the Church and the applause of some men who often judge the Religious Institutes to be of little use while they do not take on this kind of work.

In no way moved by these dismissible reasons, our opinion is that we are ready to accept without hesitation to take this burden on our shoulders for the good and expansion of our Religion; and it precisely because being conscious in our own spirit of the future prosperity of the Province and considering that we will not be lacking, through God and in its due time, the perfect friar for the very difficult work of educating the youth.

1620 If your Most Reverend Father approves our proposal, at least in principle, then it will be a question of us, together with our Defining Council, insisting on the details regarding the project to inform your most Reverend of them, and everything else as best it appears before the Lord, for when it would be required to provide them in practice.

Taking advantage of the opportunity, we are informing the most Reverend Father that some priests in our Province are dedicating themselves to the ministry of preaching without having obtained the permission to preach in writing from the most Reverend Father. To correct this abuse, will your Most Reverend deign to grant us the necessary powers to examine them?

We remind the most Reverend Father that for the establishing under canon law of the convent of Totana, we are still waiting for the apostolic approval, which we trust will be sent to us shortly.

To your Most Reverend Father, your ardent supporter

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

33. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 23 January 1899

1621 To the most Reverend General Minister of the Capuchins, Rome.

Most Reverend and Esteemed General Minister: I have received your letter and I deeply regret that due to a misunderstanding your most Reverend believed that the Defining Council would try to move the Residence of the Provincial Minister indicated in the Division of Province decree that your most Reverend cites in your letter. The provincial residence is the Convent of St. Mary Magdalene (Massamagrell) in accordance with the order in the cited document.

The residence of Valencia has been called the provincial residence, but until now it was conventual; that is, immediately subordinate to the Guardian of this Convent, but from here on the Provincial Minister Father will be there to attain the greater good of the Order. That is the meaning of the standard agreement of this most Reverend Defining Council.

1622 Concerning the foundation of the school in Alcoy, as your Most Reverend will understand, nothing is being done until later to prepare the personnel who

would have to take over the teaching, since the foundations of the building are not even set in the ground yet. A work of this nature always would take several years to be completed, and during those years we would be preparing the friars who would have to teach the classes. My consultation was only for the purpose of knowing if the idea will be accepted in principle by your Most Reverend. But from the moment that I understood from your letter that the only problem to be faced is the shortage of personnel, I understand that the idea is accepted since then, and will be carried out to the degree that circumstances allow.

1623 I also must call the attention of the Most Reverend Father about some developments at our mission in Colombia. According to the letter I received from the Custodian Father, Father José of Alcudia and Father Rafael of Alcoy need to be moved to Spain as both are seriously ill and will have to be replaced by two other Fathers of the Province. In this convent, we have a choir member, simply professed, who is 33 years old and taking the 3rd year of Theology, has very good qualities and with great devotion to consecrate himself to the missions. If the most Reverend would be good enough to send us the necessary authorization, he would be ordained and we could send him to the aforementioned mission. I am speaking of Brother Pastor of Valencia and, as he is voluntarily offering to go and has already reached a certain age, I am of the opinion that an exception could be made for him and send him to the Americas once he has received the Order of the Presbyterate. I still have not decided who the other one to go will be because I would want it to be someone who volunteers to go himself, if possible.

1624 There are currently 32 priests in the Province. Therefore, we will apply some other masses each month in accordance with the intentions of the Most Reverend Father. The calculations of the number of members of the order in the Province are being completed. I will send your Most Reverend a copy of it in due time²⁷.

1625 Concerning the division of the old province of Toledo into two new ones of Valencia and Andalusia, to my understanding, charity and justice required that the Provincial Minister of the former would carry out the term of his government, and then distribute equally however little or much there was in the Province fund. However I must bring the attention of your Most Reverend to this matter, begging him to order what he believes should be done on this occasion, since the most Reverend Father Ambrosio of Valencia did not even think of saying a single word on the matter.

These are the points I needed to express to your most Reverend Seraphic Father, begging him to give me dispensation for bothering him so much and repeating to the more Reverend Seraphic Father, from your humble servant.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

²⁷ Cf. 152 above. Cf. *Estadística General de la Seráfica Provincia de Menores Capuchinos de Valencia* (Valencia 1901). The statistical report has 149 pages and seven photos.

34. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 21 February 1899

1626 To the most Reverend General Minister of the Capuchin Friar Minors, Rome.

Most Reverend and beloved General Minister: I received the latest letter of your Most Reverend and in reference to it I must tell you that no one here has thought of any change of the Provincial Residence, either temporarily or definitively, and even less in a transfer of the Archive which, naturally, will be my responsibility although I have commissioned Father Francisco of Valencia²⁸ to collect the documents that must make it up.

Subordinating the Residence of Valencia to provincial jurisdiction was a measure adopted by the entire Defining Council, as it is impossible to correct in any other way the abuses against regular observance that was happening under the jurisdiction of the Guardian and to contribute to the decorum of Order, having full-time personnel there who could not be removed by the local Superior of the Magdalene. All this was done while this convent was suffering a reduction in its alms, since that was taken into account in making that decision.

1627 Three sick friars had to return to the Province from the Colombia mission, to wit: Father José of Alcudia, Father Domingo of Alboraya and Father Rafael of Alcoy as well as Father Miguel of Lliria for lack of vocation. To replace them, it was necessary to send some choir members who were studying the 3rd year of Theology.

To that end, I have requested the appropriate dispensations from the most Reverend Attorney Father. In addition, I have projected doing the canon visit of the Custodianship of Colombia next spring to raise the spirits of the mission and missionaries, either by myself or a delegated representative. The official visitor would accompany the expedition that would have to leave the Province very shortly for those missions.

I want to know the opinion of the most Reverend Father of my plan. To Your Reverence from your most humble Servant in Jesus Christ.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL
 Provincial Minister

35. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 23 March 1899

1628 To the most Reverend General Minister of the Capuchin Friars, Rome.

²⁸ Referring to Manuel Tomás (cf. 17, 22, 25, 29, 30, 40, 53 above).

Most esteemed and venerated General Minister: I need your advice on some matters that have arisen and I will take the liberty of explaining them to your Most Reverend.

The church of our convent at Totana, albeit far from being luxurious, nevertheless has some things that are not in accordance with the poverty and simplicity that must stand out in all the churches of our Order. Before our friars occupied it, it was an aid project of the Parish, and that is the reason it has three or four bells, a small organ of little value, and some decorations on the altars. All this is contrary to our sacred Constitutions and I plead with your Most Reverend to deign to indicate to me if we shall make use of all the bells and the small organ this church has, and if it will be required to take some measure regarding the gold adornments it contains.

1629 In addition, the Venerable Third Order that is established in that church belongs to the jurisdiction of the Friar Minors and, as the situation dictates that the Order moves under our jurisdiction, I hope that your Most Reverend tells me what I should do in order to achieve this aim.

1630 I sent the obedience to the four missionaries of Columbia who could not continue any longer in that mission, three by reason of illness and the other for an absolute lack of vocation for such a difficult undertaking. The sick ones are: Father Domingo of Alboraya, Father Rafael of Alcoy and Father José of Alcutia. The one for lack of vocation is Father Miguel of Lliria. Four others are now designated to replace them and, together with the Visitor, they will leave at the beginning of May if all the arrangements can be made.

In anticipation of the advice and orders of your Most Reverend, I repeat that I am your servant and humble child.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

36. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 4 April 1899

1631 To the most Reverend General Minister of the Capuchin Friars, Rome.

Most Reverend and esteemed General Minister: I received your letter of 27 March and I am in complete agreement with the explanations that your Most Reverend deigned to make in it concerning the point I submitted for your advice. At the same time, I have the pleasure of wishing you Happy Easter holy days on behalf of all the friars of the Province of Valencia.

The names of the friars who have been designated to replace the sick ones who had to return to Spain are: Brother Bernardino of Orihuela, Deacon; Brother Angel of Gata, Deacon; Father Manuel of Aguilas and Father Pastor of Valencia.

1632 I have thought maturely about the most advisable way of make the official visit of this Mission, and after also consulting with some Fathers, it appeared to be most advisable for me not to be absent now from the Province, due to the demands from its recent organization and the multiple issues requiring attention that call for my presence here. To carry out the idea I announced to your Most Reverend of sending the visit to our Mission in Colombia, it seemed to me the wisest and most appropriate decision is to designate the Most Reverend Father Melchor of Benissa, the 2nd Definitor, as Visitor and the Reverend Father Laureano of Massamagrell, the Guardian of the Convent of St. Mary Magdalene, as Secretary. I beg your Most Reverend to deign to send the obedience with broad powers by which of the Visitor can act according to what his sound judgment advises in unexpected situations or cases that do not allow for delay²⁹.

1633 A young man who lived for seven years on the island of Cuba has asked for our habit. The testimonials were requested from the Bishop of origin and another Ordinary clergy in whose Diocese he had stayed for some time. I have now received them from the latter, favorably dealt with, but I have not yet received any answer from the Bishop of Havana, despite more than enough time having passed. On the other hand, the present state of unrest on the Island will most likely make the sending of my request quite difficult and the postulant is tired of so much waiting. May your Most Reverend deign to grant me the appropriate dispensation for him to be able to receive the habit of our Order?

I am hoping for your prompt reply and I repeat to your Most Reverend Father that I am truly your servant and child.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

37. TO THE CAPUCHINS OF ORIHUELA
Massamagrell, 18 June 1899

1634 To the beloved fathers and brothers in Christ of our Convent of OrihueLA. Greetings and seraphic blessing.

One of the principal duties of any superior, my beloved children, is to try to secure at all costs the faithful keeping of regular observance, the exact fulfillment of the respective duties of his subjects and the development among them of charity and mutual unity, the symbols of the children of God and the bond of the religion. He makes use of them now for advice or pleas, now as a warning, now for a reprimand, according to the advice of the Apostle: *Reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and*

²⁹ Cf. 149 above.

*doctrine*³⁰, so that no one can ever point to him having given up the authority that was entrusted to him for the instruction of his subjects and the religion.

1635 For that reason, then, We wanted to fulfill a duty that the Church, the religion and our conscience imposes on us. We have decided, beloved children, to begin on the next day of St. John, the Holy Pastoral Visit in our beloved Province of the Precious Blood of Christ, to make ourselves responsible for its needs and solve them, to the degree that depends on Us, and be able to give an account of its status to our Defining Council and General Superiors.

For this reason, we grant the merit of Holy Obedience to all our subjects, so that with filial honesty and sincerity they can present to us all their own needs and those of the Community. And we warn the younger priests and the choir member brothers that on this occasion, once the official Visit is concluded, they will have their respective examinations.

The day and hour of our arrival at each convent shall be announced in advance.

We bless you with all our heart and commend you in our prayers.

Given in our Provincial Convent of the Magdalene on 18 June 1899.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

38. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Orihuela, 5 July 1899

1636 Most Reverend General Minister,

Beloved General Minister: Finding myself visiting this convent of Orihuela, I am receiving with some delay the substantial letter of your Most Reverend, dated 26 June, and in compliance with what you tell me in it, I immediately wrote to Brother Cristóbal so that he can go to El Pardo without delay, in accordance with the decision of the most Reverend Father.

I have two recently professed friars in this province who are very inclined towards and well-suited for preaching and even though I still cannot give them the title of preacher because they are not solemnly professed, I would appreciate if the most Reverend Father would deign to authorize them for preaching. Their names are Ignacio of Chulilla and Atanasio of Manises. I would also need permission to proceed with the examination of six other friars who have concluded their studies and should have the title of preacher bestowed upon them if they are well-suited for it. The four friars I sent to the Mission of Colombia are included among them.

1637 I am taking advantage of this chance to remind your Most Reverend of what I wrote to you some time ago concerning a Residence in Palma de Mallorca,

³⁰ II Timothy 4:2.

for which a lady bequeathed us 15,000 pesetas. The executors are urging us, since the time period fixed for the fulfillment of her wish has now passed, and I was unable to answer them due to awaiting the solution of the most Reverend Father. I advise you that our Province had a convent in the mentioned town before, which still exists and perhaps we would be able to acquire the church and some of the premises around it.

1638 I call the attention of your Most Reverend to the very serious conflict that is going to strike the Religious Orders in this nation with the law of obligatory military service plan, which will also encompass the Capuchins due to the transfer of the Caroline Islands and therefore the loss of the exemption we were enjoying. I am worried enough by this matter to not know what means I must use to save our young people, since what the Province of Toulouse does, sending their young friars to the missions where their schools are established, does not fit here as the law plan warns that no young man will be able to leave Spanish territory from the age of 14 on, under penalty of serious punishment. They only exempt from the obligation of this military draft Missionaries of the State, who are only in the Holy Land and Morocco, and whoever is dedicated to education; one of those means I think we should work to obtain, with the aim of evading this danger.

Beginning from the principle that our Missionaries of the Caroline Islands and Manila will have to leave the Mission and the friars who come from this province wish to return to it, naturally enough, I hope that the most Reverend Father will not agree to add them to any other Province or Mission than Valencia, whose native sons they are.

The least of your subjects reverently kiss the hands of Your Reverence, as.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

39. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 14 August 1899

1639 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerated and beloved General Minister: After greeting Your Reverence, the present letter is written to inform you of the sad news that the Reverend Father Ildefonso of Llanera has died in our Colombia mission. Similarly, according to the letter I just received from Father Melchor of Benissa, who was ordered to visit that Mission and is en route back to the Province, with the Holy Visit concluded. On his arrival, we will provide Your Reverence with detailed news of the state of the Mission.

1640 I received different letters from friars from this Province who are in Manila and the Caroline Islands, expressing their strong desires to return to the

Province, given the sad and abnormal situation they are in, without personal safety and lacking resources because the Government has not credited the corresponding allocations since October of last year. For that reason, the friars in Manila are acquiring an enormous debt for supporting the friars in the Carolines.

And corroborating what I said, so that your Most Reverend is aware of other incidents they expressed to me, I am the sending the attached letters, concerning which, especially the names of the friars who wrote them, I beg your Most Reverend to keep in the greatest confidence and to deign to return them to me for my governing.

If these friars can no longer continue in the Mission and have to abandon Manila and the Carolines, I am reminding your Most Reverend of the request I made in another letter that, in carrying out your just wishes, your Most Reverend may order their return to the Province they hail from.

With nothing else in particular at this time, I repeat to your Most Reverend my humble submission and respect and, kissing you hand, ask for myself and my subjects your paternal blessing.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

40. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 21 September 1899

1641 Most Reverend General Minister,

The Provincial Minister of the Province of Valencia, of the Precious Blood of Christ, for himself and in the name of his Provincial Defining Council, sincerely and humbly expresses to the Most Reverend Father:

That through the Pastoral Visit recently practiced in our Custodianship of Colombia, this Provincial Defining Council has been better to appreciate how poor and unhealthy the territory of our Mission is in general. For that reason, it is difficult to maintain some of the already established residences and many of the friars became sick, which the Province felt required having them return home, running up very substantial expenses since there is no location in the Mission where they could go to recover their health.

With regard to that, and having known that the city of Caracas and the territory of Venezuela which belonged to our Mission according to the boundaries that were established, were given to the friars of the Province of Castile, the Most Reverend Defining Council believe it was its duty to approach your Most Reverend to plead with him to attend to this vital need by deigning to order that the territories of the Diocese of Mérida and Maracaibo be added to our Mission.

This grace the provincial Defining Council does not doubt it will obtain from the undeniable zeal of the most Reverend Father for the good of the Order the Lord has entrusted to him and, especially, for the prosperity of the Missions.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

Most Reverend Father General Minister of the Capuchin Friars.

41. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 17 November 1899

1642 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerated and beloved General Minister: In due time I received the instructions of your Most Reverend referring to our Mission House of Barranquilla, and I was very satisfied to see that they were totally in accordance with the agreements we had made in the Defining Council and communicated to the Custodial Father of our Mission. In spite of that, I wrote again to that same Father passing along to him the orders of the Most Reverend Father and he has not answered me to date; this has upset me somewhat, because I wanted to see more diligence and concern from our representative at the Mission in its favor because, according to what the Visitor Father indicated to me, the Custodian had not traveled to the houses of the Mission until his arrival and turned out to be apathetic and useless for everything, to the extent that if he would have been a subject in the Province, I would consider relieving him to be advisable³¹.

1643 I have to inform your Most Reverend that, in agreement with the Defining Council, I decided to abandon the residence of Alcoy, in view of the impossibility of obtaining the foundation due the tenacious opposition of the clergy after we requested as a last resort a church where we could exercise our ministry. In addition, the town seeing that we are not dedicating ourselves to education, as they wished, have withdrawn and are not extending us the protection they promised at first.

1644 Due to working on the serious issue of exemption from military service which is demanding all our attention, I will need to make a trip to Madrid accompanied by another Father because I proposed, with this aim, to take charge of a mission in our possessions in Africa, as was agreed in the last Defining Council, and I need to see some people who can help me in this undertaking. I hope that your Most Reverend sends me obedience and his paternal blessing.

³¹ Referring to Father Antonio of Valencia. (Cf. 150 above; 1647).

I wanted your Most Reverend to tell me if, because of the position we hold, the Provincial Ministers can go to Madrid when we need to. I ask this because one of the Provincial Ministers of Spain mentioned it to me.

To Your Reverence, from your humble child and subject.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

42. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 7 December 1899

1645 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerated and beloved General Minister: I received the kind letter of your Most Reverend dated 26 November, and I thank you for the obedience to go to Madrid you included in it. I am sending to your Most Reverend the attached registered letter from the Superiors of our Convent of Totana demanding the expulsion of the choir member Brother NN. This young man asked me not long ago if I would obtain the dispensation of the vows, undoubtedly fearing the expulsion, which is well deserved for his bad behavior.

1646 I am making your Most Reverend aware that Brother NN. has requested to be transferred to the Province of Andalusia; as it is my responsibility, I happily granted him the permission. There is nothing in particular that I would have to request for anyone else, for praising that Province, and there are elements whose behavior is making it necessary to subdue them somewhat, which upsets and mortifies them.

To your Most Reverend, the least of your subjects kisses your hand and asks for your blessing.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

43. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 28 December 1899

1647 Most Reverend General Minister,

I just received the letter from the Custodial Father of our Mission in Colombia informing me of the sad new that virtuous Father and zealous Missionary Brother Gil of Benaguasil died on the 4th of this month, a victim of yellow fever. Having made your Most Reverend aware of this news, I beg that your Most Reverend inform Cardinal Vives, the Most Reverend Father Attorney General; the Most

Reverend Father Secretary of Missions, and the Most Reverend Father Ruperto of Manresa so they may pray to God for his soul.

Prior to the death of Father Gil, there was another Father who also died from the same illness; and the Custodian Father, who by nature is timid and cowardly, is among the most frightened and persists in wanting to abandon the position, which he renounced in the previous letter³².

Now your Most Reverend sees that we are asking with good reason that a healthy location be assigned to our Mission that would serve like an infirmary for our poor Missionaries; at the same time they have been stripped of the best one they had, in Caracas.

I am fearful, Most Reverend Father, that discouragement may overcome the Missionaries from the effect of the epidemic, the revolution that has begun in those lands and above all for the lack of spirit in the Custodian.

To your Most Reverend, the least of your subjects kisses your hand and asks for your blessing on his knees.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

44. TO THE SUPERIOR OF THE CAPUCHINS OF ORIHUELA
Massamagrell, 2 January 1900

1648 Reverend Guardian Father of the Convent of OrihueLA,

For our greater satisfaction and peace concerning the full and exact fulfillment of the masses that our Province must celebrate as intended by the most Reverend General Minister, we have decided to take responsibility for its application in the following by every priest in the Province.

For that purpose, then, and with aim that the convent help us somewhat in defraying the costs that are weighing upon us for the publication of our magazine: "Florecillas of San Francisco"³³, as well as many other attentions: We intend and order all the Guardians and your Most Reverend for the present that in the future fifteen masses will be conducted every month at our intention for the indicated goals, which we will note and record in our institutional book.

In conformity with our order, your Most Reverend will give a prompt reply per service, and its fulfillment, at the end of each month.

1649 In addition, so that the resolution of case of morality and regulations are not reduced to a mere formula and are done punctually by all the Fathers as ordered: We order that you send us on the last day of each month the solutions that

³² Cf. 150, 1642 above.

³³ Cf. 1726.

were given in the cases by himself and each one of the priests of his Community, written and signed by them.

We are communicating all of this to your Most Reverend for your knowledge and exact fulfillment.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

45. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 4 January 1900

1650 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerable and beloved General Minister: The Convent of Totana has sent me the request the choir member Brother NN. is making to your Most Reverend asking for the dispensation of vows, which I am sending to you and begging your Most Reverend for its prompt dispatch, because this gives the responsibility to the Superiors of that Convent, where it appears the choir member mentioned above is a great problem for the good operation of the School.

1651 I hope your Most Reverend will deign to grant the title of preacher to the Fathers Brother Mateo of Valencia, Brother Andrés of Benissa and Brother Eloy of Orihuela, for which I am including the certificates of examination. Of the five young priests examined, only these three deserved approval; a time period for a second examination has been granted to the other two.

1652 For the current year 1900, every month *forty masses* will be celebrated on the instructions of your Most Reverend, as there are forty priests in this Province; I am making you aware of this for your government. I have news of the return to Spain of the Provincial Father of Castile, and that makes me dare to remind your Most Reverend of the subject of increasing the territory of our Mission in Colombia, since you indicated to me you would resolve it after his arrival. Please do not be surprised by my insistence on this subject, because your Most Reverend is not unaware of the vital need there is for it, as explained by the reasons expressed in my previous letters.

1653 I sent three Directories of Divine Service in a registered package, and I beg your Most Reverend if he sees fit to accept one of them and offer, in my name, one to His Excellence and Most Reverend Cardinal and the other to the most Reverend Father General Attorney.

May your Most Reverend receive the affection of the least of his subjects, who asks for his blessing.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

46. TO THE CAPUCHINS OF OLLERÍA
Massamagrell, 19 January 1900

1654 Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Minister of this Province of the Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of Valencia (a.s.)

To our beloved children, the Reverend Guardian Father, Fathers and Brothers of our Convent of Ollería.

Greetings and seraphic blessing.

Our mother the Church is concerned, beloved Fathers and Brothers, for the spiritual good of its children and is continuously dispensing abundantly the treasure of indulgences to us, the reward of the infinite merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, his Holy Mother and the Saints who are the depository and judge for dispensing them.

With them, our soul, after being purified and clean of the stains that was making it ugly through sin, pays in full or in part the debt contracted with the divine Justice for it: it is prepared to receive greater and more abundant favors from Heaven and still can defray the souls who suffer in purgatory, to whom the Church allows to apply indulgences by means of a suffrage prayer.

1655 But if the Church always shows itself to be generous and liberal in paying for our treasures, it limits, to put it one way, its generosity in these times and under special circumstances. However, in the present year, since this is the last year of the 19th century for completing the term of the holy year named by the full jubilee that the Supreme Pontiffs often grant to the faithful. His Holiness Leo XIII, inspired by the desire to attract all men to God, the giver and source of all good, and wanting, at least in the final days of the century, to make compensation and give satisfaction to the Lord for the enormous crimes and sins that were committed during the century by individuals and societies alike, so that the most Holy Redeemer would be grateful for the homage we are paying to begin the coming century, has deigned to award this unique grace of the full jubilee to the faithful who visit the city of Rome, and grant to that end extraordinary authorizations to the confessors for the absolution of cases that have been set aside³⁴.

1656 But as many of the faithful are physically, morally or materially unable to make the journey to the Holy City, in consideration of that and wanting to make the attainment of this grace granted to all easier for them, His Holiness has seen fit to let them partake of the spiritual favors of the jubilee through the practice of the acts that their prelates are arranging for them.

We friars are among them ourselves, as our condition of poverty prevents us from being able to suffer the expenses the journey to Rome involves, as no matter how reasonable and meager they turn out to be, are always beyond our powers. For that reason, using the authority that the Roman Pontiff grants us in His papal bull *Aeterni Pastoris*, We order:

³⁴ Cf. LEO XIII: *Aeterni Pastoris*: ASS 32 (1899), pp. 260-264.

1657. 1. The practice of the diligences for earning the Holy Jubilee shall begin immediately, with the intention of having finished the spiritual exercises which are the best preparation to that end.

2. The four daily visits shall be done in our churches, in community and for a period of twenty consecutive days, which is the amount of time anticipated by His Holiness for the faithful in Rome.

3. Between visits, the friars will go out in processions in the areas around the convent chanting the major litanies and praying the holy rosary.

4. The friars who by virtue of holy obedience would have to be absent from the convent during the indicated days for the jubilee, we assign them to the visits to the parish church wherever they may find themselves.

1658 Finally, we recommend to our children that, imitating the zeal of the seraphic Patriarch for the conversion of sinners, pray insistently to the Lord to grant them more plentiful graces in the coming year with which, acknowledging their miserable state, they may convert to God.

To this end, we remind the local Superiors of the wish of the Most Reverend Defining Council that our priests especially consecrate the missions of our own Order, more necessary than ever in the present year, to support the goals and wishes of the Roman Pontiff.

Given in our Provincial Convent of St. Mary Magdalene (Massamagrell) on 19 March 1900.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

47. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Madrid, 21 January 1900

1659 Most Reverend General Minister,

The undersigned Provincial Ministers of the Provinces of Valencia and Castile state to the most Reverend Father:

In compliance with your order, they have met in Madrid to exchange views and agree on the issue of the territorial boundaries of their respective missions in the Americas and, after mature deliberation, believed it most advisable and fairest in meeting their individual needs to propose the following to your Most Reverend:

The Province of Valencia will keep the territory of the diocese of Cartagena and Santa Marta in Colombia, and the dioceses of Zulia and Mérida in Venezuela. The Missionaries of the Province of Castile will occupy the dioceses of Caracas, Barquisimeto, Calabozo and the Guayana Region in Venezuela.

We are making your Most Reverend aware of all this, confident that you will deign to give it your superior approval.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

BROTHER LADISLADO MARÍA OF RIONEGRO
Provincial Minister of Castile

48. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
31 January 1900

1660 Most Reverend Father Bernard of Andermatt, General Minister of the Capuchin Order, Rome.

Venerated and esteemed Father: I just returned from Madrid, where I went, with the obedience of your Most Reverend, to take care of various matters, principally the question of the military, as the solution can bring as much good as bad to us.

I spoke with the Minister of War and asked what our friars could do to claim from the government the privilege of exemption from the call up. I proposed to him to accept a mission in one of the Spanish possessions in North Africa, and this seemed a bit difficult, because the Minors have been granted them since ancient times. I also proposed contributing to education in the way that we were permitted by our Superiors, and this seemed much more suitable to the Minister in leading to the conclusion we both want so much.

1661 I already asked your Most Reverend on another occasion about the advisability of accepting the responsibility of education in the foundation of Alcoy, and your Most Reverend thought the time still had not arrived to undertake that kind of work. Unfortunately, the foundation of Alcoy failed completely and I recently ordered that it be abandoned.

I humbly plead with your Most Reverend to consider this matter and, taking into account the exceptional situation we are going through, see if it will be prudent to authorize me so that we can give lessons in some convent of our Province to the youths who go there. By doing this, we can go before the Government as an Institute dedicated to education and achieve the exemption from military service by this means.

For now, it is not possible for us to admit internal students, and our task would be reduced to giving classes to those pupils who come to our Convent; for that, there would have to be a location completely separated from the interior of the convent and with a separate door from the one used by the friars. The agreement on the limitation of the territory of the Custodianships of the Americas I sent to your Most Reverend a few days ago in a separation letter.

Hoping for the solution of your Most Reverend, I repeat that I am your servant and humble subject.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

49. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 12 February 1900

1662 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerated and beloved General Minister: Despite the fact that I wrote the most Reverend Attorney Father on the 9th about the subject you informed me of relating to Father Casimiro of Alzira, it worries me so much that I cannot stop from disturbing your Most Reverend to tell you: I wrote to the Father mentioned above, making some observations with the goal that he might change his opinion and indicating to him at the same time the negotiations that I have carried out to prevent the processing of his request from starting in order to obtain his restoration to this Province or the Mission of Colombia if he would choose that.

To gain time and assuming the blessing of your Most Reverend, I gave him the obedience.

Believe, most Reverend Father, that in his soul this young man would feel disgraced, as someone always much loved among us for his good behavior, interest and zeal for the order; this is why I have no doubt your solution was motivated by some serious quarrels he had with the Fathers who recently arrived in Chile.

For this reason, I ask your Most Reverend to authorize me to also call home the lay brother Brother Gabriel of Ador, who is in the same mission, since I fear that the same thing that happened with Brother Casimiro may happen to him.

From all this your Most Reverend will be able to understand the advisability of restoring to this Province the friars who are now outside of it, since the intense state of their feelings, as expressed in various letters, can never give a good result.

1663 Another new misfortune for our Mission in Colombia I have to inform your Most Reverend of is the death of the Reverend Father Angel of San Miguel de Gata, one of the friars who went on the last expedition with the Visitor Father. He is now the third victim of yellow fever in our Mission. Let the Lord be satisfied now!

Discouragement seems to be predominant among our Missionaries, undoubtedly influenced very much in that by the decline in spirits of the Custodian Father³⁵.

³⁵ Referring to Father Antonio of Valencia (cf. 150, 167 above).

Being very sensitive makes the replacement of the deceased Fathers very difficult, because the personnel become frightened from facing so many misfortunes over and over again and, in addition, they lack material resources. The Mission does not have any from what they tell me and I am in no condition to make new sacrifices, owing the Mission, as I do, "four thousand *pesetas*" that I had to take on as loaned for sending the latest expedition, trusting in the word of the Custodian Father that "everything would be paid".

I suppose they are acting with the power of your Most Reverend in the official letter related to the territorial division in the Missions, and the letter which I spoke of my discussion with the Minister of War dealing with the matter of the military drafts.

To your Most Reverend, the least of your subjects and obedient child who asks for your blessing.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

1664 I just received the official letter in which your Most Reverend informs me of the resolution of the Most Reverend General Defining Council about the territory of our Missions, for which I am very grateful.

I am including the attached letter from the friar who was a simply professed choir member of the Province of Toledo. Learn from this letter your Most Reverend, and for my part I must say that according to what I found out from the Most Reverend Father Melchor of Benissa, what this young man alleges is true. It is not inconvenient for me that he receives the Novitiate again, since he has given proofs of true vocation. I hope that your Most Reverend, taking all this into account, will use the indulgence with him.

BROTHER LUIS.
Provincial Minister

50. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 24 March 1900

1665 Most Reverend General Minister,
Venerated and beloved General Minister: The tribulations of our Mission in Colombia continue to increase by degrees. The Custodian Father writes me that Father Buenaventura of Carcaixent, an exemplary friar and very clever, has also died of yellow fever. They have left Santa Marta, and I believe Riohacha as well, and taken refuge in the Guajira (where they should never have left from!). In Barranquilla, what I assumed would happen did happen, that is: the Bishop, after seeing that the Parish of Barranquilla had left the Custodian Father with just a

single Father, wrote him that if they could not put more personnel there that they would retire and he would send lay priests; this is why he was required to return with the other friars.

Anticipating all these upsetting incidents, your Most Reverend will recall that in my previous letter, I told the Custodian General to avoid all extreme measures that might bring dishonor to the Order; but one can see the poor souls are possessed by panic and terror.

1666 One of the Fathers asked me for the obedience to come here; I did not judge it to be prudent to grant that, because that would open the door for the others to request the same thing. May God take pity on our Mission!

I would wish to know what is the will of your Most Reverend concerning the trip of the friars to Rome on account of the Jubilee and Congress, as there are several who would want to go, and some devout persons have offered to pay the costs of the trip for them. Tell me, then, your Most Reverend, whom you consider it prudent to grant the authorization to, and if I must ask the obedience for each of them, or if you authorize me to give them the obedience in your name.

He humbly asks for the blessing of the Most Reverend Father, for himself and his subjects, and kisses his hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL
Provincial Minister

51. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 7 April 1900

1667 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerated and beloved General Minister: I just received, long delayed, the very pleasant letter of your Most Reverend dated 28 March and complying with your commission, I am writing to the friars of our Mission in Colombia, encouraging them to suffer with resignation the tests the Lord wishes to subject them to, and truthfully there are more than a few of them! The epidemic of yellow fever, which is now declining, has been joined now by the war and the victory of the government of that Republic is becoming more doubtful every day. A missionary wrote me that the revolutionaries have now taken control of Riohacha, and the most important families have fled from there to take refuge in Barranquilla, the town where the Government forces are concentrating in order to defend it. If the revolutionaries emerge triumphant, I do not know what is going to become of our friars! May God take pity on our Mission!

1668 At the end of this month, a novice priest must profess in the Province, who was the one who bought us and restored the convent of Totana. This friar want to sell some of his buildings after his profession to deal with several family

commitments and works he wants to do in the Convent with the proceeds; to that end I need for your Most Reverend to tell me if he will be able to do that, by means of a representative who he may authorize for the sale after his profession.

1669 The Treasurer of the Act of the Propagation of the Faith asks that I send a Father to preach in the General Meeting of this Act, which will take place in Madrid on 3 May; for my part, I would like to accommodate her wish, as I have completed a request in favor of our Mission in Colombia. If Your Reverence considers this prudent, please deign to send me the obedience for Father Laureano of Massamagrell and a companion.

May your Most Reverend deign to send the attached letter to whomever they are addressed and bless the last of his subjects, who kisses his hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

52. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 14 April 1900

1670 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerated and beloved General Minister: On the occasion of the Easter holy day of the Resurrection of the Lord, your children, the members of the religious orders of this Province, and, on their behalf their unworthy Provincial Minister wish to congratulate your Most Reverend, and at the same time they commend you in their prayers.

To the Most Reverend Father, the least of your subjects, who asks your paternal blessing and kisses your hand.

P.S. May your Most Reverend deign to congratulate in my name the most Reverend General Definitor Fathers, especially Father Angel of Villaver and Father Antonio of Porrentruy.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

53. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 27 April 1900

1671 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerated and beloved General Minister: Yellow fever continues to wreak havoc in our Mission in Colombia; in the latest letter, they told me the youthful

choir member Brother Domingo of Carcaixent, professed in the novitiate there, has died. For this reason, Father Eugenio resolved to send all the younger friars back to Spain and I have assembled the Defining Council and agreed to accept the resignation that Father Antonio of Valencia has presented many time, appoint the Most Reverend Father Francisco of Orihuela to replace him. Similarly Father Atanasio of Manises was appointed so that he can take charge of instructing the young children, as he brings together outstanding gifts of virtue and knowledge and entered as a priest in the Order; he is of simple vows and I hope your Most Reverend will deign to send the obediences and the due authorization as soon as possible, since they have to embark in the first few days of May³⁶.

For the position of Teacher of Novices, left vacant by the departure of Father Francisco of Orihuela, I appoint Father José of Alcudia, who was the Vice Teacher; as he is two or three years younger than the regulations require, I need whoever serves your Most Reverend to order the necessary authorization and dispensation.

I ask for the paternal blessing of your Most Reverend, for himself and his subjects.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

54. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 20 May 1900

1672 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerated and beloved General Minister: In due time I received the very pleasant letter of your Most Reverend approving the agreements of this Provincial Defining Council relating to the Mission, and the obediences you included for Father Francisco of Orihuela and Atanasio of Manises, who are en route to Colombia since the 11th, the day they embarked from Barcelona. May Our Lord guide their steps and take pity on our Mission!³⁷

1673 I need for your Most Reverend to send me as soon as possible the authorization so that I can execute the deed for our convent of Orihuela in the names of some of our friars, always provided that the owners are inclined to cede the property to the Order. Currently, we have only one usufruct and there is the danger that if it would reach the stage of an expulsion, the owners then may sell it or arrange it to their taste. I approached the Most Reverend Attorney Father about this some time ago, believing it to be his responsibility; today I am writing to your Most Reverend, begging him for a prompt solution since one of the owners who was in favor of the ceding the property died in recent days, which is going to make the favorable resolution of the matter more difficult.

³⁶ Cf. 150, 151 above.

³⁷ Cf. 150, 151, 1671.

I beg your Most Reverend to deign to greet in my names His Holy Eminence and the Most Reverend Attorney Father, and telling him that I have received the age dispensation for the Teacher of Novices Father.

To your Most Reverend, I remain your humble child who asks for his paternal blessing for himself and his Province.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

55. TO FATHER CASIMIRO OF ALZIRA, OFM CAP.
Massamagrell, 22 May 1900

1674 Most Reverend Father Casimiro of Alzira,

Beloved Father: When I was anxiously waiting and the arrival of your Most Reverend and Brother Gabriel of Ador, I received your letter dated last 10 April. I found out through everything that had occurred to your Most Reverend in that Mission, which certainly does not surprise me since I assumed something like that happened and wrote to Rome in that vein. What does surprise me is that your Most Reverend would not remember in your arguments that your Mother the Province of Valencia would always have received you fondly with open arms, as it does all the children it has in faraway lands at great sacrifice.

But regarding the consequences, my child, of the decision that your Most Reverend made in view of these disagreements, I can only tell that it was very rash and highly damaging to your soul.

Do not let yourself be blinded by self-regard, it is a bad adviser, or take any notice of the promises and flattery of laymen, and believe that, if God does not change His mind, the mission of your Most Reverend is within the Order, which He called you to with a special vocation.

In no way, then, should your Most Reverend expect me to contribute to your spiritual ruin by requesting, as you indicate to me, the *ad tempus* brief; instead I will make it more difficult for your own good.

I insist, therefore, in the fulfillment of the obedience that I sent to your Most Reverend and Brother Gabriel of Ador, in agreement with, and with authorization by, our most Reverend General Minister.

Let both of you come without wasting any time, because your Father and servant in Christ, who blesses you, is waiting for you impatiently.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

56. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 3 June 1900

1675 The Provincial Minister of the Capuchin Friars of the Province of the Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of Valencia,

...Kissing the hand of the Most Reverend General Minister, in my own name and on behalf of my subjects, congratulates you in the current holy days, asking the Holy Spirit to grant you the necessary light for carrying out your painful and difficult position.

Father Luis of Massamagrell takes this opportunity to repeat to You with pleasure that he is your true and sincere servant in Jesus Christ.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

57. TO THE CAPUCHINS OF ORIHUELA
Massamagrell, 20 June 1900

1676 Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Minister (l.i.) of this Province of the Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of Valencia,

To the beloved children the Reverend Guardian Father, Fathers and Brothers of our Convent of Orihuela.

Venerable Fathers and Beloved brothers: As nearly one year has passed since we practiced the Holy Visit in the convents of our beloved Province, and wanting to comply with the obligation that our pastoral position imposes on us of attending to your needs, especially spiritual; inspiring, to the degree it depends on us, your zeal for regular observance, the very firm foundation of our moral and material progress and eliminating the abuses which can be introduced in opposition to it, we have decided to visit you this year, like the previous year, in the coming month of July, beginning on the 6th at the Convent of Monforte and continuing on to Totana, Orihuela, Ollería and the residence of Valencia, to finish up in our Provincial Convent.

1677 In due time you will be advised of the day and hour of our arrival. And we advise the Reverend Guardian Fathers that, in order not to make us waste time, they excuse us from any visits and matters apart from our object.

For this reason, the end of course examinations and those of young priests will also take place with the Definitor Fathers attending them, as was done on the previous visit.

We bless you from the heart and commend you in our prayers.

Given in our Provincial Convent of St. Mary Magdalene (Massamagrell) on 20 June 1900.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

58. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 9 July 1900

1678 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerated and beloved Father: For the knowledge and government of your Most Reverend in the matter of Father Casimiro of Alzira, I am including the letters that I received from the Bishop of Concepción and the regular Superior of that Mission, with the copy of the answers exchanged between them, which I would appreciate if your Most Reverend would return them to me.

Similarly, I am sending to your Most Reverend the letter I received from Caracas from Brother Rafael María of Rafelbuñol, so that your Most Reverend may take responsibility for it and in your views deign to grant the transfer of the mentioned brother to our Mission, exchanging him for Brother Buenaventura of Cubillas, whom we have in Colombia and if it is advisable for him to leave there.

May your Most Reverend deign to look at the observations that Father Antonio of Valencia has made for me from Colombia, and inform me of the solution to each one, so that I can answer him.

Please give me dispensation for disturbing you so much and may your Most Reverend command the least of your subjects, who kisses your hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
 Provincial Minister

59. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 6 August 1900

1679 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerated and beloved Father: I received the letters from your Most Reverend, which I have not answered before due to being on the official visit and still not having any news of the arrival of Father Francisco of Orihuela to the Custodianship of Colombia.

The request of the Bishop of Maracaibo is fully satisfied, since in this Provincial Defining Council it was decided that the residence of the new Custodian and house of studies for our choir members would be in Maracaibo because the war, which is still going on, is making traveling very difficult. I know nothing of Father Casimiro of Alzira; if your Most Reverend has some word, I would appreciate if you would inform me.

May your Most Reverend receive the affection of the least of his subjects, who asks for your paternal blessing and kisses your hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
 Provincial Minister

60. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 19 August 1900

1680 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerated and beloved Father: On account of tomorrow being the day of your Saint, I am writing to congratulate Your Reverence, and repeat once again the wish of all the friars of this Province that God grant you many years of life and an abundance of graces to continue governing the destinies of our Order, which the Lord entrusted to you, with the accuracy and sound judgment so characteristic of Your Reverence.

I have had news of the Custodian Father of our Mission in Colombia and he tells me: "I was not able to go to Maracaibo because they are not allowing passage there due to the plague and the war they are saying will be inevitable between the two republics once the war under way in Colombia is finished, since Venezuela has favored the revolutionaries".

1681 As the date for the Congress of Third Order friars approaches, I have to express to your Most Reverend that, despite our efforts, there are scarcely any Third Order friars from this province who can go to Rome, since it is the time for the main collections in this regions; in addition, those who are determined to go did so in the month of May, during the diocesan pilgrimage, taking into account the difficulty they would encounter by realizing it in September. To all of that would be added how costly the trip would be due to not having granted a reduction in prices except for sizable groups of pilgrims.

For this reason, I am somewhat discouraged about attending the Congress, since it seems to me like a slight to present myself in Rome without a normal contingent of Third Order friars³⁸.

If, in spite of this, it seems prudent to your Most Reverend that I would come to Rome, please deign to send me the obedience.

Your humble child asks for your paternal blessing.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
 Provincial Minister

61. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 25 August 1900

1682 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerated and beloved Father: Convinced that its content will be very pleasing to your Most Reverend, I am transcribing the letter from Father Casimiro of Alzira,

³⁸ Cf. 157 above; 1683.

which I received yesterday to the great comfort and satisfaction of my soul and says:

“Los Angeles, on 6 July 1900.

Most Reverend Father Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Minister of the Province of Valencia.

My beloved Father: Finally we will bury everything in oblivion and for Our Father St. Francis we will be in that, God willing. The kindness and sound judgment of the Most Reverend Father are characteristic of a good Superior. May the Lord bless you and compensate for what you have done for me.

We will leave with Brother Gabriel in mid-August, because before that we have to put a few small matters in order and above all, reconcile our spirits as much as we can. If it is possible, we will telegraph the Most Reverend Father from some port on the journey indicating the day and location of our arrival.

When we have the pleasure of speaking personally, you will know in detail the causes of this complicated mess and reasons for the quarrel. I do not want to say by this that I no longer acknowledge my rash and damaging decision, since I recognize and confess to it.

Nevertheless, the Most Reverend Father calmed me that I am returning content, without paying the slightest attention to the laymen and their promises and with only the desire to work to the degree that my poor strength allow for the prosperity of my beloved Province, and with that in the salvation of souls.

I greet you very affectionately and your true brother in Christ asks for your paternal blessing.

BROTHER CASIMIRO MARÍA OF ALZIRA
Capuchin Minister

Most Reverend Father: With this matter concluding so happily, thanks to God, let me comply in expressing my gratitude and appreciation for the sound judgment and accuracy with which your Most Reverend proceeded, thus avoiding that Father Casimiro continue to rush towards his rash decision.

The last and least of your subjects kisses the hand of your Most Reverend and asks for your paternal blessing for himself and the Province.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

62. TO THE CAPUCHINS OF OLLERÍA
Massamagrell, 15 September 1900

1683 To the Reverend Guardian Father and friars of our Convent of Ollería,

As we must depart for Rome next Tuesday, the 18th³⁹, we are leaving the Most Reverend Father Fermín of Velilla, the Provincial Definitor, in charge of the governing of the Province during our absence, to whom all our beloved subjects will be able to and should approach, as you do with Us, for the solution of those matters that do not allow any delay.

After saying farewell to Your Charities, we recommend your prayers for the happy success of your journey and concerning the Good of the Province we are thinking of dealing with our General Superiors for this reason; as long as We, as a guarantee of gratitude, bless them from the deepest part of our heart.

Given in our Provincial Convent of St. Mary Magdalene (Massamagrell) on 20 June 1900.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

63. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 17 September 1900

1684 Most Reverend General Minister and Definitor,

The Undersigned Provincial Minister interim of Valencia, named of the Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, sincerely express to your Most Reverend Fathers:

Judging it to be of the utmost advisability for this province to take responsibility for the addition of the territory of the Civil province of Castellón de la Plana⁴⁰, belonging to the Valencia Region and which historically formed part of this province of the Precious Blood.

I can assure your Most Reverends that this is the desire of all the friars because, as these are towns in Valencia, therefore they come to our convents demanding preaching and other services and are left unattended for not being in our jurisdiction and far away from the Convent of Barcelona, the closest one of that Province. All those reasons the writer of this letter has expressed to the Most Reverend Provincial Father of Catalonia, proposing to him the exchange of the Balearic Island, which are part of our Province for the previously mentioned territory of Castellón, and being in complete agreement, I approach the Most Reverend Fathers asking for your superior permission and confirmation.

This grace the writer of this letter does not doubt in obtaining for the acknowledged interest that the Most Reverend Fathers have shown for the good of our Province, and may God preserve your lives for many years.

³⁹ Cf. 157, 1681 above.

⁴⁰ Cf. 1689, 1691.

Provincial Convent of St. Mary Magdalene, Massamagrell, on the day of the Appearance of the Stigmata of Father St. Francis, 17 September 1900.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

64. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 17 September 1900

1685 Most Reverend General Minister and Definitors,

The Undersigned Provincial Minister (interim) of Valencia, named of the Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, sincerely express to your Most Reverend Fathers:

With the goal and wish of duly taking care of the needs of the Missions among the unfaithful, a favorite objective of Our Seraphic Patriarch, for the glory of God and the good for their souls that results:⁴¹

He judges it very advisable and even necessary to establish in our Province a School of Missionaries with Novitiate and Studies, where the members of the order are trained and educated from their youth in the emotion and love of the Missions to which they must later dedicate themselves⁴².

This would avoid the great problem presented by having to send missionaries, as there are very few who have the vocation for it, and sending them against their will results in serious problems. In addition, the proper operation of the Mission would be ensured this way as well as the sending of personnel, even in the case of any event at some time when there would not be good communication between the Superiors of the Province and those of the Mission. This School, although belonging to the Province, should be independent in a certain way from its Provincial Superior, so that the Superior could never shift around or change the personnel assigned to it without the consent of the local Prelate and his Discreet advisers, and be governed by a special Regulation that could be based on which the most Reverend General Minister, Brother Pablo of Colindres, wrote for the School of Missionaries of Monovar in this Province on 7 May 1764.

The writer of this letter pleads with the Most Reverend Fathers to take the reasons mentioned above, and understanding the interest and zeal which motivate them, and deign to grant their superior permission for the foundation of the referred School, so it can then be realized.

This grace the writer of this letter hopes to obtain from the kindness and sound judgment that characterize your Most Reverends, and may God preserve your lives for many years.

⁴¹ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: IR 16, in works cited, pp. 1011-102, 2R 12, in works cited, p. 116.

⁴² Cf. 1716.

Provincial Convent of St. Mary Magdalene, Massamagrell, on the day of the Appearance of the Stigmata of Father St. Francis, 17 September 1900.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

65. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Rome, 29 September 1900

1686 Most Reverend General Minister,

The undersigned Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Minister of Valencia (interim), caring for the good and prosperity of the Mission entrusted to me, believe in my duty to provide some facts, so that with greater awareness of the causes you may judge and resolve, in accordance with justice, the conflict provoked by the Missionaries of Castile over the territory of Maracaibo, belong to our Custodianship of the Precious Blood; to that end, I move on to state the following:

1687 1. The meeting that the Provincial Ministers of Castile and Valencia had in Madrid by order of the Most Reverend Father acknowledged the vital need of giving part of Venezuela to our Custodianship, in order to grant it the means for healthiness and subsistence, setting the territorial boundaries of both Custodianships by mutual agreement, which we submitted to the Most Reverend General Defining Council for their examination and approval.

2. This is to warn that, according to the testimony of all the Fathers who have been or currently are in our Mission, the Guajira cannot maintain itself in any way without Maracaibo, the town where it receives its alms for subsistence in coins and currency.

3. It is recognized by all, as the great loss of life among our Missionaries attests, how unhealthy the land assigned to our Custodianship in Columbia is and therefore with good reason claimed the dioceses of Maracaibo and Mérida in Venezuela.

4. From reliable testimony, I know of the works that some of the Fathers of the Castile Guardianship were doing in order to turn the Bishops of Maracaibo and Mérida against the friars from Valencia, with the aim that they not allow them in their dioceses. This is highly reprehensible and punishable behavior, which is confirmed in the letter of the Bishop of Maracaibo to the Most Reverend Father.

5. I also have to argue, in opposition to what the Bishop of Maracaibo says and given the vast and extensive territory of that Republic, that I do not see how there would be any difficulty in the country being distributed among and served by friars from different Provinces, as occurs in Colombia and many other Republics in the Americas.

1688 In addition, if it is true that the disgraced Father NN. gave a bad example of his apostasy there, it is just as true that the Fathers of our Mission have worked

hard and with great results and edification of the faithful in that City; Father Ildefonso of Llanera, among others, who died there like an apostle and whose grave is visited with great veneration; Father Francisco of Orihuela, who is considered like a saint everywhere and whom the Bishop himself took for his director.

From everything stated above, I do not believe your Most Reverend should attach any significance to the action of the Bishop of Maracaibo, undoubtedly suggested to him by the friars of the Castile Custodianship, and will impose on them the disciplinary actions that such reproachable conduct deserves.

But if the circumstances dictate otherwise, in the name of the Province of Valencia, which I represent albeit unworthy, I must declare that we would see the need to beg the Most Reverend Father to relieve us from responsibility for the Mission of the Guajira, which, as previously mentioned, cannot survive without Maracaibo, and give it to the Fathers of the Castile Custodianship.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

66. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 23 September 1900

1689 Most Reverend General Minister,

Beloved General Minister: I have received the letter of the most Reverend Provincial Minister of Catalonia informing me that my proposal for the exchange of territory of Castellón de la Plana with the Balearic Islands was unanimously accepted in the Defining Council meeting that was held and to notify your Most Reverend of this development. I hope, then, that this will leave the matter favorably resolved, with the most Reverend Defining Council decreeing it as such⁴³.

1690 As your Most Reverend will see from the attached statistical report, there are currently *forty three* Fathers in the Province; therefore, just as many masses will be celebrated monthly in the coming year as Your Reverence intends; if you do not look favorably on reducing their number somewhat in consideration of the needs of this newly founded Province and its Mission, as I am still in debt for the travels of the two expeditions of missionaries I sent.

Let me, like a good son, congratulate the Most Reverend Father, with all the friars of this province, on the forthcoming Christmas holy days and the New Year, wishing for him all sorts of joys and the continuation of the graces which the Lord is dispensing to him in the government of our Order.

The least of his subjects asks for himself and his Province the blessing of your Most Reverend, and kisses your hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

⁴³ Cf. 1684 above; 1691.

67. TO THE SUPERIOR OF THE CAPUCHINS OF ORIHUELA
Massamagrell, 9 January 1901

1691 Most Reverend Guardian Father of the Convent of Orihuela.

For the awareness of your Most Reverend and the members of the Order of this venerable Community, I inform you of the following agreement of our Most Reverend General Minister and his Defining Council. It says:

“Most Reverend Father Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Minister of Valencia.

The General Defining Council, in a meeting held on the date above, has discussed the request that your Most Reverend and the Reverend Provincial Minister of Catalonia in accordance with your respective Definitors, and having considered the reasons stated, have granted your request. To that effect, it is decreed:

1. All the territory of the province of Castellón de la Plana, which is from the diocese of Tortosa and thereby belonged to the province of Catalonia, shall pass from this date to belong to the Province of Valencia.

2. All the territory of the islands of Mallorca, Minorca, and Ibiza will belong to the Province of Catalonia, and no longer belong to the Province of Valencia. May your Most Reverend inform your Defining Council and the Guardians with an interest in the territories mentioned⁴⁴.

Given in Rome on 2 January 1901.

BROTHER BERNARD OF ANDERMATT.
Capuchin General Minister.

This is a faithful copy of the original preserved in the Provincial Archive.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

68. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 9 January 1901

1692 Most Reverend General Minister,

Through letters received from our Custodianship in the Americas, which were read in the Defining Council meeting, we have known the definitive decision of the Bishop of Zulia (Maracaibo) favorable to the continued stay of the missionaries of the Province of Castile in that city. As your Most Reverend will well know, this makes impossible the fulfillment of everything that was decided by the Most

⁴⁴ Cf. 1684, 1689 above.

Reverend General Defining Council, with respect to the territorial division of those Custodianships in the Americas.

1693 On the other hand, the committee commissioned by the Governments of those republics of the territorial boundaries of the civil boundaries for the land which has to belong to each of them, has placed the dividing line right through the center of La Guajira. Luckily, our residence in Guarero is included in Venezuelan territory. Given that situation and being impossible, however to take care of the sustenance of that station without being able to count on Maracaibo, the evacuation of Guarero by our missionaries became necessary so that the Fathers from Castile could occupy it. That was done, but it means the mission of La Guajira is now subject to two provinces and two Regular Superiors, which obviously is a serious obstacle for its government and prosperity.

1694 Your Most Reverend knows very well that our efforts to have the Diocese of Maracaiba were based on the vital need of the last stations of La Guajira to be able to turn to Maracaibo for their maintenance. As it appears from the latest letters, this is no longer feasible given the attitude of that Bishop. Therefore, we beg your Most Reverend to decide that our missionaries no longer have anything to do with La Guajira Mission, looking instead to the Mission of the Magdalena River and Santa Marta and some other area within its boundaries where a foundation may appear opportune.

This Provincial Defining Council begs Your Most Reverend to give providences in the present case in order able to inform our missionaries in as short a period of time as possible.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL, Provincial Minister
 BROTHER FERMÍN OF VELLILLA,
 BROTHER FIDEL OF ALZIRA.
 BROTHER MELCHOR OF BENISSA.

69. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 21 January 1901

1695 Most Reverend General Minister,

The undersigned Provincial Minister and Definitors of the Province of the Precious Blood of Valencia, meeting in congregation and compelled by the bad behavior of some friars who consider are considered incorrigible for their repeated relapses, and believe that enduring them in the order any longer would only transfer discredit and ruin to it, see it as an essential need to approach Your Most Reverend asking for their expulsion, explaining the causes which support this request.

1696 The first friar is Brother NN⁴⁵, of solemn vows, who already had to be removed from the convents of this diocese of Valencia on another occasion at the request of the Archbishop, due to his not uplifting and in fact scandalous dealing with women. Today this complaint for conduct of the Penitentiary Priest of Orihuela and the Bishop, who are similarly inclined that he be transferred outside the diocese, having reached the situation where there is scarcely any convent in the Province where he could be sent. Additionally, a letter from a nun addressed to him was discovered that suggests an illicit and scandalous correspondence between the Father mentioned above and this nun; and, above all else, he is a disruptive element in the convents and destroyer of the authority of the superiors with his continuous gossip before the friars and lay brothers.

The second is Brother NN. (Anonymous), choir member of solemn vows. Through his rebellious character and being disrespectful towards his superiors and with many of his fellow friars, he not only is the foundation of outrage, but fosters the continuous disruption of the school that is divided into bands and factions, making us fearful with good foundation that it would be very disastrous for the Order if he perseveres in it.

A final one is Brother NN., a Lay Brother, and similarly of solemn vows, who the Guardian Father of this convent has sworn *in verbo sacerdotio* (on his word as a priest) that several times he has sinned *in re turpi* (immoral and obscene acts) and his arrogant audacity reached the point of glorying in it before a lay brother. On being punished for these excesses, he candidly confessed they were true and that makes his continued presence in the Order intolerable.

1697 After the sad need to bring such an unpleasant petition before Your Reverence, we plead that you deign to examine all the referred cases and give with your supreme authority the advisable providence so these rotten limbs may quickly be separated from the body of our religion so it is not in danger of suffering damage to the fervor of the observance and the honor and reputation it must have before the lay brothers.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL,
Provincial Minister

BROTHER FERMÍN OF VELLILLA, 1st Definitor
BROTHER MELCHOR OF BENISSA, 2nd Definitor
BROTHER FIDEL OF ALZIRA, 3rd Definitor

70. TO THE CAPUCHINS OF ORIHUELA
Massamagrell, 24 February 1901

1698 We, Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Minister of the Province of the Precious Blood of Christ, of Valencia (interim)

⁴⁵ We are omitting their names for reasons of discretion and prudence.

To our beloved children, the members of the Order of the Convent of Orihuela.

The recent attacks and insults the members of Religious Orders have been the target of in different points of our unfortunate nation, venerable Fathers and brothers, worries and upsets us greatly, not so much for the sad future it foretells for us, perhaps in the not too distant future; nor for fear that they are carrying out on us the sectarian plans these excesses reveal, but instead for imagining that the unfortunate souls persecuting us and calling for our banishment and even death at the top of their lungs could be instruments of the Divine Justice.

We have repeatedly overheard people say that the reason for the Lord allowing the friars to be driven from the cloisters in 1835 was their relaxation and lack of observance. But, be that as it may, what is beyond all doubt is that Lord punishes more severely the sins and unfaithfulness of those who form, to put it one way, his select group; in the same way that he is especially fond of them and granted them greater intelligence to in order to know him and more abundant graces to serve him and obtain their salvation.

1699 However, my beloved children, if we consider the decadence of spirit that has come to characterize the friars, does not it seem that we have more than enough reason to fear it may be the Justice of God that weighs upon us, and by which an even greater punishment could strike us?

In fact, when have you seen less respect and veneration by the subordinates towards their Prelates, the representatives of God, whom they treat as equals, censuring and criticizing their acts and ridiculing them in front of both religious and lay people?

When have you observed greater ease and self-assurance in dealing with persons of the opposite sex?

When has there ever been less humility and submission in the friars, who become lost causes by not even receiving well the paternal reprimands of their Superiors?

1700 The pride, arrogance and lack of fraternal charity are evils which many of our young people suffer from, and you can say the Liberal virus has poisoned even those who abominate such a pernicious heresy.

And with such an accumulation of miseries and misfortunes, what can we and should expect? How can we complain of those who persecute us if they are undoubtedly instruments of God for punishing our sins?

In order to curtail these ills, we have made use of every means that sound judgment suggested to us, being more inclined to mercy in accordance with the advice of the Seraphic Patriarch⁴⁶ and as the one best suited to our nature⁴⁷. But seeing that this turns out to be counterproductive for some, and it could be argued that our benevolence increases the evil, we are letting you know that in the future,

⁴⁶ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 2R 7:2, in works cited, p. 114; 2LetF 43, in works cited, p. 57; LetM 9-11, in works cited, p. 72.

⁴⁷ Cf. 21 above; 1719..

in accordance with the wishes of our Defining Council, we will let justice have its day, although without forgetting that we are fathers...

By trying to correct your faults you will attract the blessings of Heaven upon you and not put the Superiors in the uncomfortable but necessary position of having to make you feel the weight of justice.

Your servant, who blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

71. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 26 April 1901

1701 Most Reverend General Minister,

Venerated and beloved General Minister: In due time I received the letter from the Most Reverend Father of 26 February in which you ordered that our friars withdraw from the city of Maracaibo, leaving it to the friars of Castile. This resolution surprised this Provincial Defining Council a great deal, since it deals with a territory that corresponds by law to our Province, and even more for being necessary in every way for the survival of La Guajira Mission; and they commissioned me to ask your Most Reverend if the decree of territorial division of the Custodianships, dated 5 February 1900, remains in effect or if it was revoked, and if by forbidding us to found in Maracaibo, it also forbids us from exercising the holy ministry in this city.

1702 I suppose your Most Reverend is not unaware that La Guajira Peninsula was recently divided between the two republics of Venezuela and Columbia, and the residence at Guarero and another one are today in Venezuelan territory. As a result, if the decree of territorial division of the Custodianships has been revoked, this part of La Guajira territory belongs to the missionaries of Castile.

It is very regrettable, most Reverend Father, that the scheming and disobedience of some Fathers of the Castile Custodianship influenced and turned the spirit of the Bishop of Maracaibo against our missionaries, and having rendered the decree of the Most Reverend General Defining Council useless, destroyed our Mission.

1703 Your Most Reverend will recall that some time ago I asked for the expulsion of Brother David of NN., choir member of solemn vows, and by your order I separated him from the course; today, I have to notify you that he has appealed before the Bishop of Murcia and his ecclesiastical Court against the validity of his solemn profession. I was waiting for the sentence to send it to you but, seeing that it is delayed and the choir member is exasperated, I am including they letter he sent me for your Most Reverend, and I hope you tell me what is advisable or what should be done in the case.

1704 The Fathers Francisco María of Massamagrell and Ramón of La Llosa have informed me that, for reasons of health for the former and to attend to the needs of his mother for the latter, they have requested of your Most Reverend secularization *ad tempus* (temporarily). I do not see the reasons both express as well-founded, since the doctors tell me that the illness of Father Francisco is purely moral; and with respect to Father Ramón, I must advise you he has been giving his mother one *peseta* daily for quite some time now. In spite of that, may your Most Reverend do what you consider best.

1705 I suppose that the criticisms and unusual circumstances we are going through and the imminent danger of expulsion we are facing are the reasons why the spirits of the weak and lukewarm souls are flagging. They give whoever has lost his vocation an excuse to ask to leave so the decision of these two Fathers does not surprise me.

I would like your Most Reverend to give me some instructions in order to know what to do in the sad but probable event of an expulsion.

Several priests have asked me for authority to give the scapular of the Patriarch St. Joseph; I would appreciate if your Most Reverend could send me some of them. The least of your subjects, who asks for your paternal blessing.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

72. TO A CAPUCHIN FRIAR
Massamagrell, 11 May 1901

1706 Beloved brother Salvador,
Deliver one thousand pesetas to the Reverend Father Querubín, the donor, which will be deposited to my account as a donation for the needs of the convent of Orito.

Your brother.

BROTHER LUIS
Provincial Minister

73. TO THE CAPUCHINS OF ORIHUELA
Massamagrell, 13 May 1901

1707 We, Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Minister of the Capuchin Minor Friars of Valencia.

To our beloved children, the Reverend Guardian Father and friars of the Convent of Orihuela.

The time is approaching, beloved Fathers and Brothers, when we have done the Holy Pastoral Visit in past years, and since it is convenient to move the date forward this year for various reasons, we have decided to start it on 29 May in our Convent of Ollería, continuing on to in the following order: Monforte, Orihuela, Totana, Residence of Valencia and Massamagrell.

For this reason, the examinations of young Fathers and the end of course exams in our Schools and Seraphic School will take place then.

We hope that our subjects will take heed of the need and importance of the Pastoral Visit and we will denounce with all sincerity and charity the things that demand correction or change, for which end we grant them the merit of holy obedience.

Given in our Provincial Convent of St. Mary Magdalene, Massamagrell, on 13 May 1901.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

74. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 4 July 1901

1708 To the Most Reverend Father Bernard of Andermatt, General Minister of the Capuchin Minors Order

Most Reverend General Minister: On the verge now of completing the third year of the restoration of our Province of the Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of Valencia, we consider it our duty, in accordance with the laws and customs of our Order, to deal with those matters concerning the celebration of the future Chapter meeting, to designate a time for it, and require from the Most Reverend Father the authorization to hold it.

First, referring to the time, despite the fact the three-year term concludes on 16 December 1901, it seemed to us more useful and timely to extend it for a few days, out of consideration for the solemnity of the Birth and Epiphany of the Lord, and select and set 10 January 1902 for the celebration of the Chapter.

The most appropriate place seemed to us to be the Provincial convent of St. Mary Magdalene in Massamagrell, Valencia.

In addition, with the reduced number of Chapter members in our Province and in order to increase it to some extent, we thought of begging the Most Reverend Father, just for this one time, to grant passive and active voice to the Reverend

Father Provincial Secretary, the Reverend Father President of the convent of Orito-Monforte, and the Reverend Father Vicars⁴⁸.

May the Most Reverend Father deign to consider all these circumstances and award the requested authorization, if that seems in order to him.

To the Most Reverend Father, from your most obedient children in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL, Provincial Minister
 BROTHER FERMÍN OF VELILLA, 1st Definitor
 BROTHER MELCHOR OF BENISSA, 2nd Definitor
 BROTHER FIDEL OF ALZIRA, 3rd Definitor

75. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 5 July 1901

1709 To the most Reverend General Minister of the Capuchin Minor Friars, Rome.

Venerated and beloved General Minister: Having concluded the Defining Council in which we were primarily concerned with the matters relating to the Provincial Chapter meeting, I am sending to the Most Reverend Father this request asking for your permission to celebrate it; and I urge that you deign to grant the passive and active voice to those for whom this Defining Council has requested it, so that by increasing the number of members, there would be more to select from⁴⁹.

I hope that on sending me the authorization for the celebration of the Chapter meeting, you will include the obedience for the Most Reverend Father Francisco of Orihuela, the Guardian of our Mission and Definitor, as the Province wishes for his presence and he hast to be summoned well in advance.

I also wish that you deign to renew the attached powers of the Sacred Penance. Once again I remind your Most Reverend that several priests have asked for the power to confer the Scapular of St. Joseph and I would appreciate it if you could send me some of them.

The least of the subjects of your Most Reverend asks for your blessing for himself and his Province, and kisses your hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
 Provincial Minister

⁴⁸ Cf. 1709, 1718.

⁴⁹ Cf. 1708 above; 1718.

76. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 12 July 1901

1710 Most Reverend General Minister of the Capuchin Minors, Rome.

Venerated and beloved General Minister: Your Most Reverend will recall that over a year ago I wrote to share with you that Father Antonio of Valencia, then Guardian of our La Guajira Mission, informed me on behalf of his Excellency, the Apostolic Envoy of Colombia, of the proposal and determination the Envoy had in creating an Apostolic Vicariate in our Mission there.

At that time I asked your Most Reverend what was happening with that proposal, both for my government and to be able to answer the Envoy; but as your Most Reverend did not say anything to me, I thought the idea was unfeasible and did not concern myself with it.

A few days ago I received the letter of Father Eugenio of Carcaixent containing another letter from the Envoy insisting on the same point, and indicating the boundaries of the Vicariate which satisfy the wishes of the Bishop of Santa Marta, in whose diocese lie the lands they are thinking of assigning to it, and asking for my acceptance. They also are sending me a map so I can better study the location of the territory, and I sent a faithful copy of all that to your Most Reverend, in agreement with the Provincial Defining Council and I hope you will deign to tell me what I should do about this matter.

To your Most Reverend, the least of your subjects asks for your paternal blessing and kisses your hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
 Provincial Minister

77. TO CARDINAL VIVES Y TUTÓ
Massamagrell, 12 July 1901

1711 Your Excellency and Most Reverend Cardinal Vives y Tutó

Most venerated and beloved Prelate: The Fathers of our Mission have written me repeatedly, telling me of the project and proposal His Excellency the Apostolic Envoy of Colombia has of creating an Apostolic Vicariate in La Guajira. However much this idea might flatter me, given the importance and usefulness that would result to our Mission, nevertheless I never gave the idea much credence, even though one of the times I was informed was at the direction of the Envoy, due to believing that our Mission was not in condition for it. But recently Father Eugenio sent me a letter from the Apostolic Envoy speaking about this matter, and settling the boundaries of the Vicariate according to the indications and wishes of

Monsignor Celedón, the Bishop of Santa Marta; and that is making me think if he has his heart set on carrying out this project.

For that reason, then, and because I have to answer the Apostolic Envoy, I would greatly appreciate if Your Eminence would tell me, with complete frankness, what I can and should do about this particular subject in order to proceed in the right direction.

I am informing the most Reverend General Minister of this matter on this date as well; and I made some mention, albeit indirectly, to the most Reverend General Attorney. I beg Your Eminence to take part in it so that, with the interest that our Province inspires in you, we can work together for the happy solution of the case, if Your Eminence and the Most Reverend Father judge it to be advisable.

I am transcribing below the letters of Father Eugenio and the Apostolic Envoy, and including the copy of a map of the future Vicariate, so that you can study the matter better.

For this reason, I repeat to Your Eminence, your humble child who kisses your Pastoral Ring and asks for your blessing.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

78. TO THE CAPUCHINS OF ORIHUELA
Orihuela, 24 September 1901

1712 Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Minister of the Province of Valencia.

We want to make known to our beloved friars of the Convent of Orihuela: In view of the serious arguments that some lay Brothers of this Community have provoked over questions of little or no importance, ignoring the spirit of humility and obedience that must inspire them, in agreement and with the advice of our most Reverend Definitor Fathers, we have decided the following:

1. Recommend to the Reverend Guardian Father to that he carefully make sure, as his position requires, that the provisions of the "Seraphic Manual" are fulfilled concerning the washing to dishes, trying to always have someone to substitute for the friars responsible for that when anyone is missing for good cause.

2. In view of the mistaken and anti-religious attitude of some of the lay brothers mentioned before have taken towards their immediate Prelate, we are ordering that all the lay Brothers perform ten days of Holy Exercises, starting today, under the direction of the most Reverend Father Vicar, and for what remains of the year, in wholesome penance, they along will be responsible for cleaning the plates. We were forced to take these measures with bitterness in our soul, and we want our

Brothers to understand well that they come from the interest we have in your spiritual good as Father and Pastor.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

79. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 2 October 1901

1713 Most Reverend General Minister.

Venerated and beloved General Minister: As the holy day approaches with which the Church honors the memory of our Seraphic Father Francis, let me congratulate the Most Reverend Father in the name of this Province for being a worthy successor to such a great Patriarch, while we ask Heaven to continue your graces in order to continue leading our Order along the paths of perfection with your wise doctrine and example⁵⁰.

I suppose your Most Reverend is well-informed of the Royal Order which the Ministry of Government has surprised us with, giving the religious Corporations a period of six month to comply with the new law of associations in Spain⁵¹. By this the Religious Institutions have been considered comparable to the lay corporations and subject to the same inspection and intervention by the civil authorities. This puts the religious orders in Spain in almost the same position as in France, except for the decree of expulsion which perhaps is coming as well, according to the projects of the Government and the animosity which reigns against us. I still do not know what the other religious Corporations will do that case but I wish for your Most Reverend to tell us what we should do, and if the instructions given by the Holy See for the members of the religious orders in France will also be applicable in Spain.

To your Most Reverend, your obedient child and least of your subjects, who kisses your hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

⁵⁰ Cf. 1C 97, in works cited, pp. 200-201; ST. CLARE.: Test 46 in *Writings of St. Francis and St. Clare*. Ed. Lázaro Iriarte, (Valencia 1981), p. 213. Cf. 2326, 2397.

⁵¹ The decree of application of the Law of Associations is dated 19 September 1901.

80. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 18 November 1901

1714 Most Reverend General Minister.

Venerated and beloved General Minister: As your Most Reverend will have seen from the newspapers, the moves made by the Bishops in the Senate in favor of the religious Institutions turned out to be futile, as the President of the Council of Ministers is persisting in compliance with the recently issued law, and refusing any postponement until the opinion of the Holy See is known, as the Prelates requested of him.

Some are saying he privately assured them that they do not have to worry, because the decree will not be put into practice (the decree against the Regular clergy); and the reason why the Prelates did not insist more on the issue is undoubtedly due to this promise. It would have been very good to even bring down the Government by bringing about a vote in the Senate, which they surely would have won with the support of all the minor parties. But this is only what might have been, what is on the record is that the Government persists in compliance with its disastrous decision; and in this case, what is important to us is knowing the attitude and intention the members of the religious orders have to take.

The Bishop of Valencia informed me of having received from the Nunciature an order that the nuns should not make any decision without receiving instructions from His Holiness, and the friars would be informed by their respective General Ministers, whom the Holy Father would have let know directly. I hope, then, from the kindness of your Most Reverend, that you tell me as soon as possible what we have to abide by; for my part, I am writing the Archbishop of Cartagena de Indias (Cartagena, Colombia) to see if his Diocese would provide some other point where we could take refuge and resources for the transportation of the friars.

1715 Father Francisco of Orihuela announced to me he will not come to the Chapter, undoubtedly due to the state of war in that Republic and the high exchange rates, which are now over five thousand per cent. Brother Rafael of Rafelbuñol, who was in the Caracas mission, has arrived in the province with the obedience of Your Reverence and Brother Buenaventura of Cubillas will arrive very shortly, admitted once again in view of the intention of your Most Reverend and the Council of Superiors of our Mission, who sent him to the Province after judging it was not advisable for him to remain in the Americas.

I include a letter from Father NN.⁵² to your Most Reverend requesting secularization. It appears he lost his vocation and is becoming very vehement; I consider it advisable to approve his request because those elements in the Order never do any good. The rest of the reasons he cited, outside of the loss of vocation, are very unjustified and inadequate.

⁵² We omit their names for reasons of discretion and sound judgment.

1716 The choir member Brother David of NN., for whom your Most Reverend will recall this Defining Council requested his expulsion, and later appealed before the Bishop of Murcia against the validity of his solemn profession, has today been called up for the army, undoubtedly with the permission of God for his bad behavior, because for all the formal procedures that were made claiming our exemption from military service, it was not possible to exempt him from the army. The ecclesiastic curia of Murcia seems to be reluctant to make a decision on this matter; in addition, Brother David, who does not consider himself a friar, has not fulfilled or is fulfilling the obligations his profession imposes on him, as it is a desperate situation for him and unfavorable to the Order. It would be very good if the Sacred Congregation would decide this or expel him from the order. Because of what has happened to Brother David, I talked to the Capitan General of Valencia and he told me: "The only friars exempt from military serves are those affiliated with the convents of Pamplona, Hondarribia (Fuenterrabia), Lecároz and El Pardo, designated by Royal Order". It would be advisable, then if your Most Reverend could make some decision, dealing with the most Reverend Father Joaquín so that he may arrange with the Government that there would be a School of Missionaries⁵³ in each Province, or find the means of being able to save all the friars from military service.

The least of his subjects kisses his and asks for his blessings.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

81. TO THE CAPUCHINS OF THE PROVINCE OF VALENCIA
Massamagrell, 8 December 1901

1717 Most Reverend Guardian Father and friars of the convent of Ollería.

Drawing near to finishing the first three-year period of the re-establishment of our beloved Province of Valencia, with great satisfaction we address Your Charities, beloved children, for the last time to announce to you the celebration of the Provincial Chapter meeting for the selection of new Superiors, which will take place, God willing (*Deo volente*), on 10 January of next year in this convent of St. Mary Magdalene in agreement with the most Reverend Provincial Defining Council and the authorization of the most Reverend General Minister who says:

"Bearing the mind that the three-year term of the Chapter in your venerable province of Valencia expires in the coming month of December of this year, We, consenting to your pleas and with the merit of holy obedience, grant and authorize so that, with the consent of the most Reverend Definitor Fathers, on 10 January of you can legally and safely convoke and celebrate in the Lord the Provincial Chapter

⁵³ Cf. 1685 above.

meeting in the convent of 'Massamagrell' for the election of the new Provincial Minister, and the other Superiors of your beloved Province of Valencia, with our law and customs observed.

Meanwhile, so that everything may take place peacefully according to our habits and customs, we beg for the Grace of the Supreme Maker of all goods. And to you and the other Brothers of the Province we grant our Pastoral Blessing.

Given in Rome, next to St. Lawrence of Brindisi on 12 July 1901. Brother Bernard of Andermatt, General Minister".

1718 We also want to make known to you that, with the aim of increasing the number of members of the Chapter and so that the will of the Province is more clearly evident in the selection of Superiors, we are making a plea to the most Reverend General Defining Council to deign to grant for this occasion the active and passive voice to the Reverend Father President of the convent of Monforte and the Vicars of the other convents, a petition which has been awarded by the following decree⁵⁴:

Given that together with your most Reverend Defining Council you requested that, for the next Provincial Chapter, due to the small number of members, that we grant active and passive voice to the Reverend Father President of the convent of Orito-Monforte and also the Vicars of the other convents of the Province, having listened to your explanations and makes use of the powers granted to Us by the Apostolic See, in mutual agreement with our General Defining Council declared in session today, by virtue of those present we agree to your request.

Rome, next to St. Lawrence of Brindisi on 12 July 1901. Brother Bernard of Andermatt, Capuchin General Minister".

1719 However, Venerable Fathers and Brothers: on saying farewell to Your Charities in the position which we, even though unworthy, have carried out, it saddens that, given our inadequacy, we perhaps will not have responded to the hopes you placed in Us by supporting us with your vote, and we will have similarly disappointed those of the most Reverend General Minister, who designated for such an honorable albeit undeserved position. But in the midst of everything it comforts us to consider that for our part we have not spared any means or procedures for the realization of what we knew was leading to the greater glory of our Province, and we have always acted in agreement with the wise and prudent advise of the honorable Definitors Fathers, and with their valuable cooperation, which has aided us greatly in carrying out our difficult task.

We have always fostered benevolence and mercy⁵⁵ but the Superior does not employ them on all occasions without sacrificing justice, because to leave the errors of the subjects uncorrected would be like taking responsibility for them. Many times we have been forced to⁵⁶ respond severely and punish abuses and non-observances

⁵⁴ Cf. 1708, 1709 above.

⁵⁵ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 2R 7:2, in works cited, p. 114; 2 LetF 43, in works cited, p. 57; LetM 9-11, in works cited, p. 72.

⁵⁶ Cf. 21, 1595, 1700 above.

with a firm hand, although it goes against our character. However, it could have happened that, due to our ineptitude, we did not find the exact measurement for combining the wine of justice with the oil of mercy⁵⁷ in these cases, giving you cause for being upset and causing some suffering. If that was the case, we earnestly beg you to forgive us, taking into account the noble aim and righteous intention we have proceeded with in everything; for our part we offer to do the same to you, although we generally have no reason for complaint about your behavior.

1720 Allow us, beloved children, to recommend as very effective praying to the Divine Kindness that He may guide all our actions for the fulfillment of his divine approval, lighting the way for the Reverend Fathers of the Chapter so that, united in agreement and harmony of opinion, they make the right choices for the Provincial government of those who are most suited to promote the glory of God and the honor of our Order.

To this end, eight days before the Chapter meeting, the choir will sing, after the Terce midmorning prayer (*Tercia*), the honors of number 323 in the “Seraphic Manual”, and from the 9th to the 12th, both inclusive, they will fulfill whatever the “Roman-Seraphic Ceremonial” orders in number 1657, advising that the Conventual Mass of the day designated for the Chapter meeting is to be with exhibition of Her Divine Majesty, continuing in evidence until after the None midafternoon prayer (*Nona*), and all the friars will receive communion during it, watching over the Lord in pairs.

We commission each and every one of the friars to state to their respective guardians, with full liberty and openness, those things which, in their judgment, may be advisable to deal with and decide on the chapter level for the good of the Province; with the superiors trying to send to us these opinions as soon as possible for our consideration.

We bless you from the bottom of our heart and commend you to your prayers.

Given in our Provincial Convent of St. Mary Magdalene, on the day of the Immaculate Conception of the Holy Virgin Mary of 1901.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

82. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 31 December 1901

1721 Most Reverend General Minister

Venerated and beloved General Minister: As our Mother the Church is celebrating the birth of the Child God these days, and completing today the first

⁵⁷ Cf. CAPUCHINS: *Constitutions of 1643*, 10:4.

year of the 20th century, I am congratulating Your Charities for myself and in name of the Province of Valencia, which, although unworthy, I represent, at the same time that I ask the Lord to continue sending your graces and gifts and prolong your life for many years for the good of our Seraphic Order.

In due time, I received the communication about the agreement made by the most Reverend General Defining Council concerning the boundaries of our Mission and those of the friars of Castile, which, without wasting time, I notified the Definitor Fathers and the Custodian Father of the Americas.

I am including for Your Charities a status report of the Province in the three-year period which thanks to God we have concluded; and saying farewell to the most Reverend Father in the position I have exercised by his commission and mandate, I beg that you give me dispensation and forgive how much I may have lacked in the fulfillment of my duty, taking into account the good will and intention with which I proceeded in everything.

The least of your subjects kisses the hand and asks for the blessing of the most Reverend Father.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

83. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Massamagrell, 31 December 1901

1722 Most Reverend General Minister,

Drawing near to concluding the first three-year term of the recently founded Province of the Precious Blood of Christ, of Valencia, I judged it necessary, most Reverend Father, to give you a true and exact account of how much we have done in the Province during those three years and at the same time the present state of this Seraphic Province.

1723 I. All the friars have a great good will in the fulfillment of their duties and regular observance. They are full of fervor and zeal in promoting the glory of God, with the exception of a few lukewarm souls who are remiss in their vocation, and every day they are the cause of bitterness to their superiors and provoke continuous quarrels among their brothers. But, thanks to God, their number is decreasing, since some of them have now been expelled from the Order as they were not showing any signs of making amends.

1724 II. From the start of my responsibility at the head of the Province, thirty three new friars have entered into it, to wit: three priests, 20 choir members and 10 lay brothers. 19 were ordained as presbyters. Four priests and one choir member died in the Lord in the Missions; and 1 priest and 3 Brothers in the Province.

1725. III. To care for and expand our missions in La Guajira and the lands of the Magdalena River, six Brothers arrived in two expeditions. To avoid the problems that emerged in the governing and guidance of those missions due to the great variety and distance between those widely scattered locations, the Visit under Canon Law was practiced. Since then, the existing rift between the missionaries and the Superiors of the Province disappeared and the mutual bond of charity and fraternal love became even tighter⁵⁸.

1726 IV. During this three-year term, the monthly magazine "Florecillas of San Francisco"⁵⁹ was published, with its main objective being to promote and increase the Franciscan spirit among the members of the Third Order.

1727 V. Two Convents were built under canon law, one in Totana and the other in Monforte. A School of secondary education for children and outside youths was established in the former. In the latter, we consider it more necessary to organize the Seraphic School, where now there are 28 seraphic students continuing their studies, candidates for receiving our habit.

Our buildings, in general old and ancient, have been the object of needed repairs. Others now in use were built from their foundations up, bearing in mind the poverty we promised to God. Otherwise, although we are not swimming in plenty because we do not receive generous alms, neither do we have an excessive desire for the means necessary for life. But in spite of this, through the mercy and aid of God, we have what we need to maintain ourselves in a moderate lifestyle rhythm of life without suffering, on the other hand, strict poverty. Our convents do not have debts, with the exception of two due to significant but necessary expenses, but I hope that they will be settled shortly.

Finally, most Reverend Father, having now arrived at the desired end of my term as Provincial Minister, I give my most appreciative thanks for have found in the Reverend Father my greatest and best help, especially in the governing and caring for the subjects that the Most Reverence Father entrusted to me, although your unworthy servant.

With all my greatest appreciation and wishing the Most Reverend Father all happiness, I sign below as your subject.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Provincial Minister

84. TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS
Massamagrell, 4 October 1904

1728 Brother Luis of Massamagrell, miserable sinner but despite that, by divine disposition, the founder of this Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows.

⁵⁸ Cf. 149 above.

⁵⁹ Cf. 1648 above.

To the beloved children, the Superior and members of the order, greetings and seraphic blessing.

The stamp that characterizes and distinguished the works of God, my beloved children, is tribulation. The most perfect work of the Almighty, the Holy Church, must go through and continuously experience trouble so that, following as one its head, Christ, persecuted, mistreated and killed on the cross, these words of His come as no surprise: *In the world you shall have distress If the world hate you, know ye, that it hath hated me before you If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you*⁶⁰.

1729 Following the example of the Church, the Religious Orders, her favorite children, also have always had to endure the sudden attacks of the its enemies, sometimes from within, sometimes from without, who have tried to achieve its destruction at all costs.

If you focus on the Seraphic Religion you will see it was embattled from the beginning, at the very time of its formation, by the rebellious attitude of Brother Elias and the Provincial Ministers against the Rule the Seraphic Father wrote. It became necessary that the Lord declare and tell them: the Rule was His work, and whoever does not wish to keep it should leave the Religion⁶¹.

Nor is it possible to be unaware of the corruption the same Brother Elias tried to introduce in the Order; nor the many persecutions which the enemy stirred up against it, inciting the ecclesiastical Prelates themselves with a thousand pretexts so they would ask the Holy See for the extinction of the Order; and for that reason, one of them was punished with a horrible death to serve as an example.

1730 The persecution the Third Order had to endure at the start of its foundation was just as strong, as some Governors of Italy were so infuriated by it that they subjected the Third Orders to all kinds of taxes; and no crime was committed without it being attributed to them and they were punished for it.

But the greatest tribulation came to from the famous heretics who faked being Third Order Friars and wore the habit of the Third Order to better deceive people and called themselves the Fraticelli (Little Brethren)⁶². This stirred up a general outcry against the Third Order, as the Prelates asked the Pope for its extinction and the Third Order friars suffered all kinds of humiliations from everyone everywhere. It required that Pope Clement V open a broad inquiry, which brought the purity and orthodoxy of its faith to light, and was worth not only the greatest demonstrations of affection and sympathy from the Pontiff but also highly honorable Papal Bulls which made evident its innocence and recommended protecting it to the Bishops.

⁶⁰ John 16:33; 15:18, 20.

⁶¹ Cf. LP 17, in works cited, p. 610; EP 1, in works cited, p. 695.

⁶² The name of Fraticelli is mainly understood as the Spiritual Brothers Minor which, in the 14th and 15th centuries, rejected the authority of their own superiors and the hierarchy of the Church. They were particularly widespread in Italy, dreamed of a return to the pure gospel and tried to establish the new spiritual church announced by Joachim of Fiore.

But the common enemy did not give up the battle as lost, and with the death of Clement V once again repeated the same complaints and petitions against the Third Order friars. That is the reason why Pope John XXII, following the precedent set by his predecessor Clement 5, with its innocence proven, made the Order safe from persecution in three papal Bulls issued to the Bishops, refuting their accusations and ordering them to treat the Third Order friars as true children of the Church as long as they would faithfully observe their Rule⁶³.

1731 But how great is the wisdom and knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments and how mysterious his ways!⁶⁴ The same means the enemy makes use of to destroy the works of God He uses to build them. If that means to reap them when they are blossoming, warning the great and powerful against them, with this the Lord takes them from the darkness and makes them known more quickly, making them love him for his kindness. If the enemy attempts to block their forward steps and advance and uses persecution, discredit and slander to this end, He who said: "Blessed are those who suffer persecution for justice"⁶⁵ takes glory from them. If the enemy tries to exterminate them by threatening them with the tortures and death of his followers, their blood is the seed of many others, as Tertulliano said of the Christians; the seed which God scatters over the entire earth. Blessed tribulation, then, that yields so many goods!

1732 Our poor and humble congregation has not lacked the divine mark of its supernatural origin and mission, either, beloved children, which should greatly comfort us.

Barely born, it saw its main support and protector removed, for apparently it was necessary to be left, to put it one way, to its own devices and initiatives by permission of the Lord, who wanted this foundation to be even better as his work⁶⁶.

But the enemy took advantage of this situation for its destructive plan and, making use of the misunderstood zeal of some people, under the pretext that the Congregation would progress more under different leadership and by giving it a new form, tried to tear it down to its very foundations. It persisted with this plan, even a third time, as the one best suited for achieving its aim, and finding the field well prepared for it⁶⁷.

Nevertheless, the Lord who watched over His work, opened the eyes of most of you so that you would know what the spirit of darkness was trying, transformed into an angel of light, and stood against him to block his cunning plans.

1733 The enemy did not and will not give up his effort, his defeat notwithstanding. From this comes the frequent and terrible desertions, we were experiencing for some time among those who, opening their ears to his diabolical

⁶³ Cf. Juan XXII: *Quorundam exigit*, of 7 October 1317; *Sancta Romana*, of 30 December 1317; *Gloriosam Ecclesiam*, of 23 January 1318 (cf. the last in *Magnum Bullarium Romanum*, Vol. IV [Augustae Taurinorum 1859], pp. 261-268.

⁶⁴ Romans 11:33.

⁶⁵ Matthew 5:10.

⁶⁶ Cf. 123 above.

⁶⁷ Cf. 127, 155 above; 1777.

suggestions, moved away from the aim of their vocation, turning their back on God. From here also come the quarrels, arguments and divisions which, by taking advantage of the recklessness of some people and the lack of mortification in the rest, have been sown among you, as he knows very well that to divide it to conquer.

However, as expected the battle does not let up but on the contrary intensifies, with this fierce enemy turning the weapon you provided, without wanting to, against you. I believe the duty, beloved children, to alert you and encourage you so that you fight the good battles of the Lord.

1734 Above all, you must be united, joined like a tight bundle tied by the close bond of charity. This way you will become stronger and more formidable to your enemies, since strength comes from unity and, on the contrary, with division comes ruin and death; the Lord saying: *Every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate*⁶⁸.

Those of you who are subjects, must have all kinds of consideration towards your greater and local Prelates, looking at them as representatives of God Himself. Those who are put in positions to govern the fortunes of the Congregation, work zealously within your sphere of activity, with mutual respect towards each other in your rights so that the principle of authority is maintained and the subjects, in turn, also respect you.

Look on the laws of the Institution with the utmost veneration. These are the laws by which you are Capuchin Tertiary friars and whose fulfillment is the express will of God.

Do not pay attention to the instrument which God have used to give you the laws; since the more vile and despicable the instrument is, the less the Lord is deprived of His glory as the only one to whom His work must be attributed.

1735 Do not listen to those who persuade you of the advisability of reforming them with specious arguments of greater perfection, changing even the form of the Institution, which would undoubtedly result in its death: *My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: That grace may be added to thy head*⁶⁹. Hear, beloved children, what St. Bernardino says in this regard⁷⁰: "It is very useful and advisable to every one to follow the profession you have chosen and the grace you have received, with the utmost effort and diligence in order to hurry and arrive at the perfection of the work that has begun. Although you should admire and praise the virtues of the others, never leave the profession that you once chose, because you know, according to the Apostle, the mystical body of the Church has different limbs with various functions, without one interfering with the function of the other⁷¹. Where some weak souls go wrong is because without having a solid foundation in the first possession, after hearing the praise of virtues and practices of others, it ignites in them the desire to imitate their lifestyle

⁶⁸ Matthew 12:25.

⁶⁹ Proverbs 1: 8-9.

⁷⁰ Cf. SAN BERNARDINO: *On the Precept and the Dispensation*, 16:44-51. PL 182:885-888.

⁷¹ Cf. I Corinthians 12:12-27.

and they work in vain; because it is impossible that one man brings together the wide variety of virtues there are found in different professions. If he wanted to encompass all of them, it necessarily happens that, in attempting to have all of them, they never master or completely achieve any of them, and this change will cause more harm than good. Since there are many ways to go to God, it is advisable that each one follows the path he started on with irrevocable intention, in order to be perfect in his profession”.

1736 Having concluded all this, then, never look back beloved children, once you have put your hand to the plow, since you would not be suitable for the kingdom of heaven, as the Lord Himself says, and our Seraphic Father reminds us⁷².

Remain true to your vocation, holding in great esteem having been called to follow the Seraphic Father who, as the Divine Redeemer told the venerable Margaret of Alacoque, was the Saint who was closest to his own divine Heart.

With your faithfulness, you will give the Lord the glory he expects of you in the salvation of so many wayward souls; you will honor your Mother the Seraphic Religion and you will assure the eternal reward that was promised to you in your religious profession⁷³.

Convent of St. Mary Magdalene, on the holy day of Our Seraphic Father St. Francis, the year of our Lord 1904.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.

85. TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF MADRID
Orihuela, 3 April 1906

1737 To the Superior and Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Madrid,
Even though I always bear you very much in mind at every occasion, my beloved children, in the natural way that the father can never forget his children⁷⁴, the holy day festivity of our loving Mother and the anniversary of the foundation of the Institute renew this memory in a special way and it seems to make my affection grow greater every year.

I would very truly wish, as you do, that we could celebrate it together in one of our homes, especially this year in which our rejoicing should be that much greater for being the first one after the elevation of this holy day festivity to a first class rite in our Congregation. But as that is impossible, let us join together in spirit on that day in the sanctuary of the sorrowful heart of our Mother and fervently ask her to

⁷² Cf. Luke 9:62; ST. FRANCIS: 1R 2:10, in works cited, p. 92; 2R 2:13, in works cited, p. 111; Adm 3:10, in works cited, p. 79.

⁷³ Cf. LP 108a, in works cited, p. 676; MP 65a, in works cited, p. 741. Cf. 1820, 1835, 1883, 1892, 1895, 1916.

⁷⁴ Cf. 1753, 1782.

continue with her blessings upon us, giving the Prelates light and success in their orders and regulations; unity, zeal and submission to the subjects and through your merits, the pardoning of your sins by your father and servant in Christ⁷⁵.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.

86. TO THE GENERAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS
Orihuela, 22 March 1907

1738 Most Reverend General Minister,

Beloved Father: I just received an official letter from the Nunciature informing me of having been a candidate and now accepted by His Holiness as the Bishop of Solsona.

This news greatly surprised me, of which I did not have the slightest inkling of⁷⁶, and even more after knowing that it is an effort not only by the Distinguished Nuncio, but also the Primate and other Prelates, His Majesty the King and his Government.

Disposed as I am for my to part to give my consent to whatever you tell me as the express will of God, I ask your Most Reverend for his permission and blessing.

From the least of the subjects of your Most Reverend, who kisses your hand.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
Definitior and Guardian

87. TO POPE PIUS X
Solsona, 18 August 1907

1739 Most Blessed Father:

With the greatest satisfaction in my spirit, I announce to Your Holiness that on 4 August, the holy day of St. Dominic, I made my solemn entry into this diocese of Solsona that Your Holiness deigned to entrust to my pastoral concern as the Apostolic Administrator.

I was welcomed with uncommon pomp and displays of great enthusiasm by the most virtuous Clergy and the faithful, who came in great numbers even from very remote villages. For all this, I bless the Lord. And protesting once again at the

⁷⁵ Like St. Francis, Father Luis had from the very beginning of his foundation work a great concern for the unity of the future family (cf. 2C 23, in works cited, p.243; 1754, 1806, 1808, 1819, 1820, 1833, 1860, 1861).

⁷⁶ Cf. 169, 170 above.

feet of Your Holiness the veneration respect, obedience and submission owed to this sacred Chair⁷⁷, I humbly request that Your Holiness bless me, so that I may work fruitfully in the vineyard I have been entrusted with, and bless my subjects so that, under my government and direction, they may make use of the way of virtue.

The humble and obedient child of Your Holiness.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

88. TO THE MOTHER SUPERIOR OF THE SCHOOL OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF CERVERA
Solsona, 12 August 1907

1740 THE BISHOP OF TAGASTE, Apostolic Administrator of Solsona, BLESSES

The most Reverend Mother Superior of the School of the Holy Family of Cervera and give my most heartfelt thanks for the warm wishes and generous offerings sent in your gracious letter of 9 August. At the same time, I offer you my prayers so that the Lord grants you the necessary graces to carry out well the difficult task entrusted to you.

Brother Luis Amigó y Ferrer takes this opportunity with pleasure to offer the Most Reverend Mother this testimony of his great esteem and consideration for her.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

89. TO HIS NEPHEW JUAN MARTÍNEZ
Solsona, 26 September 1907

1741 Mr. Juan Martínez.

Beloved nephew: Through a letter from the Reverend Mother Patrocinio⁷⁸, General Superior of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters, I find you are going to sell the plot of land adjacent to the orchard of the Asylum and, as stipulated, have notified them to see if the Sisters want to purchase it⁷⁹. You can understand this land is an absolute necessity for the house, not only for the extension of the orchard, but first and foremost so that the building does not become enclosed and subject to oversight on all sides. Needless to say, I wish for them to acquire it but I do not like the price, since I consider it very excessive for a town like Massamagrell, as the Board bought the St. Rita Reform School of in Carabanchel Bajo, Madrid, a magnificent garden for one *real per pie* (footspan).

⁷⁷ Cf. TC 52, in works cited, p. 559.

⁷⁸ Referring to Sister Patrocinio of Benissa, the second General Superior of the Congregation.

⁷⁹ Cf. 88 above.

1742 As I know your good heart and the interest the poor orphan girls inspire in you, looked after and cared for by the poor Sisters with no more resources than the Divine Providence, and at the cost of sacrifices you will never be able comprehend. In addition, I have heard you make promises that, given your character, I would consider to be formal, I hope you begin to realize how this situation makes you appear. And do not think that I want you to give us the land as a gift, but merely reduce the price and the interest you are asking under the following conditions:

1. The price is calculated in *real per palmo* (handspan).
2. The interest does not exceed 4 or 4.5 per 100.
3. A fixed time is not set for the payment of the full amount.
4. At any time during the year, they can go to you to pay off some amount in order to reduce the outstanding capital and you accept it and lower the interest accordingly.

Even in the event that others may offer you more advantages, do not believe that you would profit more from this, because the benefits you could do in favor of the homeless orphans the Divine Providence will pay in full with interest. I hope that you will not think of dealing with others as long as our negotiations are not concluded.

Blessings to you, your wife and daughter from your uncle who loves you very much. The Bishop of Solsona.

BROTHER LUIS AMIGO Y FERRER.

90. TO CARDINAL RINALDINI
Solsona, 3 October 1907

1743 Your Eminence and Most Reverend Cardinal Rinaldi, Pronuncio of His Holiness in Spain.

My venerated and beloved Prelate: the interest and concern which Your Eminence has always shows for my beloved Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows, and the intense desire you show for its expansion and development, encourages me to approach Your Eminence to explain its true status and ask for your very valuable support and protection to avoid the imminent danger of a serious upheaval in it. This is something to be feared if the capricious course of the present General Superior continues, which is the cause of universal discontent in the Congregation and could be easily avoided in the forthcoming General Chapter meeting by acceding to the wishes of the majority of the friars.

1744 This discontent and my fears are based on these reasons that I am now stating for the consideration of your Eminence:

1. The scant interest and zeal for the Congregation observe in the present General Superior and another Higher Superior who, although they presume to the

contrary, have on occasion put the Institution in grave danger of breaking apart, even after the order approved by the Holy See, by communicating with some Fathers of another Order and proposing a radical change in it, which would have been its total ruin if the majority of friars had not opposed it⁸⁰.

2. This same lack of interest for the Congregation is also observed in that, instead of favoring the vocations, on the contrary they make them more difficult and are so delinquent in delaying the granting of the holy habit so that the Congregation, which after eighteen years of existence could be very numerous, does not even have one hundred friars. The same is reflected in the small number of Houses, only four, as the opportunity to make other foundations are missed.

3. The lack of compliance in many points of the Constitutions, which makes one think he despises them, which upsets the friars in general and causes more than a few disputes.

4. The little support he has shown towards the studies for an ecclesiastical career, making them more difficult instead of favoring them, has hindered the development of the Congregation, which now finds itself deprived of being able to take care of many needs of the Houses due to the lack of priests. This has been the cause of withdrawal given by some friars who have left the Congregation⁸¹.

1745 These and many other reasons which could be added are the cause of such great discontent in the Congregation that it foretells the loss of vocation by many of our best friars if a prompt and effective solution to the situation is not found.

The number of letters I have received from them make me fearful of that happening, and it fill my heart with bitterness that it is not in my power to resolve it.

However, the general desire of the friars and the solution they are looking at in order to keep all these disruptions from getting worse and return the Congregation to its original spirit would be, according to them, for Your Holiness to make me responsible, as a Founder, for the governing of the order. They do not see among the few priests they have one who brings together all the qualities and sufficient prestige to lead it, enjoys the respect of everyone, and the ability to unify their intentions and fulfill the Constitutions. If I can be frank with Your Eminence, I believe that everything could only be resolved this way. This could easily be achieved by authorizing me to be able to rule and govern the Congregation, with a Vicar General at my orders, appointed by me and who would stand in for me on the times when I could not visit the Houses of the Congregation due to the responsibilities of my Episcopal position.

1746 This, Your Eminence, I consider has to be easy to obtain from His Holiness, if Your Eminence and most Reverend deign to show him the need there

⁸⁰ Cf. 155, 156, 1732 above; 1777, 2075.

⁸¹ The Rules prescribed with respect to this: "After the profession, one shall not move from the first to second category, or *vive versa* (Cf. *Normae*, of 28 June 1901, part I, c II, 50 in SCHAEFER, T.: *De Religiosis* (Rome, 1947), p. 1108.

is for it. I have no doubt that your affection, as demonstrated so many times to my beloved Congregation of Capuchin Third Order friars, will move you to do this notable favor, which is of such vital importance for the Order. If I wish this, may Your Excellence believe that is solely in order not to see the ruin of a work which in the judgment of everyone is performing a great good for society and giving much glory to God.

I kiss the Holy Purple Vestment of Your Excellency and most Reverend Father⁸².

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

P.S. The General meeting, God willing, will be held in April of next year because, as the six-year term does not end until November of that year, it satisfies the most Reverend General Minister as far as asking for the authorization to move it up to the indicated date.

91. TO FATHER LUIS MARÍA OF VALENCIA, OFM. CAP.
Solsona, 18 December 1907

1747 THE BISHOP OF TAGASTE, Apostolic Administrator of Solsona, BLESSES

The Reverend and beloved Brother Father Luis María of Valencia and have the pleasure of sending you the ministerial permissions of this Diocese for you and Francisco Seva, Deputy Rector of the Seminary of Orihuela, which I beg that you send along to him with my regards.

I will be very happy if you find your new residence agreeable in the convent that has so many pleasant memories for him. In addition, I ask that that you greet the Fathers of that convent and give the attached letter to the appropriate person.

Brother Luis Amigó y Ferrer takes this opportunity to repeat to the friars mentioned before this testimony of his great esteem and consideration.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

92. TO THE MOTHER SUPERIOR OF THE SCHOOL OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF CERVERA
Solsona, 26 December 1907

1748 THE BISHOP OF TAGASTE, Apostolic Administrator of Solsona, BLESSES

⁸² Monsignor A. Rinaldini sent a letter from Foligno to the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regular Clergy, stating the reasoning of this letter by Luis Amigó. On 13 December 1907, the Sacred Congregation answered *non expedire* concerning the proposal of Father Luis (cf. in the Vatican Archive, section of the Sacred Congregation for the Religious and Lay Institutions, I.V., n. 56).

The most Reverend Mother Superior and the Community of Sisters of the Holy Family and wishes you a thousand happy moments during the present Christmas season and New Year celebrations, and pray to the Divine Child to pour abundant heavenly graces so that you can sanctify and bring much benefit to the souls under your care. A thousand thanks for your greeting.

Brother Luis Amigó y Ferrer takes this opportunity to repeat to the sisters mentioned before this testimony of his great esteem and consideration.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

93. TO FATHER BERNARDINO OF ALACUÁS, CT
Solsona, 20 January 1908

1749 Most Reverend Brother Father Bernadino María of Alacuás

My beloved child: I received your always pleasing letter of 15 January, which filled me with satisfaction for the news you informed me of regarding the good condition of that House; but particularly for the peace and tranquility of the personnel. In the same vein, it seems you have found the most Reverend General Father of the House of St. Rita, from what you tell me. This peace is the greatest good the angels proclaimed to the world in the coming of the Redeemer, and we must try to achieve it at all costs, because without it we would be moving towards certain ruin⁸³.

Some time ago it was observed our friars were losing this peace, something we truly deplored and all of us have to work to keep this evil from getting worse. For my part, I am incline to avoid it by all the means that are within my grasp, since my conscience dictates that to me for the good and growth of the work the Lord has entrusted to me.

We pray a great deal to the Lord for each other and our beloved Congregation, because we must work in order to do good.

In exchange for your lovely postcard of the *seise* children, which I thank you for, I sent you the one of the Monastery of Our Patron Saint of Catalonia, the Virgin of Montserrat.

Your Father and servant in Christ blesses Your Reverend and all your beloved children.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

⁸³ Cf. 1745 above.

94. TO ANTONIO MAURA
Solsona, 16 February 1908

1750 Your Excellency Antonio Maura,

Distinguished sir and beloved friend: Finding myself on a visit through some villages of this Diocese, I knew of your decision to send Honorio⁸⁴ to this sacred congregation (s/c.), which was very satisfying to me in that it was a proof of confidence and affection with which you honor me although I do not deserve it.

I was sorry that I was not present for the arrival of your son, so that the separation from you would have been less sensitive for him. I returned yesterday and had the pleasure of embracing him and the satisfaction of seeing him quite content and very well inclined to make use of the time and attentive to the signals I gave him to avoid acquiring commitments and relations that might not be advisable for him.

You can rest well knowing that I will do everything possible so that he does not waste the time without maximizing the degree of severity and granting him some honest recreation, especially on Sundays and holidays, in which some of my relatives will always accompany him. Brother Javier⁸⁵ in particular likes him a lot and already is a friend and in contact with him.

I expect, then, confidently that this decision you have taken must yield good results. And for my part I will take care of everything regarding the regulation of conduct that you outlined for me in the substantial letter of 11 February.

Please greet your virtuous wife and family in my name, and your servant and chaplain sincerely off his heartfelt blessing.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

95. TO ANTONIO MAURA
Solsona, 12 March 1908

1751 Your Excellency Antonio Maura,

Distinguished sir and beloved friend: I have not answered you last letter before as I knew you were in France and I suspected very busy with the preparations for the trip to Barcelona you made with His Majesty the King.

⁸⁴ Honorio Maura (1886-1936) would conclude his studies as a lawyer and engineer, but his true vocation would be as a dramatist in collaboration with Martínez Sierra (cf. in *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada*. Ed. Espasa-Calpe, appendices, Vol. VII, pp. 157-158.

⁸⁵ Referring to Brother Javier María of Valencia, later General Superior of the Capuchin Third Order friars.

My main object today is to congratulate you on the excellent results of that trip, which certainly instilled a great deal of fear in me, given the situation in that city⁸⁶.

For that reason, I thought of going to Barcelona to visit His Majesty and yourself. I did not because, of course, I wanted Honorio to accompany me, who I knew had a great desire to go. As he had asked you and not received any reply, I thought the idea was not to your liking.

Honorio is in good health and appears to be making good use of the time, so you can be at peace and not think of shortening his time here but instead of prolonging it for as long as may be convenient.

With my regards for your gracious wife and children, especially Gabriel, and receive the sincere blessing of your servant and chaplain.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

96. TO THE SUBSECRETARY OF PARDONS AND JUSTICE

Solsona, 22 March 1908

1752 Your Excellency Pascual Amat, Subsecretary of Pardons and Justice, Distinguished Sir: I received the royal Auxiliary order to be able to start the revision of the Arrangement of Parishes in this Diocese but not the synoptic chart which it says accompanies it; nor the original files that, according to the mentioned Royal Order, must be attached to it in order to archive them.

I greatly appreciate his Excellency the Minister and Your Excellency for having attended to my request and sending me this Royal Order, and I would appreciate completing the work by giving the appropriate order so the documents indicated above are sent to me as soon as possible.

I am very grateful for this occasion to offer sincerely before Your Excellency, your servant and chaplain.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

97. TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF MADRID

Solsona, 9 April 1908

1753 Most Reverend Father Minister and Community of Capuchin Tertiary Friars of the St. Rita Reform School, CARABANCHEL,

⁸⁶ A well-founded fear, since on 26 July 1909 the so-called Tragic Week would begin with the burning of convents.

My beloved children: If I can never, as a father, forget Your Charities⁸⁷, nonetheless my memory (and if you like, my love) grows greater every year when the holy day of our Holy Lady of Sorrows and the foundation day of our School arrives. We all must celebrate and remember in a special way these days so comforting to our hearts for being the first ones in which the Divine Providence, wanting to reward your merits and works⁸⁸, raised your Father, albeit so unworthy, to the high position of Bishop. Let us bless and give thanks for the Lord for all of that.

1754 But, at the same time, as the common enemy, furious over the present reward for your works and those anticipated in the future, is making unprecedented efforts to destroy the work of God if he can, we must pray constantly to our loving Mother, who was the only one allowed to break the head of the snake, and under whose mantle our beloved Congregation was born, so that she may inspire in us a true zeal for the glory that our School is called to give God, our Lord, and consolidate the fraternal peace and unity, so necessary for the progress of this work that the enemy appears to want to undermine at its very foundations⁸⁹.

Commending you more than ever to your prayers, I congratulate you on this holy day and your Father offers his heartfelt blessing to you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

98. TO ANTONIO MAURA
Solsona, 21 May 1908

1755 Your Excellency Antonio Maura,
Distinguished sir and valued friend: Having returned from Valencia when I had to go for pressing reasons concerning my two Congregations, I have the pleasure of writing you to let you know how Honorio is doing, who continues behaving well after his return from Barcelona and is now preparing for his exams, whose date he is waiting to be informed of momentarily.

I am very sorry for the aggravation his trip to Barcelona caused you, which I only agreed to because he told me he had your express permission and would be gone for just two or three days. On my arrival, I knew he had exceeded the indicated time and abused his freedom, which will serve as a lesson to me so that the next

⁸⁷ Cf. 1737 above; 1782.

⁸⁸ Cf. I agreement of the General Defining Council held on 7-8 April 1908 which says: "as a result of the singular honor granted to our Congregation by raising its founder to the rank of bishop, entrusting him with the Apostolic Administration of Solsona, a grace that the Holy See has awarded him principally for the merits and works of our religious family, we beg that you raise prayers to the Almighty" (cf. in *Minutes Book of the General Defining Council*, in the Archive of the General Curia of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars, Rome)

⁸⁹ Cf. 1737 above.

time I am not letting him leave without written permission or authorization by you. Please tell me with all frankness what is advisable for his guidance.

1756 Not without fear of abusing your kindness, I dare to state the following: I have at my service, as a Provisor and Secretary, a parish priest and Incumbent, respectively, from Valencia with temporary license from the Archbishop, and to ensure their staying at my side I need to obtain some kind of Stipend for them. As that is impossible in this or any other cathedral, it is easier to obtain from Rome the dispensation of residence for a canon priest than a Parish priest, and it would be very hard for me to have to separate myself from them. In addition, both are worthy of this grace, as you will see from the testimonials that I am including for your satisfaction and consideration.

With fond regards for your good wife, Gabriel and the rest of the family, I have the honor of repeating that I sincerely am your loyal servant and chaplain.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

99. TO ANTONIO MAURA
Solsona, 11 June 1908

1757 Your Excellency Antonio Maura,

My distinguished and valued friend: I am writing you to congratulate you on your upcoming birthday party this Saturday, giving one more testimony of my cordial affection and honor. I will redouble my prayers on that day so that St. Anthony continues to obtain the graces and blessing the Lord has bestowed on him up to the present, with aim he may continue governing the destinies of our nation with the wisdom he has displayed in doing so until now.

I was very gratified you informed me of the news about Honorio and I greatly desire that he continues behaving well in conformity with your parental efforts.

With respect to the matter of my Congregation, I wait trusting in God that good will come from the ills, as his Divine Providence normally does; even more when my friars seems to be all blessed with a good spirit, and even in the errors they commit, I am convinced there is no bad intention. For that reason, I beg you affectionately not to withdraw your protection and valuable support.

With warm regards for Constanza and the rest of the family, I repeat I am sincerely your loyal servant and chaplain.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

100. TO ANTONIO MAURA
Solsona, 9 February 1909

1758 Your Excellency Antonio Maura, President of the Council of Ministers.

My distinguished friend: I am bringing to your attention that for the third time, a new automobile service from Manresa to Solsona was established one week ago. The gentlemen who form the Company are asking me to plead with you for the resurfacing of the road, whose bad condition, a lingering effect of the floods, was the reason the two other companies had to give up, as I told you when I had the pleasure of seeing and talking to you in your journey accompanying His Majesty.

You indicated to me then that you would look into the matter, which inspired me to write you with the confidence that it would be properly considered, as usual.

Last year I went to the General Directorate of Public Works with the same request, and obtained 15,000 pesetas, which they delivered to the Provincial Government of Lleida, which has done nothing to improve the section from Solsona to Cardona for which that money was intended. The section from Cardona to Manresa, which is in the worst condition, is part of Barcelona Province and they, too, are not in any great hurry to repair, undoubtedly for the lack of resources.

Perhaps it is timely to give this background to you, or perhaps you are already aware of it, but please see in this only my good desire to favor this region, which is so lacking in this automobile service and we would undoubtedly be deprived of it once again if this urgent need to resurface the road is not taken care of.

With affectionate greetings for your good wife and family, I have the pleasure of repeating to them the humble services of this humble chaplain, who blesses them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

101. TO ANTONIO MAURA
Solsona, 27 February 1909

1759 Your Excellency Antonio Maura, President of the Council of Ministers.

My distinguished and valued friend: Due undoubtedly to the poor postal service we have in this area, I received only yesterday your most gracious letter dated 20 February, for which reason I could not thank you before for the interest you have shown in the request I made concerning the resurfacing of the road. The Minister of Development has initiated so much activity that, as I understand it, several crews have been working on it now for a few days.

For the best mail service, if you would take an interest in seeing that the request that Mr. Pedro Jorba y Rius has pending in the General Directorate of Communications, in the name of the Hispano-Manresa automobile company, is

dealt with favorably, since we would receive the mail more regularly and six or seven hours earlier than at present.

With fond regards for your good wife and family, I have the pleasure of repeating to them the humble services of this humble chaplain, who blesses them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

102. TO FATHER JOAQUÍN OF LLEVANERAS, OFM. CAP.

Solsona, 20 March 1909

1760 Most Reverend Father Brother Joaquín of Llevaneras,

Beloved Brother in the Seraphic Father St. Francis: Your Most Reverend had good reason to be surprised at my silence after you last affectionate letter. It was not the result of having overlooked it, which is not possible, but rather the multiple activities that were completely absorbing my time and attention instead.

I am writing today, then, with the utmost pleasure to notify Your Most Reverend that I may perhaps shortly have the pleasure of seeing and embracing him due to the canonization of the Blessed Joseph Oriol.

The good news that you informed me of concerning the state of health of our Eminent Cardinal, your brother, brought me great satisfaction since you know that I truly value him and ask the Lord to preserve his life for extended years for the good of the Church and the honor of our Seraphic Order.

In your letter, you hinted to me of some wish that I help you in a certain work entrusted by His Holiness to Your Most Reverend and, with the frankness of a Brother, I must say that I am at your disposal for anything, albeit that you know and are familiar with my limited strength and the many activities which weigh upon me today. At any rate, in our discussion, that God willing I hope is soon, we will take about the details and you will explain to me more frankly your thinking since I will have the utmost pleasure in pleasing you to the degree that it depends on me.

Pray for me to the Lord, as I do for Your Most Reverend, and your Brother servant and chaplain is at your command.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

103. TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF MADRID

Solsona, 29 May 1909

1761 To my beloved children, the Superior and Community of Capuchin Tertiary Friars of the St. Rita Reform School, Carabanchel Bajo (Madrid).

Having arriving in the Eternal City, where we went for the canonization of St. Joseph of Oriol in the company of the most Reverend General Minister and his Secretary and our Majordomo Brother Javier⁹⁰, we have the satisfaction of announcing that our Holy Father, in the private and individual audience we were granted, deigned to make clear to us the sympathy and affection he felt for our Congregation, which he said he was perfectly familiar with; and in testament of that and agreeing to our request, he granted all the priests of the Congregation the power to apply the full *toties quoties* indulgence at the time of death, applicable to all the dying who may kiss it. Similarly, he granted the authorization for applying the indulgences of the scapulars of the Holy Virgin to the medallions of our Lady of Sorrow blessed by them, and a special blessing for all the friars of the Congregation.

1762 From his Eminence Cardinal Vives we received just as many displays of affection and interest for our School, giving us broad instructions and authorizations for governing and directing it, which in due time we will make known to our friars.

Let everyone help us, then, give thanks to God for such singular mercies and to work enthusiastically and by mutual consent for the good and prosperity of our Congregation so that His Holiness and our Cardinal Protector may see the moral and material progress they expect in it.

For this pleasant reason, your Fathers and servants in Christ offer their heartfelt blessings.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.
BROTHER PEDRO MARÍA OF TITAGUAS.

104. TO THE COADJUTOR BROTHERS OF THE COMMUNITY OF
CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF DOS HERMANAS
Solsona, 29 May 1909

1763 We, Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Bishop Of Tagaste, Apostolic Administrator of Solsona and Founder of the Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows.

To the beloved children, the Religious Assistants of our House of Dos Hermanas, Seville.

Greetings and Seraphic blessing.

It has come to our knowledge, beloved children, through various channels and primarily from Rome, the attitude which some of Your Charities have adopted in trying to present for the approval of the Constitutions of our Institution by the Roman Pontiff, to judge from the changes introduced to the Constitutions which

⁹⁰ This refers to Father Javier María of Valencia (cf. 191, 192, 1750 above).

give them a *new orientation* and, *at the same time, are detrimental* to the interests of the Brothers.

1764 It is necessary, beloved children, to reflect well on the details and weigh with all due consideration the terrible consequences of this behavior, in order not to be part of the tremendous responsibility whoever has contributed to upset the spirits of the friars in any way will have before God.

For my part, I would consider, as a father, this news have reached my soul so deeply that I cannot let this rest in good conscience and heeding indications from superiors to deliver a few warnings in which, with divine grace, I can call you to order and make you reflect and go back over your steps to perhaps prevent you and myself from having to experience irreparable bitterness between us. Bear this in mind, then:

1765 1. The approval of the Institution, although it also was mentioned in the approval of the Constitutions, was declared at the same time that the School was dealing with the unusual circumstances the Religious Institutions were going through in that period in Spain. The aim was to legalize its status in the face of the danger of expulsion of those that were not legalized and approved in due form by the Holy See⁹¹ but, once that period had passed, we understood that the Constitutions needed a specially approval that would have to asked for and would be given in due time. The same happened with the Constitutions of our Third Order Sisters, whose approval is also being processed.

1766 2. No one, and I less than anyone, had any interest or thought of introducing any innovation in our Constitutions. If they had been changed, it would been by the order of Rome, in effect of the regulations given by the Sacred Congregations for the Institutions of simple vows, which must adapt its Constitutions exactly if they wanted the approval of the Holy See⁹².

1767 3. In light of those intentions and by the command of superiors, we revised them, as you know, in 1902, adapting them as much we could to the regulations of the Sacred Congregation, but without varying their spirit in any way and even leaving unchanged the two or three points that concern you, referring to attending the Provincial Chapter meeting as members and being able to be elected Vice-Ministers of the Homes whenever that is advisable. You also already know these Constitutions were also approved in the First General Chapter meeting held in 1902; and in July 1905 the General Defining Council ordered that they be put into practice in all the houses of the Congregation and that they be read every two months so that the friars would keep them more in mind. That agreement has been complied with since that time without any protest from the friars.

1768 4. After this, the Congregation persisted several times in trying to obtain the approval of these Constitutions and received the identical response every time: it was necessary, to that effect, for them to adapt totally to the regulations of the Sacred Congregation; and the authorization by Rome for holding the second

⁹¹ Cf. 1713, 1714 above.

⁹² Cf. *Normae*, of 28 June 1901, in SCHAEFER, T.: *De Religiosis* (Rome, 1947), pp. 1102-1135.

General Chapter meeting expressly stated that the Chapter must occupy itself, above all else, with this task. To that end, the Chapter members designated the new Defining Council so that, in agreement with me, the revision that Rome was demanding would be done.⁹³

1769 5. Before undertaking this work, I once again insisted on not changing the indicated points, and again they answered me that the total agreement of the Constitutions with the previously mentioned Regulations was necessary for their approval. In our journey to Rome with the General Minister and his Secretary, even though it was untimely, we spoke thoroughly about this matter with his Eminence the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Religious Orders without obtaining any response other than the one indicated. That is why with the approval of the General Defining Council I made the required changes, which were sent to Rome and still were returned to us with a series of amendments made by the Censor appointed for that purpose by the Sacred Congregation.

1770 This is the true story of the events with respect to the approval of the Constitutions of our Institution, beloved children. And just when we were expecting to see them approved momentarily, we find that it is you yourselves who are making it difficult to attain that approval.

Consider well everything I explained and focus on the fact it is your Father who is telling you this, who you would think must have more interest than anyone (even though you have judged to the contrary) in the good of the Institution, the preservation of its spirit and for each and everyone of you in particular. Take into account also that your hostile attitude is not offending and aggravating your Founder Father and the General Superiors, but the Holy See instead, who is issuing these orders and agreements by which the religious Institutions receive their being and existence.

1771 There is much more I could and want to tell you, beloved children, but I am limiting myself to recommending to you submission and obedience to the Holy See, which gives us responsibility for so much⁹⁴ and from the admirable example given us by the Seraphic Father St. Francis, because only then will you be credited as good friars, which is what you wanted on entering into the Order and what the Order desires for each and every one of you.

I trust in God that, enlightened by his divine grace, you will go back over your agreements, subordinating yourselves in all and for all they intend, and putting it on the record in a letter each of you should address to me without delay, for my own knowledge and consequent effects.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

⁹³ Cf. 1791. (Arbitrary location, 1767-1771).

⁹⁴ Father Luis makes here a clear reference to the theme of Pius X: "Restore all things in Christ", which he cites in other writings: (cf. 280, 461 above: 2155) [Arbitrary Location, 1171-1773, see * in 1780.

105. TO CARDINAL VIVES Y TUTÓ
Solsona, 10 August 1910

1772 Your Eminence and Most Reverend Cardinal Vives y Tutó.

Venerated Prelate and most valued Brother: I have the honor of sending to your Eminence the report the Sacred Congregation of Religious Orders sent me so that you may inform your various contacts.

I would have liked to deal with it before, but it was impossible because it took this long to bring together some of the details that I needed to collect.

I do not know if this will be in the required form, but Your Eminence will be able to tell me with complete frankness if there is something to correct.

I am sorry I have to be contradictory on some details, but I can assure you in all good conscience that I am answering every point with the greatest possible precision.

1773 I would like to send to Your Eminence corrections for all the errors that the report may need, and if you believe it advisable, some instructions reserved for the Friars so that in the future they may adapt more precisely to the laws and instructions of the Holy See and the Constitutions of the Institution.

I am taking this opportunity to repeat my deepest gratitude for the new favor received, and hoping that now you will take an interest in the approval of the Constitutions of my nuns, which were presented some time again, I remain as always the sincere subject of Your Eminence who kisses your purple vestment.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

106. TO THE PREFECT OF THE SACRED CONGREGATION OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS
Solsona, 10 August 1910

1774 Your Eminence and Most Reverend Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Religious Orders⁹⁵.

Your Eminence: In fulfillment of the commission that Your Eminence gave me on 16 July, I have read and thoroughly examined the document sent to the Sacred Congregation by the most Reverend Fathers Bernardino of Alacuás and Brother Carlos of Quart de les Valls, the General Definitor of my Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars for the previous six-year period, and in good conscience I must make the following observations:

Number 13. I have to note that the Novitiate of Torrent was set up without authorization of the Holy See, as my Institution did not have more than approval of the diocese then; and a short time later there was also a novitiate for Brothers in

⁹⁵ This was Cardinal Vives y Tutó; known as a Capuchin as Father José Calasanz of Llevaneras.

Yuste, also without more approval than that of the Prelate of the Diocese, for the same reason.

Later it was established under canon law for the Coadjutor Brothers and authorization was also granted to for moving the school for the Clergy to Godella, albeit that still has not been carried out since the house is being built.

Number 17. Until the publication of the regulations of the Sacred Congregation, the Institution was governed the original working Constitutions approved by several Prelates of the diocese, and each friar had a printed copy of that; but from that date on, the Constitutions were adapted to those regulations and there was a written copy of them in each house, as answered in number 17.

Number 18. There are several (friars) who, for reasons of health or asking for alms, were outside the Novitiate for several days. One in particular, who today is a priest, was in his home for over a year and, after acknowledging it later, they professed him without a new novitiate.

Number 19. Not a single friar believes the time of the Novitiate has been reduced but many do say that it was extended, perhaps with the aim of testing their vocation.

The novice mentioned must be the one I refer to in the previous number, since nobody really considered him a novice due to the amount of time he was outside and studying in the Seminary.

Number 20. In addition to the domestic chores indicated in the answer, the Novices were very frequently employed to ask for alms.

1775 Number 24. Several friars had more or less time without vows due to not professing them at the time corresponding to them, undoubtedly either for testing or correction.

Number 29. Some friars of temporary vows were dismissed and went outside, without asking for the dispensation of time remaining of their vows first.

Number 42. In the report on accounts, even when on the first of October 1908, the closed figures show all the houses with a surplus, the truth is, with the exception of the house in Yuste, all the other had substantial debts that they had not recorded.

Number 44. The small amount is says is placed in securities of the State is five thousand *pesetas*, and is for a devout foundation.

Number 45. Five thousand *pesetas* (which were not possible to recover) were robbed by a Novice from the Torrent house, which were deposited towards the five thousand that we mentioned in the previous number, to take care of a devout foundation; but in spite of this reduction, the Institution is fulfilling its obligations exactly, as it says in number 56.

Number 51. There is a great deal of carelessness in this point.

Number 53. The strongbox with three keys has not been set up as ordered except in one House. The Superiors are protesting they have no interest to save or guard.

Number 56. In addition to the devout charges mentioned in the response to this number, it should be put on the record that the foundation of the Monastery

of Yuste carries with it an annual mass, another monthly mass, and two in the birthday celebration of the founders.

1776 Number 66. Concerning the reading of these decrees, there has been a fair amount of carelessness.

Number 69. The Constitutions were not observed with all due scrupulousness in this point.

Number 70. There has also been a fair amount of carelessness in some Houses on this point.

Number 75. The abuse of this point has resulted in heated arguments and many complaints for a long time, due to not respecting even the letters addressed to the Superiors and Definitors.

Number 76. There has not been stability in the local Superiors until the most recent General Chapter meeting, as they were being removed with great frequency according to the will of the Higher Superior.

1777 Number 77. The Official Visits have been abused on many occasions, sometimes for entire months with a diminishing of the jurisdiction of the local Superiors, who lament that fact.

Number 78. Very few times were the local councilors consulted without success.

Number 79. During one portion of these six years, I scarcely had any involvement in directing the Institution, because I did not have the required freedom in my Order, and also because the Superiors who governed my Congregation avoided it, to the degree that eight years went by without visiting the main House of the Congregation (St. Rita)⁹⁶. And what happened in this period is that some the Greater Superiors reaching an understanding with a Jesuit Father to totally transform the Institution⁹⁷. Since then, I have had to pay more attention to this and attend some of their defining meetings when I was invited and able to do so. I believe I have not restricted or inhibited the freedom and intentions of anyone in them, nor in the most recent Chapter meeting, either, although in my opinion they asked me to do that.

1778 Number 84. Up to the present day, there has been very little formality in the studies; no strictness in the academic courses or regularity in the classes; and records of the examination do not exist. All of these were subject to regulations from the time of the most recent General Chapter meeting.

Number 95. Under the authority of the Prelates of the diocese, they confessed as extraordinary and spiritually directed to the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters, also founded by me.

With respect to the signing of this document, I call your attention to this date of 20 November 1908, on the eve of the most recent General Chapter meeting, and that it was not signed by the previous Superior General nor the other Definitors

⁹⁶ Cf. 2075.

⁹⁷ Cf. 155, 156, 1732, 1744 above; 2075.

who were meeting there, one of whom was the present General Minister, who says they did not present him with any document like it⁹⁸.

This is what I can say to Your Eminence with respect to the points embraced by the attached report, in fulfillment of the commission you gave me the responsibility for preparing.

The humble servant of Your Eminence who kisses your purple vestment.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

107. TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF SPAIN
Solsona, 15 September 1910

1779 The Most Illustrious President of the Council of Ministers.

The Bishop of Solsona kisses the hand of the distinguished President and other gentlemen of the Catholic Board of Vizcaya and approves and applauds the thought of organizing Catholic demonstrations all over Spain on 2 October, to protest the anti-religious plans of the Government and encourage the spirit of the Catholics whom today, more than ever, it is advisable to keep tightly bound to the side of the Spanish bishopric and the Roman Pontiff⁹⁹.

Bless them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

108. TO POPE PIUS X
Solsona, 28 December 1910

1780 Most Blessed Father:

Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Bishop of Tagaste, Apostolic Administrator of the diocese of Solsona, humbly kneeling at the feet of His Holiness explains: Convinced of the urgent and utmost need of returning to the righteous way, through Christian education, those young people pervaded with false doctrines and bad examples who are separated from the way of truth and virtue, he founded, applying all his efforts and assisted by the divine grace, two Institutions of the Third Order of Capuchins, one male and one female, with the intention that the zealous friars and nuns of both Institutions would reform, in both the natural and supernatural sense, those

⁹⁸ The outgoing general board was made up of Fathers José María of Sedaví, Pedro María of Titaguas, Bernardino of Alacuás, Carlos María of Quart and Luis María of Torrent. The new general board was composed of Fathers Pedro María of Titaguas, Manuel María of Alcalalí, Domingo María of Alboraya, Antonio María of Massamagrell and Father Juan María of Ayelo.

⁹⁹ Facing the imminent approval of the "*Ley del Candado*", which would be approved on 23 December 1910.

youths who have strayed from the path of good, renewing them in Christ by all the means at their disposal⁹⁴.

With the help of God, both Institutions are completely fulfilling their commitment, and are therefore highly esteemed by the bishops and all kinds of people, and deserved to obtain the decree of approval of your predecessor Pope Leo XIII, of sacred memory.

I wrote the Constitutions for the correct government and disciple of those Institutions, according to the regulations of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regular Clergy; but Your Holiness only deigned to grant the approval of the Constitutions for the friars.

I cherish the wish now that Your Holiness deigns to similarly grant the supreme approval of the Constitutions concerning the nuns and reverently request this approval from the generosity of Your Holiness.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

109. TO SISTER MARÍA LUISA OF VALENCIA, CT
Solsona, 30 December 1910

1781 Beloved Mother Sister María Luisa of Valencia:

Beloved Sister in Christ: I received your anguished letter, full of lamentations like those of Jeremiah, which I judge very inappropriate for the generous and hard-working heart of Your Reverence, for not considering that it is very natural that they miss the lack of great spiritual assistance they have had in José Piqueras until now. But what are we going to do? God has willed it this way and you must fulfill his divine will, even though it was bitter for all of us. Do not think you are that abandoned, since Father José will be there at those times judged extraordinary when he must go there; and for the more urgent needs of conscience they have the prudent and zealous Directors there, designated by your Prelates who has always been well disposed in your favor. Do not complain needlessly, then, and do not chastise the Lord!

1782 Enough of responding to charges; now something more encouraging, for which I thank God. You will already know through Mother Superior Rosario that the Constitutions are on the verge of being approved by His Holiness. In addition, if Your Reverence is going to die in Massamagrell, she must know that I have planned the construction of the pantheon that we already dealt with on another occasion; and I think we can use it for the deceased for the first time this year this year. And so that you can also see I have not forgotten the living nuns, I wrote to the Reverend Mother General Vicar who has five gifts of 500 pesetas each for young postulants, the most suitable and poor ones who need it. Are you convinced that your father has not forgotten you?¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ See 1771, note 94 above.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. 1737, 1753 above.

Do not be surprised that I have not gone by your convent on this trip; it seemed to me it more likely would have disturbed them and increased, although without wanting to, the great amount of work they had to do with the sick.

Pray to God for your father and servant who blesses everyone and does not forget them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

110. TO FATHER CLEMENTE OF ARELLANO, OFM CAP.
Solsona, 6 March 1911

1783 THE BISHOP OF TAGASTE, Apostolic Administrator of Solsona, BLESSES

The Reverend and valued Father Brother Clemente of Arellano, and has the pleasure of including a note of the details of the Congregations of his Third Order friars that he asked for in the gracious letter of the 12th of last month and a published report of some works done in the House of Carabanchel; hoping that out of your kindness you will inform me when the work referred to is published and where I can acquire a copy.

I extend this blessing to all the Brothers of that most Reverend Community.

Brother LUIS AMIGÓ Y FERRER

takes great pleasure in having this opportunity to offer this testimonial of his great esteem and consideration for the Reverend Father.

111. TO CARDINAL VIVES Y TUTÓ
Madrid, 20 November 1911

1784 Your Eminence Cardinal Vives y Tutó.

Most Reverend and beloved Prelate: With the utmost gratitude for the kindnesses and growing interest of your Eminence in our Institution, we have the honor of writing today to send him the three-year report and making him aware of the results of the General Council for the appointment to positions¹⁰¹.

The General Superiors were confirmed in their posts and in the voting for General Secretary and General Attorney, the greatest number of votes were obtained

¹⁰¹ It appears to be the case that, based on the letter of 3 October 1907 (cf. 1743-1746 above), Luis Amigó received authorization to approve every three years the Greater Superiors elected in chapter meeting (Cf. GUILLÉN J.: *Testimony in the Apostolic Inquiry Process of Beatification of the Servant of God, Luis Amigó* in the Archive of the Vice-Postulator Father, Godella-Valencia)

by Father Brother Javier María of Valencia for the former and Father Brother Carlos of Quart for the latter.

Local superiors were chosen: for the Mother House of Torrent, the Reverend Father Brother Juan de Dios of Ayelo. = St. Rita Reform School, Madrid, most Reverend Father Brother Javier María of Valencia. = Correctional Colony of St. Hermenegildo, Seville the Reverend Father Brother Manuel María of Alcalá. = Monastery of Yuste, Reverend Father Brother Antonio María of Massamagrell. = Caldeiro Foundation House, Madrid, Reverend Father Brother Domingo María of Alboraya, and for the Asylum of St. Nicholas, Teruel, the Reverend Father Brother José María of Sedaví.

The Vice-Superiors are respectively: Reverend Father Brother Laureano of Burriana. = Most Reverend Father Brother Carlos of Quart. = Reverend Father Brother Ludovico of Valencia. = Reverend Father Brother León of Alacuás. = Reverend Father Brother Ambrosio of Torrent. = Most Reverend Father Brother Bernardino María of Alacuás.

These were the results obtained after several sessions, preceded by a Triduum of spiritual withdrawal. We believe we have been able to spiritually unite the peace and tranquility of the Houses in this way with the wishes of the friars and the demands of some of the Patrons, especially of the Board of the Caldeiro foundation.

We hope that with the blessing of God and the protection of Your Eminence our Institution will continue growing each day in perfection and offering greater and better services to society.

For myself and all the friars of the Institution, who ask on their knees for the blessing of Your Eminence and also beg that you may obtain for them the blessing His Holiness as well, your humble servants who kiss the hand of the Supreme Pontiff.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.
BROTHER PEDRO MARÍA OF TITAGUAS.

112. TO SISTER ISABEL OF BENISSA, CT
Solsona, 4 January 1912

1785 Beloved Mother Isabel of Benissa¹⁰².

Beloved Sister in Christ: I received yesterday your much appreciated letter of 22 November which, as with all those from my nuns, was very pleasing to me, although it always seems I appreciate the news from those who are in more distant lands even more. Your good intentions and the spirit of sacrifice you have always been inspired by, thanks to God, give me great satisfaction and you truly need all

¹⁰² Cf. 72 above.

of that in the mission because there is much you have to endure; nevertheless the consolation you experience must be very great after seeing the reward of what you do in the souls and with consideration of the award that is awaiting us for it.

1786 I understand very well that you are troubled on seeing the needs of moving the novitiate to another town and the coldness with which such an important matter is viewed. For my part, I already recommended it and made the Illustrious Apostolic Vicar see that it is advisable, as have the Reverend General Mother Superiors and their Councilors; therefore, it is advisable that Your Charities insist on it, supported in this wish by the greater Superiors, because we will not be able to increase our Congregation here whenever it is advisable and necessity demands it in any other way. We all pray to the Lord so that minds are moved to this end and resolve the problems that could arise for the execution of this venture.

Tell the novices on my behalf that I am very grateful for the good memory they have of me, but more than anything for their prayers, which I need so much for carrying out my noble mission. For my part, I do not forget them myself and I ask the Lord to make them and I very saintly in order to give him much glory¹⁰³; and if I do not have the pleasure of seeing and meeting them personally on earth, that we will all be together and see each other in Heaven.

1787 I suppose they will already know, albeit little by little, that they are carrying out the planned works in the Mother House of Massamagrell, as the school has been given priority, whose classrooms are very good and spacious and have been made on the land occupied what they were calling the *campreta*, up to the nursery. We will see when we will be able to give it another push.

I also have news that the Bishop of Segorbe died (may he rest in peace) and it appears there is some effort underway to have me go to occupy that diocese. Let them pray to God so that in this, as in all things, the will of God is fulfilled.

As for Mother Visitación, who is taking this letter for you, I will write to her another day.

Greeting to the Bishop, José, the Capuchin Fathers and all the nuns, who your father and servant Christ blesses.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

113. TO A NUN OF MASSAMAGRELL
Solsona, 17 August 1912

1788 Beloved Sister in Christ María José.

With surprise and great satisfaction I saw from your letter and one from my brother that you are now in our birthplace after thirty years absence.

¹⁰³ Cf. 1, note 2 above.

I can imagine the excitement and joy that the reunion between you and your family will produce at the end of such a long period of absence; and the satisfaction that all your relatives will have to be part of it, and I also join them in congratulating you on this event.

I am sorry my many activities do not allow me for the moment to go there to welcome you; perhaps at the end of September, when I have my trip planned, you will already have returned to your destination and therefore I am limiting myself to welcoming you from here and hoping that you enjoy this period of time at the side of your family very much.

Commend yourself in your prayers with the blessing of this prelate and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

114. TO ANTONIO MAURA
Solsona, 6 January 1913

1789 Your Excellency Antonio Maura.

My respected and beloved friend: Having found out through the newspaper these days of your decision to retire from political life, I cannot do less than express the deep pain this news cause me for the terrible consequences that on a not too distant day, if God does not find a solution, that one can see coming to our beloved Homeland. It is true that those of us who live separated from the center where events of such significance are developed cannot appreciate the proper value of the reasons that inspire them, but those expressed by you are very well justified.

At any rate, men such as you are brought in the world by Providence to contain the unrestrained onslaught of revolutionary and demoralizing ideals and your withdrawal from the Government is very significant.

If my poor vote counts for anything, I would plead with you from the depths of my soul not to abandon the true Spanish people, who sincerely appreciate and trust in you; nevertheless, respecting your decision, I sent at the time my congratulations to your wife Constanza and family, who from now on will be able to enjoy greater peace with you separated from the troubles that come from being in the Government.

Always count on me as your best friend and chaplain, who blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

115. TO SISTER ISABEL OF BENISSA, CT.
Solsona, 24 March 1913

1790 Beloved Mother Isabel of Benissa.

Beloved Sister in Christ: Your Reverence can imagine the great satisfaction the news caused that I was directly informed of and also the ones I saw in the letters from José and the Reverend Mother referring to the warm welcome Your Charities received in this devout city, which we did call it that according to what you say referring to the frequency of the sacraments observed in them.

I confidently hope the Lord must continue your blessings for that foundation for the good of the souls and honor of our Institution. But it is certainly advisable now that José Piquera would be with Your Charities, completing your work that way for the direction of the novitiate if it is definitively advisable to establish it there. As you will find out from the attached letter that I am writing to him, you will see that I am making him understand that, expecting from your interest in the Institution that he must do everything possible to please us.

1791 The Reverend Mother Visitación indicated to me the advisability of my writing to the Prelate of the Diocese which José belongs to so that he would let him go to take over as Chaplain of Your Charities, but as I do not know up to what point that would be advisable, I authorize Your Reverence so that, if you consider it prudent, you may ask for that as my commission and in my name, after reaching an agreement with José.

All the letters I receive from there I sent to the Reverend General Mother for her satisfaction and with the aim that she can supply details for the "Emulación"¹⁰⁴ magazine for the glory of God and our Institution.

From the letter of José you will find out about my promotion to be Bishop of Segorbe. As this is something that happened during these Easter holy days, I do not know if all the nuns will yet know of it yet, and one can image the joy they must have after knowing of my appointment. Help me in giving thanks to the Lord and that each and every one of the nuns of this house receives the blessing of their father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

116. TO SISTER ISABEL OF BENISSA, CT.
Valencia, 2 May 1913

1792 Reverend Mother Sister Isabel of Benissa.

¹⁰⁴ Bimonthly magazine published by St. Rita Reform School, Madrid, from 1906 to 1913.

Beloved Sister in Christ: As I found myself in Valencia, I received your appreciated letter of 17 March, and finding out about it, I called the Reverend General Mother, with whom I have to deal with the matters that you inform me of in that letter, and by mutual agreement we believed we should answer it in the following way:

1. Before dealing with the purchase of lands and the way to do the works, look closely into if it is a point proposed by that town to establish the Novitiate, since Your Reverence will recall that in other letters you have expressed some doubt about this point, and you know the reason for allowing the foundation was precisely for it to be a House-Novitiate.

2. With respect to the proposal that those gentlemen are making to you, do not make any definitive agreements as long as José is not there and thoroughly deal with them on that, and then they will tell us what seems advisable to them; because it is bad to make agreements from here without knowing the entire situation well. What we can anticipate is: to purchase some land for the foundation, doing it, of course, in the name of the nuns the same way it was done for Riohacha (Colombia) and here in Spain. They should be the same ones who figure in the deed of the other house, adding any others as advisable; and to avoid traveling, those who are in Riohacha could give powers of attorney to Your Reverence.

3. With respect to granting the seventy *pesos* they give for the works, Your Reverence will know if you can maintain yourselves decently or not without that money, and in that event, it would be good to do it if those gentlemen are responsible for the works and they remain for the benefit of the Institution.

4. By doing these works in that way and not asking for any kind of loan, there is not need of a special authorization from Rome and Your Reverence can arrange things as you see fit with complete freedom, since the General Mother has given you broad authorizations; not forgetting, of course, that Your Reverence must account for whatever you decide.

5. I imagine that my reply to your previous letter is in your possession and in it I already gave my opinion about the stay of José in the Institution. On my part, I consider it sound judgment not to make any kind of management, but if he so wishes, that you tell me what he wants and most advisable form for my involvement.

6. One of these days, as they say, the Royal Order for my transfer to be Bishop of Segorbe will be given and, although I suppose it will take a little longer for me to be able to go, it will not be advisable to write me now at Solsona, and better to address the letters to Massamagrell instead.

The General Mother, who is present here and I offer you our heartfelt blessings and commend you in our prayers.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

117. TO SISTER ISABEL OF BENISSA, CT.
Solsona, 23 September 1913

1793 Reverend Mother Isabel of Benissa.

Beloved Sister in Christ: I remember in one of your letters to the General Mother you were lamenting not having received any reply from me to the letter you had addressed to me, and I just want to state that I have answered as many times as Your Reverence has written to me.

From your most recent letter to the General Mother I found out about your projects of buying the house, the resources you have and support you can count on in that town. I believe, then, Reverend Mother, that before you acquire the kind of commitments that would be difficult to meet given the lack of enthusiasm of that town, it would be better to be saving funds to see if another town appears which could help us more and, above all, is closer to the other houses of the Institution and Capuchin Fathers for the spiritual direction, since I see it will be difficult to have José there, and even if that would be possible to achieve, it would not be for many years. I am telling the Reverend General Mother to speak with the Illustrious Father Francisco, who will be able to advise you better on what is most advisable and perhaps could even indicate some point in the Diocese of Santa Marta that would be agreeable to them, since it seems to me that he indicated that he had planned to move it to a village in that Diocese, and seemed to be somewhat sorry for the decision reached.

1794 This must not be any reason in any way to dissuade Your Reverence about pursuing this foundation, if it is advisable, but only that we make the right decision and choose the best location for the novitiate, where the health conditions and easy access are joined to the means for living and proximity to the other houses and the Fathers for the spiritual direction and education of the novices.

I am glad how much and how well they are working for the glory of God, and therefore I feel even more that those good people do not reciprocate the sacrifice of Your Charities by providing them with the materials means they need. At any rate, as the reward you have to receive is from God and not in this world, take heart and do however much you can for the good of these souls which the Lord has entrusted to you.

They should never believe we have forgotten them¹⁰⁵, because in the same degree that they are farther away, the more our affection increases and we commend them in our poor prayers to the Lord and your father and servant in Christ pleads for their return.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. 1800, 1815, 1906, 1907, 1913.

118. TO FATHER MIGUEL OF ESPLUGUES, OFM CAP.
Valencia, 22 November 1913

1795 If it is natural and only fair that we mourn the death of our famous Cardinal Vives, a star of the first magnitude in the Church, the glory and honor of our Homeland and illustrious son of our Capuchin Order, we must also rejoice just as much in the glory that he is undoubtedly enjoying in Heaven for his virtue, which earned him universal acclaim for saintliness.

I always considered him an extraordinary man sent by God; but even more I confirm the concept behind these words I heard from the august lips of Pope Leo XIII in his eulogy addressed to a considerable committee of Third Order friars, to whom he introduced our deceased Cardinal: "Throughout time, the Lord has sent great men to the world in accordance with the need of each period; in the 13th century He sent the Seraphic Father St. Francis, and in the present, He sent us Cardinal Vives to represent Father St. Francis.

The Cardinal was embarrassed, and humbled himself before the Holy Father, saying that he was nothing more than a poor sinner, to which the Pontiff replied: "Yes, Cardinal, but all the Saints said the same thing".¹⁰⁶

I do not believe a greater eulogy could be made nor greater credit given to his virtue than that testimonial.

Let us bless the Lord for the graces he granted to his servant, and let us engrave his sublime teachings and example deeply in our soul.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

119. TO SISTER ISABEL OF BENISSA, CT.
Segorbe, 2 November 1914

1796 Most Reverend Mother Sister Isabel of Benissa, General Commissioner Beloved Sister in Christ: Acknowledging the receipt of your pleasant letter of 22 August and first, I give you my most cordial congratulations for your new position which the Divine Providence has imposed on you through the General Superiors; and as it is His work, trust that the graces and assistance necessary for your undertaking will be passed along to you, and therefore: *Lift up your hearts* and work without becoming discouraged.

It seems very good to me that it is José¹⁰⁷ who is guiding your spirit; and you can also inform him regarding other matters of the Congregation when you cannot do so with the General Superior, since, as he is very familiar with the Institution

¹⁰⁶ Cf. 158 above.

¹⁰⁷ Referring to the priest José Piqueras Benedito.

and the great interest and enthusiasm he has for it, he will always give you the wisest advice.

1797 I am telling José that it does not seem advisable for Your Reverence to leave to do the Official Visits to the houses of the Mission now, since you would have to take sufficient time to do them and that would leave the main house unattended, as the personnel there are very young. Nevertheless, so that Your Reverence can attend to and find out about the needs of the houses and the personnel of that region, you could send to each one a circular letter ordering that each and every one of the nuns write separately what they think is advisable for the good operation of the Institution. Once you have collected their opinions, take the most notable points from them and submit them to the councilors so they can take the most appropriate actions by mutual agreement.

1798 Do not worry about the attitude that the Illustrious Bishop of Citarizo has taken from the beginning with respect to that foundation, since if it is a work of God, as it appears to be, this is the voice we must pay attention to first and the Bishop will be content one day when he sees nuns coming this Center for his Mission.

Here the Institution, thanks to God, continues advancing. There are presently 17 novices in the novitiate. A church has been built in it which cost more than 3,000 \$ (*reales*), pretty, spacious, narrow and everyone is very pleased with it. We also acquired a good house for a school in Benaguasil. In Paterna, we are currently building a wing for a charity dining hall and cells for the Sisters. As you can imagine, it is all financed from alms. Let us bless the Lord for it and give him our thanks.

Your Father and servant in Christ blesses and commends in his prayer you and your nuns.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

120. TO SISTER ISABEL OF BENISSA, CT.
Segorbe, 27 March 1916

1799 Reverend and valued Mother Isabel in Christ

Although I have answered your letters with the letters to the Mother Superiors, I do not want to waste such a good opportunity to send you my best wishes and gratitude for your kind regards and to show my appreciation to Your Reverence and the other Mothers and Sisters of this School and Novitiate where they are giving so much glory to God.

They continue on this path with more fervor every day, willing to suffer with resignation any of the many setbacks and tribulations inherent to whoever works for God and will find their reward multiplied one hundred times over in Heaven.

They pray to the Lord for me, both Spanish and those born in the Americas, since all of them are my beloved daughters who in their prayers commend their Father and servant in Christ who blesses them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

Poor Father Javier, your brother, joins me in these affectionate sentiments and asks the Lord to bless them.

121. TO SISTER GENOVEVA OF VALENCIA, CT.
Segorbe, 23 February 1917

1800 Most Reverend Mother Sister Genoveva of Valencia and the Community of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Riohacha school.

Valued daughters in the Seraphic Father St. Francis: It gives me great satisfaction to take advantage of this opportunity to express to you that you are not forgotten¹⁰⁸. I am quite happy to know of the good progress these houses in the Americas are experiencing and how willing they are for working harder every day for the glory of God, although they have to make some sacrifices, and thereby they will receive their eternal reward in Heaven.

Take heart, follow the advice given by the Most Reverend General Mother and do not forget in your fervent prayers your Father and servant in Christ who blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

122. TO HIS FRIEND JOSÉ MIÑANA
Segorbe, 27 August 1918

1801 Mr. José Miñana.

The Bishop of Segorbe BLESSES his respectable and beloved friend José Miñana and thanks him for his good wishes, although I advise him that his birthday party fall on the day of St. Luis Gonzaga. He is especially grateful for the prayers raised in his favor, of which he needs many because the position he holds is very great and difficult.

For that reason, he begs him to greet in my name his son Joaquín and family, to whom he extends his blessing.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. 1794, note 105 above.

Brother Luis Amigó y Ferrer takes great pleasure in using this opportunity to repeat the statement of his most distinguished consideration.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

123. TO HIS FRIEND JOSÉ MIÑANA
Segorbe, 8 October 1918

1802 Mr. José Miñana.

The Bishop of Segorbe BLESSES his beloved friend José Miñana, and in the eight holy days of Father St. Francis congratulates him on his anniversary in the Third Order, asking St. Francis to attain for him the graces necessary to imitate him in his virtues.

I am grateful for your prayers and displays of affection, which I reciprocate; and with him I regret the lack of unity of the town of Ador, which I love very much and for which I pray to the Lord so that everyone may come to have feelings of peace and harmony and bring about happiness in this way.

Brother Luis Amigó y Ferrer takes great pleasure in using this opportunity to repeat the statement of his most distinguished consideration.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

124. TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF SPAIN
Segorbe, 11 October 1918

1803 Your Excellency, the President and Minister of Pardons and Justice

Dear Sir: I first give my congratulations to Your Excellency in continuing as President and appointment as Minister of Pardons and Justice. All for the glory of God and the good of our Homeland!

I must declare to Your Excellency that in July I presented to this Ministry the parish arrangement of this Diocese and no decision has been communicated to me by the Ministry to date. And as I urge it so that it could be included in the upcoming budgets and planning as soon as possible, I beg Your Excellency to take an interest in this matter for the good of this poor Diocese.

I would also appreciate your kindness if the Examining Judge of the Merced District of Malaga, Luis de Mesa, who is due to be promoted, be assigned to the audience of Jaén or Girona. He is a gentleman of exceptional qualities, an enthusiastic admirer of Your Excellence and a close friend of mine from Solsona, where we also had him as a Judge.

Begging that you forgive me for bothering you, I repeat that I am the servant and chaplain of Your Excellency.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

125. TO HIS FRIEND JOSÉ MIÑANA
Segorbe, 16 November 1919

1804 Mr. José Miñana.

The Bishop of Segorbe BLESSES his beloved friend José Miñana, and although belatedly, answers his appreciated undated letter of October, to thank him for his displays of affection and especially his prayers, and applaud and bless his method of living, very much in accordance with the spirit of a Third Order friar and son of Father St. Francis.

I also take this opportunity to greet his son, the Priest.

Brother Luis Amigó y Ferrer takes great pleasure in using this opportunity to repeat the statement of his most distinguished consideration.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

126. TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF MADRID
Segorbe, 16 December 1920

1805 My beloved children, the friars of the St. Rita Reform School.

Beloved brothers in Christ: Having found out through the press and your own very worthy General Father of what happened with the students of this House, if it did not exactly surprise me given their nature, I could not help but regret it, as you do, for the step backwards this means for the reputation and credit that our Reform School had justly gained¹⁰⁹. I do not want to assume blame or responsibility in any of Your Charities, since that would be a great responsibility before God and society. But I must urge you, beloved children, to consider the nobility of your mission and the good or bad effect your behavior can have on the youths entrusted to you for their correction. Do not have any doubt that the good example is what has the most influence on the human heart and is the most effective exhortation for the practice of good. For this reason, you must always go ahead of them in the daily Communion, the practice of prayer, religious modesty, restraint in your language

¹⁰⁹ This paternal letter was motivated by a mass escape of these students needing correction from the School on 8 December 1920 (cf. *Memoria del Asilo de Corrección Paternal y E. de Reforma de Santa Rita del año 1920* [Madrid, 1921], pp. 9-11.

and all the virtues that must stand out in every good friar. If, on the contrary, you do not treat them that way, but rather as someone equal to them, they will dare to not have respect for you. And above all, beloved children, I must confess to you, and fed up by it, that there has always been more enough to lament in this house.

1806 The treatment of these youths is very dangerous and complicated, and that is why you must be more attentive to it and frequently ask for assistance from the Lord through prayer. Besides this, I recommend to you very much fraternal unity and charity, by which the Lord says we must be known for in order to be his disciples¹¹⁰. If there is not the necessary unity or intelligence among Your Charities or with the Superior, do not be surprised that the youths who need correction, who notice everything, would find in that a reason to be disrespectful to each other.

There is no doubt that all of us have to serve the cross, but as the Lord wills it for our sanctification, we have to bear its burden with resignation, and even joy because we must go to heaven with it. Remember this verse:

*Without the cross there is no glory
Nor with the cross eternal tears
Holiness and the cross are one
There is no cross that has no saint
Nor a saint without any cross¹¹¹.*

And I conclude, beloved children, by begging you to take this exhortation as one of a father with the utmost desire for your temporal and eternal good and happiness, for which I pray for you at the same that I commend you to your prayers.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP.

127. TO THE CAPUCHINE TERTIARY SISTERS OF ALTURA
Segorbe, 22 December 1920
Jesus, Mary, Joseph (J. M. J.)

1807 Beloved sisters in Christ: Having now celebrated the sixth General Chapter meeting of our Congregation and the people are designated who are going to undertake the different positions and offices for the fulfillment of the mission to which each of the houses is dedicated, I am addressing each and every one of you in particular to urge you: by looking at everything that was decided as the will of God, who at the very least could listen to your prayers; taking into account that not even a leaf on a tree moves without the will of God, much less the actions

¹¹⁰ Cf. John 13:35.

¹¹¹ Cf. 1916.

of creatures, and especially those which refer to the spirit, to try to look with the utmost respect and veneration upon whoever the Lord has chosen to rule and direct you, whether in the major minor positions. Do not see in them the creature, but rather God whom you obey. Remember what the Father St. Francis said about this proposal: I would obey a novice, if he was given to me as a guardian, with as much good will as the most decorated father of the Order¹¹². Do no listen, let alone follow, the perverse doctrines that are now spreading against the virtue of obedience which are unfortunately finding followers even in the Religious Communities.

1808 Do not make the heavy burden they bear on their shoulders any greater with your bad behavior; on the contrary, try to be like Simon of Cyrene and help them to bear it, which you will do if, by practicing the humility of our Seraphic Father, your behavior is submissive, meek and obedient¹¹³.

And if this sermon of your father does not get your attention, beloved daughters, I unfortunately consider it necessary in view of the details that your most Reverend General Mother informed me of after her General Visit.

Take into account that in unity there is strength; and, as the Lord says, any kingdom divided against itself shall be devastated¹¹⁴. For this reason, the common enemy is sparing no effort to introduce dissension and conflicts in the Religious Communities, and it will be a great responsibility for whoever supports his diabolical plans by their bad behavior.

Let us love each other, beloved daughters, as the Lord commands¹¹⁵; and by suffering and forgiving each other's faults, which we all have, you will maintain, as far as you are concerned, the good harmony that must reign in the Communities, with the goal of being able to enjoy the peace the Angels proclaimed in the coming of the Redeemer to men of good will, and which your father and servant in Christ so greatly wishes for you that he commends you to your prayers, and congratulates you on the forthcoming Christmas holy days and New Year.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

128. TO BROTHER JOSÉ MARÍA OF MADRID, CT.
Segorbe, 28 October 1921

1809 THE BISHOP OF SEGORBE BLESSES

¹¹² Cf. LM 6:4, in works cited, p. 415; 2C 151, in works cited, p. 317; LP 11, in works cited, p. 605 and MP 46, in works cited, p. 727.

¹¹³ Cf. TC 52, in works cited, p. 559.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Matthew 12:25

¹¹⁵ Cf. John 13:35.

The beloved Brother Brother José María of Madrid and very cordially congratulates him for the gratifying news that informs him of having now received the Clerical Tonsure and being initiated in the priestly ministry, in which he wishes he could give much glory to God tomorrow, his father and servant in Christ, who he comments to his prayers.

BROTHER LUIS AMIGÓ Y FERRER

takes great pleasure in using this opportunity to repeat the statement of his most distinguished consideration.

129. TO BROTHER GABRIEL OF BENAGUASIL, CT.
Segorbe, 16 September 1922

1810 Beloved brothers in Christ Brother Gabriel of Benaguasil: Your appreciated letter of 13 September filled me with comfort for the lovely sentiments revealed in it and the pleasing news it brought to me. There is no doubt your early profession of perpetual vows is a unique grace that demands gratitude on your part towards God and your Superiors, who have brought such distinction to the Sacred Congregation. The Lord asks of us nothing less than our sanctification; and your mother, the Religion, also hopes with the Sacred Congregation that you honor and help it in your work. Never forget this, *that grace may be added to thy head* and one day your mother, the Congregation, may say: *You are my crown*.

1811 I greatly celebrate the results of your examinations and those of your pupils; but do not forget that in everything we members of Religious Orders do, we are serving the Lord, and in His service, after we did whatever we could, we will have to confess with St. Luke: *We are unprofitable servants*¹¹⁶, and with that thinking the common enemy will not tear the prize away from us.

I am very grateful for your prayers, which I greatly need and believe you will not doubt that, as a father, I have you very present in my own prayers, however poor they may be.

Everyone here in the house congratulates you on your profession with me and send their fond regards.

Please accept the portrait which, at your request, this poor sinner is sending, your father, who embraces and blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Luke 17:10

130. TO VARIOUS CAPUCHIN THIRD ORDER FRIARS
Segorbe, 22 September 1922

1812 Beloved children, Brother José María Pérez, Brother Gabriel García, Brother J. Asensio and Brother Joaquín Guillén.

The letter from Your Charities on 19 September was immensely gratifying for the news informing me of your profession of perpetual vows and ordination as Subdeacons. Let us bless the Lord for everything! And you, beloved children, must always be very grateful for the grace He awarded you, and must not be idle with it but instead work each day with more zeal for the glory of God, which makes you worthy of the highest dignity. And show your gratitude to the Order, your mother, by working tirelessly for its greatness and honor, reciprocating in this way the aim of God's plan in calling you to it, since by doing so you will assure your salvation¹⁷.

Commending you to your prayers, your father and servant.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

131. TO THE EDITOR OF "LA MILLOR CORONA" MAGAZINE
Segorbe, 3 May 1923

1813 Editor, "La Millor Corona" magazine, Valencia.

Dear Sir: I have the honor of sending you the document you asked me for the worthy magazine you edit, dedicated to honor the Holy Virgin of the Unprotected, and I greatly appreciate your interest. Your servant Brother Luis, Bishop of Segorbe, blesses you.

"Oh Holy Virgin, Mother of the Unprotected! After receiving from the hands of your children of Valencia, and placing on your holy head the crown of pure gold of your love and devotion to You, enriched with the precious pearls which have studded and crystallized the tears you shed at the foot of your altar; bless us, Holy Mother, and do not stop caring for our needs. But I especially pray to you, my Mother, for the poor wayward youths so that they recognize their mistakes, get away from bad company and come to be men useful to society and save their souls. Do not forget, Holy Mother, your child, the most needy.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹⁷ Cf. LP 108a, in works cited, p. 676; EP 65a, in works cited, p. 741; Cf. 1786 above; 1820, 1835, 1892, 1916.

132. TO SEVERAL CAPUCHIN THIRD ORDER FRIARS
Segorbe, 5 July 1923

1814 Beloved Brothers in Christ, Brother José Pérez, Brother José Asensio and Brother Joaquín Guillén.

The most Reverend Father Pedro and I received the pleasing news of your Ordination as Presbyters, which you informed us of in your appreciated letter of 30 June.

The grace which the Lord has granted you through the religion, the loving mother of the Sacred Congregations certainly has to be very great. And nobility obliges, beloved children. And what it obligates Your Charities to do is to carry out in a saintly manner the sacred ministry that has been entrusted to you, with which you will give much glory to God by bringing to his service a multitude of souls and they will honor your mother the Congregation¹¹⁸.

This is what we wish, both your father and Father Pedro¹¹⁹ and the other friars of this house, who join me in congratulating you and kissing your consecrated hands.

In gratitude for your prayers, you father and servant in Christ offers to have you present in his own, and blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

133. TO THE CAPUCHINE THIRD ORDER SISTERS

Segorbe, 8 December 1923

1815 TO OUR BELOVED DAUGHTERS, THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY

The blessing of the Lord and Father St. Francis always accompanies Your Charities

The great distance between us prevents me from knowing you personally, beloved daughters; but that does not mean you have less space in my heart as a father than the sisters of the Houses on this Peninsula¹²⁰. I follow with interest and find out the details of all your advances and works of the spirit which inspire you, feeling great pleasure and taking joy in the Lord on seeing the plentiful rewards you are reaping with your tireless zeal for the good of souls, especially the poor boys and girls born of gentile parents, who you instill with the knowledge of God and the duties they have towards society.

¹¹⁸ Cf. 1812, note 117 above.

¹¹⁹ Referring to Father Pedro María of Titaguas, at that time a relative of the bishop.

¹²⁰ Cf. 1794, note 105 above.

You well know the determination that our Holy Father the reigning Pontiff shows for the development of the Missions so that the knowledge of God reaches all the creatures, knowing him they love him, and loving him they serve him, and in this way the will of the Lord that everyone be saved is fulfilled¹²¹.

1816 There is no doubt that even among the civilized people there is also today much ignorance of religious issues, and therefore the work that you put into the education of the young girls in the Schools must be very great: but therefore your reward will be equally great.

I urge every one of you to be faithful to your vocation and with good works make your vocation and election true, as the apostle St. Peter says¹²². Bear in mind that no one gives what they do not have, and if you are to teach others the knowledge of virtue, it is necessary that you practice it yourselves, because in this way, without a great amount of work, they will follow your teachings because example is the best preacher.

1817 All the virtues are necessary to us and we have to try to practice them, following our divine model Jesus Christ; but we must pay special attention to those that most distinguished our Seraphic Father, since they are like the characteristics of our Order.

You know well how much the Seraphim of Assisi excelled in obedience, since he even said he would obey a novice, if he was given as a guardian, with as much good will as the oldest and most decorated father of the Order¹²³. This virtue, beloved daughters, is the basis of religious life, and without it there is only confusion and disorder, which lead the Institutions to decay, discredit and sure death.

1818 Another virtue in which our Seraphic Father stood out among all the Saints was poverty, which he love so much that he became married to it and asked the Lord for it for himself and his children¹²⁴. Do not be afraid then, beloved daughters, that by practicing this virtue you will lack anything for yourself, your houses or the works entrusted to you, because the Lord knows, can and wants to give you one hundred times over whatever you do without for his love¹²⁵. And he fulfills this to the letter what the Lord promised the Seraphic Father, telling him that if at some time there were no more than two loaves of bread in the world, one would be for his children, and if there was only one, half would be for them. And you see from this that no Order has so many children scattered all over the world as the Franciscan who, without having anything, are fed abundantly by the Lord, and not only to only them but also but the countless number of poor souls who are entrusted to them and they works commended to them.

¹²¹ Cf. I Timothy 2:4.

¹²² Cf. II Peter 1:10.

¹²³ Cf. 2C 151, in works cited, p. 317, LM 6:4, in works cited, p. 415; MP 46, in works cited, p. 727.

¹²⁴ Cf. 2C 55, in works cited, p. 260.

¹²⁵ Cf. Matthew 19:29.

1819 You must also distinguish yourself in fraternal unity and charity, beloved daughters, as a virtue recommended so strongly by our Seraphic Father, and without which the religious Orders would not be able to survive, because that is the bond which unites them and the spirit that revitalizes them¹²⁶. Treat your sisters as if they were your superiors; do not pay attention to their faults to condemn them, but always keep your eyes focused on their virtues to imitate and ennoble them. Try to give them preference in everything, wishing to be the last one in everything and doing everything for everyone in order to gain favor with Jesus Christ, as the Apostle says¹²⁷.

1820 You must try to achieve this unity, which is the guarantee of peace, beloved daughters, by identifying totally with your Superiors, who are the angels sent here by the Lord to watch over you and lead you to perfection by the way of regular observance of your Rule and Constitutions. You must be fully grateful to all your directors and the people who are interested in the good of the Congregation and reciprocate their love by praying frequently for them to the Lord; but if at some time would be a difference of opinion among them over some matter regarding the Congregation, and there is conflicting advice from that could upset you, take into account that your regulations for everything are outlined in the Rule and Constitutions, and you must only offer obedience to your Superiors, to whom the Lord will grant the necessary light in each particular case for the good government of the Congregation.

There are many more things I want to tell you, beloved daughters, so that they would be engraved deeply in your hearts as a memory of your father, who loves you in Jesus Christ and wishes you to be very holy for the glory of God, the honor of our Congregation and salvation of many souls which the Lord will place under your guidance and custody¹²⁸.

As the Christmas holy days are drawing near, your father and servant in Christ wishes them to be very happy ones for many years, and blesses you and commends you to your prayers.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop of Segorbe.

134. TO SISTER ISABEL OF BENISSA, CT.
Segorbe, 8 December 1923

1821 Most Reverend Mother Isabel of Benissa.

Beloved sister in Christ: I suppose you now have in your possession the communication from the most Reverend General Mother with the new destinations

¹²⁶ Cf. 1C 39, in works cited, p. 165.

¹²⁷ Cf. I Corinthians 9:22.

¹²⁸ Cf. 1, note 2 above.

for the Superiors of the Custodianship of the Americas and will have seen that Her Reverence was elected the First General Councilor and Teacher of Novices. Similarly Mother Commissioner is Mother Genoveva; the Second Councilor, Mother Elena, and Third Councilor, Mother Clara of Beniarjó.

But the most important thing, which for some time we have judged to be very advisable, was the transfer of the Station to Barranquilla for its central location, so that the Station can communicate better with the nuns of the Mission and the Department (Region) of Antioquia since it is also closer for communication with Spain. At the same time, it allows us to ask advice from whoever can enlighten us with their opinion, leaving the Council freer and more independent to act as it believe in good conscience.

I believe everyone has to be very pleased with this arrangement, since it has to be of great usefulness for our Congregation.

1822 As Teacher of Novices, Your Reverence will not reside in Barranquilla like the other Councilors, but when an important matter comes up, you will be able to make a trip there to meet with the Council; and for matters of lesser importance, the Mother Commissioner can ask for your opinion in writing.

I believe, Reverend Mother that the assistance of the Divine Spirit was quite clearly seen in the agreements of this General Council. And Your Reverence will be able to be calmer now and enjoy the peace that your spirit needed so much. Leave everything else in the hands of God, where the hearts of all men lie and are moved as his holy will sees fit.

Your Reverence can open the attached letter for José and deliver it to him sealed.

With affectionate greeting to all the nuns who I wish happy Christmas holy days and New Year, along with Your Reverence, and your father and servant in Christ blesses you and commends you to your prayers.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

P.S.: I thought it better to address directly the letter I wrote him to José and send to Your Reverence a copy of it, which I attach, and you can save it for whatever use it may have to you.

135. TO FATHER ILDEFONSO MARIA OF VALL D'UIXO, CT.
Segorbe, 1 June 1924

1823 Reverend Father of Ildefonso of Vall D'Uixo, Superior of the Colony of San Hermenegildo.

Beloved brother in Christ: Days ago in Massamagrell, a young man from the town introduced himself, an Official of the Prison of Women named Juan Blasco Alcayna, and told me Your Charities, or at least Brother Lorenzo, had been to

visit the Establishment and it seems he believed it was an inspection visit. For this reason, and because it appears Brother Lorenzo told him he was a friend of Fernando Cadalso, he pleaded with me if I would recommend him regarding the matter the attached card indicates. If, then, Brother Lorenzo can do something with the aforementioned gentleman for what this young man proposes, who is doing it for charity and I consider his desires to be very reasonable.

With affectionate greetings and my blessing to all the friars, I repeat I am at your orders, your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

136. TO MR. SANTIAGO GARCÍA BERTRÁN AND FAMILY
Segorbe, 31 August 1925

1824 We BROTHER LUIS AMIGÓ Y FERRER, by the grace of God and the Apostolic Holy See, Bishop of Segorbe.

Using the Apostolic Powers granted to Us by our most Holy Father, Pope Pius XI in his Brief *De Oratorio Privato* issued in Rome dated 5 August last year in favor of Santiago García Bertrán de Lis, his wife Rufina Janini Mosquera and their children Rufina, Santiago and Rafael, so that in the private chapel of their houses in Navajas and diocese of Segorbe, they can celebrate a Mass every day by any priest approved by us, and if he is of the Regular Clergy, with prior approval of his Superior as well. These chapels do not enjoy similar permission for other persons, nor shall it be in detriment of the faithful on the mandatory days, extending this grant to all the festival days and solemn ceremonies of the year, with the sole exception of the Easter of Resurrection, Pentecost, Christmas, the Epiphany, Ascension of the Lord, Assumption of the Holy Virgin Mary, All Saints Day and the days of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. In serving to fulfill the precept of hearing Mass, not only those granting pardons but the guests, assistant to the Mass and the servants as well would be able to distribute the Sacred Communion within the Mass, but always with the indispensable requirement for all them that one of those granting pardons is present in the acts, always except the parish rights.

The present Letters of Execution will be place in a place where they can be read by the Chaplains who have to celebrate them in the Chapels, which in turn must be visited by Us or our Delegate, before using them as the arrangement has been currently, and always that We would approve.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe, signed in our own hand, stamped with the seal of our coat of arms, and countersigned by our undersigned Secretary of the Chamber and Government, on 31 August 1925.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

137. TO FATHER SALVADOR OF BENAGUASIL, CT.
Segorbe, 26 January 1926

1825 Reverend Father Brother Salvador of Benaguasil.

Beloved brother in Christ: In Godella, when the General Council had already concluded, I received your thoughtful letter and having read it, I have to declare to you that its content did not bother me in the slightest, since I see it as inspired by an interest for the good of the Congregation. I understand very well that the St. Rita school demands a great deal of work due to the nature of the pupils, variety of course, bad condition of the building, etc. But this is nothing new, beloved Father; I have always heard the same complaints, and I believe with greater reasons during other periods in that the number of friars there was small and not very experienced and the number of students was much greater than at present. It is true that the studies that some of the Brothers are dedicating themselves to does increase the workload, but it is also true that their greater education will permit and facilitate reducing that workload.

1826 Be aware, beloved Father, that the life of the Third Order friar is one of great denial and sacrifice, which is required at all levels of the Ministry of Jesus Christ, and therefore a great spirit of faith and true love of God is necessary in order to not fail in the venture. But we do not forget what our Father St. Francis told us to inspire us in the work: "We have promised great things, but far greater things have been promised to us"¹²⁹. In addition, it is not only Your Charities who are supporting great works; they are not any less than in the other houses, which are ordinarily sufficiently less in number than this school, and about taking care of the boys, they have to suffer the demands of the Boards, who are not as attentive to the friars as they are of St. Rita.

The General Council is not neglecting and is taking responsibility for the needs of the friars and the Houses, and for that reason is not accepting very advantageous foundations that are being offered to it. In addition, the Council decided to send them a friar to relieve poor Brother Bernus and when the ones who are serving in the ranks return, they will probably send another one. This is something that other houses which are just as overwhelmed by work as St. Rita do not attain.

1827 For the sake of God, Fathers and Brothers! that the spirit of insubordination and independence that breathes today in this century does not enter among Your Charities, and do not flee from the work that you do for God; join forces together around your Prelate; try to use your time wisely; have the spirit of prayer and zeal for the salvation of the youths the Lord places under your custody, and with that you will see how all your work becomes more bearable, and even in imitation of the Saints, you will ask the Lord to increase them.

I will ask for this from the Lord, your father and servant in Christ, who bless them and commends Your Charities to their prayers.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹²⁹ Cf. 2C 191, in works cited, p. 340; LF 18, in works cited, pp. 831-835.

138. TO THE CAPUCHIN THIRD ORDER SISTERS AND FRIARS
Segorbe, 3 May 1926

1828 To our beloved children, the Capuchin Tertiary Friars and Sisters.

Beloved children in Christ: As we come close to concluding the six-year term of government your Father and Mother Superiors were elected for, and immediately thereafter are the celebration of your respective General Chapter meetings for electing the Superiors who will govern your Congregation in the following six-year-term; in the conviction as well that these will be the last Chapter meetings we attend, given our advanced age, we believe it advisable to address some exhortations and warnings to each and every one of you, so that you may engrave them well in your hearts as a guarantee of the love of your father.

1829 First, we urge you, beloved children, to always show your great gratitude for the singular mercy the Lord had on or you by taking you from the world and bringing you to the port of Religion. Never think you have done a great service and honor to the Congregation by your entry into it, since you were the ones favored by the Lord with a special calling which distinguishes you from so many others, who perhaps would have been more grateful for the graces of the Lord and reciprocated with greater faithfulness.

1830 Do not grow too proud over the gifts the Lord has granted you, considering the esteem and attention with which society awards you are due to your own merits, because what the world honors and venerates is your Holy Habit and the Order to which you belong. If you withdraw from it, you will be forgotten and looked down on by everyone, and even lack the required means of support and sustenance. How many souls have been deceived that way by the devil, blinding them with pride and arrogance so he could take them from Religion and, once outside of it, when they opened their eyes it was to see their temporal damnation, and perhaps also the prelude to their eternal damnation!

Yes, because if you were truly called by God to Religion, the Lord does not change his thinking like men, and wanted to them to serve him and find their salvation, which can only be obtained outside of Religion with difficulty; since the Lord says that he who puts his hand to the plow and then looks back is not suitable for the kingdom of heaven (Luke 9:62). Terrible words, beloved children, which the Seraphic Father St. Francis also repeats and reminds us of as well¹³⁰.

1831 Hold your mother the Congregation in great esteem, beloved children, in which the Lord presents a vast domain for you with to work for his glory in the education of youth, making them know the Lord so that by knowing Him, they love and serve Him and instilling in them the holy fear of God, the beginning of wisdom and the brake for containing their excessive passions. And if it happens that, by listening to the infernal spirit, they wander away from the fold of the Good Shepherd, you, my beloved children, who He has made the young shepherds of his

¹³⁰ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: *Adm* 3:10, in works cited, p. 79; *1R* 2:10, in works cited, p. 92; *2R* 2:13, in works cited, p. 111.

flock, are the ones who have to go in search of the lost sheep until it is returned to the fold of the Good Shepherd¹³¹. And do not fear perishing on the steep cliffs and precipices you will have to place yourselves on to save the lost sheep; nor be intimidated by the thorny thickets and ambushes in which the enemy will try to envelop you, because you can be sure that if you manage to save a soul, you are determining the destiny of your own¹³².

1832 But yes, to make yourselves worthy of such a great mission, beloved children, you must try to form your spirit and shape your life very well to the model the Lord presents us in the Seraphic Father St. Francis. Imitate him in the profound humility which made him consider himself the greatest of all sinners¹³³. Imitate his love of holy poverty, in which he wanted no one to be ahead of him, and asked the Lord for as a grace for himself and for his Order. Imitate his zeal for the salvation of souls, for which the Lord granted him, with the Holy Virgin interceding, the famous Jubilee of the Porziuncola. Imitate his intense love of God, which made him cry inconsolably after seeing that Love, which is God, was not loved by men, and from this deserved to be transformed into the living image of Christ with the inflicting of his sacred wounds¹³⁴.

With these characteristics, you shall be known by everyone as children of the Seraphim of Assisi, the continuers of his most noble mission which gives so much glory to God and such abundant rewards of salvation to humanity.

1833 You must also try to establish an intimate union among yourselves, because the secret of its strength lies in that unity. For that purpose, you must love each other, as St. John so insistently encouraged his disciples. You must be each others' strength and support; enduring and concealing their natural shortcomings. You must also try to be ahead of your brothers and sisters in benevolence, distinction, support and help, and indulgence, always giving them priority and honor, with the aim of becoming everything for everyone, as the Apostle says¹³⁵.

1834 You must look with the utmost veneration to your Father Superiors and Mothers Superiors, whom the Lord has placed in their position with respect to you and through whom He will always communicate his will to you, and always obey their orders meekly; without reservations or objections in their age, knowledge, character, etc. since they have in the favor the special assistance of God for the accuracy of their intentions. And in the prestige of his authority the Lord many times straightens and directs what would clearly appear to be misguided. This why the Seraphic Father said he would obey a novice who had worn the Habit just one hour, if he was given to him as a guardian, with as much good will as the oldest and most decorated father of the Order¹³⁶.

¹³¹ Cf. Luke 15:4 ss.

¹³² Cf. James 5:20.

¹³³ Cf. 2C 123, in works cited, p. 302; LP 10, in works cited, p. 604.

¹³⁴ Cf. LM 13:3, in works cited, pp. 462-463; TC 14, in works cited, p. 540.

¹³⁵ Cf. I Corinthians 9:22.

¹³⁶ Cf. 2C 151, in works cited, p. 317; LM 6:4, in works cited, p. 415; and MP 46, in works cited, p. 727.

Go to them, then, with all your needs with the confidence, submission and respect of a child to his parents. Let God free you from seeking and asking for outside advice, against his intentions, because you would incur the indignation of God, who guides and governs you through them.

And when you have elected your Superiors, redouble your pleas so that the Divine Spirit rules and directs the mind and will of the electors, so they can know and correctly obey the will of God and not introduce any people into the government of the Congregation who were not called to it by Him.

1835 The Lord, beloved children, has already drawn up for you, in the Rule and Constitutions of your Congregation, the path which you must follow for His glorification, the salvation of many souls and the sanctification of your own¹³⁷. All your religious perfection is based on the faithful observance of them and it is a serious and dangerous temptation to go looking for and discovering other ways contrary to the one marked and designated by God. Be faithful observers, then, of your Rule and Constitutions and try not to let anyone surpass you in that, so that you will achieve the goal the Lord intended when He called you to Religion, which is that you are saved as saints, bringing many souls to his glory.

This is what your Father and servant in Christ wishes and asks from God, who blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

139. TO THE PRIEST ANTONIO PEIRÓ
Segorbe, 20 August 1926

1836 Mr. Antonio Peiró, Chaplain of Villar de Tejas.

Beloved brother in Christ: In reply to your appreciated letter of 17 August, I have to state to you that, concerning the festivals of this town which fall every year on the first and second Sunday of September and which I cannot miss since the townspeople would look on it very negatively, it will not be possible for me to go until 13 September. I am intending to take only three or four days for that trip, as I have a commitment to go to the Desert of La Palmas to ordain some nuns on the Saturday of the Ember Days.

I had thought to take advantage of that trip to visit the parish of Sincarcas, but I see it will be impossible for me. At any rate, please do me the favor of telling me how I would be able to do so, in the event that I make the trip. And similarly please have the kindness to point out to me which train we would have to take in Valencia for Utiel, and if someone would be waiting for us there to take us to that village.

The Provisor and Secretary will probably accompany me.

¹³⁷ Cf. 1812, note 117 above.

Would you have the kindness to inform Mrs. María Lázaro of all this, and will you please greet her and her distinguished family in my name?

Your Prelate and servant in Chris blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

140. TO MRS. MARÍA LÁZARO
Segorbe, 5 September 1926

1837 Mrs. María Lázaro.

Respectable and distinguished Lady: Answering your courteous letter of 29 August, I must inform you that, God willing, on Monday 13 September, according to what we had agreed, the Provisor, Secretary and I will leave from Segorbe for the first train to Utiel in Valencia. We are infinitely grateful for your attention in sending us your car, since we do not know the route to go to that. Would you be kind enough to inform the Chaplain of Villar de Tejas of this, from whom I also received a letter on the same date as yours?

With affectionate greetings to your brothers, I take my leave of you and your servant in Christ blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

141. TO MR. ROSENDO ROIG
Segorbe, 23 December 1926

1838 Mr. Rosendo Roig.¹³⁸

Beloved brother in Christ: I received your kind Christmas greetings that you sent in your own name and that of your wife, children and granddaughter. Let me hasten to express my gratitude to you and my wish that you celebrate these holy days with much happiness and that the Divine Infant ignites in your hearts the divine fire of charity that He says he came to bring to the earth.

I did not think there was any way I would be celebrating the birthday festivities of the Child God in this world; but undoubtedly due to the effect of the many prayers for my health made to the Lord, He has postponed my departure from this world. May his holy will be done in everything.

My health continues improving, but the inflammation from my cold, which was complicated by the other illness, still continues, although reduced.

¹³⁸ Cf. 237, note 138 above.

In the middle of next month, I have to come down to Massamagrell, God willing, since 8 January is the anniversary of the consecration of the Church of the Asylum, and on 19 January is the anniversary of Godella, and before those dates I have something to do in Massamagrell. I tell you this for the sake of your own schedule, as you were asking me in your letter.

With a thousand blessings for all in your family and their friends, I repeat your servant in Christ is at your order.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

142. TO FATHER LUDOVICO MARÍA OF VALENCIA, CT.
Segorbe, 6 February 1927

1839 Most Reverend Father Ludovico María of Valencia.

Beloved brother in Christ: From your courteous letter of 1 February, I discovered the details it gave me concerning the foundation of Galatone. They certainly are not promising, if you look at things solely from the material perspective. But all the works of God offer so many problems, especially in the religious foundations where the enemy anticipates that great glory must come to God from it, that it must inspire us like St. Theresa, who put more effort into her foundations the greater the obstacles the enemy presented were, because the Saint understood that much glory for God must result from it¹³⁹.

Your Reverend already knows that for the acceptance of that foundation, how many problems were raised on the part of the Superiors, but I can almost tell you it was an imposition of obedience to the ecclesiastical authority and the Capuchin Order which obliged them to accept it and make the great sacrifice of personnel. It appears, then, that the design of God can be seen more clearly in this foundation than many others for this reason.

1840 There is no doubt that having to found in a foreign and unknown country without a good command of the language make the problems to be faced greater; but focus on the poor missionaries, who experience the same thing on a grander scale, so that their example serves as inspiration and encouragement.

The first steps Your Reverend has taken in this town seem very good to me; I hope that the visit the Bishop plans help to give a very good result. God wants this to be entry way into the Church of the Holy Crucifix, and I believe would be a good beginning in the works of Your Reverends in that town!

It would be very good to open (when you are ready) a little school for teaching the children in order to capture the sympathies of the population.

¹³⁹ Cf. 1855.

I would be very grateful if you would keep me up to date on your works in that foundation, because you can figure out how much I think of Your Reverends.

Although, I suppose you will have to keep the Most Reverend General Minister up to date, and I am sending your letter for your greater satisfaction.

Your father and servant in Christ offers his heartfelt blessing to you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

143. TO FATHER JESÚS DURÁ, CT.
Segorbe, 10 April 1927

1841 Reverend Father Jesús Durá of Valencia.

Beloved Father Superior: I have received and thank you for the greeting from Your Reverend and Community regarding the holy day of Our Lady of Sorrows. Your Reverend also invites me to the 700th anniversary celebrations of Father St. Francis and it surprises me, because a good while ago I received an invitation from a Professed member and, and if I remember correctly, minister of the Third Order, inviting me with great insistence and with the consent of the Archbishop, to celebrate the Pontifical mass in the anniversary festivals of Father St. Francis.

I could not accept due to already being committed with the Franciscan Fathers of this diocese for the same festivals on the same days, and I could not enjoy them either since the Lord willed that I would be seriously ill for those days. I do not know, then, which festivals you are speaking or nor does Your Reverend tell me of the time period for them, which is why I cannot answer you more specifically. When you give me more details and if my health permits, I am inclined to please you, if a greater force does not prevent it.

To Your Reverend and the other friars from your servant in Christ, who blesses them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

144. TO THE PRIEST MANUEL MARÍA CAMARGO
Segorbe, 11 June 1927

1842 Illustrious Manuel María Camargo, Domestic Prelate of His Holiness and Canon of the Cathedral of Bogota.

Distinguished Sir: In reply to your gracious letter of 18 May, I must tell you: That I declare that the Superior Fathers of my Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars wrote two letters to the Reverend Father Restrepo, thanking him for his

affection and consideration to our friars and asking him for the current number of residents of the asylum, and how many can there be in this establishment; the kind of education they demand; if they sleep in groups or in rooms along a hallway; who supports that establishment as well as the amount of land in hectares of the building. These and other details could enlighten them and help them form an idea of what that center is and what it could become. I wish the Most Illustrious Canon would deign to provide them, since it flatters them to have a foundation in the Americas, especially in Bogota. It is possible they will feel they cannot carry it out very soon due to lack of personnel; even here in Spain they have had to renounce two or three very significant foundations that were offered them for the same reason.

I received the photographs Your Illustriousness sent, and I liked them very much.

I make the suggestions made by my friars my own, and anticipating your reply, I offer myself to Your Illustriousness as your courteous and humble servant.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

145. TO THE CAPUCHINE THIRD ORDER SISTERS

Segorbe, 24 June 1927

1843 Beloved sisters in Christ: After the hard test it pleased the Lord to subject me to after the General Chapter meeting, suffering a very serious illness that put me at death's door, I received so many and such clear proofs of the love of my Third Order friars and sisters that I have no doubt that the miracle of the Lord prolonging my life is due to your prayers¹⁴⁰.

However, beloved daughters, I beg you that just as you have beseeched and attained the prolongation of my life from the Lord, also pray persistently that He continues his mercies to me and multiply his graces, so that I can give him great glory by sanctifying my soul in accordance with his holy will, and attracting countless souls to his service¹⁴¹.

I also want to thank you for your kind wishes for the Easter holy days and my saint's day and especially for the prayers raised in my favor, which I need very much.

1844 How satisfied I am to see the material progress you are making in the Novitiate, Schools and Orphanages, which clearly indicates that God is pleased with you, since he pays one hundred times over your service in this world, and you can surely expect a very great reward in heaven!

¹⁴⁰ Cf. 237, note 138 above.

¹⁴¹ Cf. 1812, note 117 above.

You will already have been able to appreciate by these appointments of the new Superiors in the Chapter meeting, and the regulations regarding these houses, how much your mother the Congregation loves you and is concerned for you. You must also love it, my daughters! Always live united and connected to it, fulfilling exactly its intentions and never hesitating in making sacrifices for its prosperity and honor.

Given the impossibility of answering each and every one of you individually, which would be my wish, I am choosing to write you in circulars that reach all the houses and you can always save them in order to bear in mind the advice of your father, who loves you very much and blesses you in the Lord.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

146. TO FATHER LUDOVICO MARÍA OF VALENCIA, CT.
Segorbe, 24 June 1927

1845 Most Reverend Father Ludovico of Valencia and friars of the Galatone foundation.

Beloved brothers in Christ: Even though the greetings that I have received from my children on the occasion of my saint's day are very gratifying to me, the ones I received from Your Charities are especially gratifying because of the distance which separates us.

I am happy that, as Your Reverend says, you are trying various methods of doing good among the children, in fulfillment of your mission. And if all of them failed, God will want to facilitate to you those measures that he is preparing in his divine designs.

Do not forget the great difficulties that all foundations face in the beginning, and trust that God will bless your work.

I commend you to your prayers and your father and servant in Christ blesses you.

LUIS, Bishop.

147. TO THE PROVINCIAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS OF NAVARRE
Segorbe, 27 June 1927

1846 Most Reverend Father Provincial Minister of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Navarre.

Beloved brother in Christ: On behalf of the Reverend Mother Superior of our Novitiate of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of Altura, I am writing to state the following to Your Reverend: On 5 August, some young women directed by the Reverend Father Gumersindo of Estella must take the Habit. The wish of both these young women and their Superiors is that the same Father mentioned above would be the one to preside at the taking of the habit ceremony.

Since the Community has to do their Spiritual Exercises during those dates, the Mother Superior would take the utmost pleasure if they would be given to Father Gumersindo beginning on 26 or 27 July in order that he give the Holy Habit to the mentioned postulants after completing them. I make this wish of the Mother Superior my own and beg Your Reverend to try to please them, because I believe it would result in great good for their souls.

I would appreciate a prompt reply to this letter, and that Your Reverend would address it to the Mother Superior of Altura, since I will be away from here for a few days. With fond greetings to all the friars, I repeat to Your Reverend that I am the least of your brothers and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

148. TO SISTER ISABEL OF BENISSA, CT.
Segorbe, 10 August 1927

1847 Most Reverend Mother Sister Isabel of Benissa.

Beloved Mother Superior: I received your much appreciated letter of 8 August, and I am hurrying to answer it for your peace and that of Isabel by telling her: in fact, the Mothers gave up on selling that land because they were thinking of doing a health center for the Congregation there. But in order to sell it, they would have to bear in mind exactly what Isabel indicates; and in no way offer any contract that would upset the village.

No one has spoken or written to me about the subject, nor do I want to interfere in it, either.

Fond greetings to the Sisters, the Friars and Isabel, and Your Reverence has your father and servant in Christ at your disposal.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

149. TO MR. SANTIAGO GARCÍA BERTRÁN AND FAMILY
Segorbe, 9 September 1927

1848 WE BROTHER LUIS AMIGÓ Y FERRER, by the grace of God and the Apostolic Holy See, Bishop of Segorbe.

Using the Apostolic Powers granted to Us by our most Holy Father, Pope Pius XI in his Brief *De Oratorio Privato* issued in Rome and dated 31 August of last year in favor of Santiago García Bertrán de Lis, his wife Rufina Janini Mosquera and their children Rufina, Santiago and Rafael, we extend the authorizations granted to them in the Apostolic Letters of Execution dated 5 August 1925 so that on all holy days and solemn ceremonies of the year, with the sole exception of the Easter of Resurrection of the Lord, they can celebrate a Mass in the private chapel of their house in Navajas, hearing it as long they will be able to fulfill all the ecclesiastical precepts favorably granted in the previous pardon. We similarly grant that whenever Priests might be lodged in their home, the visiting presbyters can celebrate Mass in that chapel, but must keep to the conditions prescribed in the first Apostolic Letters of Execution.

Given in our Episcopal Palace of Segorbe, signed in our own hand, stamped with the seal of our coat of arms, and ratified by our Secretary, on 9 September 1927.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.
RICARDO CERVERA.
Vice-Secretary.

150. TO FATHER JOSÉ MARÍA PÉREZ OF ALBA, CT.
Godella, 11 September 1927

1849 Reverend Father José María Pérez of Alba, director of the Amurrio Reformatory.

Beloved Father: I received your letter of 8 September here in Godella, and as I was just about to leave, in order to answer you in time, I am writing to tell you I am quite pleased with the good news you are informing me of regarding the assistance of our nuns in the short course at Amurrio, and the good results from it, things I already knew through Father Joaquín Belda.

The thought of establishing the Franciscan Congregation for the children of this Reformatory and the activities planned to solemnly celebrate the anniversary of the death of Father St. Francis also seem very good and blessed to me.

Today we are leaving for Seville for the consecration of the Church of Dos Hermanas.

Pray frequently to the Lord for me, as I am doing for Your Charities and for my own nuns.

Your father and servant in Christ blesses all of them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

151. TO THE PRIEST ANTONIO PEIRÓ
Segorbe, 27 November 1927

1850 Mr. Antonio Peiró, Chaplain of the Church of Villar de Tejas.

Beloved brother in Christ: In reply to your cordial letter of 23 November, I have to state the follow: That Scapular of the Ministry does not have its own blessing or a special ceremony for bestowing it because it is nothing more than an insignia of the association. You will be able, then, to do so in the form you consider most appropriate if you want to make the act of bestowing it more solemn.

With regard to the display of His Holiness in the day you indicated, you can do so in the evening exercise, but not during the mass in the morning, since this runs contrary to the thinking of the Church and there are several regulations against it. There would be nothing inappropriate if you are thinking of showing and leave the Lord displayed following the Mass. In spite of the fact you can use the license which was granted in the forthcoming holy day of the Immaculate Conception, you will have to ask for this authorization in writing, so that it can saved in that archive.

I applaud and bless your zeal for the good of these parishioners, of whom I hold pleasant memories, and with my love I also send them my pastoral blessing, which is extended especially to you by your Prelate and servant.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

152. TO THE PROVINCIAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS OF NAVARRE
Segorbe, 19 December 1927

1851 Most Reverend Father Provincial Minister of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Navarre.

Beloved Father: Having learned that Father Gumersindo has to go to Madrid this coming January, I would greatly appreciate it if Your Reverend could authorize him, if possible, to come to Valencia to preach in the Convent Novitiate of my Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of Massamagrell in the farewell party for the expedition of female missionaries who will embark for the Caroní (Venezuela).

If Your Reverend agrees to the wish, which is shared by my nuns, Father Gumersindo will be able to communicate directly with the General Mother so that she can tell him the definite day, because that will depend on the departure date of the steamship.

For this reason, I cordially repeat to Your Reverend that I am the least of your brothers in our Seraphic Father St. Francis.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

153. TO THE PRIEST MANUEL MARÍA CAMARGO
Segorbe, 7 January 1928

1852 Illustrious Manuel María Camargo, Canon of the Cathedral of Bogota.

Most respectable and honorable Sir: Your Holiness must have been surprised by my silence in response to your substantial letters of 11, 28 and 31 October, in which you spoke to me of the foundation that Your Holiness so generously is offering to my Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars.

I do not know if Your Holiness will know of the great tribulation that struck us at the end of September with the death of the late lamented General Father Brother Javier of Valencia; as a result, all pending issues of the Congregation remained unresolved until the General Chapter meeting and the election of the new General Superior. This Chapter meeting took place on 29 December with the most Reverend Bienvenido of Dos Hermanas elected as the new General Superior of the Congregation. I imagine he also will have offered his greetings to Your Holiness.

I can anticipate him by saying that the deceased General Father as well as his Council (which continues to be the same) were very much inclined towards the foundation that Your Holiness is offering us in that town, only making amends for the few personnel we have who are scarcely enough to attend to the needs of the existing foundations; and in addition we are constantly being asked for many more foundations here in Spain.

The new General Father wrote me that the subject of that foundation was also dealt with in his first meeting, and continues to be very appealing to the General Council. He tells me: "How good it would be if the Most Illustrious Mr. Camargo could make his planned trip and then we could speak face to face!" I agree with his wish because then Your Holiness could come to know our Congregation in depth and they would better understand how to bring about this foundation, which I ardently wish to see take place.

Once again I place myself at the orders of Your Holiness, and commending myself to your prayers I repeat I am your attentive and humble servant.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

154. TO SEVERAL CAPUCHINE THIRD ORDER SISTERS
Segorbe, 23 January 1928

1853 May the Holy Virgin, Our Lady of Sorrows, accompany and guide the steps of the very Reverend Mother General and the Sisters who are going to the Caroni Mission, so they may attract a multitude of souls to Jesus Christ, our life.

You father and servant.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

155. TO SEVERAL CAPUCHIN THIRD ORDER FRIARS
Segorbe, 9 April 1928

1854 My much beloved children the Most Reverend Father Ludovico, Father Joaquín and Brother Emilio.

I received your appreciated letter of 2 April with very great satisfaction and also the letter from the young postulants who have entered into the school.

Now they have seen how the mustard seed has turned into a bush and very quickly will turn into a leafy tree in which flocks of birds come to nest, chosen souls of God who dress in the garment of the Seraphim of Assisi¹⁴². I always expected this, even against all hope. And Your Reverends must consider yourselves happy to have been chosen by God to plant this seed and carefully cultivate it with its own fertilizer of works and hardships characteristic of all foundations.

1855 They undoubtedly will have endured a great deal and that sometimes their spirits would flag; but now they will have been convinced, and they will see more clearly that all the great works of the Lord bear that characteristic mark. This is why St. Theresa put more effort into the foundations in which she saw greater opposition and problems, generally the work of the enemy¹⁴³.

I congratulate them, then, from the bottom of my heart, and even more for having inaugurated this chapel on the day of our Mother, in commemoration of the foundation of the Congregation.

To these beloved youths who are trying to enter into our Congregation, I of course consider them as sons, and they must consider themselves very honored to be chosen as the foundation of our Congregation in Italy. May they ask the Lord for perseverance and love the Congregation very much.

Blessing everyone and commending you to your prayers is your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

156. TO FATHER LUDOVICO MARÍA OF VALENCIA, CT.
Segorbe, 24 June 1928

1856 Most Reverend Father Ludovico of Valencia, friars and seraphic children of our house of Galatone (Italy).

My beloved children in Christ: I received your photograph with satisfaction (although it arrived in damaged condition) and from it I understand that Your Reverends are in good health and I bless the Lord for the progress of this house,

¹⁴² Cf. Matthew 13:31-32.

¹⁴³ Cf. 1839 above.

whose first offspring are very much to my liking, and I hope are the very plentiful seed of our Congregation in that Nation. I bless them with all my soul.

It appears the Lord wants to make our Congregation known in other Nations, and presently the most Reverend Father Pedro de la Iglesia and Father Arturo are en route to Bogota to take charge of, if advisable, a magnificent foundation that is being offered to us in that capital city.

Your Reverends are working eagerly in this foundation, and I hope it has to be the foundation for something more important in Rome, where in time we may be able to set up our General Procurator.

From the bottom of my heart I bless you and commend you to your prayers as your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

157. TO THE CAPUCHINE THIRD ORDER SISTERS OF THE AMERICAS
Segorbe, 10 July 1928

1857 Circular letter to our Sisters in the Americas¹⁴⁴.

Beloved daughters: Wishing that my words reach all Your Charities equally in those faraway lands of the Americas, the favorite daughter of our beloved Mother Spain, and in order to fulfill the sacred duty as a father of instructing, encouraging and correcting you, so that you may faithfully fulfill the duties of your most noble mission and not disappoint the designs of the divine Province for you, I always choose to address my words to you in common using the form of a circular letter so that, by saving it, they could serve you in the various situations where you may need them.

1858 Above all else, I will never get tired of recommending your gratitude and love towards our beloved Congregation. The Lord has used it to give you the identity of nuns you enjoy and that sets you apart from the other Institutions; and that is your Mother, who has communicated her spirit and character to you through the religious life and her preference for the virtues of humility, simplicity, charity and apostolic zeal which characterizes our Seraphic Order¹⁴⁵.

In the same way, then, that the child puts the love of her mother, no matter how poor she is, before thousands of other women who may be richer and better dressed than her own mother, because the child recognizes that he or she has received their life from her; in the same way your love, concern and interest must be placed, beloved daughters, in the Congregation within which the Lord wanted to place you.

¹⁴⁴ This circular was written as a result of the plea raised to the Holy See for the creation of an Autonomous Province of the Congregation in Colombia (cf. 50 Years of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters in Colombia, 1905-1955 [Medellín, 1974], pp. 60-61,

¹⁴⁵ Cf. LP 9, in works cited, p. 603; MP 44, in works cited, p. 726.

And understand that the Lord links this love and faithfulness towards the Congregation to the graces that must make you pleasing to his divine eyes and raise yourself to the greatest perfection and the highest saintliness.

1859 On the other hand, you must not forget, and even less ignore, the sacrifices that the Congregation has made, and as a mother is always inclined to make for you, doing without in order to care for you as nuns, not only useful but also necessary in our common Mother Spain. This is the field in which it pleased the Lord to sow the seed of our Congregation, which, with the irrigation and fertilizing of his divine grace, has grown into such a leafy tree that beneath its branches many little birds now take shelter, a multitude of souls from very distant regions¹⁴⁶, who with their virtues and zeal are giving much glory to God and attracting a multitude of souls to His divine service.

These considerations, then, must arouse in you, beloved sisters, gratitude towards the Lord, who chose you to form part of this Congregation, and at the same time a great zeal and interest in trying to achieve the growth and prosperity of your beloved mother, to that you may fulfill the noble designs that God has upon it in this way.

1860 For that reason, one of the principal methods you must employ is the close and fraternal union with each other, without which the destruction and ruin of the Congregation would be inevitable. As Jesus Christ himself says: "Every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate"¹⁴⁷.

Certainly some of you will have to suffer more than a little for this end, because the difference in characters, temperaments, education and nationality serve through divine intention for mortification and sanctification of the souls. But, beloved sisters, the fact that this can be observed even in the heart of carnal families should not in any way end or diminish your sense of mutual unity and charity, the virtue by which the Lord says we must have to be recognized as his disciples. And in the same way as it says in Ecclesiastes: "A threefold rope is difficult to break"¹⁴⁸, how solid must the one be that binds and unites you to each other, you who profess the same faith, belong to the same Congregation and are daughters of the same mother Spain?

1861 But look; just as this union is linked to the strength and power of the Religious Institutions, the infernal spirit who hates them so much tries to introduce in them, through all the means his malice and shrewdness suggests, the seed of dissension which weakens their strength and may ultimately bring an end to them. And do not think he does this himself, or makes known his attempts; he always makes use of people, seemingly well-intentioned and who would be very far from supporting the plans of the enemy if they were clear to them; and he also hides his sinister attempts under the pretext of a greater good and spiritual growth, the only means to be able to seduce religious souls.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Matthew 13:31-32.

¹⁴⁷ Matthew 12:25.

¹⁴⁸ Ecclesiastes 4:12.

The standard by which you can always recognize, beloved daughters, if the gold the enemy is trying to dazzle you is true or false is the principle of authority, and for the nuns that is none other than the Mother Superior. Everything that may be attempted without her consent or hidden from her for the most specious reasons, and whoever the people were who advised that, you can rest assured it does not come from good but from the common enemy instead, who under the pretext has known how to deceive them.

Over the years, beloved sisters, the Lord has made me aware of the efforts of the infernal spirit to destroy our Congregation in these distant lands under the pretext of a misunderstood independence which certainly would be cause of your ruin. But there was one time when I gained a much clearer and detailed knowledge of how much the infernal spirit was plotting and scheming behind this attempt.

And I would be gravely lacking in my duty and conscience if I would not raise the alert to you, beloved daughters, so that you can protect yourselves against the cunning attacks of such an astute enemy.

1862 Do not forget, beloved daughters, the obedience you promised in your profession, which made you nuns, was to the General Mother, who accepted it herself or through her representative in the name of the Congregation and to whose authority you are subject. You must consider as subversive, then, any idea or project that tends to drive you away from authority, taking into account that whoever is not governed by its head, the Mother Superior, would always be considered dislocated members of the Congregation

Not even your father would then consider them as lambs of the flock that the Lord entrusts to him.

1863 When I wrote these last words full of bitterness, beloved children, the Lord wanted to soothe my pain by having the mail bring to my hands the Constitutions of our Congregation now reviewed by the Holy See on 3 July. The letter that accompanies them says: "Dealing with an Institution that has the honor of still possessing its Venerable Founder, in the august person of your Excellency, it seemed fair to make this delivery directly to Your Excellency himself."

I am strongly hoping that the revised text must achieve a great good for the Institution of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters.

Help me, then, beloved daughters, to give thanks to the Lord for such a great benefit and never forget the advice of your father, who loves you so much and blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

158. TO FATHER JESÚS DURÁ, CT.
Segorbe, 13 October 1928

1864 Reverend Father Jesús Durá of Valencia, Superior of the Good Shepherd Reformatory.

Beloved brother in Christ: On behalf of the Reverend Mother Superior of the School of Altura I have to let Your Reverend know, so that he may inform Father Angel of Cañete, that the recipe for Mapuche tea that Father Angel is requesting is a secret that the creator entrusted to the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters that the General Attorney Mother is guarding. The aforementioned Father can ask her for a few packages of that tea that she would undoubtedly serve him with great pleasure.

With fond regards for all the friars, your father and servant in Christ blesses all of them.

P.S. I am telling Your Reverence that the General Attorney Mother, Sister Carmen of Oviedo, lives in Massamagrell.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

159. TO THE CAPUCHIN THIRD ORDER SISTERS AND FRIARS
Segorbe, December 1928

1865 My beloved children, the Capuchin Third Order Friars and Sisters.

The days are approaching, beloved children, in which our holy Mother the Church, transported by jubilation, reminds us of the coming to the world of our Redeemer. This event announced to us by the angels was the cause of great joy for the entire world, since its *Savoir* had been born; and the angelic spirits gave us an example of this joy by singing chorus: "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will"¹⁴⁹. On this day, then, we must rejoice, beloved children, by following the example of our Father St. Francis, who was maddened by love, and cast out every cause of trouble and sadness; because our beloved Jesus has come for us and opened once again the kingdom of heaven that sin had closed to us. Let us be joyful then, beloved children, in the Lord!¹⁵⁰

I have another reason for gratitude towards the divine kindness in the coming year, and I beg you, beloved children, to help me give thanks to the Lord for it. The date is approaching for the 50th or golden anniversary of both my Ordination into the priesthood and my first Mass, which took place on 29 March and 4 April 1879¹⁵¹, respectively.

1866 It overwhelms me, beloved children, to think of my many instances of unfaithfulness towards God in such a long life and the consideration of the glory which could and should have given Him in the carrying out of the ministries and positions that he honored me with. For this reason, I earnestly beg you to help me, like good children, to first plead that the Lord forgive me for my ingratitude and

¹⁴⁹ Luke 2:14.

¹⁵⁰ 1C 85, in works cited, p. 193; MP 114, in works cited, p. 785; 2C 199 in works cited, p.

¹⁵¹ Cf. 47, 48 above.

then offer him thanks for his mercies and benefits. Also ask from him to grant me that the short life that remains to me be used in his service so that I can restore to Him the glory which I took away from him with my unfaithfulness, and even obtain the level of perfection that his divine kindness demands of me.

Wishing you all happy Christmas holidays and an abundance of graces in the New Year, I bless you with all the love in my soul as your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

160. TO THE PRIEST MANUEL MARÍA CAMARGO
Segorbe, 30 December 1928

1867 Most Illustrious Manuel María Camargo.

Most respectable and distinguished Sir: Your Holiness will have to forgive me for not having answered your kind letter, but the multiple activities of the present season prevented me from doing so. Today I can dedicate some time to accomplish this pleasant task and I begin by congratulating Your Holiness on the coming new year, which I hope will be very prosperous and plentiful to him, especially in spiritual graces, and that the Lord may grant *him the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, abundance of corn and wine.*

I also congratulate him for the Lord having finally granted him seeing completed his repeated wish that our humble Congregation take charge of the great work which would immortalizes Your Holiness. How many contradictions Your Holiness had to suffer for it, and not having everything turn out completely according to your wishes undoubtedly is the best proof of it being a work of God; because these works of God always bring with them the seal of contradiction so the merit is greater for whoever the divine providence chooses to bring them about.

1868 The most Reverend Father Pedro de la Iglesia, a most worthy friar, as the General Councilor of the Congregation, will not be able to be Superior or continue in that position due to the time involved. His mission is limited to inspecting the land and going over the bases with Your Holiness, accepting the foundation if you are in agreement with the instructions he was bringing from the General Council.

With respect to the fees, it should not surprise Your Holiness that they are somewhat higher than what they would have been if Your Holiness had said the ownership of this Asylum had passed to the Congregation in your first letters; because it will not be news to Your Holiness that the situation of the religious orders would have been much different from not having to depend in the future on Boards which sometimes obstruct more than favor the progress of the foundations.

1869 It should not surprise Your Holiness that the friars prefer to make their journey in Spanish steamships, because it is very sad to have to make such a long

voyage without understanding the language if they are foreign ships. They have to accustom themselves to unfamiliar meals and especially the lack of consolation from being unable to celebrate and welcome the Lord on such a long voyage. In addition, these foreign steamships cannot offer any greater discount in price, according to what we saw, than the one granted by the Spanish Transatlantic company.

Have no doubt, Most Illustrious Sir, that both the Fathers who have their foundation in this one and the General Council are all extremely satisfied and grateful to Your Holiness and they will gladly made sacrifices to please you in everything, and raise to great height this work of which God wanted Your Holiness to be the honorable founder. A work which will be your glory and crown on earth and in heaven.

Your Holiness can approach both Father Pedro and the General Council with complete confidence regarding whatever you want at any time, as all of them wish to please you in everything.

And the least of your servants repeats he is at your orders.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

161. TO FATHER JESÚS DURÁ, CT.
Segorbe, 3 March 1929

1870 Reverend Father Jesús Durá of Valencia, Superior of the Good Shepherd Reformatory.

I received your cordial letter of 2 March and first I want to I am grateful for your good memory and charity with the poor preachers of this diocese who really lack the ordinary payment for masses; but I advise Your Reverend that I raised the stipend for those to two *pesetas* in view of the state of poverty of the priests and Your will understand that I must not have them celebrate mass for any lesser amount. As the (value of French) *francs* are so low today, the figure of eight *francs* that Your Reverence indicates to me would be equal to the two *peseta* stipend; and, of course, I will receive with pleasure and gratitude any of them you send me.

With respect to my golden anniversaries in this Cathedral, only a solemn mass will be done, God willing, and I do not believe nor wish to have anything to do with vigils. Perhaps Your Reverend knows that the Congregation will celebrate the day of Our Lady of Sorrows in Godella on 22 March and on that holy day I said my first mass. Please remember me especially in your prayers on that day, which is the only thing that my soul wishes for and needs.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

162. TO THE CAPUCHIN THIRD ORDER FRIARS
Segorbe, 16 March 1929

1871 My beloved children, the Superior and friars of our house of Galatone. Beloved brothers in Christ, the holy day of Our Lady of Sorrows is approaching, so pleasant and full of consolation for all of us as She is the Protector and Patron Saint of our Congregation. But if this celebration is a cause for joy every year for us, it is particularly special for me this year because I celebrated my first mass on that same holy day 50 years ago¹⁵². For that reason, on greeting you as I usually do, I beg you to commend me to God in a special way on that day, when I think I am celebrating the mass in the new altar I dedicate to our Mother in the Church of Godella, the mother house of our Congregation.

Anticipating your thanks, your father and servant in Christ blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

163. TO THE CAPUCHIN THIRD ORDER FRIARS OF GALATONE
Segorbe, 16 March 1929

1872 My beloved children, the Superior and all the friars. The holy day is approaching, beloved brothers in Christ, of Our Lady of Sorrow, so pleasant and full of consolation for all of us through being the Protector and Patron Saint of our Congregation. But if this celebration is a cause for rejoicing for us every year, it is particularly special for me in the present year for having celebrated my first mass on that holy day 50 years ago. For that reason, on greeting you as I usually do, I beg you to commend me to God in a special way on that day, when I think I am celebrating the mass in the new altar I dedicate to our Mother in the Church of Godella, the mother house of our Congregation.

Anticipating your thanks, your father and servant in Christ blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

164. TO FATHER JESÚS DURÁ, CT.
Segorbe, 23 March 1929

1873 Reverend Father Jesús Durá.

¹⁵² Cf. 48 above.

Beloved brother in Christ: Among the presents for my golden anniversary as a priest I received with special emotion and gratitude the one from Your Reverend and Community, as much for being the image of the most Holy Virgin, the Patron Saint of Spain, as the fact that it came from my beloved children, because nothing is more pleasing to parents than the displays of love and veneration from their children.

The lovely image of Our Lady will preside over the main reception hall of this palace, and obviously it is there so that when I look at it, I never have to forget my beloved children from Zaragoza. It was a great pleasure that you sent in the same mail the photographs that I asked Your Reverend for of both the Community and that distinguished gentleman Mr. Juan Trusells, to whom I am very grateful for his efforts in acquiring such a beautiful image.

May God pay all of you whatever you wish. This is what your father and servant in Christ asks for, who blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

165. TO FATHER JOSÉ MARÍA PÉREZ OF ALBA, CT.
Segorbe, 24 March 1929

1874 Reverend Father José María Pérez of Alba.

Beloved brother in Christ: Among the many greetings and congratulations for my golden anniversary as a priest, I am particularly grateful for those from my sons and daughters of the Third Orders. A thousand thanks, then, for the greetings from that most Reverend Community, especially the prayers accompanying them which I need so much.

I had the pleasure of celebrating the day of Our Lady of Sorrows in the new chapel and altar dedicated to Her in our church at Godella, which was quite lovely; later the solemn Pontifical Mass was sung and I was able to give the Papal Blessing, as the Holy Father had authorized me in a most beautiful letter he sent to me, an undeserved distinction that I will never be able to thank enough¹⁵³.

The ceremony will be held in this Cathedral on the 4th and on the 17th in the church of our sisters of Massamagrell.

With the attached cards, your father and servant in Christ sends his blessing to them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹⁵³ Cf. 238, note 140 above.

166. TO FATHER LUDOVICO MARÍA OF VALENCIA, CT.
Segorbe, 28 March 1929

1875 Most Reverend Father Ludovico of Valencia.

Beloved brother in Christ: After greeting Your Reverend and the friars of your house and advancing the Easter greetings to them, I am writing to beg you for this favor: I would you to send me four bottles of miracle water of St. Nicholas of Bari, like the one which Your Reverend gave me as a gift when he came to the Chapter meeting and I was very grateful for. I gave that water to my sister, who was seriously ill, and she attributes her improvement to a miracle of the Saint, and this is why she is very excited and wished that she could acquire another bottle from you. I would be grateful to Your Reverend if he could send me as soon as possible the four little bottles I asked for. Please tell me how much that will cost so I can send it to you in the form you indicate.

With fond greetings and my blessings to those good seraphic friars, I repeat to Your Reverend that I am your attentive and humble servant.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

167. TO FATHER JESÚS DURÁ, CT.
Segorbe, 24 April 1929

1876 Reverend Father Jesús Durá.

Beloved brother in Christ: I received your cordial letter of 22 April, and I am hurrying to send to Your Reverend a rescript of indulgences in suffrage of your good father, let there be holy glory. I do not believe you need them much, since you were a model of virtue; nevertheless, I am offering to bear you in mind in my poor prayers, and I offer my most heartfelt condolences in my own name and those of the friars of this house for such a terrible and irreplaceable loss.

The celebrations held for my golden anniversaries truly turned out to be solemn occasions, both in the Cathedral and the mother houses of our Congregations of Godella and Massamagrell. I never imagined this event could have so much impact. Thanks to God, for everything, and whoever took such an active part in it!

Your father and servant in Christ blesses them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

168. TO FATHER LUDOVICO MARÍA OF VALENCIA, CT.
Segorbe, 28 April 1929

1877 Most Reverend Father Ludovico of Valencia.

Beloved Father Superior: I am writing to Your Reverend to inform you that I finally received the package that Your Reverend sent me¹⁵⁴.

The most Reverend General Minister gave me good reports of that house after the visit he made there. I am convinced that some foundation in Rome for the Procuration Department of the Congregation has to result in time from this foundation.

I was very satisfied to see the increase in the family from the photograph Your Reverend sent me, and I have a great desire to see us have some Italian friars in our Congregation shortly.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

169. TO FATHER JOSÉ MARÍA PÉREZ OF ALBA, CT.
Segorbe, 24 March 1929

1878 Reverend Father José María Pérez of Alba, director of the Amurrio Reformatory.

Beloved brother in Christ: Before all else, I cordially congratulate Your Reverend and Community because the improvements you are carrying out at that house have reached the temple of the Lords, with the valuable and beautiful altar you are shortly going to inaugurate.

How much pleasure I would have had in being able to bless you and attend the ceremonies for this solemn event, pleasing both Your Charities and my Sisters of this house! But I already have a commitment in one of our houses for the celebration of my saint, and I have to celebrate the Holy Orders on the 26th; so they will understand I cannot consent to their wishes, which were the same as mine. On top of that, the serious illness I suffered has left some lingering aftereffects which make it difficult for me to undertake long trips¹⁵⁵.

With nothing else to speak of, and with fond greetings to all the friars and nuns, I commend everyone to their prayers as you father and servant in Christ who blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

170. TO SISTER ISABEL OF BENISSA, CT.
Segorbe, 28 October 1929

1879 Reverend Mother Isabel.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. 1875 above.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. 237, note 138 above.

Beloved sister in Christ: Man proposes and God provides. I say this because I had thought that during the festival of St. Francis I would be able to fulfill the wishes of your most Reverend Community by going to visit them; but now it turns out, according to what the Provincial Minister Father tells me, that the festival is not going to be held in Ollería but in the Magdalene instead on 3 November, the day on which they will also hold the farewell ceremony for the nuns who have to go to China in the Asylum of Massamagrell in the afternoon., God will provide, then, another occasion on which I can go to your house. Meanwhile, may they receive the blessing their father and servant in Christ sends to them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

171. TO SISTER ISABEL OF BENISSA, CT.
Segorbe, 9 December 1929

1880 Reverend Mother Isabel.

Beloved sister in Christ: As I am going to attend the first Mass of the Chapel Master of this Cathedral in his home town of Cocentaina, which will be held on the first day of the new year, I am thinking of passing through Ollería in the final days of this year, to go from there to Cocentaina, and be able to please everyone at once.

To do so, I would like Your Reverence to tell me what train we could take from Valencia that would arrive in Ollería for the midday meal or at a good hour of the day, and if we could count on a good car that would take us directly from Xàtiva. A car would come to take us from there to Cocentaina.

Clearly as I would make the trip at the insistence of Your Reverence, we will stay at the Hospital there. And Your Reverence will be responsible for making the Capuchin fathers understand (so that they do not take offense) that as it is Your Reverence who is calling me, she wants me to stay in the Hospital. And this does not discount the possibility that I may spend some days in the Convent.

I know the rooms and I understand they will be ready for our stay, but I am warning you that we must not and cannot use the dining hall of the Community to eat, but rather, even though it is another extra job for the nuns, they will have to serve us meals in one of our rooms.

I expect a prompt replay to all this in order to decide on the day and itinerary of the trip. And please do not let people know about my plan until you receive a new letter from me.

With fond greetings and my blessing to all the nuns, I repeat I am at your orders as your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

172. TO THE CAPUCHINE THIRD ORDER SISTERS OF OLLERÍA
Segorbe, 20 December 1929

1881 THE BISHOP OF SEGORBE BLESSES

his beloved daughters, the Superior and Nuns of the Hospital of Ollería and wishes that, possessed of the spirit of the Seraphic Father St. Francis, they celebrate with great rejoicing the commemoration of the birth of our Divine Redeemer, and that the New Year be very happy for them and filled with heavenly blessings.

With great pleasure, Brother Luis Amigó y Ferrer makes use of this occasion to repeat the statement of his most distinguished consideration.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

173. TO THE CAPUCHIN THIRD ORDER FRIARS
Segorbe, 3 February 1930

1882 Beloved Fathers and Brothers

Yesterday was a great day for our entire congregation, when we were commemorating through the purification of Our Lady, her first sorrow in the prophecy of Simeon; and Our Lady wanted the new establishment of our friars in Italy to be blessed and inaugurated by the most Reverend General Minister on her day.

This is certainly a cause for great rejoicing for all of us. And I, albeit not present in body, am there with Your Reverences in spirit.

What great providence the Lord shows towards us!

1883 On that same holy day, in the year 1889, having completed the Constitutions and placed them in the hands of our Lady of Sorrows, celebrated the holy High Mass on her altar. Blessed be the Lord for so many mercies!¹⁵⁶

And now, blessing my new children in the Religion and embracing them tightly in my arms along with those who aspire to wear the holy habit, I put all of them under the mantle of our Holy Mother, so that She may guide them and lead them by the way of perfection of your souls, so they can later spread the fragrance of the virtues and attract many souls to the service of the Lord, giving much glory to Him and honoring our mother Religion in the beloved nation of Italy¹⁵⁷.

I extend to all of Your Reverends this same blessing as your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. 105 above; 1900.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. 1812, note 117 above.

174. TO FATHER JOSÉ MARÍA PÉREZ OF ALBA, CT.
Segorbe, 26 March 1930

1884 Reverend Father José Pérez.

Beloved Father Superior: I received your cordial letter of 23 March and the telephone call announcing the death of the wife of Mr. Emilio Ibarra, and I immediately telephoned the gentleman and gave him my condolences and granted him indulgences in suffrage of his wife, sending the rescript by immediate mail. She was a very virtuous lady, and it is easy to believe she will have had very little to atone for; nevertheless, I bear her in mind in my poor prayers. I am grateful to Your Reverends for having given me the news to be able to leave the proper impression with this family, to whom we owe so much.

I was greatly heartened by the good news Your Reverend brings me referring to the foundation of the Reformatory for girls offered to our Third Order nuns. How much we owe to Gabriel! May God be able to reciprocate his eagerness and efforts!

I suppose the General Mother will be informed of all this news Your Reverend is giving me; nevertheless, I am going to send her your letter for your satisfaction and so that they can give their condolences to Mr. Emilio Ibarra as well.

With fond greetings and my blessing to the friars, I repeat I am at the orders of Your Reverend as your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

175. TO FATHER LUDOVICO MARÍA OF VALENCIA, CT.
Segorbe, 18 August 1930

1885 Most Reverend Father Ludovico of Valencia.

Bearing in mind that tomorrow Your Reverend is celebrating your saint's day, and in spite of being in delicate health for some time now, I did not want to allow this opportunity to pass by to cordially congratulate you in my own name and that of the friars of this house, wishing that Lord fills you with his blessing and graces for the intervention of your Patron Saint.

For this reason, I sent your blessing to all the good and seraphic friars from your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

176. TO SISTER ISABEL OF BENISSA, CT.
Segorbe, 18 November 1930

1886 THE BISHOP OF SEGORBE BLESSES

the Reverend Mother Isabel of Benissa, Superior of the Hospital of Ollería, and cordially greets her on the festivities of her saint's day, bringing together all the rejoicing and celebration with which these good nuns will give you as a gift, and praying to the Lord to fill you with his blessings and graces through the intervention of St. Isabel, your Patron Saint, pleading for prayers for you.

With great pleasure, Brother Luis Amigó y Ferrer makes use of this occasion to repeat the testament of his most distinguished consideration.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

177. TO THE APOSTOLIC PRO-VICAR OF LA GUAJIRA, OFM. CAP.
Segorbe, 28 November 1930

1887 Most Reverend Father Bienvenido, Apostolic Pro-vicar of La Guajira.

Beloved Father: The news has reached me through various channels of the death of our beloved and unforgettable Father Atanasio Soler, Apostolic Vicar of that mission, which has caused me profound pain for how much I appreciate him but particularly for the great void left in this mission that will be difficult to fill. But the ones who miss him even more are the poor nuns, who were a great help and support to him; nevertheless, I have no doubt that all of them must find great protection and help in the friars, but I particularly expect that from Your Reverence, who has always taken so much interest in them, which you can particularly demonstrate in a special way today through the position you so ably govern as Pro-Vicar of this Mission.

1888 Your Reverence knows well the great difficulties our Congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters have always had to struggle with in the faraway lands for the effect of the character and desire of the sisters themselves; try to keep them well united and devoted to the principle of authority, Your Reverence, and instill in them more and more the love for their mother, Religion, and obedience to their Greater Superiors¹⁵⁸.

I think you will understand me correctly, Your Reverence, what I want to tell you so I will limit myself now to give you my more heartfelt condolences for the death of our beloved brother Brother Antanasio, and extending to all members of the religious orders of that Vicarate, commends them to their prayers as least of their brothers and humble servant who blesses them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. 1857-1863 above.

P.S. I am also writing to the Most Reverend Commissioner Mother giving her my condolences, extending them to all the nuns, and giving them some advice for their government and guidance.

178. TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF GALATONE
Segorbe, 20 December 1930

1889 The Bishop of Segorbe blesses his beloved children, the Superior, friars and novices of our house of Galatone and greets them on the forthcoming Christmas holy days, wishing that the Divine Child fills them with blessings and grants them a happy and prosperous New Year.

With great pleasure, Brother Luis Amigó y Ferrer makes use of this occasion to repeat the testament of his most distinguished consideration.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

179. TO FATHER BERNARDINO OF ALACUÁS, CT.
Segorbe, 7 January 1931

1890 Most Reverend Father Bernardino of Alacuás.

Beloved Father Superior: After greeting Your Reverend and the friars of that House, wishing them a Happy New Year, I am going to send to you a telephone message I received from the President and members of the Judicial Assembly of Aragon-Rioja. As I don't know where or how I have to address them in reply, I beg Your Reverend to do so in my name, congratulating them for their great effort and growing zeal, and that the Lord will reward them substantially in heaven.

Wishing that Your Reverend and the entire Community and youths of that Reformatory are doing well, your father and servant in Christ blesses them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

180. TO FATHER JOSÉ MARÍA PÉREZ OF ALBA, CT.
Segorbe, 22 February 1931

1891 Most Reverend Father José María Pérez, Editor of *Adolscens Surge* magazine

Beloved son: That the first issue of the magazine that you are editing has the consideration of being dedicated to me, is a demonstration of the love of children that I, as father, am infinitely grateful for; and, of course, I send you many blessings and ask the Lord to ensure your chosen work is fruitful for the development of the great work of the reform of the youth that Lord has commended to our Congregation.

Your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

181. TO FATHER LUDOVICO MARÍA OF VALENCIA, CT.
Segorbe, 30 April 1931

1892 Most Reverend Father Brother Ludovico of Valencia.

Beloved Father Superior: Through the letters of the news and beloved novices Brother José, Brother Antonio and Brother Perrone¹⁵⁹, whose cordial letters I read with great pleasure, grateful for their displays of gratitude and family love which as father I reciprocate, asking the Lord to fill them with blessings so that, as good children of Father St. Francis, they may assure their eternal salvation, having proposed to wear the Holy Habit to that end. I have also read the kind letter of Your Reverend and I am very happy of the growing progress of this seraphic family, a lovely establishment that will undoubtedly bring much glory to God in Italy and honor to our Mother Congregation¹⁶⁰.

1893 I understand perfectly, as Your Reverend says, that there are very few friars in that house to take care of the instruction and guidance of as many young men as you have entrusted to your leadership, and I will state that before the Fathers of the General Council, even though I imagine they will be aware of it, and perhaps only compensate for it by not increasing the meager general funds any more.

But at any rate, they should relieve the work from Your Reverends.

Once the ownership of these lands is arranged, would it not make sense to sell part of them, although following the rental contract, to employ the product in official paper, which would certainly yield more in befit of that house?

This is only a thought that occurs to me from reading your suggestions.

1894 Your Reverends cannot imagine how much satisfaction and joy I feel from the moral and material progress of our congregation in Italy, and I would be overwhelmed if the Lord would grant me seeing them established in Rome, where we could have the General Procurator and a reformatory where the purpose of our Congregation could be seen.

¹⁵⁹ Referring to Guiseppe Nigro, Antonio Maglio and Carmine Perrone.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. 1812, note 117 above.

Let us pray to God, and Your Reverends deal with in with the Cardinal Protector so that his life can be crowned with this great Work.

To Your Reverends, novice brothers and postulants, your father and servant in Christ blesses you from the bottom of his heart.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

182. TO FATHER LUDOVICO MARÍA OF VALENCIA, CT.
Segorbe, 25 August 1931

1895 Most Reverend Father Ludovico of Valencia.

Beloved child in Christ: Before anything else, a thousand pardons because, having been away from home, greeting you on your saint's day festivities slipped my mind, although I always bear you in mind in my poor prayers and wish you much happiness.

It came to our attention that the fatal event that caused the death of Father José Ferrer, let there be holy glory, and that the suffrages are now being practiced by the friars of the house.

I see the Lord continues blessing plentifully the works of Your Reverend and the rest of the friars with abundant rewards, increasing this novitiate to the point where the number of novices matches that of the apostles. God wants them to imitate the zeal, fervor, and activity of the first disciples of the Seraphic Father, who also were twelve in number, so they may spread the rewards of our Congregation all over this beloved nation!

And may the Lord grant them the long life of the venerable priests, whom you spoke of in your letter, so they can give much glory to God and honor to our Congregation.

With Your Reverend I bless all the friars, and especially the new novices, as their father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

183. TO FATHER LUDOVICO MARÍA OF VALENCIA, CT.
Segorbe, 8 October 1931

1896 Most Reverend Father Ludovico of Valencia.

Beloved brother in Christ: Your appreciated letter informing me of the taking of the Holy Habit of two new friars, one a choir member and the other an assistant, filled me with consolation, something my heart is quite in need of in the present

circumstances¹⁶¹. Who knows, Most Reverend Father, if even the members of our Religious Orders in Spain will have to seek refuge in those lands? This week we were raising honors to the Lord so that He may enlighten the deputies who make up the Constituent Courts so that, ignoring the provocations of the common enemy, who is plotting the destruction of the Catholic religion, they legislate in favor of it and in agreement with the Holy See. Your Reverends should also pray along with these fervent novices for poor Spain, so dispirited and humiliated in these times.

The excellent figures that you gave of the devoutness and teaching of these new friars cheered me greatly, and they could be very useful in our Congregation. Would Your Reverend give them the blessing and a paternal embrace in my name?

I wanted to have command of Italian so I could directly address them, but Your Reverend now will have to tell all the novices that I have them very much in my heart, and I am very grateful for their demonstrations of love towards me.

Your father and servant in Christ blesses Your Reverend and all your friars.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

184. TO THE PROVINCIAL MINISTER OF THE CAPUCHINS OF NAVARRE
Segorbe, 18 November 1931

1897 Most Reverend Father Provincial Minister of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Navarre.

Beloved Father in Christ: When my nephew Romualdo returned from seeing a house of this Province for the Novitiates of my Capuchine Tertiary Sisters, a house which he said belongs to the Capuchins of the Province of Toulouse, France, he indicated to me that Your Reverend had been left in charge of dealing with this matter with the Provincial Minister of that Province and you would inform me of what he answered. As time has passed and Your Reverend is not saying anything about the matter, I would appreciate if you would tell me what that response was. May Your Reverend pardon the inconvenience and forgive your humble servant and the least of your brothers in Father St. Francis.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

185. TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF GALATONE
Segorbe, 19 December 1931

1898 The Bishop of Segorbe blesses his beloved children, the Superior, friars and novices of our house of Galatone and although this year we are not much

¹⁶¹ From this date onward, Luis Amigó complains persistently about the situation in Spain in his correspondence, and asks for prayers for the country.

for congratulations, given the circumstances, nevertheless the event that we commemorate in these Christmas holy days is so great that it makes us completely forget about all earthly matters to rejoice in the birth of Our Redeemer.

Your father and servant in Christ desires that you celebrate them with great happiness and for many years.

With great pleasure, Brother Luis Amigó y Ferrer makes use of this occasion to repeat the statement of his most distinguished consideration.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

186. TO SEVERAL CAPUCHINE THIRD ORDER SISTERS
Segorbe, 23 January 1932

1899 Reverend Mother Superior and Nuns of the Orphanage of St. Sebastian of Rábago.

Beloved sisters in Christ. Although belatedly, I am going to answer your cordial and affectionate greeting for the recent Christmas holy days and New Year. For us as members of Spanish religious orders, this year is not very satisfactory for the laws they continue passing which oppress the Church and the Institutions, and we still do not know what will become of them, particularly regarding education. Have Your Charities pray frequently to the Lord so that our poor Homeland does not see itself deprived of religious education.

With respect to Your Charities, I am very pleased to see the great good they are doing with the poor little boys and girls, who without the Capuchin Fathers and Your Charities would still be seated in the darkness of unfaithfulness; and today there are souls who know, love and serve God and therefore they are very grateful, of whose merits, with Your Charities in which I also wish to partake¹⁶².

My health falls somewhat in the middle, neither bad nor particularly good, but then again I cannot really ask for more given my advanced age of 78 years old. May Your Congregations (VV. CC.) ask the Lord that in the short period of life that I have left I spend it in working for the sanctification of my soul, in accordance to the will of God.

This is the same wish your Father has for Your Charities, who blesses all the souls entrusted to your care with all my heart.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹⁶² Cf. 599-606 above; 1952.

187. TO FATHER LUDOVICO MARÍA OF VALENCIA, CT.
Segorbe, 8 February 1932

1900 Most Reverend Father Ludovico of Valencia.

Beloved Father Superior. Having received the very cordial and gratifying letters of our beloved children, the first Italians who professed, and your own letter which accompanied them, they can now imagine the spiritual joy and satisfaction they have provided me. In the holy day of the Purification of Our Mother, I concluded our Constitutions and, placing them in the hands of an image of Our Lady of Sorrows, celebrated the Holy Mass before her¹⁶³. Then I went to deliver them to Cardinal Monescillo, the Archbishop of Valencia, who approved them. Subsequently during that holy days, we opened the doors to Italy to the Holy Virgin in this foundation of Galatone and currently we are quite happy with the three new flower this tree has yielded and it is to be hoped will give delicious fruits. May thanks be given to the Lord and his Holy Mother for everything!

And after thanking the Lord for his benefits, I give a paternal embrace to my new and beloved children; but I specially congratulate Your Reverend whom the Lord has validated to educate these new friars who must be the foundation of our Congregation in Italy.

How much I wish to see them established in Roma close by our Holy Father!

I extend this congratulation to the Fathers, Brothers, Novices and Postulants whom your father and servant and Christ blesses along with Your Reverend.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

188. TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF GALATONE
Segorbe, 14 March 1932

1901 The Bishop of Segorbe blesses his beloved children, the Superior and friars of the Novitiate of Galatone and, with the holy day of Our Lady of Sorrows drawing near, the anniversary of our Congregation, in spite of the reasons for contradiction and sadness that surround us, he sincerely congratulates them and encourages them not to flag in their vocation and ventures, because God is with us and, with Him, we shall triumph over everything.

With great pleasure, Brother Luis Amigó y Ferrer makes use of this occasion to repeat the statement of his most distinguished consideration.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹⁶³ Cf. 105, 1883 above.

189. TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF GALATONE
Segorbe, 16 June 1932

1902 Most Reverend Father Superior and friars of our Capuchin Third Order family of Galatone.

My unforgettable and beloved children: Among the many greetings and congratulations that I have received from everyone for the silver anniversary of consecration as bishop, I was extremely grateful, and perhaps the most timely for its context, drawings and portrait was the one I received from your house.

I watch how our religious family is growing there with satisfaction; and from the appearance of things, I am deducing that you are enjoying good health, which makes me very happy.

But as they are not in due order, nor wear the insignia of the heart of our Mother that is characteristic of our Congregation and I placed there through the wish of our Cardinal Vives, I was not able to recognize which ones were the professed ones in that Community¹⁶⁴.

I am very grateful to them for such a large and beautiful display of filial love, to say that as a father I reciprocate it, and I always have them very present in my poor prayers.

I would be very happy to be able to see and meet all of you personally, but I consider that to be very difficult due to my age and ailments. We shall limit ourselves to live very closely united in spirit, saving our meeting each other for heaven, where I am confident that through the mercy of God we shall live eternally united, rejoicing in the sight of the Lord.

Your father and servant in Christ blesses them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

190. TO FATHER PEDRO DE LA IGLESIA, CT.
Segorbe, 22 July 1932

1903 Reverend Father Pedro de la Iglesia.

Beloved brother in Christ: I was very grateful for your cordial letter of farewell as you leave for Argentina. I have to show you that if Your Reverend was sorry about not being able to say his final goodbyes to me in person, as you tell me, I also was sorry not to be able to give you my blessing before your departure, even though you can understand that my spirit will always be with Your Reverend and Brother Joaquín in your journey, and that you are not missing from my poor prayers so that

¹⁶⁴ Cf. 199 above.

the Lord blesses you and guides all your steps and decisions in carrying out the noble mission the Congregation has entrusted to you.

Concerning the strategy and sound judgment of Your Reverend, I expect you must faithfully carry out your commitment, and leave the pavilion of our Congregation well established in the territory of Argentina, as you also did in Colombia in the foundation of St. Antonio of Bogota.

May the Lord bless you, as does your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

191. TO SISTER PURIFICACIÓN OF SAN ANDRÉS, CT.
Segorbe, 10 October 1932

1904 Most Reverend Mother Purificación of San Andrés, Chapter Commissioner of the Reverend Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of Colombia.

Beloved sister in Christ: I am extremely thankful for you kind letter informing me of the safe and happy arrival of Your Reverence and Mothers Isabel and Francisca in Barranquilla, and I thank the Lord for the graces he granted you on the rest of your journey to Yarumal. It satisfies me very much to read the good news that you convey to me of the excellent spirit inspiring all of my beloved daughters, the nuns, to whom I am grateful for the good memory they have of their father in Christ, who has them very much present in his poor prayers.

To Mother Isabel, I hope that she takes heart and bears in mind the missions the Lord entrusts to her in those faraway lands, to encourage everyone with her example and advice. To Mother Francisca, that her spirit must not flag in the very important position she has been entrusted with of educating the spirit of the Novices for the purposes of the Congregation.

And tell all of them to make great efforts to obtain the Seraphic spirit, the only one capable of restoring society¹⁶⁵.

May Your Reverence and all the nuns receive the blessing your father sends to them at the same time he commends them to their prayers. Your attentive and humble servant.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹⁶⁵ LEO XIII: *Auspicato Concessum*: ASS 15 (1882), pp. 145-153. Cf. 1269 above; 1978, 2445.

192. TO BROTHER LORENZO MARÍA OF ALQUERÍA DE LA CONDESA, CT.
Segorbe, 10 November 1932

1905 My beloved Brother Lorenzo¹⁶⁶: After fondly greeting you, and likewise the Reverend Father Superior and the rest of the Community, the purpose of the present letter is to ask Your Charity the following favor:

The “Piperazina” medication, which Your Charity gave to me, is very much indicated for treatment of the herpes-like condition I suffer from and I must continue to take it. But it is very expensive, and as from today onward we will lack any pensions, knowing that Your Charity is very friendly with the manufacturer of this medication, I would appreciate it if Your Charity would write them to see what discount they would be able to give me so that would make it easier for me to continue taking it.

It requires much frankness and inconvenience on your part, but I understand that the manufacturer is a very good man and, inasmuch as that is our situation, I trust that he will not stop caring for me to the degree that is possible. To Father Laureano, do not stop telling us how you feel about that. Things are getting worse every day. Fulfill everything that God allows, and may he have mercy and compassion on us!

I bless all Your Charities and commend you to your prayers as your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

193. TO FATHER EUGENIO OF CARCAIXENT, OFM. CAP.
Segorbe, 11 November 1932

1906 Most Reverend Father Eugenio of Carcaixent, Superior of Regular Clergy of the Archipelago of San Andrés and Providencia.

Beloved brother in Christ: The cordial reminder I received from Your Reverend announcing the completion of your golden anniversary of religious profession brought many very pleasant memories to mind of the days we spent together in fraternal union in our religious Communities. Today we are separated by an enormous distance but no distance is enough to divide fraternal love, and through the kindness and mercy of God I expect to see us eternally united quite soon in the heavenly homeland.

I also completed a short time ago the golden anniversary of my solemn vows and first Mass, and the silver anniversary of my Pontificate, which means that I am

¹⁶⁶ Referring to Brother Lorenzo María of Alquería de la Condesa.

very old now and the hour of my departure is drawing closer. Pray frequently to the Lord for me, as I am doing for Your Reverend.

Tell all my daughters who are in that mission, the Capuchine Third Order nuns, that their father does not forget them in his prayers, and he rejoices in the Lord with the good news of the good they are doing in the souls of that region and I beg them to ask the Lord to partake of the reward of their good works¹⁶⁷.

And to everyone along with Reverend, the blessing of your father and servant in Christ, who commends you to your prayers.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

194. TO SISTER PURIFICACIÓN OF SAN ANDRÉS, CT.
Segorbe, 2 December 1932

1907 Most Reverend Mother Commissioner of our Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of Colombia.

Beloved sister in Christ: Through the most pleasant letter of Your Reverence and various ones I have received from nuns of that Region, I have been able to appreciate the good spirit inspiring everyone and the wish to work for their sanctification. Similarly, how well the appointments and chapter regulations were welcomed, and the assistance of the Holy Spirit in the General Chapter meeting can certainly and very clearly be seen in that acceptance. May God be blessed for everything!

I wanted to answer individually each and every one of the nuns who sent to me such reverent and affectionate letters, but that become more impossible for me every day for several reasons. I hope that Your Reverence will make up for this failure on my part by telling all the nuns in every one of the houses of our Congregation in the Americas their father is very grateful and satisfied with all of them, that they are very present in his poor prayers, and he loves them in Christ without distinction, even though I do not have the pleasure of knowing them as well as those who are closer to me here, in the houses in Spain¹⁶⁸. Beg them also to ask the Lord for the great needs of the Church, Clergy and Religious Communities of our common homeland. We also pray to the Lord to contain the impetus of the infernal spirit, which never stop workings against the Colombian Catholic republic. And as whatever we suffer is a righteous punishment for our sins, we do not cease to ask forgiveness of the Lord, saying: *Spare your people, Lord / Be not angry with your people forever.*

¹⁶⁷ Cf. 1794, note 105 above.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. 1794, note 105.

I send my sincere greetings to Your Reverence and, with Your Reverence, to all the nuns, for the coming Christmas and New Year. I hope the Lord grants you very happy festivities embraced to the cross the Lord presents us.

To Your Reverence and all the nuns from your father and servant in Christ who blesses them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

195. TO FATHER LUDOVICO MARÍA OF VALENCIA, CT.
Segorbe, 27 December 1932

1908 To my beloved children the Most Reverend Father Ludovico, Fathers, Brothers and novices of our house of Galatone.

Beloved brothers, I have received your greetings for the Christmas holy days and the New Year, which I thank you very much for, and even more than others because the love always seems to increase for the children who are farther away, whom it is impossible to see.

My children, the Christmas holy days could not be very happy here, nor the coming new year because the situation does not appear very promising, but we accept what the Lord allows in everything, because he is our Father and wants our good in everything.

In that respect, Your Charities will be able to enjoy greater peace and tranquility and therefore these holidays will be happier for you.

This is what your father and servant in Christ wishes, who blesses everyone.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

196. TO SISTER ISABEL OF BENISSA, CT.
Segorbe, 30 December 1932

1909 Most Reverend Mother Sister Isabel of Benissa.

Beloved daughter in Christ: I am very satisfied to see confirmed in the letter from Your Reverence of 21 November the joy and happiness that those good and beloved nuns of the Americas felt at seeing you return to that Custodianship, of which Your Charity was the base and foundation. This should not surprise you, since you were chosen by God through obedience to educate the spirit of these nuns who have always had great appreciation for you for that reason, and if they did not, they would be ungrateful and would not be fulfilling their duty.

However, Your Reverence rightly humbles yourself and considers yourself unable to do anything, because we ourselves cannot do or have the ability to do anything, since our aptitude comes from God. And for his great works, he always uses those who cannot take away from his glory because they believe they are unable to do anything themselves.

1910 In the early years of that foundation, the Lord did great things through his own means, instilling the seraphic spirit in the first nuns, who were to be the base and foundation of that Institution¹⁶⁹. Then the infernal spirit, anticipating the good that our Institution had to do among these poor people, took his shots against Your Reverence in order to tear down the building at its foundation, making you appear inept and becoming estranged from the wishes of those who had to be your help and support, to the point that your return to the Mother Country was considered necessary or advisable for the peace and tranquility of Your Reverence. When that happened, the enemy could work comfortably and the Congregation in the Americas was on the verge of being lost. But when the enemy thinks it has achieved its goal, the time has come for the Lord to begin the work of rebirth, as you clearly can see yourself, and which we must give many thanks to the Lord.

1911 It seems very just to me that the nuns are rejoicing over the return of Your Reverence, and I believe today you can do much good for them by restoring the spirit of our Congregation in those sisters who have such good intentions and are eager to achieve their perfection.

This is what the Lord plans by making you return to that Congregation, as His Excellency the Apostolic Vicar understands well.

Do not let yourself be daunted by your inability and the great scope of the mission, because you will be able to do everything in Him who comforts you.

You are not going to be without my poor prayers supporting you. Pray frequently for the great needs of your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

197. TO SISTER PURIFICACIÓN OF SAN ANDRÉS, CT.
Segorbe, 7 January 1933

1912 Most Reverend Mother Commissioner of the Americas, Sister Purificación of San Andrés.

I received your cordial letter of 29 November, beloved mother, and I thank you very much for the predictions and best wishes that the coming year will be very happy for me. This is precisely is what I am persistently asking the Lord to provide for Your Reverence and all the nuns, my beloved children, in those faraway lands.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. LP 9, in works cited, p. 603; MP 44, in works cited, p. 726.

I am receiving letters from many nuns of this Custodianship, as Your Reverence was indicating to me, and among them one came from the house of Montería, in which I was very satisfied to see the signatures of the Mother Superior, Sister Rosario of Barranquilla, and of Sister Bienvenida of D., since I had not heard of them or seen their names on a letter for years. As it is impossible for me to answer all of them due to my poor health, particularly my eyesight, would Your Reverence do so for me, expressing to them I am very thankful for their displays of affection, especially their prayers in my favor; and letting them know that I extend my paternal love to all of them and I pray constantly to the Lord for all of them so that everyone, with the faithful fulfillment of our obligations as members of a religious order, gives him a great amount of glory¹⁷⁰.

1913 I imagine the Reverend Mothers Isabel of Benissa and Francisca of Barranquilla would have received my answer to their letters, for which I was very grateful. I imagine one or the other of them must be of great assistance to Your Reverence, like Simon of Cyrene, and help you bear the burden of your position as Superior which obedience has imposed on you. All three of you know the spirit of the Congregation so well and will try to instill it in all these good nuns, inspired as they are by very good wishes.

As the festival of the saint's day of Your Reverence is drawing near, I cordially offer you my congratulations, and on that day in particular I will pray to Holy Virgin that She bestow on you as many graces as you need for your sanctification, so that you can be the guide who leads many souls to their sanctification and salvation.

With Your Reverence, I also bless all your subjects as your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

198. TO MS. MARGARITA ZÚÑIGA
Segorbe, 23 January 1933

1914 Señorita Margarita Zúñiga.

Beloved sister in Christ: I have in my possession your cordial and instructive letter, for which I bless and praise the Lord who seems to want to become betrothed to you, an immense and priceless good fortune for which you will never be able to give enough thanks to the Lord. And if He truly wants this, you will understand that for our part, we must be extremely grateful to facilitate the means by which your wish is fulfilled.

I am writing to the Reverend General Mother to that effect, and including your letter and my reply.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. 1794, note 105 above.

Wishing to have you some day for a daughter, this Prelate and your servant in Christ blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

199. TO SEVERAL CAPUCHINE THIRD ORDER SISTERS
Segorbe, 23 January 1933

1915 Beloved daughters in Christ, Sister Victoria of Casigna, Sister Asunción of San Juan, Sister Felipa of Medellín and Sister Benigna of Valledupar:

I received your cordial letters of 20 December sending me Christmas and New Year holiday greetings and I thank you very much for your best wishes; but in the situation we are going through in our beloved Homeland, both the Church and the Religious Orders, Your Charities will understand that there is no greater satisfaction than to know we are suffering for the love of God, who wants us to follow him along the path of the cross and tribulation. Pray frequently to the Lord not to allow the devil to fulfill all his plans against the Religion. For my part, I am enjoying the good that Your Charities are doing for the souls put under your guidance, and I ask the Lord to make partake of the merits of everyone.

1916 I cordially congratulate Your Charities, the ones who have definitively consecrated to the Lord through your perpetual vows; and I beg everyone, my daughters, from the Superior to the all the nuns in this house, to always bear very much in mind the design of God in bringing us to Religion, which was for you to give him much glory by sanctifying your souls, and without it, you will be miserably lost in time and expose your soul to eternal damnation¹⁷¹. Do not forget, either, that the holy cross is the straight and sure way to sanctification; and to that end, always bear in mind this five-line verse:

*Without the cross there is no glory
Nor with the cross eternal tears)
Sanctity and the cross are one (Holiness and the cross are one
There is no cross that has no saint
Nor a saint without any cross¹⁷².*

Learn this lesson well, beloved daughters, and by this path we will surely all reach heaven, where we shall see and meet those we never could meet in this world due to the distances that keep us apart.

To everyone, the Superior and nuns of this house, and my brothers the friars of this Mission, your servant in Christ blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹⁷¹ Cf. 1812, note 117 above.

¹⁷² Cf. 1806 above.

200. TO FATHER PEDRO DE LA IGLESIA, CT.
Segorbe, 20 February 1933

1917 Most Reverend Father Pedro de la Iglesia.

Beloved Father: I have in my possession your cordial and appreciated letter of 25 January, which arrived here on 16 February. I see from the letter that there, the same as her here, you see the entire world is currently breaking down and in such a state of disorder, so divided and at war with one another, that it seems like we are approaching nothing less than the end of time. When our Redeemer came to the World, one reads in the Book of Martyrs that *the whole world was at peace*; currently, when we are going to complete the 1900th anniversary of his Holy death, it seems like hell has vomited into the world all its rebellious spirits who are instilling in men the spirit of rebellion and dissension. No matter how much one hears the outcry for Peace! Peace! everywhere, there is no sign of it anywhere¹⁷³.

1918 But how can one find that in a world that disdains and distances itself from Jesus Christ, who came to bring peace to men of good will? It is not strange, then, beloved father, when we are experience here omens of even worse events to come, if the Lord in his infinite mercy does not cast the infernal spirit into the abyss as the Church has been asking for many years at the end of the Mass. Until that moment arrives, beloved Father, let us embrace the Holy Cross, the last resort for salvation that can carry us into port in this stormy sea.

Apart from that, my health is good enough, thanks to God, albeit I do have the flu frequently but we are waiting the results of the law that is starting to take effect upon the Religious Orders, whose right to provide education they are trying to take away.

To Brother Joaquín, who I also have at your house, and I bless both of you with all my heart as your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

201. TO THE MOTHER SUPERIOR OF THE CAPUCHINE TERTIARY SISTERS OF YARUMAL
Segorbe, 28 March 1933

1919 Most Reverend Mother Superior of the Novitiate House of Yarumal.

Beloved sister in Christ: I received your cordial and affectionate letter already written in your new destination, showing me how much you felt for the House of the Mission, where you dwelled for so many years and were so well cared for and loved. Our life, beloved Mother, is sacrifice, and not having a permanent residence is not the least of them, for we depend on obedience but it is the Lord who governs

¹⁷³ Jeremiah 6:14. Cf. 804-826 above.

us by it and whatever he arranges must always be for the good of our soul. This is why we must always say: Lord, let thy will be done in everything! Your Reverence asks me if I gave you some advice for your government, in the difficult position that obedience has entrusted to you. As that House is simultaneously a novitiate and a seminary for religious students, what I can tell Your Reverence will always serve for the Teacher of Novices.

Taking responsibility for the education of nuns, beloved sister, is a truly difficult and very great one, so that they can prove very useful to the Congregation in the future and give much glory to God; this work is one you can say Your Reverences have to begin, because it is necessary to confess (although painfully) that up until now they personnel in that house has not been trained with the spirit characteristic of our Institution¹⁷⁴.

1920 Each Order and each Congregation has its characteristic spirit, in accordance to the noble mission the Lord entrusts to them; and our Institution, as a branch from the trunk of the Franciscan tree, and as well as being Capuchin, must be based on profound humility¹⁷⁵; blind obedience¹⁷⁶; and total poverty¹⁷⁵. This has to be the cornerstone with which your Reverences know if the young women entrusted to your care meet the necessary conditions for being a good Capuchine Tertiary sister. Do not let them deceive you nor bring them in for their passion, burdening the Congregation with elements that would not be anything other than a hindrance for the Superiors, and a bad example or scandal while they are in the Congregation, because their aim, sooner or later, has to be to leave it, since they are not called by God.

1921 Look carefully, beloved sisters, to see if the young woman is melancholy and sad or walks with her head down, since joy is one of the signs of true vocation, and this is why St. Theresa said: "I do not want sadness and melancholy in my house". And Your Reverends know well that Our Patriarch St. Francis said to one of his first disciples who walked with his head down: "If you have sinned, go and confess and do not be sad; and if you have not sinned, why are you so melancholy? That shows you are not at ease in the service of the Lord, which is a serious offense to him"¹⁷⁷.

1922 Your Reverences should also focus on another condition and see if they are uncommunicative and reserved towards their Superiors. I do not mean they should tell them a story of conscience, which is forbidden. But yes, if they are communicative with them for expressing what they can with them outside of confession, so they know the state of their spirits and if the Superiors can guide them, which they are obligated to do by their position.

¹⁷⁴ In the "manuscript" version, the date of this letter was changed and the present paragraph was cut by the censor.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. LP 9, in works cited, MP 44, in works cited, p. 726.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. 2C 152, in works cited, p. 318; LM 6:4, in works cited, p. 415; MP 48, in works cited, p. 728.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. LP 12of, in works cited; MP 96, in works cited, pp. 768-769.

There would be many other things to tell you, but this letter is already going to weigh too much. Although it is addressed to Your Reverence as Mother Superior of that house-novitiate, the Reverend Mother Commissioner, the Most Reverend Mother Teachers of Novices and Isabel and all those who are in charge of the young women can take something from it. Your father and servant in Christ blesses all of you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

202. TO THE CAPUCHINE TERTIARY SISTERS OF URRAO
Segorbe, 3 April 1933

1923 Most Reverend Mother Superior and sisters of our house-School of Urrao.

Beloved daughters in Christ: I received the cordial greeting of Your Charities for the Christmas holy days and New Year with the utmost gratitude. The latter cannot be appear to be any more disastrous for our unfortunate Homeland, and God does not want it to be any different for that beloved and Catholic Republic of Colombia, since the news reaching us there do not appear very favorable. And I said it appears because, as no leaf on the tree moves without the will of God nor a hair falls from our head without it¹⁷⁸, certainly everything that happens to us, if it is not the will of God, happens by his permission to punish our sins. But we have to trust in the Lord, who knows how to take good from the bad, purified the peoples of the sins they necessarily have to pay in this world, because as so many peoples are not going to appear before the Supreme Judge, he will use his infinite mercy with all of them and for all of them; and His Church, against which the gateways to hell will not be capable of anything and will recover the lost freedom for his children, and they will enjoy the days of prosperity. Let us pray frequently, my beloved sisters, to the Lord so that for the righteous souls, and they certainly exist in the world, and above all for the innocent children so exposed to corruption and eternal damnation, the days of trial tribulation be shortened; and for that reason, we must say to Him very frequently: *Spare your people, Lord / Be not angry with your people forever.*

With all my heart I bless all of you, and your pupils, as your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Luke 21: 18.

203. TO FATHER BERNARDINO OF ALACUÁS, CT.
Segorbe, 3 May 1933

1924 Most Reverend Father Bernardino of Alacuás.

I received your cordial letter of 1 May which provided me the satisfaction of knowing about Your Reverends and see that those good young followers of St. Anthony are not forgetting me, just as I always have them very present.

I appreciate your invitation for the holy day of St. Anthony on 18 June, and if some new development does not happen and I feel as I do at present, thanks to God, I could commit myself to officiate at a Pontifical Mass, having someone who would lead it; the Communion Mass, due to my poor eyesight, would be very difficult for me to celebrate. I imagine they will come for me on the day before, and will bear in mind not to have the car very occupied, since there will perhaps be three of us plus our luggage.

May Your Reverend greet all the friars and the Board of the Convent, and Your Reverend and everyone receive the blessing of your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

204. TO FATHER LUDOVICO MARÍA OF VALENCIA, CT.
Segorbe, 11 May 1933

1925 Most Reverend Father Ludovico of Valencia.

Beloved Father Superior and all the friars of our house Novitiate: I was very grateful for your cordial letters of 25 and 15 April, for the greeting on the Easter holy days which, even in such sad times for the Church in Spain, I cannot do less than thank my beloved children. And I am also grateful for seeing that two new roses have bloomed in the rose bush planted by our Congregation in Italy, which should be very pleasing to the Lord and attract many souls to his service with the fragrance of their virtues. Congratulations to the new friars, and especially to the Superiors, who are so accurately guiding the souls of these young men along the path of virtue, so that someday they themselves may be the leaders of many souls to Heaven.

Your father and servant in Christ blesses everyone.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

205. TO THE MOTHER SUPERIOR OF THE CAPUCHINE TERTIARY SISTERS
OF SANTA ROSA DE OSOS
Segorbe, 31 May 1933

1926 Most Reverend Mother Superior of our house of Santa Rosa de Osos (Colombia).

Beloved sister in Christ: In the midst of the many sorrows we are suffering in this unfortunate Nation, it serves as a great comfort to receive the gratifying demonstrations of affection from our beloved daughters, the sisters in Colombia, and above all, the many prayers they are raising the Lord in our benefit and for the triumph of our Holy Mother the Church, so persecuted in our beloved Spain.

I am very grateful for your good will in helping with our poverty in some way, but I warn you that the currency of that Republic is not accepted here, only United States dollars. The Mother Commissioner and Mother Elena both sent me one and I received them inside several letters from sisters. Nevertheless, I am grateful for their good intension, and plead with you to use your products in meeting the needs of your sisters, whom with Your Reverence I bless as their father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

206. TO THE CAPUCHINE TERTIARY SISTERS OF COLOMBIA
Segorbe, 14 June 1933

1927 Most Reverend Mother Commissioner and her Councilors, local Superiors and sisters of all the houses of our Congregation in Colombia

My beloved and unforgettable daughters in Christ: As I have received several letters from Your Reverences related to the Easter holy days and my saint's day and it was possible for me to answer all of them individually, I am doing so in general by means of the Most Reverence Mother Commissioner, who will now deign to convey it to Your Reverences.

These are certainly not times of happiness and rejoicing we are going through, you could say, in the entire world and especially in this Catholic Nation of Spain, it seems that hell has put all its efforts into de-Catholicizing the country. Certainly they must not achieve that, because not matter how much they may be persecuted, the more fervent the Catholics become and I have no doubt they are the stuff of martyrs, if the persecution were to go that far.

But it appears there are also reasons to fear that some persecution may be provoked against the Catholic Religion in that beloved Republic. Nevertheless, we should not be afraid of anything, beloved children, since the Lord, who builds dikes against the sea so that the land does not flood will put limits to the lack of devotion when, after our sins are purged, we have satisfied his Divine Justice. Certainly God punishes and tests us, but he does so as a Father who wants our eternal good, so that we must say with St. Augustine: "Lord, burn here; cut here, spare nothing here, so long as you forgive me for eternity".

Of all the displays of affection that I receive from Your Reverences, beloved daughters, what I am most thankful for and need the most are your prayers, and

have no doubt, I do reciprocate them, because for me there is no distinction at all between Spaniards and natives of the Americas, as all of you are my beloved daughters in Christ.

I bless everyone, then, with all my heart as your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

207. TO FATHER BIENVENIDO MARÍA OF DOS HERMANAS, CT.

Segorbe, 13 July 1933

1928 Most Reverend Father Bienvenido his companion Reverend Fathers. Beloved brothers in Christ: I received your kind postcards of 27 June from Bayonne and 9 July from Brussels. My blessing and poor prayers accompany you everywhere, although naturally my beloved children in Christ have preference in them and, as Your Reverends are sacrificing for the good and honor of the Congregation, you clearly must have a special place in my prayers. Do not doubt that the Lord will bless you and grant you an abundance of graces so your sacrifices and those of the Congregation are fruitful.

I enjoyed accompanying you in Spirit through the little Convent of Bayonne, my mother house, and felt very sorry that they would not preserve the Spaniards, as it would have been very good if we would have come in the present circumstances. I do not want to make you waste any time, so I am limiting myself to entrusting you to give thanks in my name to those excellent Professors, who I became so interested in through Your Reverends, and to repeat to you the love of your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

208. TO MR. GERMÁN ROIG

Segorbe, 1 September 1933

1929 Mr. Germán Roig, carpenter.

Beloved brother in Christ: Pardon me for not putting your surname but I do not know it. You will recall we spoke in the Asylum of my wish to put a sheet of cork in the bottom of my casket, and you told me not worry about and to send you the measurements of length and width, since it was very easy to buy it in good conditions. The measurements are as follows: length, 1 meter and 94 centimeters; width at the head, 50 centimeters, and reducing to 40 centimeters at the feet. You told me the layers of cork were well finished and they could get any thickness

you wanted. I think a centimeter thick will be enough, and perhaps it would be advisable if it came divided lengthwise in three pieces.

I would appreciate if you would not let anyone know about the use and purpose of these sheets of cork, and once the matter is settled, that you send them to me in good condition, in whatever way seems best to you. With the same delivery, I would appreciate it if you would include the bill for the amount so I can send it to you as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours, your servant who blesses you and all your family.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

209. TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF GALATONE
Segorbe, 3 September 1933

1930 My beloved children of new profession and taking of the habit in our House of Galatone:

Your letters, beloved children, expressing to us your satisfaction and joy at seeing yourselves numbered among the children of the Seraphim of Assisi, means you will be able to understand the pleasure and joy you have provided me. For that reason, I give you my warmest congratulations, and I wish that you are very faithful to the Lord so that his holy will can be completely fulfilled in you, which is your sanctification. But I especially congratulate the Most Reverend Father Ludovico, your Father Superior for this reason, the other friars who have served to prepare your souls for the intimate union with Jesus Christ Our Lord. They have been chosen by the Lord for this great work, and for that reason they deserve our cordial congratulations.

May be the Lord bless everyone.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

210. TO FATHER BIENVENIDO MARÍA OF DOS HERMANAS, CT.
Segorbe, 9 September 1933

1931 Most Reverend Father Bienvenido.

Beloved brother in Christ: I have in my possession your cordial letter, and I did not want to delay acknowledging receipt of it in order to express my satisfaction that Your Reverend has enjoyed your journey and the good it has yielded.

I considered you very busy this season in affairs of the Congregation, and I have not written in order not to distract you. God wants your works to be fruitful! The Spiritual Exercises you will be doing are very fruitful and that your graces and blessings also reach me. Fond greetings to the Most Reverend General Father and other friars.

Your father and servant in Christ blesses them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

211. TO MR. GERMÁN ROIG
Segorbe, 21 September 1933

1932 Mr. Germán Roig.

Beloved brother in Christ: I received your cordial letter of 18 September and the sample of cork sheets that you sent me, which were completely to my liking, since for its porousness, light weight and even the color it meet all the best conditions for the purpose I had in mind for it. It is slightly thicker than what I indicated to you, and for that reason I wanted to certify if we would able to use it for this case. I called the house carpenter as he would be aware if it would raise the bottom too much and therefore we would not be able to use it. He measured the sheet in the bottom and told me that, although a little bit thinner would have been better, this thickness would serve very well since the coffin is deep enough. He also corrected the measurements I sent to you, giving the length of the sheet as 1 meter, 96 centimeters; and the width in the upper part as 52 centimeters and 41 centimeters at the bottom. It does not matter if the sheet is divided in three or four pieces, whatever you believe is advisable is fine. We would like have you do this procedure as soon as possible, and when sending it to me by the service car, please also include the bill for the full amount, since my nephew José María Amigó will be coming down from the convent at the end of the month and can bring you the payment then.

With fond greetings to your family and the nuns, I repeat I am your cordial and humble servant who blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

212. TO THE CHAPTER COMMISSIONER OF
THE CAPUCHINE TERTIARY SISTERS IN COLOMBIA
Segorbe, 28 September 1933

1933 Most Reverend Mother Chapter Commissioner of Colombia.

Beloved sister in Christ: Your most recent letter in July was very pleasing to me, as are all those written by you and my nuns in these lands, which I receive frequently from all the houses, encouraged by Your Reverence. If Your Reverences are giving these displays of love to your poor father, you can imagine what mine will be for each and every one of Your Reverences.

I congratulate the Most Reverend Mother with all my heart for her meritorious efforts in the fulfillment of her ministry, so ably carried out. You can imagine how great my satisfaction will be to see the Congregation expand with new foundations in which much glory is given to God. I would like to get to know all of my beloved daughters personally, but we will have to leave that for heaven. Please keep praying for our poor Spain, which needs it very much.

Everyone from this House sends fond wishes to Your Reverence and you father blesses all of them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

213. TO FATHER BIENVENIDO MARÍA OF DOS HERMANAS, CT.

Segorbe, 13 October 1933

1934 Most Reverend Father Bienvenido, Secretary General.

Beloved brother in Christ: The greeting from Your Reverend regarding the holy day of Father St. Francis, which I spent in Godella with the most Reverend Father Francisco and other friars, was very pleasing to me.

I suppose, if you have seen the "Diario de Valencia" newspaper, you will be aware of the death of my niece Carmen Boada. She died like a saint, and lived her life the same way. R.I.P.

Regarding the changes that have taken place in the personnel of the Congregation, the one that caught my attention was the situation of Your Reverend with respect to the House of Amurrio. I was truly sorry for the error that I imagine the General Father had to make, although I am aware of the difficulty that the appointment of the Superior to that House of Amurrio presents.

Your father and servant in Christ blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

214. TO SISTER FILOMENA OF BELÉN, CT.

Segorbe, 13 October 1933

1935 Reverend Mother Sister Filomena of Belén.

Beloved sister in Christ: Your kind letter of 16 September filled me with comfort on seeing the good spirit that Your Reverence and the other sisters of that House are encouraging to obtain perfection. Of course, our nature is weak and we are capable of little for such a great work, but as it is not only us who are working for it, but God instead who is the one who aids us because he wants our sanctification, this should give us encouragement, because with Him we are capable of everything, as the Apostle says.

The little crosses that we often give as gifts to each other, without wanting them or thinking about it, are the means the Lord makes use of to forge our sanctification, because the Lord wants the members of the religious orders to be martyrs, with the slow martyrdom that we give each other, and usually without willing it or thinking about it. May God be blessed for everything.

I was very happy with the favorable news Your Reverence gave me about the development of the illness of Sister Leonor. May God want her to recover completely, if it is advisable for his glory! But if not, everyone should embrace the cross, which is the true path to heaven. I have everyone in the asylum very much in my heart, from the old ladies to little girls, and wish they make good use of the guidance of the nuns, who are like their guardian angels who must lead them to their salvation. May they pray to the Lord for me.

I celebrate the good news Your Reverence informed me of concerning the work of the Orphanage and Chapel being very advanced and I trust the Lord will move hearts and wills so that we can see them completed soon. I would want to be one of the benefactors, but as this is impossible for me, I plead for you to give in my name for this purpose the alms that Your Reverence was reserving for me.

Your father and servant in Christ blesses everyone.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

215. TO FATHER JOAQUÍN GUILLÉN, CT.
Segorbe, 16 October 1933

1936 Reverend Father Joaquín Guillén.

Beloved Father Superior: Having received the courteous letters of the recently professed Brother Luis and Brother Oreste, which Your Reverend sent to me, I beg you that you congratulate them in my name and tell them that, even though far away for your house, their father has them very much present in his poor prayers and sent them his paternal embrace and blessing. I beg prayers for our poor Spain from the Most Reverend Father Ludovico, Your Reverend and that entire Community, to serve as encouragement for the Catholics there to work valiantly in the next elections, with the goal of obtaining the victory of our Holy Mother Church, so persecuted by its enemies.

Your father and servant in Christ blesses everyone.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

216. TO SISTER CONSOLACIÓN DE LOS DOLORES, CT.
Segorbe, 16 October 1933

1937 Beloved sister in Christ Consolación de los Dolores.

My delay in replying to your much-appreciated letter of 13 July must surprise you; but the cause, in addition to the ailments typical of old age, which takes away my desire for doing anything, is the situation in our poor Spain and the many matters demanding my attention.

I take great comfort and joy in the devotion that Your Charity displays to Our Lady of Sorrows, whose name you honor, because She truly has to be our consolation and secure hope at the hour of our death.

I am very thankful for the displays of love from all my daughters of the Community, but particularly the prayers they raise in my favor, which their father and servant in Christ, who blesses them, needs so much.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

217. TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF GALATONE
Segorbe, 18 December 1933

1938 Reverend Father Superior and friars of our house of Galatone.

As the holiday season of Christmas approaches, the cause of universal rejoicing by everyone, we recall the birth of Redeemer; and although the present situation lessens our joy, nevertheless, I greet you from the bottom of my heart and invite you to sing together with the angels: "Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth for men of good will"¹⁷⁹.

Your father and servant in Christ blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹⁷⁹ Luke 2:14.

218. TO SEVERAL CAPUCHIN THIRD ORDER FRIARS
Segorbe, 21 December 1933

1939 Reverend Father Superior and friars.

As the holiday season of Christmas approaches, the cause of universal rejoicing by everyone, we recall the birth of Redeemer; and although the present situation lessens our joy, nevertheless, I greet you from the bottom of my heart and invite you to sing together with the angels: "Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth for men of good will"¹⁸⁰.

Your father and servant in Christ blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

219. TO FATHER PEDRO DE LA IGLESIA, CT.
Segorbe, 31 December 1933

1940 Most Reverend Father Pedro de la Iglesia.

Beloved brother in Christ: And on the last day of this year so sad to recall, especially for Spain, I am answering you courteous letter to tell you: In fact, the most Reverend General Minister, in his letter of greetings for the Christmas holidays, gave me the pleasant news, which I am now communicating to you, of having finally signed the deed for the Government of the foundation of our Congregation in that town. *Thanks to God!*

There is no doubt, Beloved Father, that this is a great step in favor of our beloved Congregation; but it has also cost it as well, because all the works of God have to go forward marked with the seal of contradiction.

The congratulations mainly go to Your Reverend and also to Brother Joaquín who has accompanied you in your works; God will reward them, and also the Congregation, your mother.

Having to do a new work, I imagine it will still be some time before you need to have personnel sent; although the most Reverend General Minister, as short of personnel as he is, now has to worry about that subject. *God will provide!* With the surprising election of a conservative government here in Spain that no one expected, it seems there is some glimpse of light in the distance that gives us cause for some hope, and that is already starting with the desire of the Government to enter into new relations with the Holy See. God wants us to be able to say one day: *Salvation from our enemies!*

To the Bishops of that Region and the good Catholics who have helped Your Reverend so much to achieve the definitive establishment of our Congregation

¹⁸⁰ Luke 2:14.

there, tell them on my behalf that I have the utmost gratitude for them and are very obligated to their service.

May they pray to God for your Father, because I am in somewhat delicate health, and receive a paternal embrace with my blessing.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

220. TO SEVERAL CAPUCHINE THIRD ORDER SISTERS

Segorbe, 9 January 1934

1941 My beloved daughters in Christ, Mother Superior Sister Milagro of Alboraya, Sister Paulina of Donmatías and other nuns of the Orphanage of San Antonio in La Guajira.

Beloved sisters in Christ, it truly is a great sacrifice Your Charities are making in benefit of the souls in such unhealthy climates that are punished so often by plagues, but just one look at the Divine Redeemer who gave his life on the cross for these souls Your Charities are caring for, will not only encourage you to endure, but will even make it appear there is very little you can do for the good of these souls. Moreover, if someone who saves a soul determines the destiny of their own, how can it not console you when you see your salvation assured to that extent?¹⁸¹

I understand very well, Mother Milagro, it must have meant for you to have to come down from the residence of Sierra Nevada to the one in La Guajira, since the climates are so different, but God is there in both places and in His company we always can be and must be happy, no matter where we are.

I see the wish of Your Charities and request they make of the Lord to prolong my life is being granted, but it cannot be for much more time now, because my 79 years and the ailments that are appearing are announcing the end of time for me.

That we see each other in eternity is the wish of your father, who blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

221. TO FATHER BIENVENIDO MARÍA OF DOS HERMANAS, CT.

Segorbe, 28 February 1934

1942 Most Reverend Father Bienvenido, Secretary General.

¹⁸¹ Cf. James 5:20.

Beloved brother in Christ: Since our meeting when you described the condition of the Congregation and the abuses which, due to the circumstances, a few people were introducing into it, I have been thinking of the advisability of speaking myself, as Your Reverend thought it was advisable to do. To that end I wrote the attached circular, which I am sending a copy of to the General Minister and Your Reverend so, if they agree, proceed to printing it and be able to give a copy to each member of the order¹⁸².

Your Reverend does not have to return this copy to me, but only his agreement to it so that, in the event it would not be printed, it will always serve you to have my thoughts and intentions on the record.

I had a letter yesterday from the most Reverend General Minister from Godella, where he had gone due to the serious illness of Father Francisco, whom he says is feeling somewhat better and it appears that now Dr. Valls is more hopeful of being able to save him. I have addressed my letter and circular to him there, asking for a prompt replay just as I am doing with Your Reverend.

Your father and servant in Christ blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

222. TO SEVERAL CAPUCHIN THIRD ORDER FRIARS
Segorbe, 5 March 1934

1943 My beloved new Capuchin Tertiary children Brother Luis, Brother Orencio y Brother Mateo.

I read with the utmost pleasure your letters announcing your taking of the Holy Habit and the satisfaction Your Charities felt on seeing yourselves dressed in the garment of the Lord Father St. Francis.

This is truly an extraordinary grace the Lord is granting you, which obligates you to imitate your Holy Father the Seraphim of Assisi.

Your Charities have now entered in the novitiate, and as the name indicates, you have to leave behind and eradicate all worldly vices and bad habits in order to dress yourself in the virtues that your Holy Habit and new status demand, which you will be able to achieve easily with the assistance and protection of Our Lady of Sorrow, the Mother and Patron Saint of our Congregation.

This is what I wish and will ask for from the Lord for Your Charities who I bless from the bottom of my heart, as well as the Superior and other friars, as your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

¹⁸² Cf. 1945-1950.

223. TO FATHER JOAQUÍN GUILLÉN, CT.
Segorbe, 5 March 1934

1944 Reverend Father Joaquín Guillén.

Beloved Father Superior: I am sending to Your Reverend the letter in response to the one from my beloved children, the new friars, involving me in their taking of the Holy Habit. Congratulations to all, but especially to Your Reverend, who are the true stem which nourishes such beautiful flowers and with time will undoubtedly give tasty fruits that will honor our Congregation in Italy. What a shame that the very limited resources the Congregation has available does not lend itself to expanding our sphere of activity in that nation more! But the poor Greater Superiors are overwhelmed just trying to attend to the needs here, since they cannot receive anything from the Houses in the Americas.

I will do whatever I can to send some small object for those friars, as Your Reverend suggests, although you must already know that we have great difficulty here taking care of our own needs, as our only income is the stipend from the celebration.

With fond greetings to the Most Reverend Father Ludovico and the other friars, your father and servant in Christ blesses them.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

224. TO THE CAPUCHIN THIRD ORDER FRIARS
Segorbe, 14 March 1934

1945 My beloved children, the Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows.

Perhaps the subject I am addressing in this circular letter today will catch your attention, beloved brothers in Christ, when ordinarily I refrain from giving you any instructions, confident as I am that your Superiors are not neglecting to make the necessary corrections and warnings in each case in fulfillment of their obligation. But the situation we are passing through today is so special and exceptional, due to the persecution that has been unleashed against the Religion and Religious Orders, that it forces us to be on guard and watch over the Superiors, in order that there is no reason for relaxation and loss of spirit, concerning the liberties which could have been or must be taken with respect to some observances that the Superiors cannot authorize in any way, outside of cases involving true need, and that must be cut off and corrected severely.

1946 For that reason, then, beloved children, in support of the Greater Superiors, we have decided to give this Circular letter to each and every one of you, so that you can have on the record our most energetic protests against the abuses

concerning observance that are being introduced or could be introduced; and so that no one can ever say that the Founder father saw it and did nothing to correct it, and have some people can take that and use it authorize it themselves.

Receive, then, meekly and submissively, the warnings and admonitions of your father, beloved children, which could well be the last ones he gives you, given my age and ailments.

1947 This is the first: Hold in the utmost esteem your holy habit, do not remove it without a serious and urgent need, recognized by your Superiors; and even then just for a brief time. God does not allow that you come to abhor what you once yearned for so greatly! Also take into account that the appreciation and esteem the world may have for you is not for your personal qualities, but rather that they are honoring your holy habit in you; and you owe the excellent results of your ventures to the same thing. Many have discovered this too well, by believing that the displays of affection shown them were personal and, seduced by the devil, they left behind the holy habit and then found themselves ignored and even rejected by the laymen they had trusted. Never fall into the temptation of wanting to change, in material or shape, your holy Franciscan habit because it appears rough and poor to you. This is what the Lord values so much, so that in the nuptials he made with St. Veronica Giuliani (Julianis), after trying on all the clothes that he made various Saints wear, He commanded that they put the holy habit upon her. Take into account, beloved children, that by changing the habit you will attract the indignation of the Lord and of your father in Jesus Christ. Never forget the terrible words uttered by the Seraphic Father St. Francis when he hurled the habit that Brother Elias was trying to change to the ground and said: "This is how the relaxed friars of Our Order dress"¹⁸³.

1948 Due to the insults and outrages the Religious Orders were victims of during the first days of the change of regime of this unfortunate Nation, many friars and nuns, including some of our own, had to dress as laypeople as a prudent precautionary measure to avoid insults. But, now that the initial danger has passed, whether from fear or because some prefer to dress as a layperson to feel freer, it is true that many frequently continue to dress that way and that now constitutes an abuse. To cut it off and help the friars avoid the dangers to which secular dress exposes them, the Archbishops ordered the following in their last meeting in October: "It seems necessary and urgent to recall the obligation the secular and regular priests have to wear the open crown and habit of the clergy or the religious order. If they do not comply, the penalties foreseen in the Code will be applied".

Beloved children, you have less excuse than other friars for not wearing the holy habit since, in order to leave the house, the Constitutions already provide for going out in the habit covered with an overcoat.

1949 The Archbishops also call attention to the obligation of the clergy to wear the open crown and although I do not think our Congregation comes up short

¹⁸³ Cf. CASALE, Ubertino da: *L'Albero della Vita*, 3, in *Fonti Francescane* (Padova 1982), n. 2102.

in this regard, nonetheless I have to tell you of the sorrows it causes me to see you leaving your hair long and parted, as the laypeople wear their, a ridiculous thing which is a great injustice to the religious habit. But what displeases me most and I greatly condemn is when you shave off your beards, which characterizes you and makes people respect you in your difficult mission. You well know that you cannot do this without the permission of the Superior, who, using his sound judgment, can authorize it when the circumstances makes it advisable, especially when dealing with very youthful friars or because of some defect that would make having a beard inconvenient or inappropriate. Our Divine Redeemer Jesus had a beard, beloved children, so the majority of the saints, especially the Founders, had them in imitation of Him and also all the Missionaries wore beards to make the savages respect them more. You, then, by your Constitution, must wear a beard, and you would not want to be guilty of an injustice to such saintly examples¹⁸⁴.

1950 I have also been able to appreciate some innovation in religious customs, beloved children, although not in the ceremonial, and I established them in the foundation of the Congregation and I want them to be preserved as all the Orders have their practices which characterize them. Do not listen, let alone believe, whoever you may see who has the spirit of innovation, because truly this is not the spirit of God. You have the path to your sanctification well set in the Rule and Constitutions and the devout practices established; fulfill them faithfully, then, and they will bring you safely straight to the port of salvation.

This is what your father wishes, who blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

225. TO FATHER BIENVENIDO MARÍA OF DOS HERMANAS, CT.
Segorbe, 27 March 1934

1951 Most Reverend Father Bienvenido, Councilor and Secretary General.

Beloved Father: I received your kind letter of 24 March, and I thank God for the good results that my Circular letter has yielded, according to what your Most Reverend indicates to me, and for the other letters that I have received from other houses, although some of them were limited to greetings for the holy day of our Mother without acknowledging the receipt of the circular letters.

The pleasure and satisfaction that these good friars would have from being ordained by me would also be mine; but how is that going to be possible if, for me to go, it could not take place until mid-June, since the wedding of my nephew, which had been scheduled for 2 May, has been postponed until 8 June? Since the Ember Days of Trinity are at the end of May and there will have to be Orders

¹⁸⁴ Cf. 2371.

there, they will probably ask for me there as well, and I don't know how we will be able to arrange this matter. The Most Reverend can communicate with the General Minister and combine things for your greater convenience but I think we will all have to sacrifice our preference and pleasure on this one.

If the journey of General Minister to the Americas must be done quickly and the Most Reverend would have to accompany him, I repeat what I told him directly, and that I would have no desire to go there in that event without being accompanied by your Most Reverends. Let us leave it, then, that the Lord provides what is most advisable and your Most Reverends attend to the good of the Congregation before everything else. In any case, I would limit myself to going to the houses of the Congregations from here. Your Most Reverends have the word on this matter.

To your Most Reverend and all those good friars, your father and servant in Christ sends his blessing.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

226. TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF GALATONE
Segorbe, 4 April 1934

1952 My beloved and unforgettable Father Superior, Master, Professed friars, novices and postulants of our house – novitiate of Galatone, Italy.

Beloved brothers in Christ: I cannot express to you in words how much my spirit enjoys the kind and affectionate greeting for the Easter holy days I just received from Your Reverences and Community.

I also wish them all kinds of spiritual and temporal blessings, and long years of life so that they can bestow great glory upon God, yielding great merits of which the Lord will make me part, using with me his infinite mercy through Your Reverends and Your Charities¹⁸⁵.

It would make me very, very happy to be able to meet all of you, my beloved children, but we will have to leave that for when we reach Heaven. Meanwhile, each and every one of your individually receives the blessing of your father and servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

227. TO FATHER BIENVENIDO MARÍA OF DOS HERMANAS, CT.
Segorbe, 27 March 1934

1953 Most Reverend Father Bienvenido, Councilor and Secretary General.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. 599-606, 1899 above.

Beloved brother in Christ: I confirm to the Most Reverend what I said in our meeting and last letter and also to the most Reverend General Minister about his journey to Colombia and his companion. I worry very much about this matter, because the character of Father Francisco is well known, especially if he has not fully recovered from his grave illness, and I would see it as an intolerable burden for the poor soul have to remain at the head of the Congregation, even more when the absence of the General Minister on such a long trip cannot be as brief as he plans. And if the most Reverend Father Francisco was not in condition to be at the head of the Congregation, who else but your Most Reverend would have to assume this position in the absence of the most Reverend General Minister? Does not Father Jaime appear suitable to them for accompanying the General Minister as secretary on his journey to the Americas, if his health permits?

1954 With respect to my planned trips, I already told you in my previous letter not to worry about them, because this machine of my body is breaking down more every day from being so old, and that makes me afraid of travel and long stays. I would almost prefer to spend a season around the houses in our Congregation close by my residence here. In addition, the wedding of my nephew, who put so much effort into having me bless him, keeps getting moved back for one reason or another and I still do not even know if it will take place on 8 June, when it is scheduled. This coming May, my friend Rosendo Roig is determined to bring me to Ador to confirm his grandchildren, and I think that may serve me as the experience for seeing if I am in good enough condition or not to travel.

There is nothing else in particular that occurs to me to tell you, because I am waiting for a letter from the General Minister, who said he would write me when he received a letter he was expecting from Bogota and had seen Your Reverend.

To the most Reverend Father, your father and servant in Christ blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

228. TO FATHER PEDRO DE LA IGLESIA, CT.

Segorbe, 16 June 1934

1955 Reverend Father Pedro de la Iglesia.

Beloved brother in Christ: Do not think that I have forgotten you and the beloved Brother Joaquín. As your saint's day festivity approaches, I am writing to cordially congratulate in my name and that of the friars of this house, wishing that the Lord fills you with his blessings and graces so that you can see the reward of your works in these lands, with the establishment of our beloved Congregation.

Great festivities are approaching there with the holding of the Eucharistic Congress, which from what I saw is going to turn out to be a very solemn event. I was invited to it, as were the other prelates of Spain, by his Excellency, the

Archbishop of Buenos Aires; and certainly if I had not been so old and suffering from so many ailments it would have been a great opportunity to visit that Region and find out for ourselves first-hand what conditions it offers for our Congregation.

The Lord wants to continue blessing the works of Your Reverends so that our Congregation feels that our *reales* are well spent there.

Your father and servant in Christ blesses you both.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

229. TO SEVERAL CAPUCHIN THIRD ORDER FRIARS
Segorbe, 14 August 1934

1956 Most Reverend Fathers Bienvenido and León, beloved brothers in Christ Fathers Angel and Laureano, and Brother Estanislao.

Since it was impossible to see you at the last minute, I received with the utmost gratitude your cordial farewell card signed on the boat by the five members of the expedition to the Americas. I gave you my blessing and prayers on that day in order that they accompany you for the entire expedition, and even though I knew nothing of your trip, I confidently expect that the Holy Angels must be accompanying you, and the Lord has been providing for everything relating to Your Reverends, the Visitor Fathers.

I imagine you must not be very far from your destination at this point, and I commission you to give a respectful greeting on my behalf for the authorities, especially their Excellencies the Distinguished Nuncio and Archbishop, and a cordial embrace and my blessing to all the members of our order and the children under their custody. I hope by one means or another we will have word of your negotiations in the capital city of Bogota.

From here, it appears that everything continues to follow its normal course; but my health is very poor after the stay in the Holy Cave and Dr. Alfredo¹⁸⁶ has again forbidden me once and for all to go anywhere at a higher elevation than Segorbe.

Pray for your father and servant in Christ, who embraces and blesses all of you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

230. TO FATHER JOSÉ OF CALASANZ, OFM. CAP.

1957 Most Reverend and beloved Father:

¹⁸⁶ Referring to Doctor Alfredo Lorente.

At the first meeting of the Definitors of the new Province of the Precious Blood of Christ, presided over by our honorable Provincial Minister, after giving thanks to the Almighty for such an auspicious event, we also sent to Your Most Reverend Father a vow of warm thanks for the active interest that the re-establishment of our old and beloved Province has always inspired in you.

For our part, even recognizing our insignificance and inability, we cherish the hope that our humble efforts supported by divine assistance and guided by the wise maxims of the General Superiors will give a great increase to this portion of the seraphic vineyard, whose cultivation has been entrusted to us.

This is what we hope, and to this end we raise fervent pleas to Divine Jesus, the Immaculate Virgin and the Blessed Juan of Ribera.

Receive the testimony of our deep gratitude and the disposal of your sincere servants in Jesus Christ.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL, Provincial Minister
 BROTHER FERMÍN OF VELILLA, 1st Definitor
 BROTHER MELCHOR OF BENISSA, 2nd Definitor
 BROTHER FRANCISCO MARÍA OF ORIHUELA, 3rd Definitor
 BROTHER FIDEL OF ALZIRA, 4th Definitor

231. TO A CAPUCHIN FRIAR

1958 Beloved Father Francisco: Accompany the giver of this, the Ordinary of La Ollería, to the home of Salvador, my brother-in-law, and pay him for transporting the loom he has brought which apparently is four pesetas and put it on my account.
 Your Servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL.
 Provincial Minister of the Capuchin Fathers.

232. TO SISTER PATROCINIO, CT.

1959 Reverend Mother Patrocinio:

I judge it advisable to ask permission for the Forty Hours, since if they do not want to do them later, it serves for the display during in the morning and afternoon functions.

Inscriptions for the stamps: Memento of the Triduum held in Montiel (Benaguasil) giving thanks for the approval by His Holiness Pope Leo XXIII, on 25 March 1902, of the Congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family.

BROTHER LUIS.

233. TO FATHER JOSÉ MARÍA OF SEDAVÍ, CT.

1960 Beloved Father: Given the impossibility of going to help Your Charities in these days of many commitments, I am writing these lines to comfort your spirit and those of all those beloved children reminding them with Saint Job: that if we have received the goods at the hand of the Lord, then why not the bad¹⁸⁷; and even more so when these are only bad in name but in truth are great mercies of the Lord.

Take heart, then, that the time of trial and tribulation lasts for a short time but the reward is eternal¹⁸⁸. The only thing that makes me sad is the thought if my sins were the reason why God is afflicting my children; and how I would be so sorry about this I would beg them to help me ask God to punish me for them on my own person, but in this life, not the eternal one.

I will do everything possible to go to that after the days of Carnival. Your Reverence may give the profession to Brother Domingo if he is in danger of dying.

I bless them with all the warmth in my soul as your servant in Christ.

BROTHER LUIS.

234. TO MR. JOAQUÍN ESPINOSA.

1961 Mr. Joaquín Espinosa.

Distinguished Sir: In confirmation of the proposal I made to you of coming to Solsona in the capacity of Secretary or Provisor of that Diocese, I wish you would answer me with your decision at the earliest possible opportunity, because it is urgent for me to resolve this matter.

If your answer is affirmative, would you please indicate the conditions under which you would come, starting from the basis that I would be very pleased if you would live with me in the Palace? You could also request of Rome, for the time being, the dispensation of one year of residence of your cathedral benefit so that during that time both of us could see the advisability of your continuing in the position.

I would appreciate it if you keep this matter secret, whatever your decision might be.

With great pleasure, I repeat to you that I am sincerely your humble servant and chaplain, who blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.
Apostolic Administrator of Solsona.

P.S. You should address your answer to C/ de las Rejas, 5, Valencia.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Job 2:10.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. 2C 191, in works cited, p. 340; LF 18, in works cited, pp. 831-835.

235. TO FATHER BERNARDINO MARÍA OF ALACUÁS, CT.
Segorbe, 7 January 1931

1962 THE BISHOP OF SEGORBE

blesses and cordially congratulates on your saint's day festivity, for himself and in the name of the friars of this house, of Father Bernardino of Alacuás and asks the Lord to grant him many years of life.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

236. TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS
 (Introduction to the Manual of Uses and Customs)

1963 Beloved children:

The Lord is jealous of his glory, the glory he proposed on taking all the beings of creation from nothing, and wanted that in their own way each and every one of them would take part in the hymn of tribute that creation pays him: *The heavens shew forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of his hands* (Psalm 18:2). The heavens disclose the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims itself the work of his hands. But in this harmonious concert only man, created in the image and likeness of God, with the intelligence to know him, the abilities and intentions for using them in his service, and the will to love him, only he brings his voice to sing such a lovely hymn to the Creator.

1964 And the Lord himself wishes that man dedicates himself to continuously singing his praises, an occupation he must have later for all of eternity. For the fulfillment of that, the royal Prophet David says that he praised the Lord seven times a day and interrupted his sleep and rest by rising at midnight: *I rose at midnight to give praise to thee* (Psalm 118:62). But as men, obsessed in their worldly businesses, did not pay attention to what is due to their main obligation in the worship and praise of the Lord, His Divine Majesty arranged that there would continuously be souls in his Church who were totally consecrated to his service and would serve as the norm and stimulus to their brothers in carrying out their main duty. You form part of that number, beloved children, through the mercy of God. To this end, then all the precepts of the Rule and Constitutions of the Congregation are directed; but as they cannot reach down to deal with every particular detail related to the worship and ceremonies, the need arises for a Ceremonial Protocol to guide and provide for all those details.

1965 You have had a manual for that up to the present which rules and governs you; but as experience has made us see the shortcomings in some provisions and others to be unfeasible, the need rises to adapt it to the goals and needs of the Congregation. There is no better time for that than the present, when

the Church has given a new Rule to the Third Order Friars¹⁸⁹ and, as provided in it, our Constitutions have been adapted to the precepts of the new Canon Code. Let us willingly accept then, beloved children, these changes based on the experience of many years, and will certainly contribute to giving greater glory to God and enhance our Congregation.

This is what your Father hopes and expects, who blesses you.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop.

237. TO THE CAPUCHINE TERTIARY SISTERS
(Introduction to the Manual of Uses and Customs)

1966 Beloved children:

When the Lord called with special vocation, and selected in the world some souls to serve him in the religion, he planned on receiving from them the worship veneration and tributes of praises that are due to the grandeur of his Majesty, and which were are obligated to by the countless benefits free hand constantly lavishes upon us. As He created all things for his glory, necessarily he was that his creatures to pay him tributes of praises and especially man, who He established over all other creatures as the King of Creation and a summary of his wonders, only slightly below the angels themselves.

1967 There is scarcely a single page in the Holy Scriptures which does not instill and recall the obligation, for whose fulfillment the royal Prophet says he rose at midnight: *I rose at midnight to give praise to thee*¹⁹⁰, and that seven times a day he paid tribute to the Lord with his blessings and praises: *Seven times a day I have given praise to thee*. In this, then, lies the main end of all the religious Orders and Congregations, guided by the precepts and obligations of their rules and constitutions. But as they cannot reach down to all the details of worship, the need arises for ceremonial protocols which determine and specify their substance and form. See, then, the object that I propose in this Manual, in order that uniformity may reign among you because it is so inspiring and contributes to keeping order, as you must avoid at all times the introduction of arbitrary and capricious practices and customs which can cause disorder and confusion in the Congregation.

May you receive this as a testament of the affection and concerned interest for the good of your souls and reduce yourselves to practicing your obligations with punctual precision is what your Father and servant in Christ wishes.

BROTHER LUIS, Bishop

¹⁸⁹ The Rule was approved on 4 October 1927, through the *Rerum Condicio* Apostolic Constitution: AAS 19 (1927), pp. 361-367.

¹⁹⁰ Psalm 118:62.

ORDERS OF HOLY VISITS TO THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS

INTRODUCTION

From 1890 until 1899, Luis Amigó made visits under canon law at least three times to the “Mother House” of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars located in Torrent (Valencia region) and another three times to the St. Rita Reform School in Madrid, directed from its beginnings in 1890 by his friars.

These visits, which began in 1890 to the house of Torrent and in 1891 for the school in Madrid, were on an annual basis only through the year 1892. From then until 1899, Luis Amigó, “for reasons beyond his control”, could not visit his friars in Madrid¹.

At the conclusion of the six visits under canon law of which there are historical record², the founder of the Capuchin Third Order friars left his children wise directions written in the form of “orders”. These orders relate as much as to the spiritual life of the newly founded Institution as the apostolic effort itself.

The Spiritual Life of the Institution

Since Luis Amigó was conscious that the paramount goal of any visit under canon law is to “encourage the members of the religious order on the path of virtue, make them strong in the regular observance and attend to and secure all their spiritual needs”³, his orders are primarily oriented towards the spiritual realm.

And in this realm what stands out are not only the orders designed to apply the characteristic spirit of the Institution to the different circumstances of the devout life

¹ Cf. 2075; 1777 above.

² Of these six visits, the book is preserved that he in fact took to St. Rita (Madrid). Also collected in it are the orders left by Luis Amigó in the visits under canon law that he made to the “Mother House” of Torrent (Valencia) until 1892 (cf. *Book of Visits Under Canon Law of St. Rita*, in the Archive of the General Curia of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars, Rome. Cf. 2037). The book of visits under canon law that was taken to the convent of Mount Zion, of Torrent (Valencia) was lost in 1936, and therefore we do not know with any certainty if the founder visited his friars in Torrent between 1892 and 1899, even though the context of his writing seem to point to a positive answer (cf. 1777 above).

³ Cf. 1968.

in each community⁴, to their organization and operation⁵ and the education of future generations⁶, but other provisions also stand out which have the much more specific objective of defending the Franciscan character of his male foundation⁷ in the face of the attempts made to separate it from the Franciscans in the beginning⁸.

The Apostolic Effort

If it is true that the specific ministry of the Capuchin Third Order friars must nourish itself in the spirit of devoutness⁹, it is just as true that this spirit is definitively directed towards strengthening the dedication of the friars to their mission¹⁰.

From here Luis Amigó, at the same time he grants his visits under canon law a privileged place in the orders concerning the spiritual life of the Congregation, does not neglect, together with them, others that make a more direct reference to the apostolic life of the Congregation.

Even before the mission of the Amigonian friars became exclusively focused on the re-education of youth¹¹, its founder urges in the visit under canon law that they “instruct them practically the same way as working with the poor prisoners”, who “learn the knowledge of the human heart through experience”¹². When little by little it becomes clearer that the particular mission of the Institution must focus on the “arduous undertaking of the moral uplift of wayward youth diverted from good”¹³, one finds in his orders the foundation of the teaching and re-educational system that the Capuchin Third Order friars have traditionally used¹⁴.

This system, starting from an integral and Christian vision of man, considers moral uplift as the essential foundation for the re-creation of the student¹⁵, at the same time as he discovers in sports, wholesome life and proper nourishment some necessary conditions for that moral uplift¹⁶. In addition, this system proposes for the re-education an individualized process, gradual and progressive¹⁷, which, based on emulation and incentives¹⁸ and brought about through religious education, work,

⁴ Cf. 1969-1975, 1989-1994, 2000, 2002, 2013, 2017-2019, 2038-2042, 2060, 2074 and 2076, among others.

⁵ Cf. 1976, 1983-1987, 1999, 2006, 2010-2012, 2021-2024, 2041, 2056-2058 and 2061-2066, among others.

⁶ Cf. 1992, 2007, 2009, 2025, 2039, 2040, 2042, 2045, 2046, 2063 and 2064.

⁷ Cf. 1974, 1978, 1988, 1995, 2015 and 2100.

⁸ Cf. 127-129, 155-156, 1732, 1744 and 1777 above.

⁹ Cf. 2361.

¹⁰ Cf. 2360.

¹¹ Cf. CUESTA, L.: *The Mission of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars. Evolutionary Process 1889-1902* (Rome, 1977).

¹² Cf. 2047.

¹³ Cf. 2075; 1780 above.

¹⁴ Cf. CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS: *Teaching Manual* (Valencia, 1985), pp. 161-164.

¹⁵ Cf. 2068, 2075 especially.

¹⁶ Cf. 2031, 2034, 2091-2093.

¹⁷ Cf. 2027, 2029, 2049-2054.

¹⁸ Cf. 2049-2054, 2069.

*study and devoutness*¹⁹ leads the student towards self-responsibility. Finally, this system sees as necessary that the educators not only know how to personally join love and tenderness for the fallen youth together with sound preventative judgment, required vigilance, necessary strength and an essential emotional equilibrium²⁰, but they must also form a true educational team, among themselves and always around the Director²¹, which boasts the most absolute “union of views”²².

¹⁹ Cf. 1982, 2028, 2030, 2033, 2055, 2068, 2077 and 2079.

²⁰ Cf. 2026, 2032, 2067, 2070, 2071, 2075, 2086, 2087, 2090 and 2093.

²¹ Cf. 2030, 2035.

²² Cf. 2086.

Orders of the holy visit verified by the Most Reverend Father Brother Luis of Massamagrell, founder of this Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows, in the month of June 1890 in the convent of Mount Zion, Torrent (Valencia)

1968 The good order and harmony of the Religious Institutions, beloved Fathers and Brothers, depends in large part on the zeal, vigilance and pastoral concern of its Superiors, which the Seraphic Father St. Francis was taking into account when he prescribed in his Rules that the Superiors visit their subjects to encourage them on the path of virtue, strengthen them in the regular observance and care for and provide for all their spiritual needs¹.

For this purpose, then, and in fulfillment of this precept, I have made the Holy Visit which we are concluding today, and as the result I leave the following Orders, which I expect will be obeyed and religiously observed by each and every one of you.

1

1969 The Superior will try to secure that the Divine Office is prayed with the greatest possible seriousness, without haste and with the voices in unison, making the correct pause at the asterisk, and as the Capuchin Constitutions say, "without embellishments or falsettos"².

The lessons of the Matins will be read, those of the first Nocturne by the First Acolyte; the second Nocturne by the second acolyte, and the third by the Weekly acolyte. They will try, as ordered and practiced by our seraphic Doctor St. Bonaventure in spite of his great knowledge, to practice what they have to read in public in advance so that, as the Capuchin Constitutions say, they do not harm the divine by disturbing the listeners nor provoke the holy Angels who are present during the divine praises³.

2

1970 All those friars who are not prevented by some exercise of Holy Obedience will try to attend the Conventual Mass that will be sung every day immediately following the mid-morning prayer (Terce). This Mass will be celebrated by the

¹ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 1R 4:2, in *San Francisco de Asís* (BAC, Madrid, 1978), p. 94; 2R 10:1, in works cited, p. 115.

² Cf. CAPUCHINS: *Constitutions of 1876*, 3.3.

³ Cf. CAPUCHINS: *Constitutions of 1876*, 3.7.

Father who would be the Weekly priest, and all the Fathers would take turns having that responsibility depending on the week.

The Conventual Mass will be sung on Sundays and holy days, whenever possible, and the Holy Eucharist will also be said at a later hour than on work days, but always at the same determined hour. In the Sunday Conventual Mass, the *Asperges* will be sung. A Mass will be said every day while the Prayer is done in the Choir, so that whoever cannot attend the Conventual Mass due to their occupations can hear it and, especially on Sundays try to make sure that the Masses are said at set hours.

3

1971 The Fathers will not be able to practice any Mass by themselves without permission of the local Prelate. Even less should they dare to celebrate it for other people, so that they can obtain something with the stipend, because that would act against holy poverty. Approach the Prelates for all your needs, who will provide for them with full charity and sound judgment.

We leave to the charity of the local Prelate whether to grant one or two masses each month, depending on the needs of the house, which the Fathers can practice on their own initiative or for the needs of the Congregation, but will not receive a stipend of any kind.

4

1972 In order that the friars can know beforehand what days there is going to be Communion and can better prepare for it, a message board will be placed in the Choir, on which the Superior will indicate on Sunday the days of Communion during the coming week; the friars will always receive communion in the Mass that will be said during the meditation, so that they have more time later for performing their ministries and services.

5

1973 In the same way, the Superiors will try to announce beforehand any activities or exercises apart from the regular ones that would be held in the church, as well as the hour, manner and form of doing them, and the position or responsibilities the friars must perform in them so that everything is done in an orderly way and results in the edification of the faithful.

6

1974 In accordance with the Papal Decrees regarding the Regular clergy, one verse of the Holy Scripture of the New Testaments will be read in the Dining Hall

during all meals, more specifically, of the Holy Gospel during the midday meal and from the other books at night, and this reading will be done from the Spanish (Castilian) version, so that all the Brothers may understand it.

Try to include that among the regular readings in the Dining Hall will be one of the Works of the Order to inspire the seraphic Spirit in the friars, and give preference to the lives of Father St. Francis and the other Saints of the Order⁴. As an author dealing with the mystical, for the instruction of the friars, Father Rodríguez shall be read frequently⁵.

7

1975 When you listen to the *mea culpa* in the days prescribed by the Constitutions⁶, do not make an exception for the Priests in order not to deprive them of the merit that you acquire in this exercise of humility in which, as the devil himself once declared, he loses everything he could have won with the friars.

The form of this exercise will be by the friars confessing themselves, and not confessing the others, because of the problems this may present if one is not very mortified and deeply rooted in humility. Nevertheless, the Superior will not limit himself to correcting or reprimanding the friar of the faults he confesses, but also all the faults he may have observed in him, as they are public.

The Novices should not be present at the exercise of the *mea culpa* by the professed friars, and must enter later and they say their sins in front of the Community.

8

1976 With the Congregation now having Professed friars, all the prescriptions the Constitutions make with respect to the Novitiate in Chapter 5⁷ will be put into practice.

Similarly, you will try to keep the Postulants separated from the Novices and Professed friars, with whom they will not get together apart from acts of the Community, and a Professed friar will be assigned for instructing, guiding and governing them⁸.

⁴ Cf. 129, note 89 above. Cf. 1978, 2367 also.

⁵ Referring to the book *Exercise of Christian Perfection and Virtues*.

⁶ Cf. 2013, 2424.

⁷ Cf. 2376-2378.

⁸ Cf/ CONCILIO VATICANO I: *Schemata constitutionum de regularibus*, n. 6, Chapter I., in *Enchiridion de statibus perfectionis*, n. 220. Cf. 2377-2378.

9

1977 If the Novices, in accordance with the Constitutions⁹, cannot be put in charge of any office, this does not prevent that they can and even should take part in the various jobs of the House, under the authority and guidance of the Professed friar who would be responsible for the Office, who must make the Teacher of Novices Father aware of the behavior and ability they display.

10

1978 Try to secure that the friars are thoroughly instilled with the Seraphic Spirit, the only one which can transform present-day society, as Our Holy Father Leo XIII says¹⁰. It is the spirit which we, with our special vocation, have been called to imitate¹¹. To this end, try to ensure their reading are seraphic, their devotions are seraphic, the Saints of their devotion who they propose to imitate are seraphic, and their love of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, our Mother, the most fragrant rose of the Seraphic Garden, is also seraphic.

11

1979 With the aim of avoiding useless, superfluous conversations, which serve no purpose other than to disrupt the mood of the friar and prevent him from fulfilling his duties and the fervor of his prayers, the Superior shall try to excuse them as much as they can from making frequent visits and calls to the front desk; it would be prudent to send them accompanied by another friar.

12

1980 I recommend as highly effective the fulfillment of the Constitutions with regard to the regular and evangelical silence, as it is the guardian of the other virtues; that the friars do not enter into the cell of another without need and permission of the Prelate¹²; of religious modesty, seriousness and discretion they must display everywhere at all times; to not give or take anything without permission of the Prelate, and whatever touches on the time indicated in the Constitutions for examination of conscience¹³.

⁹ Cf. 2376.

¹⁰ Cf. LEO XIII: *Ausplicatu Concessum*: ASS 15 (1882), pp. 145-153. Cf. 1010, 1269 above; 2640.

¹¹ Cf. 1832, 1974 above; 2367.

¹² Cf. 2425-2426.

¹³ Cf. 2420.

13

1981 Avoid with the greatest possible prudence and delicacy the entrance of laymen in the Sacristy and other interior rooms of the House; and when they are permitted to visit, have them accompanied by a friar. Do not agree to let the children and elderly people from Charity wander about the Convent, and with the aim of having them respect the friars more, do not have dealings with them beyond the ones entrusted to your guidance.

14

1982 Try to instill in the children a great devotion to the Holy Virgin, the secret for making great progress in virtue. For that purpose, you will form them into a Marian Association, bestowing on them the blue Scapular that is so enriched with graces.

St. Anthony of Padua will be designated as the Patron Saint of the children in this house, as he is in all the other Houses of the Congregation.

15

1983 Whoever may be admitted into the Congregation will have to be warned they must be completely neutral and accept the will of the Superiors with respect to the status of the Clergyman or Assistant whom they want to place them with for their instruction¹⁴; no matter how many studies they may have and even if they were very advanced in the Ecclesiastic Career. The designation of status and studies to which the youths will have to dedicate themselves belongs to the older Superiors, and they will do so after the Profession; and even after this designation is made, if the friar is discovered to have little capacity or ability for that which obedience has destined him, or if he could be more useful to the Congregation in another capacity, the aforementioned Superiors can arrange things according to what they judge is most advisable in the Lord, and the friar must be completely neutral and accept it as the will of God.

16

1984 The new foundation that will shortly take place in Madrid¹⁵ will, of course, be set aside as a Seminary for those studying for the degree courses for Teaching and other special courses¹⁶.

¹⁴ Cf. 2362.

¹⁵ Cf. 133 above.

¹⁶ Cf. 2367.

17

1985 As the fact that the Civil Guard and friars inhabit the same building presents great problems even though they are completely separated, the Superior will try by all possible means to ensure compliance with the Deed of the contract, which gives possession of the entire building to the friars¹⁷.

18

1986 To establish some distinction between the Professed friars and the Novices of our Congregation, we order that in the future the Friars are not to use the Shield of Our Lady of Sorrows, characteristic of the Institution, until after they have professed.

19

1987 We want that the abuse of friars walking about without the Hood and Scapular distinct to the Habit of our Institution to never be introduced; as the Constitutions only tolerate the friar removing it to sleep¹⁸; if any other way is tolerated, there would be no visible difference between them and the Donor Brothers.

20

1988 After the night prayers (complines), both those who recite the Divine Service and the Parvo of Our Lady will say the commemoration of the Immaculate Virgin which begins "*Unica esta columba mea*" (Only one is my dove), the one by Father St. Francis which begins "*Coelorum candor splenduit*" (Brightness shone in Heaven), and the Response of St. Anthony of Padua, "*Si quaeris miracula*" (If thou seekest miracles). On the days designated in the Breviaries of the Order, which are Monday, Wednesday and Friday, they will say the suffrages for our benefactors. The litanies of the Saints that are prayed in the morning as preparation for the Meditation will be said in the form granted to our Order by Apostolic Pardon.

Convent of Mount Zion, Torrent, on 29 June of the year of our Lord 1890.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL
(Seal)

¹⁷ At the start of their stay in Torrent, the Capuchin Third Order friars shared the building of the old Alcantarine convent with the Civil Guard. (cf. ALBORAYA, Father Domingo María of: *Our House in Torrent*, in *Adolescens Surge* 3 [1933], pp. 95-100). Cf. 119 above.

¹⁸ Cf. 237o.

Orders of the holy visit verified by the Most Reverend Father Brother Luis of Massamagrell, founder of this Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows, in the month of May in the convent of Mount Zion, Torrent (Valencia)

1989 Having concluded the Holy Visit in this House of Mount Zion of Torrent, the Mother House of our Institution, and made my myself aware of the state and needs of this House, I was able to appreciate and admire once again, Venerable Fathers and Brothers, your zeal in securing the glory of God, working with the utmost interest on your sanctification and the greater glory and prosperity of this Institution¹⁹, which seems to be very much to your liking, judging by the protection, refuge and providence it dispenses.

In order that this spirit does not grow lukewarm and diminish in you, but on the contrary, goes on increasing each day, in your own good and for that of the Congregation, and in fulfillment of our duty requiring us to provide solutions for all the faults that over time could have been introduced in the observance of the Rules and Constitutions, and prescribing everything advisable for the correct system and moral and material government of the Community, we come to order and establish the following:

1

1990 As the passion and death of the Lord is the regular subject of meditation the Saints have used, especially our Patriarch, who came to lose his sight from the continuous tears he shed in contemplating it²⁰, and not being able, on the other hand, to think of a more suitable way to ignite in us as Seraphs in the divine love, inasmuch as in his holy passion and death is where he gives us the greatest and easiest proofs of his burning love for us: We order that, following the practice of our Capuchin Order, the full time of the morning meditation shall be devoted to the passion of the Lord. Nevertheless, during the eight days of the great holy days of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the mediation shall be done about the mystery of time.

2

1991 During prayer, the friars must not focus their attention on the Mass²¹, nor perform any other act of devotion that will distract them from the inward

¹⁹ Cf. LP 108a, in works cited, p. 676; MP 65, in works cited, p. 741.

²⁰ Cf. 2C 11, in works cited, p. 236; LM 1:5, in works cited, p. 386; Lm 1:4, in works cited, p. 502; TC 14, in works cited, p. 540.

²¹ The mass that is celebrated during the meditation was aimed at whoever was prevented from attending the *conventual mass* (cf. 1970 above; 1996, 1999).

meditation so necessary for this practice. For this purpose, try to secure that the curtains of the Choir are closed during the mediation.

3

1992 As the year of the Novitiate is intended for the novice to train his spirit and acquire the virtues characteristic of his status²², and there is no more appropriate means for that than the practice of prayer, the mother which bears and raises all virtue, we make the Teacher of Novices Father responsible for trying to keep as much as possible to the provisions of the Constitutions regarding the amount of prayer time the novices must have, and that of the Community²³ as well.

4

1993 Try to secure that the Divine Office and the Parvo of Our Lady is always prayed as a Community, even though only a few could attend on some occasions due to the occupations of Obedience. And it must be done using semitones, with a fairly high intonation, in accordance with the solemnity of the day.

Because to sing the divine praises is a totally angelic service, the Superior will diligently try to secure that this tribute is paid to the Lord with the greatest devotion, attention, seriousness and uniformity of voices²⁴.

5

1994 Always try to follow the time schedule for the Divine Service and other acts of the Community with the greatest possible precision to avoid confusion and wasting time.

Similarly, avoid multiplying the exercises of devotion when doing so would alter the order of the Community or take away from the time the friars need for their ministries.

In order that the exercises during the month of St. Joseph, Mary, the Sacred Heart and Our Patriarch St. Francis and other can be practiced without taking too much time, so necessary for taking care of the multiple material occupations of the Community, they may be done during the Conventual Mass, except on the holy days, when they could be done in the afternoon to give them even more solemnity.

6

1995 Having been granted the privilege by the Sovereign Pontiffs allowing all the priests to celebrate the Mass of the Immaculate Conception on Saturdays, our

²² Cf. 2376.

²³ Cf. 2419.

²⁴ Cf. 1969 above.

Order urges every Father in our Community to make use of it, in honor of our Most Pure Mother and heavenly Patron Saint. We warn, however, that the Conventual Mass must be the Service of the Day, and cannot be missed.

7

1996 To better serve the faithful and avoid wasting time, the Community shall try to secure that the Conventual Mass and Prime are always celebrated at their proper times, that is, the prime immediately after concluding the reading of the Meditation verse, and the Conventual immediately after the hours; in this way the Mass begins when the Choir finishes the prayer of the Office; without saying the final prayer nor the "*Sacrosanctae*".

8

1997 In ringing the bells for the Masses, try to secure that there is very little time between each one in order not to upset the faithful; and the Fathers should be punctual in leaving the altar after the third one is over.

Similarly, so that the Priests know beforehand when they have to ring them and avoid confusion, there will be a message board in the Sacristy, on which the Superior will indicate the time for each priest.

9

1998 I insist on making the friars responsible for attending the Conventual Mass, in which they will receive communion on the designated days, but at the beginning of the Mass so that they can give thanks during the Mass.

10

1999 The Cooks, Nurses and Doormen will always hear the first Mass and receive communion at the beginning of the designated days. In order that the doormen are not interrupted during this time, another person will be responsible for the keys until the Mass is over.

11

2000 With the aim that all the friars can receive communication at the indicated time, they will confess the day before the Communion days during the afternoon prayers, and any friars who were left over will confess at night after the Indulgence.

12

2001 The Fathers shall try to observe the Rubrics that foresee not using the stole apart from the administration of the Sacraments; nor use the rochet to preach, as this is our Choral Habit. Similarly, they must not remove the Scapular in order to re-dress themselves with the holy ornaments.

13

2002 The ten days of Spiritual Exercises that the Religious Communities must do every year in accordance with Papal Regulations, will done here in two groups, so that the occupations of the House are not left unattended and the participants will be free of any tasks, and thereby better able to approach the Lord in prayer without other concerns²⁵. The first group will do their exercises in the ten days prior to the holy day of Our Lady of Sorrows in September, and the second group in the ten days prior to the festival of Our Seraphic Father St. Francis.

14

2003 As it is not respectable for the Holy Oils to be kept in the closets of the Sacristy, we order that a decent place be made for them in the wall alongside the Gospel in the Presbytery.

15

2004 I insist on the observance of the provisions in the Constitutions for the year of the Novitiate; particularly the separation of Novices and professed friars outside of work and acts of the Community; of not talking to them any more than is absolutely necessary, and that the Novitiate be locked²⁶.

16

2005 Always to the degree that it is possible, without ignoring the laws of charity and good manners, avoid admitting lay guests for overnight stays in the House. And when operators from outside the House might be there, make an agreement for them to arrange for their own food and rooms.

Similarly, it is advisable that the hostel, to the degree that it is possible, should be set apart from the Community so that the guests do not find out about our

²⁵ Cf. 2080, 2421.

²⁶ Cf. 2377.

things, and apart from the host, the others friars should speak very little with them and not go to visit them without permission of the Prelate.

17

2006 In order that the votes prescribed in the Constitutions for the Profession can take place²⁷, I dispense and grant that until such time as there are professed friars for three years, to whom the right to vote for the novice belongs, those friars who still have not completed that time period can also vote.

18

2007 The friars who are dedicated to their studies must put as much care and attention as possible into them, so that afterwards they can excel and be useful to the Congregation. And in order that they have enough time to study, the Superior shall try to avoid, whenever possible, putting them in positions that take up too much of their time or send them outside the House to ask for alms. Nevertheless, inside the House the Superior will have to assign them some jobs compatible with their studies so they can become accustomed to working at the same time, and the students, for their part, shall try to be so subject to obedience that they put themselves willingly in his hands²⁸.

19

2008 Try to organize the school for children as best you can, and we recommend that the Director in charge of it take a great interest. A night class should be established for the children involved in services²⁹.

20

2009 In the same way, the utmost care shall be placed in the instruction of the Coadjutor Brothers, and a night class will be established to that end. Professed friars, Novices and Postulants will all attend that together, although with the required separation and inspection by the Teacher of Novices or his representative³⁰.

The students will be in the charge of the classes for both the children and the friars.

²⁷ Cf. 2380.

²⁸ Cf. 2025, 2032, 2045, 2063 and 2064.

²⁹ Cf. 1840 above: 2034, 2036.

³⁰ The education of the Assistant Brothers was always an active concern of Father Luis Amigó (cf. 2046, 2367).

21

2010 In order that the Brother Cooks do not have the extra trouble caused by having to serve the midday meal to the Community, children, the sick and guests at the same time, and in order that the Community does not have to delay this meal any more than necessary, the Community and the sick will eat first at 11.30h and the Children and Guests at 12.00 noon.

22

2011 Taking into account that the responsibility of the kitchen is substantial, both for the excessive workload and the fire always having to be lit will make most of the people working there sick, I commission the local Superior to try to form two pairs of cooks who can alternate weekly. In the week they are not working in the kitchen, they are to be employed in asking for alms and other positions that can be beneficial to their health.

23

2012 Try to put the Library in order and make a Catalogue of its contents. The door shall always be locked, and when a friar needs some book, he will ask for the key from the designated librarians who, if the friar would have to take the book from the Library, will note the work and volumes that he is taking, the date and the name of the friar.

24

2013 Friars are not to be excused from the practice of the *mea culpa* on the designated days easily, in order not to deprive them of the merit they acquire in this act of humility and also for also being one of the main means of keeping regular discipline in effect³¹.

25

2014 I very much recommend cleanliness to the friars, not only of themselves but also in the offices commended to their care, because they must take into account that this is one thing lay people focus on and find instructive in their visit to a Religious Establishment. In addition, they are not in conflict with neatness and virtue.

Through hygiene and cleanliness, the clothing used by the friars will not have to be changed and their bedclothes even less.

³¹ Cf. 1975 above; 2424.

2015 I order the friars themselves to have and profess a great love for holy poverty, the spouse given to Our Patriarch St. Francis and our beloved Mother³², and in this way take great care in the preserving the things that are in your possession; do not waste anything and become accustomed to the hardship and need that poverty brings with it, so that I cannot say about them what St. Bernardino said of the false poor, namely: "They want to be poor in such a way where they do not lack for anything"³³.

2016 I recommend and ask the Superior to do all the possible procedures to obtain the necessary authorization to be able to bury the friars in the old pantheon of the Community, and arrange it for that purpose. If that is impossible, he will ask the Town Council to cede a general cemetery plot for building some underground graves, so that the remains of the members of the Order are not confused with those of laymen.

Every measure we have taken for your needs, Venerable Fathers and Brothers, we judge in the Lord must be ordered for the good governing and system of this, our beloved Congregation. We hope that they will be religiously fulfilled and faithfully observed by you, whose meekness and obedience are evident to me.

With this confidence and in gratitude for and guarantee of my paternal affection, I bless you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Given in Torrent in this Convent of Mount Zion on 17 May of the year of our Lord 1891.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL
(Seal)

DECREE ON THE CELEBRATION OF THE HOLY DAY OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS

Being unable to celebrate the holy days of Our Lady of Sorrows, the Protector of the Institution, over an eight-day period, as it rightfully should be because the Easter Week prevents it, I now designate the day of Our Lady of Sorrow perpetually to be in the month of September, so that the Congregation may celebrate the holy days of its heavenly Patron Saint over an eight-day period.

³² Cf. 2C 55, 72, 82, in works cited, pp. 263, 273, 278; LM 7:1, in works cited, p. 420; Lm 3:5, in works cited, p. 510. Cf. 1283, 1832 above; 2100, 2349, 2433.

³³ Cf. ST. BERNARDINO: *Advent Sermon* 4:5; PL 183:49. Cf. 2100.

In spite of this, the day of her Sorrows must be celebrated with the greatest solemnity, due to the fact that the establishment of the Congregation happened on that day.

We hereby agree to, order and command this, having seen and heard the opinions of the Most Reverend Commissioner and Provincial Discreet Fathers who sign this decree with me.

Given in Torrent in this Convent of Mount Zion on 17 May of the year of our Lord 1891.

Signed: Brother Luis of Massamagrell; Brother José María of Sedaví, Provincial Commissioner; Brother Francisco María of Sueras, Provincial Discreet.

Orders of the holy visit verified by the Most Reverend Father Brother Luis of Massamagrell, founder of this Congregation, in the month of June of the present year 1891

2017 Having concluded the Holy Visit, beloved Fathers and Brothers, in the Seminary House of Our Institution, although thanks to God Our Lord, nothing worthy of correction or amendment was found there, but still for your greater guidance and government, and your spiritual progress, I decided to give you the following Orders that, after mature reflection and asking the Lord for his enlightenment, I believed were advisable:

1

2018 I order the friars to show strict punctuality and observance in acts of the Community and precision in following the time schedule set forth in this Visit, because the House will then shine with the harmonious order that gives the name of Regular Orders to these Religious Institutions, because everything is ordered and measured by the Rule in them. To this end, be very diligent in attending the acts of the Community at the first sound of the bell, if you are not legitimately prevented from doing so, and at the same time the Community may not delay its Exercises for anything or anyone. The Superiors shall impose a penance on those found negligent in this regard.

2

2019 The days of the Saints of the Order on which, in accordance with the Constitutions, the friars must receive communion are all those celebrated with a double of second class, of any one of the three Orders³⁴.

3

2020 Try to obtain as soon as possible a decent vessel for the Holy Oils to be kept in the Chapel, in a place made for them alongside the Gospel.

4

2021 When a friar eats with the children, it presents many major inconveniences that are easily understandable and therefore it is advisable not to

³⁴ Cf. 2422.

introduce this custom into Our Congregation. And if in some particular case, which must be very rare, the local Superior would judge it good to authorize this, bear in mind that the friar, both for his age as well as his excessive intellectual and physical work, needs more food than the children, and thus make him eat his meal apart from the children, because no instructive or scandalous situation would come from this arrangement.

5

2022 In order that in those times when the friars can have three meals, according to the Rule, whoever truly needs lunch may not abstain from it, for fear of making themselves peculiar; the Superior shall be able to, the economic condition of the House permitting, grant them to everyone without distinction.

6

2023 The friars cannot and should not eat the same as the pupils. Their food shall be prepared separately, and then increase the number of the pupils, and not employ them nor permit their entry in the kitchen of the Community.

7

2024 I recommend to the Brother cooks to try to obtain the greatest neatness and cleanliness in the soup for the Poor; and the same goes for the other Friars, if by the love of God anything is left on the plate for them, they must bear in mind that the poor are our brothers and the most vivid portraits of Christ Our Lord, whom we feed in them³⁵.

8

2025 The friars designated for studies must be diligent in using the time they have available for it, guarding in their conscience against the neglect of such important and significant activities for the glory of God and the good of the Institution. And the Superiors shall try to be very watchful over this point³⁶.

9

2026 In order that the children look with due veneration and respect on the friars so that they can have more influence over them, the friars must always maintain and govern themselves prudently, so that the children do not come to

³⁵ Cf. 1C 76, in works cited, p. 188; 2C 85, in works cited, p. 280; LM 8:5, in works cited, p. 430.

³⁶ Cf. 2007 above; 2032, 2063, 2064.

ignore them either by showing too much openness and familiarity or by making themselves repugnant through excessive seriousness. To that end, whoever was not commended by Obedience to the care and direction of the children will have as little to do with them as possible.

10

2027 As soon as the Reform School is inaugurated, a statistical study will be opened of the children in need of correction who enter it, recording their name and surnames; the names of the parents; the age and profession of the child, how he is directed to the school, his address, the date of his entry and departure, and also leaving a blank page for any advisable observations. In the same manners, although private and solely for the use and government of the Superiors, as a precaution against the law approved by His Majesty the King on 4 January 1883, they will take another registry or Statistical Study of the children belonging to the school of paternal correction.

11

2028 As indifference and skepticism are spreading and increasing every day, it is not strange now, unfortunately, to find fathers who are so heartless they do not baptize their children, and some could be from unknown parents, it shall be advisable that through the relatives of the child, or privately when more appropriate, the certificates of Baptism and Confirmation be requested so that, since they would not have received any of these Sacraments, they could administer them as soon as possible.

12

2029 Similarly, so that the Superiors know the prior history and qualities of the youths confided to the care and correction of the Congregation, for governing as well as informing them when advisable, a private Register will be made, recording all the prior history they have been able to find out about them as well as their abilities, temperament and character, and their grades for conduct concerning devoutness, study and work they would have earned each month³⁷.

13

2030 The Directors and those in charge of the children, as well as Professors and other officials of the Houses, must make an exact mark of the behavior of the

³⁷ This intuition of Father Luis will be developed later, within the teaching method of the Capuchin Third Order friars, in the file of teacher monitoring of the pupil (cf. CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS: *Constitutions 1910*, n. 233; *Teaching Manual* [Valencia, 1985], p. 106).

children in their custody, and make the local Superior aware of them at the end of the week.

For the classification of marks, the conventional signs shall be used: a, e, i, o, u. A means very good; e, good; o, bad; u, very bad, and the I, average. In order to serve as incentive to the children, and at the same time a sanction for those who have not been well-behaved, the marks they received related to devoutness, study and work will be displayed in public each month.

14

2031 I recommend the utmost tidiness and cleanliness, both personally and in the Halls, Offices and other rooms of the house, because this is not at odds with virtue; on the contrary, it serves as an adornment of it and become one which the laymen praise most in an Establishment dedicated to charity, and they are more instructed by it.

15

2032 There must be at least two directors and persons responsible for the children of the House in each section, and more when a great increase in their number would require it. In this way, the children will be watched over better and leave the Directors freer to attend to activities of the Community by alternating and also have more time for study.

16

2033 As ignorance is the cause of the spiritual ruin and damnation of the majority of men, I earnestly order the friars to put be very attentive and thorough in teaching the youths commended to their care in reading, writing and arithmetic. And in order that those who are employed in the workshops or farming during the days do not lack this instruction, a separate class for workers will be established.

17

2034 It is advisable to continue the work of propaganda begun with the children of the town, both for the good it yields to those poor creatures lacking in religious instruction and because it makes the town more sympathetic towards the mission of the friars³⁸ and wins over the wills of even the most idle. On the other hand, as it is neither possible or advisable to bring together these children with the pupils who will shortly begin to be admitted to the Reform or Paternal Correction

³⁸ Cf. 1840 above.

School, we ask the greater and local superiors to pursue the already initiated project of buying a location suitable for that purpose, separated by a wall from the building of the Reform School, although connected by a service door for the friars. The property should have characteristics that allow a ball game to be set up there and a large shed for the children to relax in, as well as night schools to the degree that is possible.

18

2035 The Directors and those responsible for the children, from inside or outside the house, may never act as absolute and independent authorities without consulting the local Superior who, in turn, should try to give the Directors the greatest possible freedom of action, but nonetheless keep an eye on them to cut off abuses. To that end, every change, revision or new method the Directors judge necessary to introduce for the education and moral uplift³⁹ of the children must have the approval and blessing of the local Superior, and even of other higher Superiors when the situation requires it.

19

2036 In order that the friars can have more time to take care of their occupations and so there is more order in everything, set hours for the entry of the children from town shall be designated, and a friar chosen for that purpose by the local Superior will take care of it, without prejudice to the others helping him when ordered to do so, especially if the night school is established for them.

20

2037 It is our intention and will that the Regulations of the Holy Visit, both those given in the Mother Houser and this house, are looked upon and taken as laws dictated for the Congregation, with the exception of the ones which may be advisable or concern only the House where they given. The Superiors, then, will be sure to send an exact copy of these Regulations so they may be entered in the Annals Book, noting in the margin the House in which and for which they were given.

Venerable Fathers and Brothers, I hope and trust in your zeal for the good of the Congregation and your well-known meekness and obedience to the Superiors, that these Orders will be well-received and faithfully observed by you. As a guarantee of

³⁹ Education and moral uplift appears in the teaching philosophy of Father Luis Amigó as the most perfect synthesis of the ultimate objective of the mission entrusted to his foundations (cf. 83, 98, 100, 164, and 1780 above; 2068, 2075).

paternal affection, I bless you abundantly in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Given in Carabanchel Bajo (Madrid) on 11 June of the year of our Lord 1891.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL
(Seal)

Orders of the holy visit verified by the Most Reverend Father Brother Luis of Massamagrell in the month of May of 1892

2038 Having taken the Holy Visit in this Mother House in fulfillment of my duty, Venerable Fathers and Brothers, I have not found anything worthy of reprimand, but instead many things to praise you for and admire the good plans and wishes that inspire you to work in your sanctification and the moral and material prosperity of our Institution. Still, in order to stimulate your efforts more and give you some rules and regulations to that end, we come to order and stipulate the following:

1

2039 Since the Postulant stage is a time of testing and preparation for the Novitiate, the postulants should practice during this period all the exercises the Community has and practices, especially in prayer. Therefore, to the degree it is possible, the Superiors should arrange it so the Postulants are not busy at those hours in jobs that could be done at other times, and establish a Regulation to rule and govern them.

2

2040 Even though the Teacher friar is in charge of Postulants during the recreational activities, walks and other activities when they are together as a group, nevertheless it will be advisable, when that Teacher is not a priest, that a Father should preside over their meetings some time during the week and make an address to them. For many reasons it would be preferable that the Father be the Teacher of Novices or his assistant.

3

2041 Under no circumstances shall the Postulants work in the field, let alone the friars, even though the jobs pay very well for outside people and however many benefactors there may be; because this does not conform to our Institution, nor religious decorum and dignity, and would diminish the respect with which the laymen should look at the friars, and even reduce their very vocation.

4

2042 I recommend that the Teacher of Novices and his assistant take an attentive concern in educating the Novices according to the characteristic spirit

of the Institution; because the spiritual and temporal good and prosperity of the Institution depends on it.

Make them become accustomed to denying themselves and always watch over them by presiding over all their activities, especially the recreational activities, since not doing so could lead to a thousand problems.

Similarly, I recommend that they do their voting in the manner and time prescribed in the Constitutions⁴⁰.

5

2043 As there are now enough professed friars in the Congregation, of course the Congregation will comply with what the Constitutions prescribes, based on the Papal Decrees, regarding not sending any Novice outside the Mother House to their family⁴¹.

6

2044 As it is not acceptable or advisable for any friar to take off the Holy Habit frequently without serious need, I recommend trying to secure a servant as soon as possible to be in charge of going with the carriage of the House whenever necessary.

7

2045 I give the Superiors the great responsibility of being very attentive in seeing that the Professed friars fulfill their responsibility properly, conducting their classes regularly, and we want them to be punished if they are negligent in that task.

With respect to the Students, I insist on the provisions in Regulation 18 from last year's Visit⁴².

8

2046 To Regulation 20 of last year's Visit, concerning the education of the Assistant Brothers, I should add to try to work particularly hard with them on Christian doctrine and proper Religious etiquette and behavior⁴³.

⁴⁰ Cf. 2379, 2380, 2383.

⁴¹ Cf. 2376.

⁴² Cf. 2007 above. Cf. also 2025, 2032 above; 2063, 2064.

⁴³ Cf. 2009 above.

9

2047 In order that the friars are properly instructed in the way of working with the poor prisoners, the most unfortunate of beings, and learn the science of the human heart through experience, as this knowledge not only has to be useful but even necessary to them when Providence places them before the Prisons; to take advantage of having a prison in this town, it is our will and desire that two or more friars should go there every day, alternating weekly, to instruct and console the inmates and even take care of their needs as much as possible by asking, if necessary, for alms for that purpose, to capture their wills and win them over more easily to God. It will give our Institution a good reputation so it will begin to partly fulfill one of the main purposes the Divine Providence assigned to it⁴⁴, and later the prisoners themselves will be eulogizing the friars in the prisons and creating an atmosphere to make them loved and wanted by those unhappy souls.

10

2048 Since there are now several Priests in this House, they of course may establish the Moral Conferences at the times prescribed by the Papal Decrees, and do not stop reading a case of conscience every day in the dining hall.

11

2049 Besides the very nature of the human heart, the most beautiful way for inspiring the children, both in the practice of virtue and applying themselves to their studies or work, is to awaken a sense of emulation⁴⁵ among them; it appears very much the case to us that you should try to stimulate this among the children of the House through some kind of emblems and prizes to serve as the visible sign of their behavior and application.

To that end, looking at moral behavior, they shall be classified in the orders to be named Neophytes (Catechumen), Diligents, and Worshippers. The first, the Neophytes, will be those children who still preserve their old habits or are indomitable, rebellious or from a bad origin. The Diligents shall be the children who are taking advantage of reforming their habits and you know they have a good desire to achieve their perfection. And finally, the name of Worshippers will designate those children whose exemplary conduct can serve as a model for the others⁴⁶.

⁴⁴ Cf. 100 above; 2360.

⁴⁵ Cf. 2030 above; 2051, 2053, 2054, 2069 and 2077.

⁴⁶ This division of educational periods mark a first formulation of the *progressive and graduated* approach which has distinguished the teaching method of the Capuchin Tertiary friars from the beginning (CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS: *Constitutions, 1910*, n. 228; *Constitutions 1961*, n. 335; *Teaching Manual* [Valencia, 1985], pp. 85-96).

12

2050 Each of these orders will wear an emblem on the chest, on the side of the heart: for the Neophytes, a small cross without crucifix pinned in a purple bow, a small crucifix with a blue bow for the Diligents and the Worshippers shall have a small effigy of the Sacrament with a red bow. The children will not take off their insignias unless they are leaving the House.

13

2051 The classifying of children in the different orders shall not depend on their ages, but rather on their moral qualities, because not only will the different orders not necessarily be grouped in the same class, workshop, etc., this will awaken an even greater sense of emulation instead, the goal we aspire to with this classification.

14

2052 The grace of passing from one order to another will be granted by the local Superior, after listening to the opinions of the Directors or those responsible for the child in the school, workshop, etc. The Superior will try to give this act some kind of solemn ceremony and try to hold it on days with major festivities to further interest the children.

15

2053 When any child from the Diligents or Worshippers orders commit some serious fault or his behavior begins to decline and is growing worse, as a means for correcting him and attempt to have him change his ways, the emblem of the order he belongs to will be taken from him and replaced with one from another lower order by the local Superior.

16

2054 As emulation stimulates and encourages children, and ordinarily is beneficial when applied to their studies, the most suitable means of emulation should be selected from what ingenuity and experience dictates, but nevertheless trying, in this and everything else, for uniformity in all our Houses.

We want the friars to make use of this method to awaken emulation in the children, because experience will teach them that they will get more from the children than with any kind of punishment.

17

2055 To promote devoutness among the children, try to establish as soon as possible a Marian Association, which was prescribed in the Visit made in June of 1890⁴⁷. And as the same Regulation assigned St. Anthony of Padua to the children as their Patron Saint, it shall be named the Association of the Immaculate Conception and St. Anthony.

Study, then, and write a Regulation by which that association must be governed, and send it to us for our approval and it shall be entered into the Annals Book. I foresee that to further encourage the children to devoutness and virtue, you establish in the regulation that no child can occupy any position in it who is not part of the Worshippers Order.

18

2056 Having now established on this Visit under canon law the Provincial Discreet council, who together with the Commissioner Father must govern the destinies of the Congregations, we of course want that they put into practice what the Constitutions provide for, making each Discreet responsible for the branch to which he belongs⁴⁸; we urge them to put great diligence into the performance of their functions, so they can be true assistants to the higher Superior and makes his burden more bearable. And in order that they act in accordance with the Superior whose secretaries they are, and there is good communication between them, they will attempt to meet every month to deal with the matters of the Congregation. When it happens that a Discreet cannot attend one of those meetings, due to being with his family outside the House where the Defining Council holds them or for some other reason, he will send to the higher Superior a Statement of his subjects for the Discreet Council to take into account and the Superior will send him a note of the questions that must be dealt with, so he can convey his opinion on them.

19

2057 In order that the distinguished people who come to visit the friars can be received with the decorum and attention they deserve, and to avoid that the conversations can be overheard by anyone who is at the front desk, to the degree it is possible make a decent but modest entrance hall, arranged in such a way that the Doorman can observe what happens in the entrance hall through a glass window.

20

2058 Since it is impossible to raise a wall to obstruct the view of the windows facing the street, as the Papal Decrees orders, lattices or blinds will be put in them

⁴⁷ Cf. 1982 above.

⁴⁸ Cf. 2389.

so at the same time it prevents the friar from being seen, it avoids distractions and waste of time for him.

21

2059 If it would be the will of God that the foundations planned in the Cabañal take place, we are inclined that one be destined for the Protectorate of distinguished Priests⁴⁹ and the other for the Seminary of Arts and Services⁵⁰.

Venerable Fathers and Brothers, we confidently expect that you will receive in good faith these orders that, though the Lord, we have judged we should give you for the good order and system of the Congregation, and that you will put them into practice with full diligence, aware that only our paternal affection inspires them and the intense desire we have for the moral and material prosperity of this, our Institution.

Hence, we thank you and give you our blessing from the bottom of our hearts and recommend you to your prayers.

Given in Torrent on 19 May in the year of our Lord 1892.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL
(Seal)

⁴⁹ Cf. 2137-2144.

⁵⁰ Cf. 2367.

*Orders of the holy visit verified by the Most Reverend Father Brother Luis of
Massamagrell, founder of this Congregation, in the month of
June of the year 1892*

2060 Venerable and beloved Fathers and Brothers, having completed the Visit under Canon Law in this House of Carabanchel with the help of God, and having taken account of its state, we congratulate you after seeing the faithfulness with which you know how to reciprocate the plans of the Lord for you, fulfilling as good souls the hard and difficult mission that He entrusts to you.

In spite of this, the obligation of any Superior is to lead and point the steps of the subjects in the right direction so that, without slipping off to the right or left, they always march along the narrow path of regular observance and see that the works entrusted to them continue progressing for the glory of God and the usefulness of our fellow man, in fulfillment of our duty and having requested his grace from the Lord, we come to order and intend the following:

1

2061 As long as it not possible that the friar have cells for their rooms, as the Constitutions prescribe⁵¹, they will separate the beds with curtains for greater decency.

2

2062 To avoid abuses and so that no one take something from the Offices in the absence of the person responsible for them, we are taking the precaution of having them locked , especially the dining hall and pantry, and nothing is to be taken without the permission of the Superior.

3

2063 I urge each and every one of the friars that after the fulfillment of the task or tasks that obedience is employing them for, they must perform with complete precision, faithfulness and diligence, as the express will of God, that if they have some extra time left over, to do everything possible to relieve it by working together mutually. Similarly, inspired by a great zeal and interest for the House, try to become qualified in everything yourselves, and without dwelling on

⁵¹ Cf. 2428.

the problems, act in everything as if its good order and government depended only on you and your concern and effort.

4

2064 I again place the responsibility on the Students to be dedicated in their studies and under no circumstances leave the hours destined for studies, or their hours in class, although some may not be able to attend them due to their occupations⁵².

5

2065 I ask the Superior, using his sound judgment, to deny the requests that could be made for the friars to go sing at the Parish church because, in addition to the loss of time and other problems that could arise, it will establish a precedent that very quickly would become a law. For this reason, I also order the friars to take precautions against and avoid making commitments, in order to avoid conflicts for the Superior.

6

2066 Order and clarity must distinguish your accounts, and it is advisable to be very attentive to details in this matter, especially in Houses such as this one that depend on a Board to which the accounts must be reported; it is advisable that the purchases and sales be done by the administrator himself if possible. If not, the friar who is commissioned for that task must later produce a precise and detailed accounting of everything he spent.

The inspection of the kitchens, pantries and dining halls should be the responsibility of the administrator, as well as the financial side of the workshops.

The local Superior, by law and according to the Constitutions, is the Administrator⁵³; nevertheless, if he considers it advisable, he can appoint or designate himself a friar to help him by carrying out this responsibility. In that event, the aforementioned friar will act in everything under the proper supervision of the Superior.

7

2067 Taking in account that the nature of the Establishment means the youths entrusted to the care of the friars are generally mischievous and have depraved

⁵² Cf. 2007, 2025, 2032 above.

⁵³ Cf. 2398.

habits, and for their correction and to change their ways, it will be advisable to separate them whenever possible from sight and contact with laymen in order to avoid many temptations. First, I recommend you try to avoid any visits which are not by their parents or interested parties, and do not permit them to see him more than once a month or every 15 days in special cases, and always accompanied by one of the friars responsible for the children. Second, under no circumstances should the children in need of correction attend the Communion and other functions of the Parish church, nor affiliate to the Congregation already established there, under the pretext of developing devoutness in them, because it is already intended and ordered that a Marian Congregation of the Immaculate Conception and St. Anthony⁵⁴ be established in our Houses. Finally, when it is a good idea for the children in need of correction to go out for a walk, it should always be in the country or an unpopulated area.

8

2068 As St. Rita is not a School, but a House of reform and protection, which is not achieved by means of study but rather through moral uplift and work, the parents and interested parties of the children must be made to understand, and it should even be recorded in the Regulations of the House, that the friars are not obligated to give the children anything more than primary education and occupy them without distinction in the jobs they judge are most appropriate for the goal of their correction. With respect to the former, they shall teach them to read and write, the Catechism, Good Manners, Grammar and Arithmetic, and if the friars establish any extra subject or class and the interested parties wanted the child to study it, since he is a lodger, they will have to pay the quota indicated for each subject. Concerning the latter, they will not be able to demand any kind of trade, but rather the friars can set up as best they can, given the situation and always keeping the children under their responsibility, the employment of the children in those trades where they have displayed greater abilities.

9

2069 As stimulus and incentive for work, and to take care of the future of these poor children as much as possible, I order: that when they reach the point of perfecting themselves in the job or trade where they were placed to the extent that their work now pays substantially more than their expense to the House, one third or one quarter of what they are expected to earn is to be reserved in their benefit. The Superior will deposit that sum for them monthly in the *Monte de Piedad* (bank), without giving them any amount for any reason, unless it is for helping their parents, in which case the amount would be given to them, and a

⁵⁴ Cf. 1892, 2055.

receipt required from them in order to make the youth aware of the transaction on his departure from the House.

10

2070 As full vigilance is not enough with children, I recommend to the friars responsible for them to never lose sight of them or leave them along; because sometimes it would only require a moment of carelessness to lose them and diminish all the progress made with them over so much time and with so much work.

Do not tolerate or agree to let them separate from the others to play, or even to talk; and very carefully prevent them from forming individual friendships, so harmful in the youths, by separating those in who you observe too much affection or familiar behavior.

11

2071 To avoid serious problems and disruptions which must follow from these youths sleeping in a single open hall, we ask the Superior to do everything possible to convince the Board of the advisability of establishing the cell system, generally adopted today in all schools, and so necessary in an establishment of this nature. Until this system is approved, there must be a night watchman, who should be a friar whenever possible.

12

2072 I very earnestly recommend that you not keep female animals in the house, and to absolutely forbid the children from touching and playing with the animals. For that reason, do not entrust the care of the animals to them, or even permit them to enter the stables or pens where they are enclosed.

13

2073 As it is advisable to obstruct the view of the Asylum of Santa Cruz, to prevent the children in need of correction from being distracted by the sight of the young girls and causing some scandal or bad example, and since it is not possible to raise the wall facing the fields enough to do that, plant evergreen trees that are very thick and grow rapidly; place them far enough apart so they can intertwine with each other and form a wall. However, be careful that they are sufficiently far away from the wall so that the youths in need of correction cannot use them to escape.

2074 In order that the visits under canon law are not reduced to a mere formality, but instead give the practical result they try to achieve in the correction and correction of faults and in the prescriptions directed towards securing the good order and government of the Institution, the local Superiors are ordered and commanded to be sure they are read in the public Dining Hall several times a year; and on the actual month of the visit, make us aware that you have put all the prescriptions into practice.

Venerable Fathers and Brothers, I do not doubt your renowned faithfulness and know you will fulfill these orders willingly and practice them with scrupulous precision, as the prescriptions of one who even though so unworthy has been designed by God to rule you.

While I ask you to pray earnestly to God for me, in turn I am begging the Lord to confirm from Heaven the blessing that in the name of the seraphic Patriarch your Father and servant in Christ I give you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Given in Carabanchel Bajo (Madrid) on 3 June of the year of our Lord 1892.

Signed and Sealed: BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL

Orders of the holy visit practiced on the 25, 26 and 27 May of 1899 by the Most Reverend Father Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Minister of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars of the Province of Valencia and founder of this Congregation of Our Lady of Sorrows

2075 After such a long absence, when situations beyond our control made it impossible for us to visit you⁵⁵, Venerable Fathers and Brothers, the diving Providence wanted us to share the incredible satisfaction of seeing you and taking the Holy Pastoral Visit. During it, we have been able to appreciate the good intentions of your spirit and generous will that inspires all your acts, undoubtedly a product of the interest and effort with which you support the designs of the Lord in trying to secure the salvation of the poor souls of the youths we entrusted to you, as whoever saves a soul determines the destiny of his own⁵⁶.

For all those reason, then, we give infinite thanks to the giver of all good and we urge you, beloved children, to always be faithful to the Lord, so that your zeal for the glory of God and the well-being of your fellow man never diminishes, a virtue that, in imitation of your holy Father, must always inspire any good child of the Seraph of Assisi.

However, even though we have not found anything worthy of reprimand or correction in the local visit or personally, in order to further promote the glory of God and with the aim of giving you regulations and rules of conduct for certain things which you can use to rule yourself in the arduous task of moral uplift of the youths whom we entrusted to your care, we come to give the following orders:

1

2076 We approve *cum laude* the practices introduced and established by the Most Reverend Provincial Father of making the first Friday of the month, consecrated to the Sacred Heart, as a most appropriate means of offering the greater perfection and achieve the graces necessary in the carrying out of the obligations of our state, in accordance with the promises of this Divine Heart. And it is our will to practice this devotion in all our Houses; and when possible, to have the Divine Majesty half-displayed for the entire day, in front of whom one friar and two pupils will continuously pray.

⁵⁵ Cf. 1777 above.

⁵⁶ Cf. James 5:20.

2

2077 Both for the greater glory of God and the spiritual good it will yield for the souls, we would like to establish a daily vigil for the Sacrament of Jesus in our reformatories. But if that is not possible, form a guard of honor, who would be selected each week from the children who had displayed the best behavior during the week; and it will be incumbent on them to do the vigil on *prie-dieux* and *ciriales* (high candelabra) placed to that end in the presbytery during all the acts practiced by the children in need of correction practice in the chapel. To further inspire the children, the names of the guards of honor will be displayed every week within an honors board set up for that purpose in the Chapel, with the image of the Sacred Heart in the middle.

3

2078 We note that the regulation of the Constitutions referring to the sacred Community does not remove nor reduce in any way the freedom of the Superiors and confessors to grant more communions than those prescribed for the Community in general or an individual friar when they consider it advisable⁵⁷. On this point, I urge the Superiors and confessors not to be reluctant to granting that permission, because the holy Communion is the best and most appropriate means for spiritual progress; and the religious soul needs more than anyone the comfort and strength conveyed to us in it.

4

2079 We warn the priests to, although their fervor and laudable zeal may be moderated somewhat, try not to spend more than half an hour in celebrating the holy sacrifice of the Mass, so that it does not make it tedious to the children and for that reason, they listen to it with little devotion and delays the acts of community.

5

2080 It is advisable that the exercises the Community practices annually⁵⁸ be done in this house in at least three groups, in order that the care and vigilance over the children in need of correction is never left unattended. And it would be very appropriate if they are always given by a Father of the Congregation, but from another house, in order that whoever gives them and those who practice them can have greater freedom.

⁵⁷ Cf. 2422.

⁵⁸ Cf. 2002 above; 2421.

6

2081 The Fathers are to take turns by weeks in celebrating the conventual Mass and whichever priest is on duty that week shall also be obligated to dress again for the evening exercises which happen in it; to bless the table and give thanks, and says the glories and prayers in the litanies of the saints before the prayer.

7

2082 The friars must try to save their time for spiritual matters and be very punctual and diligent in their attendance for acts of the Community, especially prayer, so their spirit does not flag from their various occupations, nor avoid performing them routinely and out of habit, and thereby come to lose the merit of their work.

8

2083 To take care of the necessary rest for the Brothers doing the vigil and so they do not miss Mass and Communion, it is ordered that whoever does the first vigil will wake the Brother who is doing the second at one in the morning; in turn, the second Brother will wake the Brother who did the first vigil at 6.30 in the morning to attend Holy Mass.

9

2084 As charity is the primary virtue that makes all of us in the likeness of God, who is charity⁵⁹, the friars are to try to practice virtue at all times, avoiding hurting his Brother with biting and sharp words, or bring up and emphasize his faults, which in all cases should be corrected in secret; and we also recommend this consideration and prudence in the recreational activities when it is easier to make mistakes of this nature due to the greater freedom and relaxation involved with them.

10

2085 Avoid at all times that any friar sleep in the halls or close by the children in need of correction, for the potential risk of them trying to avenge the punishments and reprimands they receive from the friars during those hours of rest. For the greater safety of the watchmen, try to reinforce the guardroom, the

⁵⁹ Cf. I John 4:8.

doors and windows of the holding cells, and all windows which present any danger with good bars, in order to avoid escapes and other problems.

11

2086 The friars must act with sound judgment and unity in their viewpoint in the correction of the children, who can never think there is any disagreement among them, so that one friar cannot undo with leniency and praise the effect on the children in need of correction from the wholesome severity of the measures that the superiors or those in charge of the children adopted.

12

2087 The superiors should not easily grant permission to study to the children in need of correction, in order that when this permission is awarded, it is valued as a reward for merits and they will make better use of the time, by being able to appreciate the difference between work and study.

13

2088 Cut off visits as much as possible. Do not allow the parents of children from Madrid see them on other days and hours than those designated in our pamphlet, and avoid letting them go on for too long, with the resulting reduction of the necessary time for the friars to perform their duties.

For relief of the Superior, on this point it is advisable that he himself designate a friar suited for this task, whether a Father or Brother, to be responsible for the extraordinary visits, since several will have to work on this during the receiving days.

14

2089 We consider it very advisable not to allow the youths who have left the school to have contact with those who are now attending it, if a sufficient amount of time has not passed since their departure, to avoid the temptation the students must feel on seeing the others who have freedom and prevent them from making use of them communicate with people outside the Institution.

15

2090 We order the friars who are in charge of the kitchen, workshops and fields to take the utmost care with the knives, tools, sickles, etc., and collecting, counting and guarding them under lock and key. It could happen that the children in need of correction, taking advantage of a moment of carelessness, may save some of those objects for evil purposes. In the same way and for the same reason, we

recommend the utmost care in guarding the medicine cabinet, which must always be kept in a safe room closed by a good lock.

16

2091 For greater cleanliness in the dormitories and comfort for the children, try to place some stools next to the beds, to give them somewhere to sit for dressing and undressing and also serve as a closet where they can keep their clothes.

17

2092 Organize and add to the clothing room with good closets locked with a key and enough divisions capable of holding the clothes the children wear all the time and the suit they wore when they entered the School, which must be preserved with the utmost care so it does not deteriorate or be eaten by moths.

18

2093 Watch carefully over the games of the children, and fencing in general and the foil is not to be tolerated in any way.

When the funds of the House permit, build some walls to serve as a *fronton* (court) for playing handball, the cleanest and most innocent game.

19

2094 Avoid having the children go into the sacristy as much as possible, and only the ones who are acting as acolytes are permitted to enter; and even with them, the sacristan must try not to leave them alone, nor be careless in having all valuable objects locked away and the key to the tabernacle well guarded.

20

2095 Do not allow the friars to enter the kitchen in any way without the permission of the Superior, not even to walk through it.

21

2096 We order the local Superior to try not let the midday meal and dinner extend for so long that they take away from the friars' time earmarked for recreation, something even more necessary when their works are greater and more laborious. The Superior, then, should give the order to leave the tables when all those who enter in Community finish eating, and not those who came in later, since it is not

good for the entire Community to be waiting impatiently. The midday meal should ordinarily not last for more than half an hour, and the dinner between 15 minutes and half an hour. It would be very good if the friars responsible for the children took turns in the dining hall with them, so the same ones are always deprived of going to the dining hall with the Community.

22

2097 The Fathers and Brothers are to have separate recreation times, unless the Superior considers it prudent that a Father supervise the recreation of the Brothers. In that case, a Father will have to be designated and both of them must do their recreational activities in a place far away from the children, so that they can have more room and freedom. However, this does not apply to the friars who are in charge of the children, who must do their recreational activity with them.

23

2098 With the intention that the local Superior has somewhat more rest from his multiple concerns and can preferably dedicate himself to the moral part, we advise that he choose one suitable and discreet friar to serve as secretary and be responsible for both the correspondence and Chronicle of the House. It would be very good if he would have a letter copier to transcribe and save those letters from the children and their relatives who bestow more love to the House and Institute and were more instructive.

24

2099 Try to put some inscription or shield in the yoke of the blouses so, if it any of the children should escape, they are more easily recognizable. Similarly, their clothes will be marked and saved separate from the School clothes for the use of the Community.

25

2100 We very earnestly recommend to all our friars love and diligence in keeping the Holy Poverty, which forms the character and is the emblem of our Order, and was the most virtue most highly valued by Our Seraphic Father⁶⁰. To keep it, try to avoid useless and unnecessary trips, buying tools and utensils you could easily do without and still carry out your task; be very careful with the things you are responsible for so they do not deteriorate; do not force the Superior to make superfluous expenditures, and remember above all that through our profession we

⁶⁰ Cf. 2C 55, in works cited, p. 263; LM 7:6, in works cited, p. 424. Cf. 1283, 1832, 2015 above; 2349, 2433.

must live as poor men, not like those who want to be poor in such a way where they do not lack for anything, as St. Bernardino says⁶¹.

26

2101 Those children in need of correction who request to become friars will be tested by having them in the School for more time than usual, and then they will be sent to another house of the Congregation to spend their time as Postulants, because it is not advisable to establish any kind of distinction in this one.

It is essential that the novitiate is spent in the mother House.

27

2102 The entries for renewing the professions and perpetual vows must be registered in the House where those vows were issued and a certification sent to the Mother House so that they can be recorded in the general register.

28

2103 The surplus material the propaganda section may produce, after all its needs are met, will be invested in establishing a new library for the use of the Reform School.

29

2104 In order that the regulations that are given in the pastoral visits are not forgotten, the local Superiors must be sure to have them read in the public dining hall every two months, when the Constitutions are read.

Venerable Fathers and Brothers, understanding the spirit of the present regulations and the zeal and interest that inspires them, we have reason to you except to obey them meekly and reduce them to practice punctually and precisely. In this way, God Our Savior, who has the utmost interest in giving credit to the authority which comes from Him and in rewarding with his largesse the obedience he came to the world to teach us, will abundantly spill his gifts upon your souls. With them, you will be able to climb from virtue to virtue to the high perfection that our state demands.

As a guarantee of our gratitude and paternal affection, we give you our seraphic blessing in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Given in our House, the St. Rita Asylum of Paternal Correction.

Carabanchel Bajo, 27 May 1899.

Signed and Sealed: BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL
PROVINCIAL MINISTER

⁶¹ CF. ST. BERNARDINO: *Advent Sermon* 4:5; PL 183:49. Cf. 2015 above.

CIRCULAR LETTERS ADDRESS TO THE DIOCESES OF SOLSONA AND SEGORBE

INTRODUCTION

The Circular Letters could best be categorized as minor writings of Luis Amigó. They are not history per se, but they help to fill it out; neither are they autobiography, but they contribute to tying together the life of the Servant of Christ during the periods spent in his dioceses of Solsona (1907-1913) and Segorbe (1913-1934). And they always provide an accurate and reliable chronology.

We present a broad selection of them here, those in which doctrinal issues of relative interest are added to disciplinary points. We are only leaving out those issued annually on the same date and under the same circumstances, those using the same or similar reasoning, and the ones repeatedly answering particular regulations concerning the governing of the diocese.

Of the rest, the subject matter of the Circulars contribute to providing a wealth of precise and valuable details for creating the historical framework of his long, 26-year tenure as the leading Church authority in two extremely poor dioceses that were essentially agricultural and rural in nature.

On the other hand, they are valuable documents that help to illustrate the pastoral activity and intentions of Luis Amigó: his profound interest in the religious education and cultural level of his priests¹, the special attention he pays to the teaching of religion and the catechism², his attention to the fulfillment of Easter duties of the members of his diocese³, his preferential concern for the Catholic press and the missions⁴, and his fondness for the world of workers and his paternal concern towards those struck by the scourge of war or the swings of fortune⁵. The latter even reveals that he was a universalist in nature, through creating an interest among his parishioners in the needs of Russia, Mexico, Sicily and Calabria, and the combatants in Africa⁶.

The Circular Letters are not lacking, either, in showing the paternal concern of Luis Amigó over sick and ageing priests with the creation of residences for priests⁷,

¹ Cf. 2106-2110, 2113, 2195-2197, 2201-2202, and 2224-2226.

² Cf. 2174, 2175, 2220-2223, 2270.

³ Cf. 2164-2166, 2198.

⁴ Cf. 2183, 2246, 2249-2250, 2275, 2276, 2281, 2283, 2288 and 2290.

⁵ Cf. 2176, 2179.

⁶ Cf. 2124-2125, 2132-2136, 2206-2208, 2215, 2239, and 2242-2244.

⁷ Cf. 2137-2144.

nor his zeal for maintaining the purity of the faith and morality of customs⁸, his love for art in general, and sacred art in particular⁹, as well as his particular devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus¹⁰. The Circulars constitute a simple, popular monument to the small-scale pastoral guidance of members of the diocese.

⁸ Cf. 2117-2120, 2127-2128, 2145-2147, 2184, 2228-2230, and 2262-2264.

⁹ Cf. 2155-2157, 2181-2182, 2265.

¹⁰ Cf. 2227, 2247, 2267, 2272-2274, and 2279.

I

Granting of Privileges and Powers

(B. Sol 42 [1907], pp. 252-254)

2105 Duly authorized, we authorize for a period of five years, until 17 May of 1912, our Vicar General, Dean and members of our Cathedral Church, Leaders of Orders, Archpriests, Parish Priests, foreign Vicars and the others who are responsible for churches that they do not require unction to bless sacred ornaments.

Similarly, we authorize all confessors of the Diocese during the full length of our apostolic administration to give the faithful the same apostolic blessing with full indulgence as many times as they may be at the point of death (*in articulo mortis*) and that if they are unable to receive the Holy Sacraments of Confession and Communion, they may invoke the holy name of Jesus verbally or in their heart.

We declare the high altars of our Cathedral Church and all the parish churches of the diocese to be privileged for a period of seven years, until 27 May of 1914, with the observations of Circular number 4 of the Bulletin of 16 December 1895.

Wishing to satisfy the devoutness and add incentives for the sanctification of the faithful of the Diocese, with due authority we grant them the following indulgences: 1. Full indulgence for those who attend the first Pontifical Mass that we celebrate in the Cathedral Church and later in the other major churches of the Diocese, giving the Papal Blessing after the Mass, and to whoever visits those churches on that day. 2. Full indulgence applicable to souls of Purgatory for a period of seven years, until 27 May of 1914, to the faithful who may visit and receive communion in our Cathedral Church on the days when there is general communion there with our permission. 3. Full indulgence, for one time only, to all the faithful who may visit any church when we are making our first Pastoral Visit there. 4. Full indulgence for the same period of seven years, until 21 May of 1914, to the missionary priests that we may send and the faithful who attend more than half of the acts of the Mission. 5. Finally, full indulgence, for one time only, to the faithful who may the Cathedral Church on one of the days when the Synod of the Diocese is held.

In order to benefit from the indulgences detailed above the faithful must receive in all cases the Sacraments of Confession and Communion, pray for the exaltation of the faith, elimination of heresies, harmony of Christian principles and conversion of the sinners, in accordance with the intention of the Supreme Pontiff.

With the object of giving our clergy a vote of confidence, we extend for the period of one year the ministerial permissions to all those priests who were granted them for a limited time.

Solsona, 12 August of 1907.

† BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP AND APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR

Reform of the Seminary
(B. Sol 42 [1907], pp. 278-281)

2106 The education and training of the young men called by God to the priesthood certainly ranks first among the main duties of our apostolic ministry; for they have to be the leaders who guide the peoples along the paths of salvation. For this reason, our main concern and effort is focused on the Seminary, the school where they have to be educated and instructed in the sciences and virtue necessary to be able to grace souls with doctrine and by example¹.

2107 In spite of the various and significant reforms of all kinds that our predecessors introduced in the Seminary, we still judge it necessary to establish many others to complete the labor of such honorable and zealous Prelates. Wishing to proceed with the most scrupulous correctness and all possible guarantees of accuracy, after a long and thorough study of the regulations in canon law concerning the issue and considering the state and circumstances of the Diocese, after extensive consultations with the Discipline Council and Treasury Board and gathering together the opinions of the distinguished professors of the Seminary and other noteworthy men, we have arranged our plan.

And although the full extent of the plan cannot be carried out immediately or in this year, we of course have to begin establishing all the reforms that time and circumstances permit. As a result we have agreed to order and we order:

2108 1. In the future, there will not be two Seminaries but only a single Seminary divided into two sections; a lower section, which will include the grammar and philosophy courses, and an advanced section made up of all students from the first year of Theology until the end of the course of study.

2. The lower section, for now and until the time we can achieve our ideal of joining all the students together in a single building, will occupy the new Seminary and San Ramón without any greater separation than is absolutely necessary, which will yield great advantages economically and for the governing board. The non-boarding students of this first section must report there to attend their classes.

3. The second, or advanced, section will also occupy the so-called old Seminary for the time being, and only the number of boarded students will be admitted that the capacity of the building allows, giving strict preference to the two courses where being a boarder is required. Whoever is furthest advanced in their studies will come after them and finally, within the same course, the ones who first requested it.

4. As there will only be a single Seminary, there will also be one a single Board of Directors, Discipline Council and Treasury Board.

2109 5. The general Director of the Seminary will be called the Rector and will be responsible, with full authority, to see that the Regulations are fulfilled, whether they concern Government and Discipline or Studies and Treasury. All the positions

¹ ST. CLARE.: Test 46 in *Writings of St. Francis and St. Clare*. Ed. Lázaro Iriarte, (Valencia 1981), p. 213. Cf. 2195-2197.

will be subordinate to him and no book will be presented for their corresponding approval without him having seen it first. It also falls on him to sign with assistance, and at the request of the Majordomo, and present in timely fashion for the Treasury Board report a budget of expenses and revenues for each school year divided into chapters in accordance with the number of items included, which must obtain the approval of the Prelate to take effect.

6. It is also incumbent on the Rector to have contact and communicate impressions and observations with the Disciple Council and Treasury Board, at least at the beginning and end of each school year, and in extraordinary situations not foreseen in the Regulations; and at all times with the Prelate, always provided it would be advisable, any time that a new initiative could not take effect without his knowledge and superior approval.

7. The leaders of each section of the Seminary will be a Vice-rector and a Prefect, in addition to assistants as the situation demands. When the Rector is not present, the Vice Rector will stand in for him and assume all the necessary responsibilities, and the Prefect will stand in for the Vice-rector in the same fashion.

8. A single majordomo will secure and administer the interests of the two houses, whose income from all sources will form a common fund from today onward, always keeping the account books up to date and in suitable form. These books, after being seen by the Rector, have to be presented every year in the report of the Treasury Board and following the approval of the Prelate, before a new school year begins.

9. A general Secretary will combine and be the custodian of the Archive of the Seminary, keeping the corresponding books clearly, both of the registrations and accounts and other records it may be advisable to keep, and sending the products of his office to the majordomo in timely fashion. The Secretary will not send, without informing the Rector first, any document or certification requested of him, which will have no value if not authorized by his signature, the seal of the office and the approval of the Rector or Vice-Rector, in case of illness or absence.

2110 10. At the first opportunity, the respective Regulations will be sent to whoever is responsible for fulfilling them, and the new offering of courses, class hours, textbooks and names of the professors will be publicly displayed in the Seminary. We are very sensitive to the reductions and changes we are obligated to make by the harsh law of necessity and thereby require the execution of the plan we have outlined for the good of the Diocese after long and thorough consultations.

May God want to bless our well-intentioned efforts and help us as much as possible, as well as the Reverend Clergy, whose charities on this point have caught our attention so powerfully and earn our most paternal and heartfelt applause, as well as the laymen and those who offer testimonials, whom the Lord will undoubtedly reward a hundredfold, and anticipating the giving of his graces, give you his loving and pastoral blessing.

Solsona, 17 September of 1907.

3

For the Poor People of the Diocese

(B. Sol 42 [1907], p. 342)

2111 The public calamities which the Lord, as the Father of Mercy, is afflicting on the people, so they may come back to him and move away from the roads to damnation they are rushing along, have fallen especially hard this time on some souls of our beloved Diocese, causing great material losses and plunging many families in to misery.

This thought tortures our paternal heart. For that reason, albeit having only just arrived in the Diocese, our first main concern is to provide resources that can relieve the sad situation of our children and wash away their tears.

But with the impossibility of being able to meet such a great need given our poverty, we have thought of opening in our Bulletin a subscription, headed by Ourselves, and we hope it will be supported by our Illustrious Church Council, Parish and Beneficial clergy and all the beloved members of the diocese with the charity that distinguishes them and the graces for which are anticipated by their Prelate, who blesses them.

Solsona, 12 November of 1907.

† THE BISHOP

4

The Jubilee Year of His Holiness Pope Pius X

(B. Sol 42 [1907], pp. 363-364)

2112 Next year will mark the completion of the fiftieth year of the ordination as a priest of our most Holy Father Pius X and hence the celebration of his golden anniversary. For this reason, the Catholic world is inclined to celebrate this auspicious event with the greatest possible ceremony in order provide something to soothe the heart of the most kind Pontiff, saddened by the sad situation his Catholic Church is going through in some nations.

For this purpose, his Majesty the King (may God protect him) has been so kind as to designate a Board to collect the donations it pleases the faithful to offer to His Holiness, and has happily entrusted the presidency of the Board to the most Serene Princess María Theresa of Bourbon, to whom we address the letter we are inserting below in order that the beloved members of our diocese have knowledge of it.

We have no doubt that every one of our children unanimously, possessed as We are by the most filial affection towards the Holy Father, will wish to contribute to these offerings as best they can. Even though their humble contributions, given their poverty and increased today by past misfortunes, cannot be that large, let them take into account that the gift is not measured by its magnitude but by the

will with which it is given. Therefore, do not hold back from giving what you can, because the small alms of the poor man will please the Holy Father as much as the great offering of the rich man.

We make the senior Archpriests responsible in their areas for forming and presiding over a Board entrusted to collect the alms and objects for divine worship which the faithful in each town want to offer to the Holy Father. We advise you that, as His Highness indicates, the Supreme Pontiff wishes that donations of clothing are given to poor churches.

We also expect the Religious Communities will contribute as much as possible by each of them sending us a goal for that purpose.

All this should be done with the greatest possible haste, as her Most Serene Princess indicates, and let us take notice of what is collected by recording the name of the donors.

Solsona, 1 December of 1907.

† THE BISHOP

5

Help for the Seminary (B. Sol 43 [1908], pp. 24-25)

2113 One of the most gratifying and acceptable works of charity to divine eyes, beloved children, is undoubtedly the one which aims to favor the vocation of the young men who, called by God to his service in the ministry of the souls redeemed by Him, lack the necessary resources to pay the indispensable expenses for their studies, modest though they are in our Seminary.

We would definitely want to count on resources with which we could give more opportunities to the poor (among whom the Lord usually selects his ministers) to make their way, as the Holy Council of Trent wants and advises. We are well convinced that there is no Seminary in Spain, not even the Institutes of St. Joseph established for the poor, where they can pursue their studies more economically than our own.

But this fact, so satisfying to us, also increases our concerns; because, without funds in the Seminary, as the revenues from the pensions of the students are small and the expenses have increased considerably this year from having tried to improve the food and nourishment of the students, there necessary is a great deficit at the end of the course. We have found no other means for paying this than to appeal to the charitable feelings of those members of our diocese whose high social standing could lend us the support necessary for this venture, confident as well that our beloved and virtuous Clergy will follow us by lending their support with the customary generosity and zeal of which we already have ample proof.

As a testament of gratitude and the awareness of everyone, we are copying below and will continue to do so in future Bulletins, the alms we are receiving for this purpose and the name of the donors, to all of whom Your Prelate expresses his eternal gratitude, and blesses you from the bottom of his heart.

Solsona, 13 January 1908.

† THE BISHOP

6

Bull of the Holy Crusade

(B. Sol 43 [1908], pp. 33-35)

2114 For the knowledge of the beloved members of our diocese, we inform them that: the Most Eminent and Reverent Cardinal Primate, the Apostolic General Commissioner of the Holy Crusade, has deigned to communicate to us this interesting document:

Ciriaco Maria, through divine mercy, bearing the title of St. Peter in Montorio, in Urbe, of the Holy Roman Church, Presbyter Primate of Spain, the Greater Chaplain of His Holy Majesty, Vicar General of the National Armies, Knight of the Royal Distinguished Order of Charles III and decorated with the Cross of the Order of Isabel the Catholic, Senator of the Kingdom, Apostolic General Commissioner of the Holy Crusade, etc., etc.

To you, our Venerable Brother in Christ, Father, Your Excellency and most Illustrious Bishop and Apostolic Administrator of the Solsona Diocese.

Greeting and thanks in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Inasmuch as His Holiness Leo XIII, of blessed memory, deigned to extend, dated 15 September of 1902, for a period of twelve years, the Bull of the Holy Crusade, and His Holiness Pius X, who happily governs the Church, deigned to extend, dated 22 January of 1907, for ten years, the 40th Indulgence, on the basis that the product of the first has to be directed towards attentions to the divine worship and for the second, to works of charity and benevolence and that the Bishops were ex officio administrators, independent of any lay authority, in their respective Dioceses.

Hence, you will issue the regulations you believe are advisable so that this Holy Bull will be received with all the solemnity corresponding to it in your Cathedral Church, and to that end, we send the attached Summary of the authorizations, indulgences and privileges awarded by that apostolic bestowal. Similarly, you will order the parish priests of your Dioceses to do their preaching in the time and form that is customary, so that the people who you will appoint for the issuing of the Summaries and collection of alms are arranged according to the instructions you give them.

The alms that are indicated for each category of summary are stated in them, and the people who take them must pay them, in accordance with their social class

and the income they enjoy, and abolishing any privilege or custom to the contrary. For the Bull of the Distinguished, the alms are four *pesetas* and fifty *centimos* for the Common of the Living. For the Deceased, seventy five *centimos* of one *peseta* and for the alms of Composition, one *peseta* and fifteen *centimos*. Alms for the first-class *Lacticinios* are six *pesetas* and seventy five *centimos*, for second class, two *pesetas* and twenty five *centimes*, for the third class *Lacticinios*, one *peseta* and fifteen *centimos* and the fourth class, fifty *centimos*. For the 40th Indulgence of the first class, nine *pesetas*, for second class, three *pesetas* and for third class fifty *centimos*.

Given in Toledo on 4 November of 1907. —CARDINAL SANCHA, *Apostolic Commissioner of the Holy Crusade*. By order of His Eminence and most Reverend General Commissioner of the Holy Crusade, PEDRO CADENAS, Secretary Priest.

2115 Accepting with the utmost awareness of the singular graces granted to our beloved Diocese by these Pardons through the benevolence of the Supreme Pontiff, and in fulfillment of the assignment that such a considerable document confers on us, we order the following: 1. In our Central Church and the parish and affiliated churches in the Dioceses the Holy Bull will be published on the days of religious practices that are held every year with the greatest solemnity possible, and summoning the civil Authorities to this event. 2. The Reverend Priests and others involved in curing the souls, will make use of this opportunity to instruct the faithful in the privileges and graces granted to us by the Bull of the Crusade and the 40th Pardon in order to refute the erroneous doctrines that are being spread about this issue, and instill in them the gratitude that must reciprocate the displays of maternal affection the Church gives us and the concern in making use of the treasures of Indulgence which enrich us.

Solsona, 1 February of 1908.

† THE BISHOP

7

On Carnival and Lent

(B. Sol 43 [1908], pp. 49-50)

2116 In order to make amends as much as possible for the affronts that the upcoming days of Carnival will inflict on Your Divine Majesty, we authorize the Reverend Parish priests and others in charge of churches that they display the most Holy Virgin in an act which we hope that everyone who possibly can will celebrate on the afternoon of the three respective days, and we grant 50 days of indulgence to each faithful follower who attends the service of apology.

As the holy time of Lent is now very close, the object of facilitating the fulfillment of the Easter obligation by the faithful, to the extent it is in our power to do so, and at the same time make it easier for the confessors to carry out their

thorny ministry, we declare the effective working time for said fulfillment to be between the second Sunday of Lent and Low Sunday (*In Albis*), both inclusive. We authorize all the confessors approved in this Diocese to be able to absolve the cases reserved to Us by common Law and by the Synods during the same period; and we also sub-delegate to all those who have parish responsibility for the same amount of time the power to authorize the incestuous *ad petendum debitum* in the form and conditions already known.

Solsona, 15 February of 1908.

† THE BISHOP

8

The Scandal of Blasphemy
(B. Sol 43 [1908], pp. 260-264)

2117 “The abominable custom of blaspheming and uttering gross curses and phrases incompatible with public decency has long been the sad reason for frequent scandal and outrage in this province, with the diminishing of its good name and serious damage to the deserved concept of the culture and morality of its residents.

These excesses of language degrade whoever uses them and offends the rest, brutally profaning the sacredness of their beliefs and feelings; they must then, be prohibited in our environment as aberrations contrary to social decorum and the mutual considerations which is an indispensable foundation of the existence of any civilized and progressive people.

But even more as the corrective actions of the authorities, always thorough and persistent, is not enough as the sad experience of many long years has shown us. It is also necessary that the many people who feel the need or share the desire to see this evil eliminated support this corrective activity by offering their full personal involvement, energetic and committed. They must strengthen this activity by spreading and declaring without stopping or resting, in the home, the press, the university chair, the workshop, the school and as many other places and occasions that encourage it and practice the life of good relations, the concept that blasphemy, the angry curse and the obscene phrase, although uttered, as happens in many cases, without a full awareness of the insult it inflicts on religion, morality and culture and obeying only the terrible impulse of an unconscious habit, are indignities to which anyone who values or wants to deserve the esteem of their neighbors and people around them must never lower themselves.

Without this general cooperation that many people have offered me, and I request of everyone, it would in vain to expect that the zeal and good intentions of the authorities by themselves would achieve more than to watch over, surprise and suppress, and punish with governmental sentences or those indicated in the Code,

individual cases that are nothing but isolated manifestations of this deeply rooted social evil which motivate them and all of us must battle.

2118 Confident that I am not going to be lacking that involvement, and sure that all the authorities, and not just those under my authority, will always support whatever means progress and morality, I do not hesitate in expecting that the mutual effort realized in this way will certainly be sufficient to reduce the frequency and seriousness of this evil, and a sure guarantee that in the end would achieve its complete disappearance.

For such a positive goal, the authorities subordinate to me must come with a strong will, insisting for itself and through its agents in the beneficial labor of regularly watching over and punishing those attacks on religion and public decorum with all the severity of governmental action provided or entrust their correction, if the circumstances call for it, to the courts of law.

They will take into account that blasphemy, as something contrary to the respect due to Christian morality, also is contrary to the precepts of Article 11 of the Constitution of State, and as a public ridicule of religious dogmas falls under the scope of Article 240 of the Penal Code, in accordance with the sentences of the Supreme Court of Justice of 13 and 30 April 1885 and other later decisions; and blasphemy in less serious cases has a punitive sanction in Article 586 of the Penal Code and Article 22 of the Provincial Law. Finally, all these transgressions, as they violate the ordinances, regulations and edicts the local authorities decree and must decree for the policy and good government of the towns are subject to the penalties indicated in Article 77 of the Municipal Law.

One can only ask that these means with which the legal precepts facilitate official action for the honorable task of watching over the public good in such an important matter, are enforced consistently and with integrity to be fruitful, and it certainly will be if it has the scrupulous attention dedicated to it that it deserves.

To achieve this more lawfully, I decided to announce the following rules, which I earnestly urge everyone to observe exactly and I will require those who may fail to show diligence in complying with them:

2119 1. The Mayors shall order the agents, night watchmen, guards and other municipal employees who perform or can perform surveillance and police activities, to bring formal and immediate charges against any person, of any social class or status, who utters blasphemies or concepts contrary to social decency in streets, plazas and other public thoroughfares.

2. The Civil Guard, the agents and individuals of the Surveillance Corps and other civil servants of like character directly under my authority, will also bring the same formal charges before the Mayors in the same kinds of cases, and make me aware that have done so at the same time.

3. The Mayors will examine and evaluate the charges and will of course then apply the sentence that within the scope of their powers they may adjust for the nature of the offense and advisability of avoiding its repetition, or they will take the accused party before the courts of law if the seriousness of the case so demands.

4. The demands, complaints and charges made by any neighbor, resident or passer-by will proceed in the same way, with the right of all recognized by Article 13 of the State Constitution and Article 24 of the Municipal Law.

5. All decision adopted on these matters by the Mayors, even when they judge it is not necessary to impose or request any corrective measure, they will be punctual in making me aware of the effects they consider timely in the use of the powers awarded me in Article 22 of the Provincial Law.

6. If the insults to religion, decency, and public decency which the present circular letter deal with do not have a punishment expressly established in the municipal ordinances of some town, they will of course then proceed to broaden the punishments in the section where they are lacking, or announce supplementary regulations that were conducive to achieving that goal.

7. The spirit and scope of this circular letter and the sentences the Mayors or City Councils have indicated or are indicating for the repression of the offenses in them, will be made known publicly to the respective neighborhood by edict, proclamation or any other means that assures its proper and advisable publicity.

8. The Mayor and other governmental authorities and agents will have it understood that the offenses this circular letter intends to correct must be and shall be punished with greater severity when committed by public servants, especially those who have the obligation to suppress and denounce them”.

2120 Venerable priests, the preceding Circular Letter is very laudable, with regulations inspired in the conscience of the duty of our most honorable Civil Governor, and we hope that they will be effective through the cooperation of the Mayor and other governmental and judicial authorities and agents.

The ecclesiastical authorities, priests and Catholics of every town are the ones who are called first to this cooperation, by all means which prudent zeal and practical charity suggest to each one according to his own ministry and to the degree of the influences so that the preaching of some, the prayers of others and the actions of all may reach the point of influencing the customs of the peoples, in order that everyone becomes aware of how gross, horrible, criminal, and dangerous the abominable sin of blasphemy is.

We urge every one, and primarily you, reverend Priests, to organize the evangelic resources of Christian civilization and return for the glory of God and the decorum and dignity of your respective parish churches, banishing from them the vice of blasphemy, where it brought such disgrace, and making amends for the sacrileges that cannot be avoided with works and acts of praise and love of God.

Solsona, 15 July of 1908.

THE BISHOP

9

A Necessary and Commendable Campaign

(B. Sol 43 [1908], pp. 367-369)

2121 What to a great degree deserves all our praise and demands the support of all good souls is the campaign undertaken by the supreme government of this nation, backed by the Provincial authorities, due to the appearance of the deadly cholera in Russia, where it has been experiencing a terrifying increase, and the more or less remote danger, but in the end still a danger, that this terrible plague may invade our beloved homeland.

The prospect of illness imposes duties which no one can avoid complying with, and therefore while we enthusiastically applaud all the authorities, and particularly his Excellency, the Minister of Internal Affairs, for his incredible activity and zeal, we also turn our gaze towards our beloved Clergy, whose beneficial influence on the people can produce enormous advantages to the public health. Their charity, raised to a higher level because it is the charity of Christ over the common, ordinary good impulses produced by mere philanthropy and altruism, indicates a primary position for it when dealing with the public good, a place in the forefront when danger threatens, a position of honor that belongs to it by force of heritage when love, denial and charity until the point of sacrifice are necessary. *For the charity of Christ presseth us*².

In this concept of priesthood, which is exact, and the spirit of the ecclesiastical personnel which it is only fair to recognize, lies the inspiration for the interesting and honorable telegram addressed to the Spanish bishops by his Excellency, the Minister of Internal Affairs, to whom all the Prelates have unanimously offered our most wholehearted and sincere cooperation and that of our respective clergy.

And it shall be this way, as it always has been, if the Lord, in his adorable designs, should visit this tribulation upon us.

2122 A secret impulse of the heart brings us to expect the Divine Providence once more will leave us feeling the wholesome effects of his sweet Love, showing us by lifting the scourge but not reaching the point of bringing His raised arm down, leaving us punished and corrected by the mere threat but free, however, from the terrible plague.

Nevertheless, prudence advises to put in practice the saying, so full of good common sense, "God helps those who help themselves" (*A Dios rogando y con el mazo dando*). The indescribable help and splendors of the faith; the valued resources of science; join together these two elements and then you will have chosen correctly; that is the way.

2123 We order, then, that all the Reverend Priests of our beloved Diocese, to the degree it is possible, to contribute effectively to the splendid public health campaign being undertaken, and that the Parish Priests and whoever hold positions

² II Corinthians 5:14.

in the congregations to come to an agreement with the local authorities, cooperate in complying with the public health regulations that are necessary to put into effect, as advised by science and decreed by the Superiors. At the same time, they should take care that the application of these regulations is done correctly and using sound judgment, so that damages are not produced instead of benefits and conflicts and bitterness increase instead of being avoided or reduced, and also to dispel false prejudices, tenaciously held opinions and resistance, or diversions that simplicity, lack of culture and routine often produce, unconsciously accumulating more than a few obstacles to the prompt and life-saving action inspired in Religion, charity and science.

Similarly, they shall keep the cemeteries, church gardens and orchards, fountains and all locations and objects entrusted to their jurisdiction and care well cleaned.

The principal effort of all must be to take advantage of these circumstances, like manna come from heaven, to purify the customs (the worst of all plagues are corruption, intemperance and vice, which strongly nourish and prepares way for the epidemics and public disasters), to disinfect hearts and consciences and promote a great advance in the hygiene of the soul.

This is an undeniable truth, shining bright as day; healthy spirits in healthy bodies make up a fortress for the defense of health and human life, and no army of enemy epidemics can manage to open a great breach in its walls, let alone assault it.

We conclude with a word that synthesizes our entire thought. And that is: Hygiene, a great deal of hygiene! Cleanliness, a great deal of cleanliness! Physical hygiene, moral hygiene; cleanliness in the soul, conscience, customs and in the entire moral order.

This I urge on you, this I impose on you, this I wanted to tell you very much, beloved Priests and faithful, much is expected of all of you, and blessing you with all the affection in my soul.

† THE BISHOP

10

The Catastrophe of Sicily and Calabria

(B. Sol 44 [1909], pp. 25-27)

2124 In the last issue of the Bulletin, we informed you, Venerable Brothers and Beloved Children, of the tremendous catastrophe that has occurred just before in Sicily and Calabria, suggesting that you interest yourselves by taking a public collection in the churches to help alleviate that misfortune in part. Today, knowing more details about the terrifying disaster and the enormous need of resources for the vast number of people who have been left in the utmost misery, we can assure you that maintaining the needy there costs 200,000 *pesetas* a day. We once again

approach and appeal to the never-questioned feeling and charity of our clergy and faithful, so that since not everyone will have had the chance to contribute to the previous collection, to imagine the amounts that your heart tells you in the subscription to resolve the sorrowful situation of our brothers, we are heading and will leave open with our Council Secretary until the 25th of this month, after which we will send the full amount donated so that the money may be distributed as he sees fit, to His Holiness the Pope, who is giving such a gallant display of sublime charity.

2125 With respect to the deceased victims of the catastrophe, we have ordered, in accordance with our most Illustrious Council, to celebrate a solemn Requiem Mass in our Holy Cathedral Church, and we hope that everyone responsible for churches will apply some suffrage in the usual way they have when dealing with like cases, and the other priests and congregations will perform another one so that God may welcome in his bosom so many souls who will not have relatives to pray for them.

We do not believe it necessary to enlighten our enlightened Clergy on the need of asking for alms, commanding by the Divine Master, nor the advisability of urging the faithful to make some sacrifice for the living and the dead, forming in this way a chorus in the concert of universal commiseration that the tragedy we are lamenting has awakened all over the world.

Solsona, 1 January of 1909.

† THE BISHOP

11

Pilgrimage to Rome

(B. Sol 44 [1909], pp. 145-146)

2126 For the purpose of attending the most solemn celebrations of the Canonization of the Blessed Joseph Oriol³, whose magnificent ceremonies will be held on 20 May, we have decided to form part of the pilgrimage to Rome, having the fervor of God and with the enthusiasm the Clergy from Catalonia feel for the glory of the humble priest of Santa María del Pino, of Barcelona.

But we are also being taken to Rome by the ardent desire to see and comfort the Supreme Pontiff in the bitterness that his heroic soul suffers in his colossal struggle for the triumph of the Church. To that end, we shall also express to His Holiness the filial feelings of love and submission which the beloved members of our diocese offer to him.

And if some of them want to contribute, due to our visits, to the work of the Peter's Pence (*Óbolo de San Pedro*), so indispensable to the common Father of the

³ Cf. AAS I (1909) p. 605ss. Cf. 190, 1761 above; 2129.

faithful, to the parish of the world, the Leader of the Universal Church, who has no other assets beyond the offerings of his children to attend to the enormous expenses in service and benefit of the Catholic world, we order all of the Reverend Parish priests and others responsible for the churches of our Diocese that they read this Circular Letter during the masses of the first festival day after receiving it, inviting their respective congregations to make this contribution and to send the offering to us before 10 May.

Solsona, 20 April of 1909.

† THE BISHOP

12

The Protestant Heresy

(B. Sol 44 [1909], pp. 152-154)

2127 Several pages of Protestant propaganda are being widely circulated and, with surprising indecency, were even sent to the Ecclesiastical Authorities themselves, religious Institutions and individuals characterized as Catholics (and even more to the simple, innocent people!). They were written with great hypocrisy, cunning in every way and yet would not turn out to be really dangerous if it they were not, by affecting a devout and even mystical style and adding texts of the Holy Scripture in favor of the Faith, stimulating lustfulness, removing the restraints from all excesses of passion and leaving the doors wide open to all kinds of dissolute behavior. This is being done under the pretext that, as Christ spilled his blood for all men, these same men, however much they may have sinned and are sinning, do not have to do anything to save themselves. Just by believing in Christ they are saved and there is nothing else for them to do.

What a faith so much to the liking of the animal man, and how pleasant a devotion which allows them to race about with total freedom, like a high-spirited sorrel (horse) without reins or bridle through the green meadows of frivolity and impurity, to burn in the fire of orgies until the last trace of modesty and decency, oppress the innocent if they feel so inclined, enrich themselves without regard for the means, to grow in evil and continue growing in it, like the spray in the stormy sea. And then, at any time when it seems good to them, they can say: "And, nevertheless, more than important than all of those excesses, I am saved, and to be saved there is nothing else for me to do: I believe in Christ and He already did it all at once for me and everyone who believes in him, however much they sin, and live however they live. And since the ones He saves are saints, I, so impure, so outrageous, such a thief and slanderer...I, too, am a saint and there is nothing else for me to do, not penance, not restitutions, not any compensation; I said enough, now everything is arranged; I said I believe in Jesus, so now there is nothing else for me to do, everything is done and I am nothing less than a saint; and not only that, if I feel like going back to the same or even greater depravations, like dogs to

vomit, I will not lose the sureness of my salvation, either. I will say it again; enough of this and I believe in Christ, and without any more discomforts or inconveniences (because Christ has already done all that), I am a saint again, I am safe in Heaven. Works? What for? There are more than enough, they already did one for everyone. Much faith and sins comes. *Believe strongly and sin strongly!*

2128 The Church thinks in another way when it reminds us with the Holy Scriptures that "Faith without works is death". *Faith also, if it have not works, is dead in itself*⁴.

It thinks in another way when it advises us, "Not all those who say 'Lord! Lord!' shall be saved"⁵.

It thinks in another way when it warns us that "not the listeners, not the experts, not the eulogists, but those who fulfill the Law shall be saved"⁶.

San Agustín expressed himself in another way when, speaking of the support and harmony of the divine element and the human element for the salvation of the sinner summed up a magnificent and sublime doctrine with these words: *Not even the same that raised us without us will save us without us*⁷.

You also have to think in another way, my beloved children, moving away with horror and nausea from such loathsome and useless writings, such hypocritical and horrendous propaganda. For that purpose, taken by our love towards you and in fulfillment of your duty, we are making this warning to you, so that you save yourselves and be aware of the perverse pages we are referring to, we denounce them before you and say that almost all of them appear to be printed in Figueres, but their main distinguishing mark is the following written at the bottom of each page: DEPOSITORY OF THE SPANISH SOCIETY OF RELIGIOUS TREATISES AND BOOKS.

When you read this, you are certainly facing danger and hidden poison. If you do not want to fall, say as Christ did to his evil tempter in the desert: *Begone, Satan!*⁸

Your Father blesses you with all his affection.

Solsona, May of 1909.

† THE BISHOP

2129 On taking up the pen to greet you, beloved members of the diocese, after returning from our very happy journey to Rome, as you know for the canonization

⁴ James 2: 17.

⁵ Matthew 7:21.

⁶ James 1:22-24.

⁷ Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE: *Sermon 169*, 11: PL 38:923. Cf. 1190, 1226, 1353 above.

⁸ Matthew 4:10.

of St. Joseph Oriol⁹, the glory of Barcelona and all Catalonia, the dazzling star in the sky of the Spanish Church, the glory and honor of the Catholic priesthood, so unfairly vilified today, we have all of you very much in our thoughts and heart, yes, everyone, from the Illustrious Chapter Council to the last priest, from the richest to the poorest members of our diocese, from the smallest child to the oldest of them all.

I thought and felt this in Rome, and my soul did not lose sight of you for even a moment, now in the great solemn ceremonies we attended, so magnificent that, even if we wanted to, we would not be able to give you a complete picture of them, since in the places we visited, of most sacred and eloquent memories, where history and sovereign inspiration influence the spiritual, saturating it with heavenly perfumes and aromas of immortality; now, in the end and in a very special way, that moment of incomparable happiness for Us in that we had an individual, confidential and extensive audience with the Supreme Pontiff.

2130 With the naturalness and simplicity characteristic of and exclusive to exceptional men, that without diminishing his authority and the respect and prestige due him and, to the contrary increases them even more, he attracts, ennobles and controls hearts through confidence. In his own individual office, which is respectable but modest, like the virtue of the person who lives in it, the Pastor of Pastors, Pilot of the Ship of Peter, the Holy Leader, the Supreme and infallible authority of the universal Church deigned to receive and attend to your humble Pastor. There is an extremely likeable simplicity to him, his friendly and appealing attitude, and his features radiate kindness and sweetness, but in the gleam of his pupils, in a certain involuntary languor and even in the accents of his voice, one detects something melancholy, revealing a profound pain and the enormous weight that rests on that great soul, something which, easily noticed from the first moment, sparks your interest, increases the authority and pulls up from the deepest parts of the soul intense wishes to console him and the inclination to go to the point of sacrifice, if necessary, if that would be able to achieve it.

And We, beloved children, were able to obtain some part of this good fortune not by Ourselves but we owe it to you instead.

2131 In fact, we were making him aware of the state of our Diocese, mainly with regard to beliefs and Christian customs, practices and religious traditions. We, who always bitterly deplore the damage caused in the souls by the enemy, do not want nor should we exaggerate the sad notice or the optimistic notice, either, but reflect with full precision and impartialness the true situation. And he knew of the discipline, application, exemplary behavior and zeal of the clergy in general; the distinguished collaboration of so many religious Communities; of the strength in the Faith of Christ on the part of the faithful; of their devotion and perseverance, and their bravery in facing the hard struggles with anti-religious propaganda, since here, in our Diocese, thanks to God, the virus of the heresies and modern, more

⁹ Cf. AAS I (1909) p. 605 ss. Cf. 190, 1761, 2126 above.

or less, errors have still not penetrated. This is when we had the goof fortune of observing the consolation that your religious feeling and perseverance had brought to his soul troubled by so many and such sensitive defections and infidelities; this is when, the pleasure showing on his face, his look was happier and I heard from his august lips words of blessing for the entire Diocese of Solsona, words which deserve our gratitude for all eternity and must give immense satisfaction to all of you, as they will be a lasting memory for us, who are your spiritual Father. He told us that by his commission and special authorization we could give the faithful the Apostolic Blessing on the day which seemed most appropriate to us; he bestowed a special Apostolic Blessing on the Illustrious Council of our Holy Cathedral Church and, finally, another individually for each and every one of the parish priests and each and every one of the Priests of the current Clergy of our Diocese.

And now We, our chest swollen with holy and sweet satisfaction in bringing such a holy missive from Rome to you, we greet you with ardent feelings of charity, we give thanks for your prayers during such a memorable pilgrimage and for your devout alms for Peter's Pence. We order that all the Priests say in the Mass once, on a day when it is not prevented by the Rubric of the service, the *Pro Gratiarum Actione* (thanksgiving procession) prayer, and finally we note the upcoming solemn ceremony of the most Holy Corpus for fulfilling the commission of the Supreme Pontiff to give you the Apostolic Blessing in our Holy Cathedral Church, once the High Mass is concluded.

Your Bishop,

Solsona, May of 1909.

† BROTHER LUIS AMIGÓ

14

The War in Africa and the Tragic Week of Barcelona

(B. Sol 44 [1909], pp. 257-261)

2132 In view of the extremely sad circumstances afflicting our Nation, at war with semi-savage African hordes, a war into which our Nation was unfortunately dragged into against general public opinion and even of the Government itself, as the skillful efforts of the honorable men governing us to avert it were futile; a war which, like it or not, necessarily becomes, due to the insurmountable force of the situation, a question of life or death for our Nation, that is, in its existence as such among the European powers and its global relations or the dishonor of a stunted life without dignity or honor. With the national spirit in training knowing the true situation and with everyone doing their duty, a prompt and brilliant victory will crown the brow of our beloved and glorious Spain and it will be reincorporated in the position corresponding to it among the other nations. Then, prestigious and duly considered, it will be able, in peace and control of its destiny, to freely arrange

the great elements it has amassed for the development of trade, industry, the arts, science and morality, yes, the so-neglected but essentially necessary Morality of Christ, without whose divine ferment all social masses become corrupt...

2133 On the other hand, to see at the same time how the war was inevitable presented it appears like... who would say it! the most deplorable and unpatriotic of all treasons; now they consider it themselves, now in the despicable, vile moment chosen for betraying in a single stroke the support due to our soldiers, the vital interests of the Homeland and the special qualities of one of its most thriving areas, filling with mourning, desolation and blood a site that should be looked on as sacred and inviolable, where with full generosity and tenderness all the poor souls of every class, age and social status are all looked after, giving them education, refuge and comfort in their Asylums and Schools free of charge, in the place of the noble, charitable and kind Matron, the glory of the Catalan Principality, as well in other important neighboring cities...

2134 Considering, with great pain in our heart and affliction of our soul, that the solemn hour is now here in which an entire people, if it does not want to foolishly dig its own grave, must fall on its knees before our seriously offended God, showing themselves to be as fervent as the need demands, as much true believers as incredulous at the blatant nerve shown by this treason, and filled with contrition and holy hope, offer to the Divine Majesty, at the cost of any sacrifice, all the possible satisfactions and public acts and individual apologies for the purpose of appeasing the Divine Justice. With our charities and fervent prayers, we attempt to make the most Sacred Heart of Jesus take an interest in looking at our soldiers with benevolent eyes, accept our prayers of suffrage for the dead, inspire and assist the heroic leaders who are under such great strain, bring a complete, brilliant and decisive victory quickly to our army, and pacify the emotions within the Nation by uniting for the salvation, good and prosperity of the Homeland, which is only possible and will only become reality when the pure light of the Faith shines in its sky and the feeling of Charity beats predominantly in their chests.

2135 Therefore, we believe it is our duty to make a few regulations related to the situation and to that effect, we order:

1. That all the churches of our Diocese celebrate three consecutive days of solemn rogations, asking the Lord of armies to grant triumph and victory to our troops and inviting the local authorities to those acts.

2. We order all the priests, laymen and members of the religious orders in our Diocese to include the prayer *Pro tempore belli* when they say Holy Mass, always provided the Rubrics allow it, for as long as the present circumstances last.

3. We also invite them to, during the free part of the reward of the Holy Sacrifice, to apply each day a Memento of the living for the conversion of the skeptical and miserable sacrilegious souls, and another memento for the dead, in suffrage of the soldiers who died in the war and all the victims of the past revolution, earnestly asking them in addition that they bear the same goals in mind in all their prayers and private devotions.

4. We equally commission all the religious Communities of both sexes to do the same, and in addition to perform some daily act of Community, praying with great fervor for these devout ends.

5. To the families who have the commendable custom of reciting the Holy Rosary, and those who for any reason have interrupted that custom, we earnestly beg that you renew that practice and apply it to that end until the end of the war.

6. With complete security, we are also confident that the people who often frequent the Holy Sacraments will apply some monthly communion, and better still if it is weekly.

7. To relieve the situation of the families of reservists from this Diocese as much as possible, we urge all our beloved children to contribute by making a humble contribution, to the extent that their circumstances permit, to the subscription for this purpose opened by the representative in the Courts for this district, His Excellency Pedro Milá y Camps, and their alms will be sent to the most Illustrious authorized Canon priest of this Diocese.

2136 You have to do holy violence to Heaven, it is necessary to make amends to God Our Lord, who is very offended, not only for such horrendous sacrileges and sins they have committed, but even more by those who call themselves his children and with such good reason he can complain repeating these bitter words: *But they have despised me*; you have to pray to God *with a strong cry*, imitating the Divine Mediator, and not in the manner of that people, now vanquished forever, of whom it is written: *People glorify me with their lips, but their heart is far from me*¹⁰; you have to return, in the end, but return resolutely to the ways of God, foolishly abandoned by some and forgotten by others, in this society that today is crying over the initial consequences of its corruption.

And in the comforting hope that these new regulations and calls shall be well received by all members of our diocese and will obtain the most exact and detailed compliance, we are please to grant fifty days of indulgence to our Beloved Children for their practice and attendance at each of the recommended activities and we bless and greet everyone, in the name of the Lord and with very cordial affection.

Solsona, on the holy day of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin Mary of 1909.

† BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP,
Apostolic Administrator of Solsona

15

Hospices for Priests¹¹

(B. Sol 44 [1909], pp. 348-355)

2137 Venerable Priests, we have always lamented the sad situation that most of the Ministers of the Lord are reduced to in their old age or when they lose their

¹⁰ Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 15:8.

¹¹ Cf. 2059 above.

usefulness for their work, seeing them unattended and often considered as a heavy burden by the same people who are most obligated to them, by virtue of their relations or for the favors and protection they received from them.

It certainly is very sad that while the Priest is completely devoted to and sacrifices, in the name of charity, for his family and other neighbors, that they have to consume the bitter disappointment of seeing that they only serve for their own interests, since, once the hope of profit is gone, the concern and care stops.

The divine Providence, which encourages us to make the most of everything, Venerable Priests, does so to get our hearts to rid themselves of the ties of flesh and blood that usually imprison us, and to make us understand the preference with which we must mutually attend to the needs of our brothers in the priesthood.

The majority of the societies have understood the need today to combine their efforts to mutually protect each other, and contribute with their humble contribution to assure the subsistence and care for the illnesses of their own people who are no longer able to work. The proper thing, then, is that we should do so ourselves; and with even more motivation when the reasons indicated demand it.

For our part, we can assure you, Beloved Priests, that this has been our ideal, one we were aspiring to obtain from the moment when, by divine will, we were entrusted with the governing of this Diocese.

2138 It is true that with the creation of Monte Pío of the Clergy, which largely cares for the needs of its members and is thriving in this Diocese, means the sustenance of the majority of our Clergy during their illnesses and those cases when it is impossible to carry out their ministries is ensured; but not all of the Clergy are part of this Society and it is not just the physical nourishment that has to be assured for the Minister of the Lord, but also the service and cares, which only the interest based on a true love of charity knows and wants to offer. It is also very advisable and a matter of the utmost importance to provide accommodation for the priests who, not being able to live with their family, can only find board and lodging adapted to their condition with great difficulty, and also inexpensive enough as they usually need, given their precarious situation. And finally, we also feel there is need for this Hospice for those who come to the home city of the Diocese to deal with their affairs, in order that they can be among their own and with the decorum corresponding to their priestly dignity.

We think we have and want to provide a solution for all that by establishing a Hospice for Priests in the old site of the Seminary which will be governed by the following Regulation:

REGULATION

CHAPTER I

Object and Goal of the Hospice for Priests

2139 The object of this Hospice for Priests is to provide a respectable hospice and through and charitable assistance to the elderly and invalid Priests of the Diocese, others who request it with the permission of the Prelate, and also those people passing through who wish to find lodging there.

2. The goal of this work is so the Ministers of the Lord can end their days in a holy way in this house, attended to and cared for by their brothers in the Priesthood, and that all of them can find lodging there that is adapted to their dignity and with the advisable independence and separation from laymen.

3. For this reason, all priests should have great esteem and appreciation for this house and champion it whenever possible.

4. Our Seraphic Father St. Francis is the patron of the hospice and the title of its church, a model for veneration for the Priesthood, since he always spoke on his knees to whoever he saw wearing the dress of that high position, and was accustomed to saying, "If I found myself on a path with an angel and a priest, I would first kiss the hand of the priest and then venerate the angel"¹².

CHAPTER II

Regarding the Means for Sustaining this House

2140 5. The Priests who stay in this Hospice shall pay for their lodging the pension or quota which corresponds to their status or condition, or by virtue of how long or short a stay they have in the house, as established in another chapter, since this new Institution does not have any other resources to sustain it, nor is it fair to charge the Seminary, to which it belongs and under whose leadership it will be governed.

6. But seeing as it will be impossible for some Priests to pay the pension due to their poverty, and others will not be able to give the full amount corresponding to them, a permanent subscription shall be opened in the Bulletin of the Diocese among the Clergy and laymen of the Diocese, so whoever voluntarily wants to contribute to this great work of charity can do so and the results will be used to pay for or finish payment for the pensions of the House.

¹² Cf. 2C, 201, in *St. Francis of Assisi* (BAC, Madrid, 1978), p. 345.

CHAPTER III
Conditions for Admission

2141 7. No Priest shall be admitted in this Hospice without the permission of the Prelate or the Board, with the exception of the temporary residents, who the Director can admit.

8. In order to have regular residence there, it will be a necessary condition to belong to this Diocese: but priests from outside the diocese can be admitted for lodging for a few days.

9. The Priests who reside in this House, in whatever fashion that may be, understand they will subject to this Regulation by which the House is governed, and the direction of the Superior commissioned by the Prelate to govern it.

CHAPTER IV
Pension for board and lodging and extraordinary expenses

2142 10. The ordinary pension for those who regularly stay in the House will be two *pesetas* per day, to be paid by month in advance and two *pesetas* and fifty *céntimos* for the temporary residents.

11. Only the Prelate and Board will be able to make some grace in this pension to whoever they judge advisable or necessary, but in this case it will be arranged that what they owe for the quota may be paid through the deposit of alms, as indicated in point 6.

12. This amount will include, in addition to food, the costs of washing clothes, a doctor and medicines. But the Establishment will not be obligated to pay the washing and ironing of clothes when the Priests prefer to do so outside the house, or pay for another doctor than the one indicated for the Hospice, nor other medications prescribed by the priest for ordinary illnesses.

13. If the patients are poor, the Prelate and Board will similarly be able to arrange for the extraordinary expenses from illnesses of long duration to be paid from the previously mentioned alms fund.

14. The House will be able to receive from the Monte Pío of the Clergy the pension of the Priests which belong to it and are in condition to receive the help that Monte Pío grants to its members. If the amount corresponding to the priest is greater than the pension, the surplus will be delivered to the Priest himself.

15. If someone, due to their medical condition, needs a servant expressly to care for them, one will be granted but the maintenance and salary of the servant will be at their expense. In the same way, they will have to pay the amount of any extraordinary expenses they request from the kitchen, heating, etc.

16. If any benefactors of the House want to retire there, that consideration will be taken into account to lower the price of the pension for them, according to the judgment of the Prelate and Board.

CHAPTER V
General Notices

2143 17. For the good order and government of the House, and in order to not increase the work of the servants, the Priests are requested to be punctual for meals.

18. Seating in the dining room will be by order of position, and among those of equal rank, the oldest members of the House will have precedence.

19. The only acts and hours the Priests will be subject to are: 8:00 a.m. for breakfast, 12:00 noon for the midday meal, 7:00 p.m. for the Rosary, meditation and examination; 8:00 p.m. for dinner and 9:00 p.m. for going to bed and rest.

20. For celebrating Mass, they will be subject to the order established by the Director.

21. Visitors shall be received in the location intended for that purpose, and under no circumstances in their room.

22. It is absolutely forbidden for women to enter in the rooms of the Priest and the interior of the House, without the express permission of the Prelate, who will not grant it except in extraordinary cases, and then they must be accompanied by a layman.

23. No layman shall stay in this Hospice, even if they are a family member or accompanying a priest.

CHAPTER VI
On the Government of this Hospice

2144 24. As this Hospice belongs to the Seminary, the Director and Administrator of the Hospice shall always be one of the Superiors of the Seminary, as chosen and appointed by the Prelate.

25. The Director must govern and administer the Hospice, without deviating from the provisions of this Regulation in anything, and making all the guests and employees of the Establishment comply with it as well.

26. It is incumbent upon this position: To preside over all acts of the Community; observe closely and with great interest the behavior of all those who dwell in the House; collect the pensions and make the necessary purchases and payments, keeping a detailed account to be added to the accounts of the Seminary at the end of each month.

27. For greater support of this Establishment and so there is someone who administers and gives the due application of the alms raised for the purposes indicated in point 6, a Board of Protectors will be established in the following way:

President:

The Illustrious and Most Reverend Bishop of the Diocese

Vice President:

The Most Illustrious Vicar General.

Members:

The Most Illustrious Dean of the Cathedral Council
 The Reverend Rector or Vice-Rector of the Seminary
 The Reverend Director of the Hospice

Treasurer and Secretary:

These two positions will be appointed by the Most Illustrious Prelate, after hearing the opinion of the Board.

28. This Board will always meet when advisable, and at every session the Treasurer will report on the revenues, expenses and balance of the funds; and the Secretary will record them in the minutes.

29. If at any time there would be surplus funds which can be capitalized, they will be invested in State government bonds and deposited in the Treasury of the Diocese for the indicated purposes.

30. The Board will be able to help the Seminary in the works of improvement or repair of the building, when the balance of the funds permits.

Solsona in the holy day of the Seraphic Father St. Francis, 4 October of 1909.

† BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP
 Apostolic Administrator of Solsona

16

On Modernism

(B. Sol 44 [1909], pp. 346-348)

2145 As the enemy never ceases in his efforts to sow the seeds of discord in the fields of the Catholic Church, beloved children, there is the need here for vigilance and continuous work of those responsible for its cultivation, to prevent such a destructive effort and pull out the weeds that may reduce its rewards of eternal life.

There is hardly any dogma in Catholicism that has not been challenged in some period; but in our own times, inspired by liberal principles and modern ideas, the attacks have come from people who, in spite of wanting to call themselves Catholics, have attacked its most holy and sacred foundations: the Holy Scripture, the truths of the faith; the divine Tradition, the Holy Sacraments and even the figure of Jesus Christ himself.

For this reason, His Holiness Pius X raised the alarm and cried out against them in his *Pascendi* Encyclical¹³, unmasking them so we could recognize them more easily, and putting on record the pride and arrogance that is peculiar to all heresies by nature.

¹³ Cf. Pius X: *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*: ASS 40 (1907), p. 596ss.

2146 Look closely, beloved children, to know these poisonous snakes and save yourselves from their venom, at their lack of respect for ecclesiastical traditions and decrees of the Councils: in the disdain they show towards the Holy Fathers of the church, whose knowledge they admit but make their ignorance apparent concerning criticism and history, and their attack on the scholastic philosophy, which they say does not conform well with progress in the sciences and the needs of the period.

Save yourself, then, from all those whom you hear breathe in this way, *tamquam pecus morbida*; and following the advice of St. John, keep yourself from even greeting them, so that communicating with them does not also make you take part in their evil works¹⁴.

Through the mercy of God, we consider our Diocese to be very free from this deadly plague, and we trust very much in the knowledge and virtue our beloved Clergy, who will not let themselves be taken by these erroneous doctrines. For this reason, we have not rushed to appoint the Council of Vigilance and Doctrine and the Council of Ecclesiastic Censors before, as the Encyclical mentioned above advised, and why at present we appoint the following:

Council of Vigilance of Doctrine

2147 The Most Illustrious Hermógenes Malo, Dean.

Most Illustrious Antonio Miquel, Canon Priest.

Most Illustrious Manuel Vilella, Canon Priest.

Reverend Bernardo Font, Beneficial Priest of the Cathedral.

All the Reverend Archpriests of the Diocese.

The Reverend Father Superior of the Order of Our Lady of Mercy of San Ramón de Portell.

The Reverend Father Superior of the Piarist Fathers of Tárrega.

The Father Superior of the Congregation of the Mission of Bellpuig.

Most Illustrious Juan Rosell, Canon Priest, Professor of Morality.

Reverend Angel Cuadrench, Professor of Dogmatic Theology.

Reverend Dr. Juan Mata, Professor of Canon Law.

Most Reverend Father Casanova, Abbot. General Visitor of the Benedictine Fathers.

We pray to the Lord that each and every one nominated accept the appointment and fulfill with zeal and interest the delicate mission we entrust to them, so that the flock commended to us always stays strong in the faith and free from the contagion of modernist doctrines.

Solsona, holy day of the Archangel St. Rafael of 1909.

† THE BISHOP

¹⁴ Cf. II John:10.

17

Sacrilegious Robbery

(B. Sol 44 [1909], pp. 361-363)

2148 With a heavy heart, we have to inform you today, beloved children, of the sad tidings that the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes of La-Nou was robbed and, what is unquestionably more lamentable, that those sacrilegious heathens did not even respect the Divine Majesty, and took the sacred images safeguarded in the tabernacle.

The followers of Lucifer now are not content with vomiting from their disgusting mouths the most horrible blasphemies against the Lord and his Christ, but rather, in his diabolical rage and in accordance with the plan of the masons, they are stripping the temples of the Lord of their most precious objects for worship and committing unprecedented and terrible sacrileges against the God of the Eucharist, who patiently suffers them and still hopes for their repentance.

Let us cry, beloved children, at the foot of the holy Tabernacle over such enormous outrages! And at the same time we ask the Lord to make known to us what sacred images were robbed, we also pray for the miserable sacrilegious souls so that with the price of the sacred objects and, especially, with the money they perhaps obtained from selling the divine Master, that they are not buying their eternal damnation as Judas did.

2149 We hold such a high idea of the beloved members of our diocese that we could never think they might commit similar crimes in our Diocese that are unfortunately so frequent in other places. We are still convinced that the evildoers could not have been from among our beloved children; but at any rate, as these sacrilegious robberies are increasing every day, to prevent them from being duplicated in our Diocese, we raise the alarm to our beloved priests responsible for the churches and we recommend to them: 1. Reinforce the doors and windows of the doors, covering them with iron if need be, and put strong locks on them that, if possible, open and close from the inside, as can be done in the churches which connect to the house of the rector. 2. Try to ensure that the Tabernacles are screwed on tight and secured to the table and altarpiece so it is not easy to remove them; and it would be advisable that its interior or casing be made of iron, with a lock that cannot be opened except with a master key. 3. Remove the holy glasses, clothing and valuables from the sacristies and keep them guarded in a secure place known only to the priest in charge of the church and another person of complete confidence. Finally, regularly safeguard the Divine Majesty in white metal ciboria made of Meneses silver, which cannot arouse the greed of these lovers of what does not belong to them.

2150 This sad event, added to the horrible sacrileges perpetrated not long ago in Barcelona and the anticipation of the events that threaten us, if God with his mercy and our penance does not save us, forces us to call on you, beloved children, for the necessity of raising in common our prayers to the throne of the Almighty

seeking forgiveness and mercy; to that end, it is our wish that all the faithful frequently recite, and especially after the praying of their devotions, the following short prayer:

*Appease, Lord, your anger,
Your justice and your rigor,
Sweet Jesus of my life!
Mercy, Lord.*

Similarly, learn in common language to say at the end of the Mass the prayers the priest recites in Latin, having been ordered to do this by His Holiness Leo XIII, and thereby we have had them translated and the Priests and other priests will be able to acquire them in the print shop of Mr. Serafin Corominas of this city.

Solsona, 14 November of 1909.

† THE BISHOP

18

Municipal Elections

(B. Sol 44 [1909], pp. 387-391)

2151 With the date when you must go vote in the elections drawing near, beloved children, we believe it is our duty to give you some instructions, in order that you will act correctly in a matter of such significance, and for that reason we make our own and issue to you the rules decreed by His Excellency, the Bishop of Madrid, all of them based on the instructions of the Roman Pontiff Pius X, the Supreme Master of the Doctrine.

1. The citizens have a general obligation to go vote in the elections and choose good candidates who are ideal for securing true progress, the public good of the Religion and the Homeland.

2. This obligation of legal justice or charity towards society is, by its very nature, serious; to the degree that without a valid reason excusing them, whoever abstains from voting can sin mortally, whenever the good candidate is not elected for that reason or the candidate hostile to the Church emerges triumphant.

3. When there is a contest between an ideal Catholic and an anti-clerical or liberal candidate in the ecclesiastical sense of the word, it is not justifiable for any reason of friendship, gratitude, etc., to vote for the liberal against the Catholic. If the contest would be an ideal Catholic and an even more perfect Catholic, it will be advisable to give your vote to the most ideal in order to obtain the greatest social good.

2152 Note that Catholics are, according to the pontiff Leo XIII, whoever demonstrates their strong and faithful adherence to the precepts and doctrines set

forth in the solemn documents of the Apostolic Chair (Brief of 19 March 1881). Candidates must be taken as liberals who deny some of these doctrine and precepts, principally those which touch on the relationship of Church and State, because, according to the previously mentioned Encyclical, obedience is a characteristic quality of the Catholics, *TAMQUAM NOTA INTERNOSCENDI CATHOLICOS*. Whoever is writing articles for newspapers and is leading or establishing political parties need to take very careful precautions not to employ the narrow criteria of the party in dealing with Catholic doctrine and not to apply the dictates of liberalism or any other dogma which involves discrediting the purity of that doctrine, and no one who champions himself as a loyal child of the Church and an adherent of its visible head and all its teachings.

Note as well that one can partake of the evil of liberalism to a greater or lesser degree or, that is, of political naturalism. If there is an intense but short-lived evil, for example, a *PASSING* demagoguery, that can be and be considered a minor evil, and less damaging than another less intense yet much longer-lasting evil, especially if it is unwittingly or not openly presenting, for example, a strictly liberal system, albeit moderate; nevertheless, it could appear more *TOLERABLE*, this kind of modern *STATE*, as Leo XIII says in his *Immortale Dei* encyclical¹⁵, if compared with another state, whether real or imaginary, where they tyrannically and shamelessly persecute the Christian name. The party which in its program shows itself to be less of a persecutor of the rights of the Church in its political platform should be considered by you as less evil than the party whose platform incorporates greater persecutions.

2153 4. With a liberal or candidate hostile to the Church running against an even more hostile candidate, and without any Catholic candidate, you cannot vote for the most hostile candidate; but not only can you justifiably vote for the less hostile when doing so is considered a necessary means for avoiding the greater damage to be feared from the election of the more hostile candidate, at the very least it is fully advisable to do so, conquering any distaste you feel against voting that way. This is not considered voting for liberalism per se, if the candidate is liberal, nor approving of anything about liberalism in any way; it is, simply, the only effective way of attaining the good of the Religion and the Homeland.

5. It is also clear that when there is no contest, due to no ideal Catholic candidate presenting themselves, the voters must vote according to rules 1 and 2, and if only a liberal presents himself, you cannot give him the vote. You can \ only do this when the election of that candidate would be necessary to obtain a great good in the administration, for example, of the province or town, so they may consider it appropriate and not be afraid of him causing evils against the moral and religious order.

2154 6. In order that the electoral action be more effective, all Catholics have to be united in the struggle, without anyone trying to dissolve a Catholic party and

¹⁵ Cf. Leo XIII: *Immortale Dei*: ASS 18 (1885), pp. 161-180.

joining a liberal party and tolerate its errors. But on such a vital point as the unity of Catholics, listen to the authorized and paternal word of the reigning Supreme Pontiff, engrave them in our hearts and minds to put them into practice in the upcoming elections: "You have requested a word from us", he says in the speech mentioned before, "you have wished to receive from Our lips a word to preserve as a memento of this visit and to bring to your brothers who are not here as a greeting of peace and some message of gentle consolation. And not wanting to disappoint your hopes, we address a word to you with the brevity that our current health conditions force upon us; but at the same time with all the energy of paternal affection, because the person who addresses you is a father.

We recommend, then, union; yes, we earnestly recommend the union of all against the common enemy, because the common enemy in Spain is also working to sow the seeds of discord among the good souls. You are hereby warned and must remember that the main and perhaps the only way to defeat the enemy is through the meek submission to the teaching that are issued by this Apostolic See, and are conveyed to you through the official channels of your respective Prelates.

We have taught you many times, but today we take pleasure in repeating solemnly to you that, when trying to defend the interests of God and his Church, each one of must generously give up your own opinions and join tightly together with your bishop to form, without party distinctions, that UNION of Catholics which constitutes the strength, the strength leading to victory and victory ensures the rewards of the ventures that are already underway.

We are not trying to force you to renounce your lawful political opinion by this measure; we only want that, setting aside these different political opinions, the Catholics who belong to the various parties all unite in defense of the cause of the Religion and order, as this reason is superior to all others and rightly takes priority over all parties.

Listen with special reverence and love to the leaders of the Catholic parties, many of whom have influence in their subordinates and acquaintances and understand the need for common action with each other; do not reject the cooperation of others who, like them, are trying to defend the Church and true prosperity of the Homeland, and inspire the voters in accordance with the rules indicated above. If you have any doubts, consult your prelate or a wise and prudent spiritual leader, and God will bless your efforts.

Those who reached an understanding to reject the proposed laws of Associations, would they not have an understanding to reject other plans prejudicial to the Church or make the claims the diocese indicated as the platform of union in the Catholic Congress of Burgos"?

Solsona, 28 November of 1909.

† THE BISHOP

Forbidding the Transfer of Valuable Objects

(B. Sol 45 [1910], pp. 17-19)

2155 As our zealous Prelate wants to imitate the greater restorer of all things in Christ, Pius X¹⁶, as he opened the Vatican Art Gallery to the public, with its works of incalculable artistic worth, the Prelate has established in the Episcopal Palace the *Museum Archaeologicum Dioecesanum* (Archaeological Museum of the Diocese), where the general public can admire and study the beautiful artistic, archaeological and historical works of this Diocese.

There are many works of recognized value, primarily archaeological, preserved in this Diocese. Some are dedicated to divine worship, and must continue in what they are dedicated to for the greater glory of God and the satisfaction of the faithful, who love them as the jewels of their temples and a testimonial of the faith of their ancestors. There are even more which, out of disuse or their deteriorated state, are not suitable for worship or are useful in any way. The Reverend Priests who are responsible for their care, as well as the individuals who may possess items, must attempt to collect all of them in the museum, in order that in, after establishing a glory for the Diocese, the history of Christian art itself can be studied. It would also be an honor for the churches and the individuals from whom they come since it will be recorded in the catalogue his Illustriousness has ordered written, as well as the catalogue of the donors.

Whoever does not want or cannot deposit these works in the place they belong, the museum, must attempt to ensure that they do not leave the Diocese for any reason. To that end, our most Reverend Prelate sent the following circular letter to the editors of this Bulletin:

2156 "As the church is zealously protective of its property assets, which are the substance of the ministers of the altar and the bread of the poor people, and the richness of its furnishings, which are the treasure for the splendor of the worship, the transfer or donation, sale, exchange, lease or mortgage of the property assets of any values and the precious things under its ownership are equally forbidden, unless done for just and serious causes, to wit: the need or usefulness of the Church and Christian devoutness and charity, demanding, in addition, the consent of the Holy See. This is established in the extravagant *Ambitosae* of Paul II (book 3, chapter 4, Extr. Comm. c. un.), which lacking the mentioned solemnities, declare the transfer of ecclesiastical goods null and void, confiscating *immediately (ipso in se)* from the transferring priest the profit he possesses in the church whose goods were transferred and striking the seller and recipient of the items sold from the Church with excommunication, a condemnation that today is the third of the *Ratae Sententiae* excommunications reserved from no one in the Apostolicae Sedis constitution, which says: *Alienantes et recipere praesumentes bona ecclesiastica*

¹⁶ The motto of Pius X was: "Instaure omnia in Christo". (cf. PIUS X: *E Supremi Apostolatus: ASS* 36 [1903/1904], p. 131). Cf. 280, 461, 1780 above.

absque Beneplacito Apostolico, ad formam extravagantis "Ambitiosae", de rebus Ecclesiae non alienandis.

2157 Precious furnishings of the Church are considered to include, and therefore cannot be transferred without the formalities prescribed by Law, the sacred glasses, pieces of jewelry made from gold, silver and other metals, fabrics, precious stones, paintings, statues, altarpieces, tapestries, codices, incunables (early printed documents) and similar objects, which through their rarity, art or age are valued at over 25 *ducats de Cámara*, the equivalent of some 250 *pesetas*.

In order to transfer those assets, you have to approach the Holy See, request the suitable authorizations and proving a reason that justifies the transfer; but, for those items which do not reach the amount referred to, you need the permission of the bishop, in accordance with the declaration of the Sacred Congregation of the Council, which Scavini cites in his note 1, Question 1, *De bonis Ecclesiae non alienandis*.

This should be enough so that no one transfers any object, and even less when they do not know its value. Additionally, having come to our attention that some Priests, also disregarding what was ordered in the "Official Bulletin" of 12 June 1891, transferred objects belonging to the churches that are entrusted to them. We come to recall and remind everyone of this regulation and together with the present one, we order you that without our express permission, no priest or layman transfer any object of the Church, no matter how insignificant it may appear, and we will demand the strictest responsibility for any one who violates this regulation".

Solsona, 15 January of 1910.

† BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP, Apostolic Administrator

20

On Devoutness towards the Deceased Faithful

(B. Sol 45 [1910], pp. 81-85)

2158 The communion of feelings, prayers and good works; the mutual charity disclosed by God to his people and established by Jesus Christ as the characteristic and distinctive note of Christians, is the greatest consolation for the believers who are crying, and the most effective remedy for the faithful who are suffering. Whoever has revealed themselves to be against this fundamental Commandment has never been able to resolve what they call a social problem among the living, nor found comfort at the hour of death.

Regarding the social question, the cure for the material and moral needs of humanity is not a problem among Christians; it is a question of charity against envy and egotism, the practice of charity the Church continually urges us to perform, and We have urged you in order that you, in your mutual support, find comfort and effective cures against the misfortunes of life in all its manifestations.

At the time of death, we Christians also find the sweetest comfort in the hope of a happy immortality. We trust in God that he will mercifully welcome us in his breast and that, through the communion of prayers and other spiritual aids, we will be deserving of each other, the living paying for the souls of Purgatory and achieving very substantial benefits for them.

Death takes from loved ones away from us; but our emotion is calmed by the comforting doctrine of the Church. If those people were saints, we follow them with our heart up to Heaven. We do not lose hope for those who were not perfect because God found a means to purify them before they enter into Heaven; but being so kind, how much compassion it must cause us, this idea that for a long time, although not for all eternity, they can be suffering pains and sorrows more serious than all those of the world and perhaps from our sin! We also have to instill greater joy in ourselves for the sureness that we can pray and suffer for the souls of those loved ones, who are incapable of merit, but can use our merits, and even receive due satisfaction from us.

2159 Let us go ahead then, beloved members of the diocese, and offer our deceased the acts of sacrifice and justice which we have been credited for through the love they profess for us and for how we esteem them. While they were living, we were ready and quick to favor them, and perhaps they did not consent so they would not cause us any inconvenience, but now they not only accept our assistance but rather ask for it in tones of profound bitterness that inspire in us the most tender compassion.

We pray for the souls in Purgatory, and if our prayers are not enough, we send torrents of blood there from the sacrifices on the altars; many Masses, so they may immediately be purified and can fly up to Heaven and pay us back in exchange for their freedom the effective protection we expect of them. We will try to compensate in some way for the very serious harm to the blessed souls caused by the cooling of charity and the taxes on the bequests for the good of the soul. We do not expect death to take away the goods from us in order to leave something for the people of God who suffer in Purgatory.

We have reserved judgment with deep sadness on the deviation of the peoples and families from Christian customs and particularly the exercise of charity towards the living and the deceased. We have promoted in our Diocese, to the degree it depends on Us, the mutual benevolence for relief and possible solution of the material and moral needs of those souls who suffer in this world; and we also want to develop, as much as we can, the reciprocal devotion between living and dead.

In fact, before resorting to new procedures, we want to re-establish the ones that already exist, such as the Devout Union of Suffrages in favor of the Souls of Purgatory, a society established in this Diocese by His Excellency, the most Illustrious Mr. Ramón Rúa (may he rest in eternal glory) in the Circular Letter of 14 October 1898. The regulation and appropriate instructions for its functioning were published in the "Ecclesiastical Bulletin" of this Diocese for 1898, on page 297 and the following pages.

2160 We are starting by re-establishing this society to give it fresh impetus. For the satisfaction of the interested parties and to inspire the rest of the faithful, we declare first the benefits that the Devout Union obtained for the souls of Purgatory in one year. The devout faithful of Berga founded seven perpetual Masses; two by Mr. Pablo Torredadella and his wife, two by Mr. Jaime Satorres, one by Mrs. Dolores Figols and two through the efforts of several founders. The congregation of Cervera founded one and with alms from different parishes of the Diocese a second was founded. Finally, some priests committed themselves to celebrate several Masses for the souls of Purgatory without charge.

Ten years went by without any new foundations until the present day, when Mr. Valentín Soler, of Ametlla de Merola, founded 20 perpetual masses as his intention and at the disposal of the Prelate, and under the same conditions the Illustrious Dr. Valentín Comellas also founded two more. We have associated to this Devout Union other small foundations of suffrages and with that, we have been able to establish a perpetual Mass on all holy days for the founders in particular and the souls of Purgatory in general, which will be held at the church of the Nuns of the Teaching in Solsona.

We desire, without placing too much of a financial burden on the faithful, but in a way where all can collaborate for this end, the foundation of perpetual Masses whose capital will be administered under the supervision of the Prelate, and whose celebration will be carried out wherever the founders want, until reaching the point where a perpetual Mass will be held under the intention of the founders in every Parish church on Mondays, and several days of the week if possible. This is without hampering the continuation of the usual schedule with respect to the celebration of Novenas and the usual collections plates or boxes for the souls.

For the governing of this Devout Union of Suffrages, we appoint as Director the Illustrious Dr. Valentín Comellas, Canon Priest of the Cathedral, the Vice-Rector of the Seminary as Vice-Director, and the Secretary of Studies of the seminary as Secretary, who will make up the Diocesan Centre of the Society. This Center, commissioned to realize the foundations and fulfill the will of the founders, will communicate with the Reverend Parish Priests and other Rectors of the Churches of the Diocese; and these in turn will promote their respective parishes the founding of perpetual Masses in the form they consider most discreet and effective, according to the situation in each location and without the Regulation serving as an obstacle, but always in accordance with the Diocesan Center.

We are considering the material poverty of some parishes, but not ignoring the richness of their devoutness and how much is possible with the love of God and the souls, in whose name I ask for charity and bless you.

Solsona, 12 March of 1910.

† THE BISHOP

The Holy Eucharist

(B. Sol 45 [1910], pp. 301-303)

2161 The papal encyclicals and decrees, full of the wisdom and zeal like all the acts of our Holy Father Pope Pius X, give a clear idea of his ardent desire for restoring all things in Christ, as he proposed in his elevation to the Papacy, but he very clearly demonstrates this will to us and the fire of the divine love that burns in his breast, and want to guarantee in all hearts, in the *Sacra Tridentina Synodus Decree*¹⁷, in which he urges the faithful to receive communion every daily in imitations of the first Christians, so that, strengthened by this Bread of the Mighty, they more easily acquire the virtues and valiantly defend their faith.

To this end, he condemns and refutes the Jansenist error and those who, while feigning respect to the Sacrament of the Eucharist, allege the lack of the necessary intentions to legitimize the withdrawal of the faithful from frequent communion, since the Eucharist is not a prize that someone may deserve as such, but instead a remedy for human weakness and frailty and a means of reviving the fire of divine love in our souls, consuming the dregs of their miseries and faults and uplifting them to greater perfection every time.

2162 With access to the hearts of men eased in this way, to the God of the Eucharist who, in order to dwell with those in whom he had his delights, chose such an admirable means... only the ardent zeal of the Pontiff was lacking to try to secure even greater glory for Jesus Christ, allowing the children to approach his sacred table, whom the divine Redeemer loved so much that he did not consent to them being separated from Him, holding them tight to his heart because theirs, he said, is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Reprehensible worries kept these innocent souls separated from the Holy Communion as being incapable of receiving it, for not having a perfect knowledge of God, without taking into account that, from the moment they know what is being offered them, they know enough to be able to receive Him, and what must not take place is that the devil take control and take possession of the hearts of the children before their true owner and Lord Jesus Christ enters them.

In addition, they are frequently given the grace some times and the natural ones other times, especially during the present times, as the children are progressing notably in their use of reason, as seen in the Capuchine St. Veronica Giuliani who, on taking the Viaticum to her mother when she was three or four years old, knelt before the priest and asked him to give her Communion. When the astonished priest claimed he only brought one holy wafer, she replied: "You divide it in two parts, because the Lord will be in one just as much as the other".

2163 The conduct of some priests was no less worthy of condemnation, either. For fear of profaning the Sacrament of Penance and considering that the children

¹⁷ Cf. AAS 2 (1910), p. 894.

did not have the appropriate intentions to receive it, they refused to confess them and did not give them absolution, depriving them of a great increase of graces at the very least and almost exposing them to the risk of remaining in sin.

These erroneous ideas were detrimental to children even in death, because they were not administering the Viaticum to them, as they were not prepared for it; nor the Extreme Unction, for judging them to be without sin, and for the same reason also deprived them of the suffrages that are applied to the rest of the deceased faithful.

In the admirable *Quam Singulari Christus* Decree¹⁸, the Roman Pontiff makes such harmful concerns disappear and opens the door of the Tabernacle to the souls of the children, in whom Our Lord Jesus Christ took so much pleasure.

We want our Parish priests and those in charge of churches to make such useful and wholesome decrees known to all the faithful, reading them once a year, to which end we will try to have them translated into Catalan; and we urge them that by all possible means to try to promote frequent communion, not only in adults but also in children.

Solsona, holy day of the Arcangel St. Miguel of 1910.

† THE BISHOP, APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR OF SOLSONA

22

On Fulfilling Obligations in Easter

(B. Sol 46 [1911], pp. 81-84)

2164 Wishing to secure, to the degree that it depends on us, the eternal salvation of the beloved members of our diocese and looking to overcome problems for the priests in carrying out their holy ministry, we authorize all confessors of the Diocese to, during the time of fulfilling the Easter obligations, which this year will be understood as between the second Sunday of Lent and Low Sunday (*In Albis*), both inclusive, absolve the penitents for the cases of the synods and the condemnations reserved for the Bishop by the *Apostolicae Sedis* Constitution.

Similarly, by virtue of apostolic authorization which we can sub-delegate, we authorize all the confessors for the same time period to authorize *ad petendum debitum coniugale* to all penitents who may have lost this right, under the following conditions: *Remota occasione peccandi, imposita gravi poenitentia salutari, et frequentia sacramentorum quolibet mense ad tempus iuxta Confessoris arbitrium statuendum*. Once this is professed, and the usual form of absolution is concluded, the confessor will add: *Et apostolica facultate mihi subdelegata, habilito te et restituo tibi ius amissum ad petendum debitum coniugale, in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.*

¹⁸ Cf. AAS 2 (1910), p. 577.

2165 All Christians, as soon as they reach the age of discretion, are obligated to receive at least once a year the sacraments of Confession and Communion. We well know that children need to be prepared for an act of such signification but it is also true that this can be obtained with little effort if you adapt to the first, second, and third rules of the decree published in the Bulletin of 1 October 1910.

We are confident, then, that the Reverend Priests responsible for the curing of souls and the teachers and family men will try to do their part to comply with the regulations of the decree referred to above, in order not to be burdened with the responsibility that emerges in the fourth rule.

2166 For that purpose, they must instruct without delay those children who are at least seven years old so that they can fulfill the Easter precept this year at the same time they receive their first communion.

We order this first communion to be held in all the parish churches and affiliate churches with the greatest possible solemnity on the same day, Low Sunday, 23 April, and that five or six days of spiritual exercises adapted to the age and ability of the children precede this most interesting act.

It is our wish that the children arrive at the sacred altar accompanied by their parents, which will set a great example for them and for the instruction of the town. And in the afternoon of that day, with the display of His Divine Majesty, they are to renew the promises of the holy Baptism; consecrate themselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Holy Virgin, and perform some public prayer for the needs of the Church, the Roman Pontiff and our nation.

In time, the Priests will make us aware of the children who will receive their first Communion on that day, and also make note of the other children who are coming to receive communion through the intentions of the Roman Pontiff, with the aim of being able to communicate with them by telegraph and ask a blessing for all of them. In this critical and very sad situation the Church is going through at present in our beloved country, which unfortunately is losing the honorable distinction of Catholic which so ennobles it; it is very just, beloved children, that we try to give some comfort to the afflicted and anguished heart of the kind Pontiff who, in spite of his zeal for attracting all men to Jesus Christ, watches with indescribable bitterness the general desertion of the nations conspiring against the Lord and his Christ. And it seems like nothing can be more gratifying for him than to know that the innocent souls of children, united with Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, are raising tender prayers for him and needs of the Church.

Those responsible for the curing of souls in various times of the year will arrange and hold some general communions for children when advisable, and admit for first communion whoever is reaching the appropriate age and has sufficient preparation in them, trying to get them to associate with other children who have previously received their first communion so they frequent the Sacraments and complete their religious education.

And finally, we recall the mandate contained in the Decree mentioned above to be read to the faithful in common language each year during the Easter period.

Solsona, 7 March of 1911.

† THE BISHOP

Charity and Understanding in the Action

(B. Sol 46 [1911], pp. 166-168)

2167 In the midst of the disruption and confusion of ideas the spirit of darkness has managed to introduce among Catholics in order to conquer them more easily by dividing them among themselves, whether through political opinions or the diversity of opinions in valuing the means to use in the same Catholic action, the light of truth always radiates from the Vatican like a brilliant lighthouse, arriving to clarify the intelligences, show the Catholics their line of action, and without destroying their political opinions, teach them not to put them before the greater interests of the Religion.

Various outstanding documents were issued by the Holy See¹⁹ on different occasions for this purpose, and the Bishops have used them for support as they tried to channel and direct the social action of the faithful commended to their pastoral concern. However, what we are informing you of today, beloved children, especially deserves your full attention, as it is like the synthesis or summary of everything on this subject the infallible Master of the truth has been teaching us until now.

The present situation is difficult, beloved children, as you well know. The advancing storm of persecution against the Catholic Church is growing worse, and it is necessary in these circumstances that its faithful children, crying out to the skillful Pilot entrusted with guiding the ship who is saving us because we are perishing, place themselves at his orders unconditionally, each working in their honorable position and according to their strengths, with the aim of weathering the storm which threatens to submerge us.

2168 Following his instructions then, strengthen the bonds of mutual and fraternal charity between you, beloved children. That will end the dissensions which divide you and make your works barren, to the great contentment and benefit of our opponents and the decline and loss of prestige for our sacred Religion.

You do not want to set yourselves up as judges and teachers of doctrine with respect to your brothers, leaving this responsibility to the Prelate, whom the Holy Spirit placed in their positions to lead his Church.

Do not let yourselves become so passionate about political ideals that you betray our Mother the Church and your own conscience for them and the commitments they carry with them.

To sum up, in the necessary things which the Holy Mother Church proposes and orders you to do, try to be united; in the questions which are open to doubt and different opinions like purely political matters, respect the freedom of others; and above all else, practice charity a great deal, beloved children, *In necessariis unitas; in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas.*

Solsona, 21 May of 1911.

† THE BISHOP

¹⁹ Cf. Leo XIII: *Graves de Communi Re*: ASS 31 (1901), pp. 385-396; Pius X: *Il Fermo Proposito*: ASS 37 (1905), pp. 741-767; *Gravissimo Officio*: ASS 39 (1906), pp. 385-390.

24

On Celebrating Two Masses

(B. Sol 47 [1912], pp. 33-34)

2169 As some Reverend Parish Priests of the Diocese authorized to celebrate a second Mass on the holy days have declared to us, their parishioners also wish to have two Masses on the holy days left out by the *Motu Proprio* of His Holiness Pius X *Supremi Disciplinae* of 2 July 1911²⁰. Considering the express will of His Holiness that all the faithful, even on those days distinct from the official holy days, give testimony of their devoutness towards God and their veneration of the Saints no less than before,. As attending Holy Mass is a testimonial of that devoutness, we judge that the permission granted to those Parish priests by virtue of the Apostolic Rescript of 12 September 1910 to repeat the Holy Sacrifice on the holy days previously left out is extended to those holy days left out by the *Motu Proprio*. It is well understood this grace is conceded solely for those holy days left out now or before, that the majority of the faithful of the indicated parishes have them as official holy days, at least concerning the devout practice of hearing the Holy Miss, in the opinion of their parish priests.

With the same object of promoting the devoutness of the faithful in the churches where on holy days they celebrate Mass called on the spot, the practice will continue on the holy days left out before or now, which the majority of the faithful keep as holy days with respect to the Holy Mass, and they will be celebrated in the number and at the times that are most convenient, all in the opinion of their parish priest.

Solsona, 1 February of 1912.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

25

To the Daughters of Mary of the Diocese

(B. Sol 47 [1912], p. 106)

2170 With the utmost pleasure we are making public, with the aim that it be imitated, the appeal and regulations for the Crusade of Christian Modesty that the Congregation of the Daughters of Mary of Orihuela have initiated.

There is no doubt that, given the style of dress for women introduced by the fashion industry, which is a constant attack on the good customs of the Christian people, has prompted this crusade and therefore, by presenting it as a model for imitation, we are convinced that all Congregations of the Daughters of Mary and

²⁰ Cf AAS 3 (1911), p. 305ss.

the other orders of women in our beloved Diocese will make this crusade their own and begin to advocate it through their example.

The Reverend Parish priests should inform the mentioned Congregations that this is our wish and that God and the Virgin of Mercy bless your works as they bless them.

Solsona, 15 March of 1912.

† THE BISHOP

26

Help and Support for Embattled Rome

(B. Sol 47 [1912], pp. 209-211)

2171 Rome, the city of the Popes, having once been the teacher of error and capital of paganism, came to be established as teacher of the truth and center of Catholicism through the preaching of the Apostles and hence is necessarily the target of attacks by Lucifer and his followers in his relentless war against the religion of the Crucified Lord.

They made a great effort to fight this war throughout history but particularly during the present period, when Lucifer has managed to make himself worshipped as God in some Masonic lodges.

The Freemasons met in Rome not many years ago to insult the Vicar of Jesus Christ by performing the apotheosis of an apostate, Giordano Bruno, in front of the Vatican itself. And from that date on, as if obeying a preconceived plan, they are redoubling their efforts to de-Catholicize Rome, making use of the laws regarding education, reading and pornographic painting and other material means put at their disposal.

Without the promise of Jesus Christ that the doors to hell shall not prevail against his Church, we might be afraid for the Church. But as we to be sure it is fulfilled, because the heavens and earth shall disappear before the divine word is not fulfilled, we do not have to neglect and cut back on the resources at our disposition and within our reach, in order to counteract the attacks of its enemies, to make them known to everyone and spread them all over.

2172 Helped by the good Catholics, this is being done with great interest by the Holy Office; but as the well-aimed fire of the enemies of the church today is especially directed at Rome, the center of unity and culture of Catholicism, His Holiness Pius X has very correctly established a new Congregation involved in the preservation of the faith in that city, so it is, by divine providence, the seat of the Chair of the truth, this truth so very free and safe against error and heresy.

This Congregation must make use of the same means that the Satanic sects employ for error, that is the establishment of Catholic schools, asylums of charity and centers of social defense. In order to sustain all these in conditions of competition,

substantial material resources are necessary, which the true faithful of the entire world will undoubtedly rush to provide the Holy Father, whom has been reduced to poverty by ungodliness and stripped of his worldly power and his patrimony.

We offer our modest collaboration for this goal and plead for the same from the generous members of our diocese, urging them to, to the extent they are able, contribute annually to this extremely important work of the Preservation of the Faith, one different from both the Propagation of the Faith and Peter's Pence. We order the Reverend Priests and Chaplains of our Diocese to make their congregations aware of it in timely fashion and recommend it effectively, as well as the other works referred, making collection of each of them during the different celebrations every year.

Solsona, 10 July of 1912.

† THE BISHOP

27

Protest Against the Law of Associations

(B. Sol 47 [1912], pp. 260-261)

2173 Most Excellent Sir:

I add my own pleas to the well-reasoned and respectful ones that our Primate and several of my brother prelates have raised to Your Excellency seeking that you do not bring to the discussion of the Chamber on the report of the Parliamentary Committee on the law of Associations without previous agreement with the Holy See: although fully confident that the honesty of Your Excellency and your love of justice will make you agree to such a reasonable request, or at the very least there is no question of the Cabinet approving a law which, however you look at it, would oppose justice by disregarding one of the involved parties.

I do not have to remind Your Excellency of the noble spiritual mission the religious institutions carry out and the services of all kinds they offer society in the material realm, because even their enemies themselves recognize that and make use of them.

However, leaving aside the reasons of justice, so wisely put forward by my brothers and to which I adhere, does it not seem to Your Excellency that the aforementioned law would constitute a very serious insult to such distinguished Orders if they are compared to corporations, some of which devastate order, justice and morality?

May God our Lord, by whom the kings reign, the princes rule and the lawgivers decree just laws, enlighten Your Excellency and the Spanish Parliament so that they clearly see the abyss into which certain rash decisions would push us. This is what I ask of the Lord.

May God give Your Excellency many years of life.

Solsona, 24 August of 1912.

His Excellency, the President of the Council of Ministers.

† THE BISHOP

28

Against the Plan to Suppress Religious Education

(B. Sol 48 [1913], pp. 109-110)

2174 We suppose that you have found out about, beloved Parish priests and the others responsible for the churches of this Diocese, the lovely and comforting protests raised throughout all Spain by all social classes against the plan of the Government to abolish the mandatory teaching of the Catechism in the schools.

Neither the valiant campaigns in the Catholic press, nor the respectful demands of the Prelates, nor the forceful statements of the teachers, nor the great outpouring of national desire in demonstrations and telegrams has managed, sad as it is to confess and how incredible it may seem, to make the Government desist from its reform plan as it continues to still be attached to its disruptive project.

The Catholics have wielded all those weapons which seemed the best to them up to the present to ensure that schoolchildren are not deprived of religious educations, which is necessary to better dedicate the first fruits of their being to their Creator. But until now, we have not joined to this venture the great force which these children represent to defeat them, despite their weakness, by raising to God their fragrant prayers with the candor of their innocence, and perhaps being able to achieve through that what everyone wishes for so intensely. The pleas of a pure soul can do that much!

For this person, and in accordance with the Most Eminent Cardinal Primate, we order you, Reverend Parish priests and those responsible for churches, to prepare in your respective congregations a general Communion of all boys and girls for next 1 May, the holy day of the Ascension of the Lord, at eight in the morning. On that day at that hour, a similar act will be held in all the parish churches in Spain, recommending to the little ones that they receive the Lord, to direct their prayers seeking the solution to the needs of the Church in our homeland.

Solsona, 24 August of 1912.

† THE BISHOP

29

The Catechist Congress of Valladolid

(B. Sol 48 [1913], pp. 174-175)

2175 The Roman Pontiff has deigned to grant:

1. Dispensation of the law of fasting and abstinence on the day of the Vigil of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul for those in the city of Valladolid that day.
2. Dispensation of the choir residence, so that the choir service does not suffer any serious detriment, for the canon and beneficial priests who, with the consent of

their Ordinary Priest, would be involved during the current month with the works and sessions of the National Catechist Congress of Valladolid.

3. Papal Blessing with Full Indulgence to all the parishes of Spain who, joining together spiritually in that Congress, are celebrating a general Communion of boys and girls on either the 26th, 27th, 28th and 29th of this month.

With the object that all members of our diocese can take advantage of this grace, we sub-delegate to all the Reverend Priests of the Diocese the privilege of giving the Papal Blessing with Full Indulgence in their respective parish churches during one of the days mentioned above when they celebrate the general communion of boys and girls, the indispensable basis so that the adults united spiritually in the Congress may confess and receive communion on the same days they can also enrich themselves from the indulgence itself. This spiritual union means they have to beseech from Heaven the special grace of Catholic education for all the schools in Spain.

We urge the Reverend Priests to promote and organize the mentioned general Communion and they inform us in timely fashion, in order to notify the Secretary of the Congress, of the number of Communions there might be that day in their Parish church, recording separately those of the children and the adults. It would be very helpful if all the Catholic entities existing within the boundaries of your Parish would send their most enthusiastic support to the Catechist Congress before 26 June, by telegraph or in writing, at the following address: Most Eminent Cardinal, Valladolid.

Torá, 10 June of 1913.

† BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

DIOCESE OF SEGORBE

30

In Favor of the Poor Workers

(B. Seg 34 [1914], pp. 170-171)

2176 The Most Illustrious Civil Governor of Teruel, in a courteous communication of 17 August, asks us to invite the clergy of the towns which are part of his province to raise donations from the parishioners destined for the subscription opened by the initiative of Her Majesty the Queen (may God protect her) in favor of the poor Spanish workers who are returning to Spain without resources due to the war in Europe.

As it is constant rule for the members of the Catholic Church to go wherever charity demands their resources, we expect with very good reason that the priests

who exercise their ministry in said province of Teruel will contribute whatever may be their part to support the wishes of the Governor, which we make our own.

To this effect, all priests responsible for churches will open lists to record the names of the donors and their donations, and they will send the full amount of money raised to the Governor.

Segorbe, 25 August of 1914.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

31

Election of His Holiness Benedict XV²¹

(B. Seg 34 [1914], pp. 169-170)

2177 Our grief was very appropriate when we were crying over the loss of the common Father of the faithful, Pope Pius X, in the critical and difficult situation the world is going through now due to the effects of the general war among nations.

As minister of peace and Vicar of the Lord who came to bring that valuable gift to the world, the Holy Pontiff approached the belligerent powers offering to act as a mediator, with the aim of containing the spread of the incalculable evils that must follow from such a horrifying war. But, oh pain and sorrow, his voice went unheard and full of bitterness, he approached God offering him his life in sacrifice for the peace of the world; and when it was accepted by the Lord, flew to Heaven, to negotiate before the King of Kings and Lord of all those who control the benefit of this peace, which the world rejected.

We have him interceding for us there. And the Divine Founder of the Holy Church has listened to the cries of the church, shortening the days of its widowhood, and bestowing on it a new Pontiff in Benedict XV in accord with its Divine Heart, who with virtue, wisdom and prudence may rule and govern in the difficult times we are going through.

That is what they inform us from Rome.

Long live the new Vicar of Jesus Christ! And may He preserve us unharmed against the Machiavellian plans of his enemies; revitalize and invigorate him in his undertaking, and grant him the pleasure of seeing his bitterest enemies converted and kneeling at the feet of the Holy Church.

Let us give thanks, then, to the Lord for such a notable benefit. To that end we came to order, in agreement with our Venerable Council, that in our Holy Cathedral Church, a very solemn *Te Deum* will be sung next Sunday, to which we invite our beloved children and order that during the three consecutive days the "*Pro Gratiarum Actione*" prayer shall be added to the Holy Mass and the name of

²¹ Benedict XV, Giacomo della Chiesa, was elected Pope on 30 September 1914, and developed a broad range of activity in favor of peace and relief of the miseries of the war, especially hard on the children.

His Holiness Benedict XV shall be included in front of the Canon and “*Et Famulos*” prayer.

We extend the previous mandates to all the parochial churches, affiliates and members of religious orders of both sexes in our Diocese.

Segorbe, 4 September of 1914.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

32

The Pastoral Visit

(B. Seg 35 [1915], pp. 89-90)

2178 Among the serious duties the pastoral position brings with it, beloved children, one of the principal ones is the duty imposed by the Sacred Canons and the Holy Council of Trent of visiting every one of the churches in the Diocese, for the purpose that, by knowing its state and circumstances and the condition and behavior of its subjects, the Prelate can more correctly issue the regulations advisable for the glory of God and the good of the souls that have been entrusted to him.

We would have wanted to begin this in our ministry before, if other matters of no less interest for the Diocese had not intruded and prevented it. Even though we are not in the best of health right now, we are thinking of starting the Holy Pastoral Visit in this month of May, announcing it in time and for the service of the Priests and others responsible for the Parish churches the day of our arrival.

For this reason, beloved children, we beg you to raise your plea to the Lord seeking his lights and graces and to give us the physical strength necessary for the faithful carrying out of our duty.

Segorbe, 1 May of 1915.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP OF SEGORBE

33

Help for Victims of the European War

(B. Seg 35 [1915], pp. 113-114)

2179 Over ten months have passed since the terrible scourge of war began lashing without pity nations we are united to by bonds of race and friendship.

Through the divine Providence, we are free of many of the worse evils this war brings with it and we are in the position of appreciating how great the suffering will be for many of our brothers on seeing their homes converted into a pile of rubble

and their fields condemned to a forced barrenness. As a result, misery is the only companion that follows them in their hazardous life.

We give thanks to the Lord for his charity towards us and ceaselessly ask that he put an end to such a great calamity; but at the same time we remember that this Charity of God is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us and God himself recommends in us. Hence, paying attention to that recommendation, we are trying to practice charity with our fellow man in imitation of the Divine Master.

We appeal to your sense of charity, then, not without reservations for being aware of the economic circumstances you are going through, in seeking alms to provide help for the needs of our fellow man, without distinction among peoples or races, which the war has plunged into misery. To that end, we order that, on the holy day festivities of the apostle St. Peter, that all churches in our Diocese will make a collection during all the Masses for this purpose, with the priests giving advance notice to their congregations.

As I am sure it does not escape you that an equitable distribution of the amount raised would be impossible if we did it ourselves, we decided to place it in the hands of His Holiness to distribute according to his noble prudence and at the same time have the satisfaction of exercising his inexhaustible charity, despite the small amount involved.

We beg the beloved members of our diocese that they pardon us for this new sacrifice we ask of them and make the Priests responsible for sending all the money raised in your churches to our Council Secretary before 15 July, or a note stating that amount in order to make it arrive at its destination as soon as possible.

Segorbe, 15 June of 1915.

† THE BISHOP

National Tribute to the Pope

(B. SEG 35 [1915], PP. 121-122)

2180 Our Clergy and congregations know perfectly they have scarcely had notice of the hospitality offered to the Holy Father by Your Majesty the King (may God protect him) and his government, placing at his disposition the Royal Monastery of El Escorial on account of the current situation in Italy forcing him to temporarily leave his residence in the Vatican. And in the same way that righteous praise for the Monarch sprang from the lips of his subjects for such a noble gesture, the idea emerged that all Spaniards would associate themselves with this offering, and for that purpose the Center of Defense of Madrid was commissioned to make this idea a reality.

For that reason, the organizing committee of the Tribute has written a message and sent a copy to us to see if it deserved Our approval, which we willingly granted.

At that time, we authorized copies of that Message, instructions and sheets of paper for the signatures to be sent to the Parishes and other entities of the Diocese in order for our Diocese to take part in this testimonial of love to the Holy See and affirmation of the nobility of the Spanish nation.

We trust that all the parishes will have received those papers and that our beloved collaborators the priests will have put all their zeal in service of this idea, since the success of the undertaking undoubtedly depends on their effort and discretion.

In the event that any Parish has not received the papers, request them as quickly as possible from our Council Secretary, who will provide the ones you need, since the occasion demands that no time is wasted.

Segorbe, 19 June of 1915.

† THE BISHOP

35

Sacred Music

(B. Seg 35 [1915], pp. 129-131)

2181 In the published *Motu Proprio* of 22 November 1903²², His Holiness Pope Pius X (of holy memory) addressed to the most Eminent Cardinal Vicar of Rome a letter dated 8 December 1903²³, in which one reads the following words: "However much one reflects on the most holy purpose with which art is accepted in the worship service and the advisability of offering to the Lord nothing but good and, wherever possible, excellent things of yours, you will quickly become convinced that the prescriptions of the Church concerning sacred music are nothing more than the immediate application of those two fundamental principles. When the clergy and the Choirmasters are deeply involved in these things, good sacred music flourishes spontaneously once again, as has been observed and continuously is observed in many places; when those principles are scorned, neither pleas or warnings, nor strict and repeated orders, nor threats of penalties under canon law are enough to make anything change; so many means find the passion, or if not, a shameful and unforgivable ignorance, to avoid the will of the Church and persist in the same state of affairs for years and years.

We expect that that good inclination of the will for the clergy and faithful Christians... Even more now ... when the entire world would be convinced of the need to restore sacred music, any abuse concerning this issue is intolerable and must be eliminated".

We echoed these wise words from the very beginning of our elevation to the position of bishop, trying to secure the restoration of Sacred Music with sermons

²² Cf. ASS 36 (1903), pp. 329-333.

²³ Cf. ASS 36 (1903), pp. 387-395.

and orders that would obtain the desired effect. Our predecessor, the most Illustrious Bishop Antonio María Massanet (of venerable remembrance), gave the Diocese a very important circular letter on page 157 of the "Ecclesiastical Bulletin" dated 18 November 1909, which we confirm for the present and order his conclusions to be observed with all due respect.

2182 But, with the Papal inclinations multiplied, it was advisable to summarize them in the form of a regulation with the aim of intensifying positive action in the restoration of Sacred Music. His Reverend Eminence the Cardinal Vicar, did this by mandate of His Holiness in 1912, when he addressed to the Reverend Parish priests, Rectors and Superiors of all the churches and chapels, both of the secular and regular Clergy, the Superiors of the Seminaries, Schools and Institutes, and the most Reverend Prefects and Choirmasters some requirements in the form of a regulation, which gives a perfect idea of what His Holiness wanted the singing in the Church to be, both in the liturgical settings and those outside of it. On 24 November 1912, in the closing session of Third National Congress of Sacred Music, we had the satisfaction of hearing the reading of the approved conclusion referring to Subject VI, of the third section, to wit: "The Congress, unanimously and by acclamation, votes for the regulation of the Cardinal Vicar of Rome to be accepted in all the Dioceses of Spain, modifying it in particular cases to our needs, and send to all the most Reverend Prelates of Spain a respectful plea that this valuable and very comprehensive regulation be accepted and put into effect by everyone".

Confident, then, in the good intentions of the will of the clergy and faithful Christians in our beloved Diocese, we accept and declare the stated Regulations to be in effect in the Diocese. Its applicable part is published below in this circular letter, so that whoever is responsible for the musical performances in the Churches and Chapels of Segorbe and its Diocese abides by its regulations and provisions. They will serve as such for the Apostolic Holy Visit and of the Roman Committee of the Secretary of Council and Government, and the Committee of Sacred Music of the Diocese, respectively, making use of the Spanish Cecilian Association for its government, censorship of works and obtaining of degrees and Teaching diplomas and of competence in Gregorian singing, and using the Bulletin and Cecilian Repertoire and Catalogue.

In timely fashion, we will give the necessary regulations for the advisable adaptation of the state Regulation to the Diocese of Segorbe, after having heard the opinion of the Committee of Sacred Music of the Diocese; for which we designate the Secretary of the Council and Government of the Diocese and the Choirmaster of the Cathedral Chapel.

Segorbe, 15 July of 1915.

† THE BISHOP

36

Day of the Catholic Press

(B. Seg 36 [1916], pp. 101-102)

2183 Through the manifesto of the Central Board of the National Association of Good Press, inserted in the Bulletin corresponding to 1 April 1916, now you are aware of, beloved priests, the plan to create in Spain "The Day of the Catholic Press".

As was to be expected, the project merited an enthusiastic reception on the part of his Excellency, the Distinguished Nuncio and Prelate, and all the Catholic publications offered to work towards making it a reality as well as those convinced of the influence exercised by the press in present-day Society and want to see the Catholic press acting in society to the degree that the interests of religion and the homeland demand.

And considering that the clergy is not the least convinced of the need that our press would have an influence in these interests, we especially address to you in this present Circular letter seeking your help so that the objects that "The Day of the Catholic Press" proposes: "Pray, propaganda, collection" are very successfully fulfilled in the Parishes of this Diocese, inspiring the faithful to pray, making them aware of the project and the goals it proposes and inviting them to deposit an alms, however small, in the collection.

We already consider that, for one reason or another, that we have the need to appeal to you very often recommending works to you which require or call for greater activity on your part, which could upset you, or some financial sacrifice; but believe even more that it is distasteful for us to do so. But if the Prelate cannot approach his Clergy in the works of prayer and propaganda, who can he approach?

So we put the success of the "The Day of the Catholic Press" in your hands, then, and those of the Diocesan Committee for Good Press, which must be celebrated this year and in future years in all Spain on 29 June, the holy day of the Apostle St. Peter, and in that month the monthly collection will be withdrawn for the Great Work. The Committee of the Diocese, has taken, as a first agreement, to celebrate a general Communion on the designated day and one collection in the Parishes with as many others as zeal suggests to each of you, especially the priests, for the best result which, however insignificant it may be, we expect you to inform us of.

Segorbe, 31 May of 1916.

† THE BISHOP

37

About the Freemasons

(B. Seg 36 [1916], pp. 227-228)

2184 The most Eminent Cardinal Primate of Spain has raised his authorized voice to put before the Catholics of his Diocese and of all Spain the treatment the common Father of the faithful, Pope Benedict XV, receives from those who by their sworn word and by law are obligated to guard him with all the attention his high position deserves.

Yes, beloved brothers, what at the start of this terrible war were biased telegrams against the Holy Father to see if they could alienate the sympathies of the Catholics towards him, and particularly of the Italians, today they are waging a declared war.

You cannot see this sect named "Freemasons" which moves in the shadows that the Pontiff, despite the prevailing confusion, is the lighthouse which illuminates the world from time to time with the flashes of his speeches, making them see where they must seek justice and the law scorned today by the nations at war. He does not resign himself to contemplation, as that would increase the hatred, as the Pope is blessed in all nations for the consolations he offers without distinction, as he is the mediator summoned on many occasions by many of those involved in the current conflict because he is the representative of the Prince of Peace; but all the prestige the Pontiff enjoys serves only to spur on his sworn enemy, the Freemasons, to mistreat and insult him.

But the doors to Hell will not prevail against the Church nor the rock on which it is founded.

Back in the beginnings of Christianity, a King envious of the advances of the Church seized St. Peter and put him in jail; he was soon freed by the ministry of an angel sent by God, before whom the prayers made by the Church to this end were favorable.

Today the successor to St. Peter, our much beloved Father Benedict XV, suffers in what we could call the jail of the Vatican. We pray, beloved brothers, for him as the early Christians prayed for St. Peter; we pray as the most Eminent Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo recommends in the preceding Pastoral Address which we insert and make our own, offering our heartfelt support. We ask the Lord to free the Pope from the slanders his enemies spread against him, to help him in the critical times he is going through and give us all the strength to comply, if the circumstances call for it, with the duties that the title of beloved children of the Supreme Hierarchy of the Catholic Church imposes on us.

Segorbe, 31 May of 1916.

† THE BISHOP

Pilgrimage to the Holy Cave

(B. Seg 37 [1917], pp. 65-68)

2185 On visiting the Parish church of Altura in June of 1915, where the venerable remains are found of that great servant of God, Bonifacio Ferrer, brother of the glorious apostle from Valencia, St. Vincent Ferrer, and no less saintly than him according to his biographers, we indicated to the honorable authorities of that town our desire that such a precious treasure be guarded definitively in the Sanctuary of Our Lady of the Holy Cave, as tradition indicates he is the creator of that miraculous image²⁴. They welcomed our wish enthusiastically, and we initiated a subscription to pay the cost of a tomb befitting the great man, who honors Valencia which deserved his birth, and the Carthusian monastery enlightened by the splendors of the saintliness of his mature years, and this Diocese of Segorbe where he dwelled in the last years of his life and reached splendors of the highest degree until he reached the perfect day of eternity, radiant even through the humble burial in Val de Cristo, for the prodigious favors obtained through his mediation, if we give credit to the Carthusian writers and other serious historians.

After finishing the tomb, which is unworthy of the merits of Bonifacio but at least decent, we believed that no date offered a more timely moment to celebrate the moving of his venerable remains than 29 April of this year, which celebrates the 500th anniversary of his beautiful death. Considering it only fair that all the congregations of the Diocese are associated to such an important event to honor someone who honors them so much, to glorify the Mother of God, for whom her very faithful servant secured so much honor and to appease the divine wrath, which has so righteously punished the apostasy of nations for three years, we invite the beloved members of our diocese on 29 April to come to the pilgrimage to the famous Sanctuary the Holy Virgin our Mother chose as the throne of her mercies, valuing as an instrument of the holy image, which according to the tradition came from the blessed hands of Father Bonifacio.

To the Cave, then, beloved members of the diocese, and our beloved children! To the Cave, to give testament to our faith, to see in the kindness of our Mother the hope of our cure, to ignite our hearts in the love of that gentle dove whose maternal cooing has known how to fit so many generations in her nest and soften the hardest and most stubborn hearts.

2186 To the Cave to ask God for peace in the world, which the angels sang on seeing Him born in another Cave, and which continues reigning in the hearts who still recognize him as King, but has been banished by the nations which rejected his rule, a peace we will achieve by giving glory to God in the heights of the Cave, through the mediation of his most Blessed Mother and his venerable Servant, to whose efforts the Kings of Aragon owed their peace when bloodied

²⁴ Cf. 208-210 above.

by civil disturbances, and acknowledged their debt to the Universal Church in the extinction of the great Western Schism, which for so many years ripped apart the unstitched tunic of Christ!

It is our wish that all the towns take part in the pilgrimage we invite them to and the Parish Priest form boards if they think it is advisable to organize it and join with the Diocese board mentioned in the previous issue of this Bulletin. It would be a good idea if they could advise the Diocese board in timely fashion about the approximate number of pilgrims expected and if they will go in an individual procession.

The reciting of the Holy Rosary and the singing of devout numbers can accompany the march of the processions, both during the departure from each Parish church and the arrival at the Cave, with the hour of departure and most convenient direction for his parishioners left to the discretion of the Parish priest, just so long as they arrive some time before the Pontifical Mass.

The departure of the pilgrimage of Altura will be at 5.00 in the morning of the indicated day. Masses will be celebrated from the earliest hours of the day in the Sanctuary for the convenience of the faithful, who can receive the Holy Communion in them if they wish. The Pontifical Mass will begin at 10.00 a.m. which through God will be in the Holy Mountain of the Cave, and an eloquent sacred speaker will give the funeral prayer there. After the Mass, the body of Father Bonifacio will be placed in the new tomb located in the Communion Chapel. At 2.00 in the afternoon, we will give the blessing to the pilgrims who will be able to return to their homes in the same order they arrived.

Segorbe, 15 March of 1917.

† THE BISHOP

2187 The news we received on Holy Saturday that the Parish Church of Alcublas had burned down the night before was a surprise that produced great pain and sorrow in our heart, beloved children.

Our thoughts went immediately to the vision, in all its terrifying grandeur, of a temple, a house of God, a place for great comforts for the spirit, as fuel for the flames.

We are thinking of the sadness of our good children of Alcublas on contemplating how that sacred reliquary which contained the most precious memories of their lives had been destroyed in spite of their efforts; the one where they received the regenerating waters of the Baptism, when they made themselves children of God and heirs to his glory; the indelible act of their first Communion,

in which they partook of the body and blood of Jesus Christ; the sanctification ceremony with the blessing of the Priest of the chaste loves which brought them together for fulfilling providential goals, to establish an honorable family; the sad but very comforting fact of having seen how your Mother the Church, those who had been received joyfully into her bosom at birth, bid them farewell at the door of this temple with somber songs saturated with hope when they were going to pass through the thresholds of eternity. And we consider all these significant events in the spiritual life of man and so essential to him they formed the chain of memories that united generations with others, were going to be left, if not interrupted, at least deprived of that mystical devotion which surrounds meditation in a suitable temple.

We have dedicated and will dedicate our efforts to making this interruption be as short as possible, united them with that of our beloved children of Alcublas who, qualified for handling what the loss of the Parochial church involves, have applied all their energies and resources to remedy the situation.

We have approached the government of His Majesty seeking a subsidy to repair the damages this disaster caused, but we do not have much confidence in the help that they can offer, not for lack of will but rather for the meager amount budgeted for these situations, given how many temples make claims on it.

Hence, we are considering advisable the suggestion of the Priest of that Parish church to make an appeal to the charity and religious feelings of the beloved members of our diocese by inviting them to contribute with an alms that we thank you for in advance, both in our own name and that of the Priest of Alcublas. Our own name is at the head of the list of donations to this end that is now open with our Secretary of the Council.

Given in Segorbe, 30 April of 1917.

† THE BISHOP

40

Sacred Preaching

(B. Seg 38 [1918], pp. 21-24)

2188 The Regulations of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation on sacred preaching published in issue 13 of the "Ecclesiastical Bulletin" last year were declared mandatory in this Diocese by our Circular letter of 1 September of that year²⁵.

We were not attempting anything else on that date than to establish the basis for the definitive application of these Regulations in this Diocese, which we want to put into effect in their totality through this Circular letter, issuing at the same time

²⁵ Cf. AAS 9 (1917), pp. 328-334. Cf. also BENEDICT XV: *Humani Generis*: AAS 9 (1917), pp. 305-317.

the advisable regulations so that each of our beloved Priests know what to abide by with regard to the Ministry of the divine Word.

For this purpose, we are dividing the priests into: outside the diocese, members of the diocese not authorized to preach or authorized to, and belonging to the religious orders.

2189 Priests from outside the diocese will not be able to preach in the Diocese without our written permission in each case, or incur the penalties in accordance with Regulation number 8 that we shall impose on both the preacher and whoever allowed him to preach without having requested the prior authorization mentioned in Regulation number 5.

This permission will be requested two months in advance, stating the name, surnames, Diocese, position and place of residence of the Preacher, and if he was a member of a religious order, the order to which he belongs.

Members of the Diocese not authorized to preach in the Diocese are subject to the same regulations for the preachers from outside the Diocese, that is, with prior written permission for each case, and the request for the permission two months in advance.

Members of the Diocese authorized to preach will be able to, without the requirement of our prior authorization, when called to do so and they have permissions for the type of preaching for which they are called. In that case it will enough for whoever invites them, in accordance with number 5, to demand them to present the proof of their authorization.

The Parish priests, *Ecónomo* (interim) priests, Regents and Assistants, will have authorization to preach in their churches without needing prior authorization by virtue of the mission given them when chosen for the position. Only the preaching of Lectures and Funeral Prayers are forbidden with this permission. They will have the same authorization but only for explaining the Gospel and Christian Doctrine, when they are commissioned by us to stand in for another parish priest or do so unofficially.

The Assistants of Parish Churches will have permissions to preach in those cases when they stand in for their Parish priest or the neighboring one in his ministry for reason of illness or legitimate absence.

We authorize the Priests with responsibility for Sermons to carry this responsibility without asking us for permission.

The Chapter members who form our illustrious Council, in view of the character that law attributes to them, and using the power that Regulation number 16 gives us, will have the *Ad Tempus Nostri Beneplaciti* permission to preach the divine Word in the entire Diocese, with the exception of the funeral prayers and lectures, for which they will have to ask permission from us. The same authorization for the length of time they stay in the position will apply to the non-Chapter member Priests who make up the Diocesan Committee of Vigilance on preaching, the Rector of our Seminary and the Superiors of the two houses of Franciscan Fathers of the Diocese.

The members of religious orders resident in the Diocese shall need prior permission and authorization to preach both in the Church of their Convent as well as the others.

2190 As We are not inclined to grant permissions to preach to Priests, some who have asked us for it without our recording their suitability for it in accordance with Regulations number 13, 14, 15 and 16, and since the usual means for doing so is through a written and oral examination, according to Regulation number 14, we call for examination all the presbyters who want to enjoy the authorization to announce the Divine Word to their congregations. Having heard the opinion of the Committee of Vigilance on preaching, whose members will make up the examining board, the examination will consist of:

The *oral*, in a translation exercise answering questions on Dogmatic Theology, morality and sacred oratory, especially on the Regulations; and by developing over fifteen minutes the plan of the sermon of the written exercise.

The *written*, in writing a plan for a Sermon on the point to be designated by the Examining Board, for which three hours of time will be given.

The days of examination this year will be held, in addition to those indicated for renewing permissions to celebrate and confess, on 16 and 24 April, and for the following year, the days that will be indicated in the Directory of the Diocese.

With the aim that Chapter 5 of the duplicate Regulations has the appropriate effect in our Seminary, we commission the Rector of the Seminary to propose to us the most conducive means for achieving it.

Segorbe, 1 February of 1918.

† THE BISHOP

41

New Canon Law Code

(B. Seg 38 [1918], pp. 61-62)

2191 On 19 March of 1904, the great Pontiff Pius X gave his *Arduum Sane Munus* Constitution²⁶ for the codification of the Canon Law, and with scarcely thirteen years having gone by, a relatively short time for a document that represented and supposed a work brought to a satisfying conclusion, in the *Providentissima Mater Ecclesia* Bull of 27 May 1917²⁷, the current Pope, happily and providentially reigning, order the publication of the new Canon Law Code, leaving approximately one year before it enters into effect.

Beloved children, tomorrow is the first day that the Code is in effect, and before this date of everlasting memory in the annals of the Catholic Church we can do nothing less than bow our head respectfully and with love, obeying meekly the sure

²⁶ Cf. ASS 36 (1904), pp. 549-551.

²⁷ Cf. AAS 9 (1917), pp. 5-8.

guide and faithful master who must regulate our actions concerning our duties as children of the beloved Mother the Church and its unworthy Prelate.

We ask you for this same respect, submission and love for the new Code, beloved Priests and all the faithful of our diocese, and at the same time we urge you to become familiar with it. This is something that today is not as difficult as it was before, because it was necessary to go to many sources of Law in order to know, fulfill and apply the ecclesiastical laws, and many times there was not exactly the security of having acted and received the reward worth all the work done and time employed. We also urge you to keep the Code faithfully, because with that your conscience will be calm, and the mutual good that all law attempts to attain will be a reality in this life and halfway assured of enjoying the eternal life of God, the Supreme Lawmaker.

Segorbe, 18 May of 1918.

† THE BISHOP

42

Measures Against the Influenza

(B. Seg 38 [1918], pp. 137-139)

2192 The prevailing illness that has terrifyingly invaded our nation has reached such alarming proportions in this province that it made necessary the adoption of general and energy-related hygienic measures to avoid or reduce the contagion. For that reason, the most Illustrious Civil Governor, the President of the Provincial Board of Health, has come to Us seeking our cooperation so that these measures are adopted in the temples and, agreeing to that with great pleasure, we came to order and are ordering the following:

1. That in accordance with the respective municipal health authorities, the most Illustrious President of the Council for what affects the Cathedral, the Priests of this City and the entire Diocese for your Parishes and the churches within their boundaries open for worship, and the Superiors and Chaplains of the religious Communities for their places of worship, are to go ahead with the disinfection of them in accordance with the method and number of times indicated by these authorities and, in addition, to change the holy water of the fountains frequently.

2. Believing that, in addition to practicing whatever science advises for avoiding the illness, it is not less advisable to approach He who holds health and illness in his hands, we establish *tanquam pro re gravi* for whoever says the *Pro Tempore Pestilentiae* prayer in the Mass, leaving it to say as ordered the collection *Et Famulos*.

3. We forbid all Priests with the curing of souls and their assistance from being absent from their parishioners for even a single day, apart from serious and urgent cases, without our permission, and they will let us as know as soon possible even in those cases, and state the reason.

As it is not unlikely that some village will see itself deprived of spiritual assistance due to the illness of their Parish Priest, we urge that in this case the Parish priests and neighboring Priest to stand in and serve for the sick priest to the greatest degree possible and by whatever means their charity suggests to them. To make clear the interest we have the spiritual service remains ensured at all time, we postpone the celebration of the upcoming Synod and extend until the following one the ministerial permissions to however many priests needed to renew them now.

Segorbe, 10 October of 1918.

† THE BISHOP

43

Regulations on Parish Books

(B. Seg 38 [1918], pp. 180-182)

2193 With the aim that our beloved Parish priests, interim priests and Regents could become familiar with the new regulations under Canon Law on parish books, the rules that referred to them were published in issue 12 of the "Ecclesiastical Bulletin" dated 25 September 1918.

In order, then, that these regulations are duly complied with in our Diocese, we come to order and are ordering the following:

1. In all the Parishes, from the first day of the New Year, the books of Baptism, Confirmations, Marriages and Deaths will be kept separately, stopping the practice in some Parishes of recording the different entries under the previously mentioned headings in a single book or two volumes. On 31 December of this year, and following the last entry under each heading, the Priests will put a formal stamp of the closing of the book, recording that it is being closed by virtue of this circular letter, and will put another instruction in the beginning of the new book they open noting the reason for the opening and the number of pages it contains.

2. In order that there be uniformity in the recording of the entries, we are making mandatory their writing in accordance with the formulas published at the end of this circular letter. All will be recorded using good ink, with clear lettering, without abbreviations and with the numbers of hours and dates written out. If an error is noted while recording the entry, it will be immediately corrected and be saved at the end of the entry, before the signature. Once signed as it is, no amendment shall be made to it without our mandate or of our Provisor Vicar General.

3. The margin of the entries in Baptisms will attempt to be wide enough so that the entry number, names and surnames of the baptized and the notations prescribed by Rule 470, page 2, where in its day the notation had to be made if the child received Confirmation, the holy Sub-deaconate or whoever issued the solemn

religious profession, contracted marriage, or some other notation the ordinary priest prescribed, would all fit clearly and without confusion.

These notations will be signed with a half signature by the priest and they will be certified in the copies that are taken from the entries.

4. In January of each year, the Priest will send to Council Secretary authentic copies of all the entries corresponding to the previous year of the books indicated in Order 1, with this regulations being in effect from next January for the entries recorded since Pentecost to 31 December of this year. We will permit the use of printed copies for these copies, which must be presented for our approval before they are used.

The Priest will try to extended *Quam Primum* and *sine ulla mora*, as rules 1103 and 777 indicate, the entries and the same formal stamp is to be used in making the marginal notation or to alert the Priest it is necessary to make them.

Segorbe, 20 November of 1918.

† THE BISHOP

44

The Cloistering of the Religious Orders of Women

(B. Seg 39 [1919], pp. 21-22)

2194 Among the various regulations the new Canon Law Code contains are those referring to the cloistering of convents and homes of nuns²⁸. Decreed by a mother so loving of the spiritual good of her children as is the Church, they incline towards having the nun live as far removed from the world she renounced in order to join together more intimately to the Divine Spouse of her soul and offer her a safe place in her withdrawal where her spirit cannot be disturbed by the sight and dealings with the people of this world, so that in this way she can dedicate all her thoughts to He who called her so that she would be everything of Him.

We do not believe it necessary to plead for the cloistering when it is done deliberately so that the nuns achieve their goal in fulfillment of the wise regulations of the Church, but we do think it advisable that the nuns be known to all and remembered from time to time. To that effect, we have ordered that these regulations be published in translated form in this Bulletin so that they will be read and in all the religious communities of nuns at least twice a year and observed by all.

We will make the Mother Superior of each Community aware of the observation of our order in the act of the visit under canon law.

Segorbe, 12 February of 1919.

† THE BISHOP

²⁸ Cf. Canons 597 and 598 of the Canon Law of 1917.

New Constitutions for the Seminary

(B. Seg 39 [1919], pp. 137-140)

2195 It is a precept of Our Holy Mother the Church, confirmed in the Canon Law Code, that each Seminary must have its laws approved by the Bishop, in which they express what the students and collaborators in educating the students (Canon 1357) must do and observe.

The laws that have ruled in this Seminary up until now, as respectable as their wise and venerable authors, require modifications that are too broad and sweeping to preserve them in their present form. We have chosen to create these Constitutions, mainly bringing together the canons pertaining to the Code mentioned above, and the Regulations of the educational and disciplinary codes from the Seminaries in Italy given by the Sacred Congregation of Ordinances and Regulations (*S.C. de O. y R.*) on 18 January 1912, while also taking into account the customs, nature and object of this Seminary.

2196 If there is a decrease of ecclesiastical vocations and lack of perseverance of many people in their original aspirations, it is not attributable to the disciplinary structure and new system of studies the Holy See requires in the Seminaries. The ultimate and true reason for it is that the hostility against the clergy displayed from so many parts and in so many ways, the lack of human appeal of ecclesiastical studies for people nowadays, and the greater earthly advantages other states and trades offer with fewer years of studies, cannot help but dissuade many people from starting on the path of the Sanctuary or to persevere on it, especially if steps were not taken during intermediate studies to reinforce the weak wills of the Seminary students and protect them from the dangers of seduction.

Be that as is may, it is even more true that, through the divine promise, the lineage of Leviticus will never be extinguished, and the divine assistance and vocations to the ecclesiastical estate will not be lacking in the Church *even to the consummation of the world*²⁹, nor will they ever lack for generous souls who respond to the voice of the Lord even when He calls them to deprivation and sacrifice. Nevertheless, divine assistance requires our support, and ranking first is cooperation between the Parish priests and zealous Priests, whom we expect will search for children of good nature, sufficient cleverness and an inclination towards to the Church. Once found, they will be given special treatment and their study of reading and writing and devoutness will be cultivated with patience, love, industriousness and even some temporal assistance so that, if the voice of God calls them, they can be ready and able to answer the call and enter the Seminary when the time comes.

2197 But even more important than the number is the holy and perfect education of the future ministers of God. This is what we must watch above all and with our full attention, not merely being content with the improvement that

²⁹ Matthew 28:20.

has been obtained up to now but trying to maintain that level and increase it every single day.

We advise the students that the laws of the Seminary are not oppressive bonds, but a support for your will in order to save yourself from the slavery of unruly passions. We ardently beg the Superior and Professors in the name of the Lord that they consider the serious responsibility on their shoulders, because the prosperity of the entire Diocese, divine worship and salvation of the people depends almost exclusively on the proper education of our students.

In the name of God and his Holy Church, having heard the advice of the Discipline Council, we order that in the 1919-1920 school year and future years, the Seminary of the Diocese of Segorbe shall be ruled by these Constitutions, and all those who are affected by them must observe and fulfill them with faithfulness and religious precision.

Segorbe, 2 August of 1919.

† BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

46

Religious Indifference and Materialism

(B. Seg 39 [1919], pp. 239-240)

2198 Year after year we have come to worry about the results of the fulfillment of Easter obligations in the Parish churches, on seeing the meager number who do fulfill this serious ecclesiastical precept in most of the parishes noted in the official letters you send us periodically.

We do not blame the religious indifference shown by this non-observance of the Easter Communion in any way on lukewarm zeal in you for the salvation of souls. On the contrary, we consider it the daughter of the materialistic environment which envelops society today, suffocating the spiritual life of man by making him not worry about anything more than the earthly and forgetting he has a soul he has to save.

We are convinced this is the reason and you do not lack zeal for the spiritual health of the souls commended to your care; so that you can exercise it on any occasion, without any deadlines that apparently seem to inhibit you from urging your parishioners to this obligation, and so that we can contribute, to the degree it depends upon Us, more easily to purifying the unhealthy environment of religious indifference in our beloved Diocese, we turned to the loving concern of the Holy See pleading for broad authorization with respect to work hours in this Diocese so that the faithful may fulfill the precept of the Easter Communion. The ever-benevolent Holy See has favored us with the rescript inserted below.

Focus your attention closely on how many times they fulfill any of the required conditions in your parishes, or try to do so in timely fashion, and come to Us, who will gladly allow the use of this valuable grace.

Segorbe, 2 December of 1919.

† THE BISHOP

47

The Stipend for Masses
(B. Seg 40 [1920], pp. 53-55)

2199 After what was said in the Press and Parliament, no one can claim ignorance that this idea of the comfortable economic situation of the Clergy has been nothing but a myth up to now, and from the look of things will continue to be. In the unlikely event a member of the clergy enjoyed a bit of comfort, it was due to the frugality of the Priest and something apparent in all aspects of his life.

But we have arrived at a time, beloved parishioners, when that frugality and lifestyle of the Clergy is coming up against their meager compensation, the great and unchecked increase in the cost of the essentials just for living, which is all the Clergy aspires to in the end.

And We recognize, as you will, beloved children, that it is required for each one to contribute what they can until this distressing situation ends, and the life of the shepherds of our souls are more bearable and with the due decorum, we invite to you contribute through this circular letter; confidently hoping that in your religious feeling you will obey meekly and willingly fulfill what we order below, having taken into the account the powers the new Canon law grants us and special conditions possess:

2200 1. We indicate, both for the Secular and Regular Clergy, an alms of two *pesetas* as ordinary for the manual Masses that are commission in advance and held in the Cathedral, Parish churches, Churches and Sanctuaries of the Diocese.

2. In order not to appear that we are making it difficult for the poor to use a weapon of such great spiritual value as the Holy Mass and so our venerable and beloved Secular and Regular Clergy can exercise their charity towards them, we are allowing the Clergy of Capital of the Diocese and the Head Churches of the Archpriest areas to receive for each Mass an alms less than that previously indicated but no less than five and no more than 6 *reales*, but cautiously encouraging them to make the effort to elevate their alms to the indicated amount and in that way raise all alms to that amount

3. We also raise to two *pesetas*, for a period of four years, the alms for masses with a smaller stipend funded through a canon proceeding, reducing their number so that this rate could be forced to rise if there are not enough people *de iure et*

utiliter, with the condition that each year the individuals who grant them inform us of their fulfillment.

Beloved Priests, we are not concealing from you that the preceding regulations are not going to help you much in resolving the problem that worries Us and perhaps they may even be considered to make matters worse. Perhaps you, beloved faithful, consider this small charge unbearable for having introduced the custom of paying 5 or 6 *reales* we are establishing; but we want to make clear to all of you the purpose that guides Us, to wit: to make on our behalf the effort which depends solely on us to try to secure that when all the social classes have come to see benefits from the socio-economic imbalance, the priests are not the only ones who arrive broken.

Segorbe, 3 April of 1920.

† THE BISHOP

48

The Spiritual Exercises

(B. Seg 40 [1920], pp. 85-87)

2201 Expressly stated in Canon 126 of the current Canon Code is the obligation for all the Priests to practice Spiritual Exercises at least once every three years, during the days the ordinary prescribes, in some devout and religious house indicated by the ordinary and not allowing any exemption from this obligation except for some particular case, with just cause and express permission of the Prelate.

Reminding you of this canon, beloved Priests of the Diocese, we want all of you to fulfill it, whatever your rank and condition may be, because of how advantageous it has to be for your souls, whose benefit We must look out for, although it is useless to beg you when each of you has experienced the salutary effects of the Holy Spiritual Exercises practically, first in your days as a Seminary student and afterwards as a Priest,

To make that fulfillment easier and so each Priest knows what he has to comply with in order to carry out all parts of the canon referred to, we order the following:

2202 1. The Most Illustrious Rector of our Seminary will prepare the Seminary as he considers advisable so that 25 Priests can practice spiritual exercises at the same time.

2. We indicate the Seminary of the Diocese as the house for the Spiritual Exercises prescribed by Canon 126. If any Priest, for reasons to be declared to us, wants to practice them in another house, he will request the appropriate permission.

3. Even though we could order that the exercises be practiced more often than once every three years, and we urge you to do so, we do not want to impose on our Priests another obligation that is already imposed by the Code; but in order that they faithfully fulfill it, the Reverend Archpriests of Chelva, Jérica and Montán,

Ademuz and Alpuente will send to us, in the first half of June of each year starting this year, a comprehensive list of one-third of the Clergy from their territory who, in the judgment of the Archpriests, can practice the Spiritual Exercises that year, and will be trained by taking care of the best parochial services. The Priest of the Parish Church of Segorbe will do the same for the Clergy unassociated with the Cathedral in the Archpriest area of Segorbe, and the most Illustrious Dean will attend to the needs of the Cathedral with respect to the noble members of the Chapter Council and beneficial clergy of the Cathedral.

If there would be more than one shift of Exercises, those who have to practice them will receive timely notice of the day they have to be in the Seminary of the Diocese.

Segorbe, 28 April of 1920.

† THE BISHOP

49

Visits to the Areas of the Archpriests

(B. Seg 41 [1921], pp. 90-92)

2203 On appointing you as Archpriest on 15 December of last year, we announced to you the preparation of a questionnaire in accordance with which you must practice the visit under canon law in your area, as Canon 44 of the Canon Code was amended at your request.

When we were thinking about the writing of that, we received an invitation from our Venerable and active Metropolitan archbishop to attend the episcopal conferences prescribed in Canon 292. As one of the points being dealt with was that of visit to the archpriest areas, we left the writing of that amendment for later, with the aim of adapting it to whatever was agreed upon concerning this point.

Through the Bulletin of this Diocese corresponding to 1 June of this year you will already be aware that the annual visits of the Archpriests to the Parish churches will have to be done according to the rules recorded in the Bulletin of the Archdiocese of Valencia.

By publishing, then, these rules in the current Bulletin, we wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to address two words of attention to you about them.

2204 Canon 447 says the right and obligation of the Archpriest is primarily to watch over and see if the ecclesiastical clergy of his district are living a life that conforms to the sacred canons; if they are diligently fulfilling their duties of residence, preaching the divine word, teaching the catechism to children and adults and visiting the sick; if they are fulfilling what is ordered in the Visit under canon law; if they take special care with regard to the Eucharistic Sacrifice; if they try to secure the cleanliness and splendor due the Churches and their ornaments, primarily those related to the Secret Reserve and the Mass; if the function are

done in accordance with the liturgical prescriptions; if they administer with due diligence the assets of the Church, fulfill the responsibilities outside them and keep the books of the parish church up to date, etc. The cited canon gives the Archpriests the responsibility for watching over all this and hence orders them to visit their district in the time prescribed by the Bishop.

2205 That the Archpriests conscientiously fulfill all these duties undoubtedly depends the prestige of the Clergy, the spiritual regimen of the souls and the material interests of the church do not suffer. A pro forma vigilance, a bad conception of what should be fraternal charity, leads most of the time to extremes and circumstances where it does not fit or are very difficult to resolve; whereas if you have watched over time and could just have appeared with a prudent warning it would have been easy. The evils which derive from this cannot leave anyone given the responsibility to prevent them indifferent.

We do not doubt the zeal of our beloved Archpriests and with good reason we expect their collaboration at the head of these districts, as they can and should expect our support to fulfill this serious obligation this position imposed on them. In the same way, the Clergy of each Archpriest areas promise us reverence and meekness to the observations and advice the Archpriests address to them and an exact fulfillment of the obligations imposed on each one by the sacred canons, and they must try to become knowledgeable about them by carefully reading the series of questions that the instructions for the visit contains.

Segorbe, 28 June of 1921.

† THE BISHOP

50

The War in Africa

(B. Seg 41 [1921], pp. 134-136)

2206 The tremendous disaster suffered by our brave, self-sacrificing Army on Africa soil has had a painful impact on every Spanish heart. But, thanks to God, albeit that the pain and sorrow may have placed the seeds of despondency in the Spanish spirit, after a brief period of reflection it gave way to serenity and put hope in the Spanish soul that the honor of our flag has not been tread upon and that the God of victories will put himself on our side and help us wash away the stain that betrayal wanted to inflict upon us.

We do not understand it to be our mission to cry out for vengeance, fan the flames of hatred, nor point out causes which could lead to responsibilities and blame being assigned. On the contrary we believe our ministry to be to advise calmness and confidence to the spirits and preach obedience to those in charge of ensuring the honor of Spain, making it easier for them by using the means of kindness and love that the nature of our service as ministers of the Lord has put in our hands.

2207 Faithful to that for the present, then, we come to order and are ordering that in Our Holy Cathedral Church, the Parish churches and the Houses of Aid in the Diocese rogations are to be held so that the merciful gaze of the Lord may be attracted over our Homeland and offer illumination to our leaders on the arduous African problem, and to that effect they will consist of:

1. In the public display of the Divine Majesty over three consecutive days, followed immediately by the recitation of the litanies of the Saints, which will conclude with the glories published in the Ecclesiastical Bulletin of the Diocese for 1917 on page 194.

2. During those three days, the *Pro Tempore Belli* prayer will be recited in the Masses.

3. On the day after those three days, if the rubric allows, a funeral ceremony will be held for the souls of the many men who have died in Morocco defending the independence of our Homeland. The authorities and faithful shall be invited to the aforementioned rogations and funeral.

Segorbe, 16 August of 1921.

† THE BISHOP

51

For the Combatants in Africa
(B. Seg 41 [1921], pp. 137-138)

2208 Having spread the news in the pages of the Bulletin about the sad events that happened in the area of our Protectorate of Morocco and ordering prayers and suffrages to incline divine protection in favor of our brave soldiers, it seemed natural that one of those regulations would be aimed at the economic relief of the combatants and to take care of the multiple needs and expenses that will be caused in the hospitals where the wounded from the other side of the Strait of Gibraltar will have to come.

Maybe you will miss that regulation given the desire you feel of joining your generosity to that of the other social classes, so unanimously displayed; and if our intention was to invite you to open a subscription, we refrain from doing that in view of the signs we had that we would have to ask for your humble contribution to the Clergy in a way that was both uniform and simultaneous.

In fact, our venerable Primate, his Excellency the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, in a letter dated 17 August, proposes to us that we invite all of you who are receiving a salary to contribute one day's wages for that purpose, for one time only, and that We would contribute 1,000 *pesetas*.

With great pleasure, at the same time that we offer the sum requested of Us in favor and relief of the needs of our Army, we invite you to contribute what they request from you, certain that everyone will contribute with pleasure knowing this

money is going to a worthy cause and with the self-sacrifice characteristic of the Spanish clergy, never known for an overabundance of resources.

Nonetheless, if anyone through special circumstances is unable to do without this amount, they will advise us within a period of twenty days in order to alert the paymaster not to make the corresponding deduction.

Segorbe, 25 August of 1921.

† THE BISHOP

52

The Death of His Holiness Benedict XV

(B. Seg 42 [1922], pp. 21-22)

2209 Once again, after scarcely seven years have gone by, the Church is weeping over the loss of its visible head, the Roman Pontiff. But this time, due to the unexpected nature of his death and the situation of the world without the spirit of peace among nations and the continuous calls for this peace by His Holiness Benedict XV, the heart of every faithful Catholic experiences even greater pain and sorrow.

Just a few days ago, the telegraph agencies were telling us that a Holy Father full of life had indicated the theme for the sessions of the future International Eucharistic Congress: the reign of peace through the Eucharist, and today, beloved children, the Pope has already died. He rose to the throne of the Pontiff crying out for peace and we can say that he died with that sweet word on his lips.

May he also rest in peace and everyone mourn his death, without distinction of race, religion, or ages, because he had words and works of peace and comfort for everyone; but the Catholics are weeping for him in a special way because he was our Common Father in addition to everything else.

Let us cry, yes; but pray just as much and with double prayers to ask for his eternal rest and for God to quickly give his Church a new successor:

To this end, we come to order the following:

2210 1. Solemn funerals will be celebrated for the soul of the great Pontiff Benedict XV in all the parish churches, affiliated churches, and churches of religious orders of both sexes in this Diocese, and the Parish priests will invite the Authorities to attend.

In the Cathedral, we order the following in agreement with the Illustrious Council.

2. After the funerals, every day until they verify the election of the new Pontiff, after the conventual Mass is concluded, the prescribed invocations *Tempore Sedis Apostolicae Vacantis* will be erected, which is found in number 380 of this bulletin, dated 5 February of 1900, changing the word *Episcopum* to *Pontificem*.

3. On the days allowed by the rubric, whoever celebrates the Holy Mass will add the *Pro Eligendo Summo Pontifice* prayer of the Roman missal.

4. The Parish priests and those in charge of churches will urge the faithful to unite their private prayers to these public ones in order to better attain the proposed goal.

Segorbe, 22 January of 1922.

† THE BISHOP

53

The Election of His Holiness Pius XI³⁰

(B. Seg 42 [1922], pp. 23-24)

2211 We have a Pope! This the shout of jubilation heard all over the Catholic world today. The ship of the Church, deprived by death of its pilot, is going to continue on, guided from this moment by the expert hand of His Holiness Pius XI, sailing safely through the stormy sea of the word, assured of not sinking.

The new Pontiff was chosen for important missions by the mourned Benedict XV, who raised him to Bishop and then Cardinal in two years, and the name of Pius adopted by Monsignor Achille Ratti foretells of days of peace and glory for the Church, as those two facts hint to us that the current High Pontiff is going to continue the great deeds with which the previous Popes have immortalized that name.

Let us take joy then, beloved children, with the happiness that Christianity is experiencing today and at the same time give thanks to the Divine Founder of the Catholic Church for having deigned to listen to the prayers that we raised to Him so he would grant us a Supreme Shepherd of our souls in accordance with his Divine Will.

2212 To this end, we come to order the following:

1. In all the Parish churches of the Diocese and the churches of the religious order of both sexes solemn "*Te Deum*" will be sung on the first holy day after the date in which they receive this Bulletin, and they will try to invite the authorities to this act.

In our Holy Cathedral Church, in agreement with the Illustrious Council, it will be sung next Sunday.

2. From the time this regulation comes to the attention of our Clergy, they will say the *Pro Gratiarum Actione* prayer in the Mass for three days.

3. In the future the name of the elected Pontiff will be said in the canon of the Mass and the *Et Famulos* collection.

Segorbe, 22 January of 1922.

THE BISHOP

³⁰ Pius XI, Achille Ratti, was elected Pope on 6 February 1922, and will go down in history as the Pope of the Missions.

On the Death of a Parish Priest

(B. Seg 42 [1922], pp. 119-122)

2213 Death, which often comes when we least expect it, and sometimes without the usual prelude of an illness, when its victim is a priest who heals souls, often causes, apart from the other disruptions which we are not concerned with in this case, the no less important upheaval, if the appropriate precautions are not taken, that the interests of the Parish entrusted to his responsibility run the risk of deteriorating.

Thanks to God, we have not had reason to lament anything with respect to that danger from any of the deaths that have occurred among our Clergy since we took over this Diocese, and if we record that as being honorable for our Priests, we must not overlook the need to provide some rules in the event of a vacant position in a Parish with the aim of preventing possible suffering, avoid doubts and confusion and urge the acceptance of what is prescribed by Canon 472.

2214 That is the purpose of this Circular Letter, and to that effect we come to order the following:

1. Each Parish priest, interim priest (*Ecónomo*) and Regent will commission two people of the Parish church of their confidence, one of whom will perform the duties of sacristan of the church for them and, promptly on hearing news of the risk of the priest dying, or their death if it strikes unexpectedly, to notify the neighboring Parish church of the death of the priest, either personally or by some other reliable means. To ensure compliance with this regulation, we charge the conscience of everyone one required to carry it out.

By the neighboring Parish church, it will be understood as the one within the Diocese that is closest in distance to your own Parish church, whatever the condition or convenience of the road for getting there may be. Another thing we do not order concerning this is if they would ask for some change for a particular Parish Church.

The Parish churches which have an Assistant will be exempt from the above order. Since the most senior of them, in case there are more than one, or the only one, or if they would have them in any House of Aid, would be the ones who stand in to perform the duties of the neighboring Parish church with respect to the first paragraph of this regulation, as well as in the event of the death of the Assistant of the House of Aid, the Parish priest to which he belongs would perform the duties.

2. Promptly on receiving news of the risk of death or the death of the neighboring Parish priest, the person who by virtue of the preceding mandate must appear at the Parish Church of the sick or deceased priest will do so as soon the essential concerns of his own Parish church permit. We also charge his conscience to that effect, and his service will be to offer the sick or deceased priest those comforts and assistance that charity and camaraderie demand in those cases. He will also keep watch so that the interests of the parish church, both material and moral, are not harmed during those times adopting the measures that sound

judgment advises if the priest whom he was going to stand in for is still alive, or in the event of death those duties are now his own as commissioned by the Parish, because he will be considered as such until there is new order from the Ordinary Priest of the diocese.

They will pay special attention to taking charge of the inventory of the parish church and review if everything is in agreement with what is contained in it, inspect the parish church books to see if they are up to date, take possession of the archive and its inventory, the book of *pro populo* Masses and manuals, and those relating to the brotherhoods and administrative proceedings for worship and factories the priest they are standing in for was responsible for, verifying the entries in them, and in the case of death, fill in the part that deals with the burial of the deceased.

3. As soon as the Parish priest, Interim priest, Regent, or Coadjutor in charge of fulfilling what is mandated in number 2, they will inform our Secretary of the Council and Government of his management with respect to the administrative procedures ordered in it.

4. From the moment this Circular reaches the attention of the interested parties in their areas, they of course will comply with the first mandate. For the provisions of the second, they will address two official documents, one to us and the other to their neighboring Parish church, who will archive it alongside the inventory of the Parish church. These documents will bear the following declaration: *a)* there is an inventory of your Parish church and a place where it is kept; *b)* there is a *quinque libri* and it is up to date; *c)* there is the *pro populo* book of Masses and manuals and it is up to date; *d)* the archive is closed and has a catalogue and a place where the key is kept; *e)* the books of the Brotherhoods and administrative procedures (nominal relation to them) that manage their assets, their funds (if they are not administered by them, indicate that) and the place where they are kept; *f)* where you keep the key to the tabernacle, the Ornaments and objects for worship.

5. When the neighboring Parish church received the notice of which the first provision speaks, he will take the previously indicated document and, as it is stated that this must be guarded, he will bring it to serve as proof.

It only remains for us to warn our beloved Parish priests, Interim priests, Regents and Coadjutors of Houses of Aid that you must keep the books entrusted to you with the utmost scrupulousness, particularly those concerning the inventories and parish church funds, because it should not be concealed that not doing so may come to the detriment of the assets themselves, and if We do not want the people of the Church to suffer, neither do they, which you will avoid by faithfully fulfilling this Circular letter and the regulations under canon law on which they are based.

Segorbe, 2 September of 1922.

† THE BISHOP

55
Collection in Favor of Russia
 (B. Seg 42 [1922], pp. 172-173)

2215 This letter, beloved children, says with great eloquence what we could say about the disasters the Russian nation is going through as a result of their religious, political and social ravings.

To the heart of the Holy Father, representative on earth of He who is charity, could not be indifferent to such misfortune, especially among the children, the innocent victims, and from the very start applied himself to remedy it to the extent he was able³¹. But, as he is living from alms, how would he be able to help others? Charity, which is self-sacrifice and ingenious, provided the means, making the Holy Father deprive himself to the degree necessary in order to give to those unhappy little creatures, and called on charitable souls to help in the undertaking.

Even though we know too well, on the one hand, the poverty of the members of our diocese and on the other that this is the third time that we have approached you seeking a donation for the same purpose, we still could not avoid the call of the High Pontiff; even more after the beautiful example he sets and is emphasized in the previous letter. We can do nothing other than order, as we order our beloved Parish priests and those in charge of Parish churches to promote the formation of the "Action Committees" the letter refers to in their churches and in the upcoming Christmas seasons, the season for children par excellence, urge them to begin their charitable mission by collecting donations, trying to secure monthly subscriptions for as long as the need lasts, etc. This is what the love of children and devotion to the Holy See suggests for the indicated goal.

The Parish priests and whoever is in charge of the Parish church will keep us informed of whether they have been able to establish in their church the aforementioned "Action Committee". Those unable to form one must make a collection on any of the holy days of the current Christmas season, chosen at their own discretion, announcing and explaining the goal to their parishioners and send us the amount or a notice of how much was collected before the 15th of next month to add to the list of the donations We are heading.

Segorbe, 15 December of 1922.

† THE BISHOP

56
Coronation of the Virgin of the Unprotected
 (B. Seg 43 [1923], pp. 37-40)

2216 Valencia and the entire region surrounding the city is preparing to honor with dignity Our Lady of the Unprotected next May. A lovely crown of gold and

³¹ Cf. AAS 14 (*1922), pp. 417-419.

precious stones which generosity has interwoven with its magnificent donations will be placed under canon law upon the humble brow of the most humble Queen of Heaven and Earth³². Great religious and profane festivities will be the halo which surrounds the solemn act of the coronation.

But without a doubt the favorite beam of light in that halo for the Mother of God has to be the magnificent regional assembly of the Marian societies that will be held on the 15th through 17th of that month, since that will be the fervent chant of her graces and prerogatives, a monument to her loves for humanity, the forges where the Marian hearts will be placed until they acquire the vivid red color of the divine loves.

2217 And in that that noble affair of Marian love, the Diocese of our Lady of Hope, of Segorbe, Our Lady of the Holy Cave, of Altura; Our Lady of the Light, of Navajas, Our Lady of Loreto, of Jérica; Our Lady of the Lost Child, of Caudiel, and Our Lady of Sorrow, of Montán; Our Lady of Remedio, of Chelva, and Our Lady of Consolation, of Corcolilla cannot be absent.

It is required that the devout followers of the Virgin in these societies appear with her name, at least, and even better with her presence and works, to form the chorus of praises to Mary under no less sweet name of the Mother of the Unprotected. We require these devotions to it, since so many of the beloved members of our diocese hail from the province of Valencia and almost all of them from the beautiful region of that name.

We said before that they must attend the assembly in name, at least, and to this end we invite and desire that individual Catholics and Catholic entities sign up as members, especially those dedicated under the patronage of Mary. These additionally may send their commitment to the conclusions that are agreed upon, as is recommended in the program inserted in this Bulletin.

These wishes of ours will be particularly satisfying if the learned and self-sacrificing teaches of primary education and the devout Catholic women would follow the very noble examples of the Valencia Teachers and ladies, whose Marian ardor has merited the creation of a special Section at the assembly for the teachers and another one for women.

2218 We also said it was necessary to attend with the work and one means that will most contribute to the glorification of the Holy Virgin and highlight one of the most distinguished crests of our Diocese will be the preparation of the Marian Guide, the same kind as an integral part of the regional one proposed in the first topic of the third section of the Questionnaire. For that we hope and beseech the Reverend Parish priests and those in charge of churches, acting on the wings of your love for our sweet Mother, will supply the details they desire about the different societies the Holy Virgin is venerated by in their churches, the images dedicated to her, the altars, sisterhoods, festivals and their date, chapels, well-known sanctuaries within their respective boundaries, etc. They should send them before the month

³² Cf. 1813 above.

of May to the representative for our Diocese of the Assembly, the Most Illustrious Pedro Morro Fosas, Canon Priest, who will take care of collecting them and sending them to the governing Board of the Assembly.

With those details sent in a simple, brief form, the task will be easy and attract the gratitude of the Virgin upon our beloved Collaborators in the Priestly Ministry within the Diocese and bring a special luster to the Diocese of Segorbe.

Of course, we bless these works, and as proof of our gratitude, so that this appeal will not be lost in the void, we send our paternal blessing to everyone.

Segorbe, 1 March of 1923.

† THE BISHOP

57

The Arrival of the Dictatorship³³

(B. Seg 43 [1923], pp. 129-131)

2219 We are currently witnessing, beloved children, events of immense significance for our beloved Homeland. It had reached a lamentable state due to the inertia and apathy of some, the ambition and avarice of others, the misguided intelligence and abuse of freedom in most and the separatist doctrines of the masses, respected and even protected by those who were obligated to watch over order and morality which made any action and all authority impossible. We were rushing with gigantic strides towards damnation and ruin, very similar to unfortunate Russia.

Only the divine Providence, which can find its bearings even in the stormy seas, could put an end to the upheavals of our society and channel it to the paths of justice and order. And like the Holy Virgin, Mother and special Advocate of the Spaniards, from its Pilar of the unmovable stone and the greatest storms, interjects her mediation in our favor; the Lord who can never deny his Mother, instilled the necessary zeal and bravery in militias like the Maccabees to rise up against the prostration of the nation, avoiding its imminent and complete ruin.

We give thanks to God, beloved brothers, for his kindness and mercy; but, in addition, taking into account the arduous and difficult undertaking of social reform that the military government has taken on itself, all of us will try, to the degree that it depends on us, some with support, others through action and everyone by means of prayer, help them to carry out such a noble and patriotic mission.

In addition, then, to the individual prayers which all of us must raise continuously to the Lord with the greatest possible fervor, asking him to grant the lights and graces necessary to make wise decisions in arranging everything that must be for the glory of God and leading to the order, well-being and the uplifting

³³ It was established by Miguel Primo de Rivera on 13 September 1923.

of our Homeland; as the prayer in common is much more acceptable to God, we order:

That in all the churches of our Diocese perform a solemn Triduum on the 12th, 13th and 14th of this month, with full display of the Divine Majesty and reciting the rosary, they will then chant the Greater Litanies and a Salve Regina to the Virgin of Pilar, adding an Our Father and Ave María to the apostle James and another to the Holy Guardian Angel of Spain; concluding everything with the blessing of the Most Holy. The authorities will be invited to these acts and the attendance of the faithful will be requested by reading them this Circular Letter.

Segorbe, 6 October of 1923.

† THE BISHOP

58

The Teaching of Religion

(B. Seg 43 [1923], pp. 149-153)

2220 The ignorance of the divine religion, the reigning Pope has said, is the biggest stain spoiling the Catholic nations³⁴.

To know the accuracy of that statement, one only has to glance at present-day Society. The majority of Christians in our times do not know the main dogmas of our sacred religion. Ask many of them what the mysteries of the Holy Trinity are or the Incarnation of the Son of God; question them about what it the sacred sacrifice of the Mass and what purpose the holy sacraments serve and they will not know how to answer you. It is very similar to the recent converts who St. Paul asked if they had received the Holy Spirit and they replied: *We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost*³⁵.

2221 The ignorance of the dogmas of the religion is necessarily followed by a lack of awareness of the relations and duties that man has towards God, his fellow man and himself.

From this, devoutness disappears and the faithful drift farther and farther away from the temple; from this, egotism drowns the beautiful virtue of charity and injustice spreads in all directions; from this, immorality and corruption invade everything and man, only intent on enjoying sensual pleasures and concentrating his happiness in this world, stops looking to heaven and becomes similar to wild animals, according to the statement in the holy books: *Homo cum in honor esset non intellexit; comparatus est iumentis insipientibus et similis factus est illis*.

2222 An evil of great magnitude, what cure will be able to oppose it? The Church, founded by God to enlighten all men who come to this world, has not

³⁴ Cf. AAS 12, p. 299; AAS 15, (1923), pp. 327-329; AAS 16 (1924), p. 332 ss.

³⁵ Acts 19:2.

stopped teaching all men the doctrine of the Gospel since its origins, by means of constant preaching.

Among all the types of preaching, the most excellent, most important and most necessary is undoubtedly the Catechesis or teaching of the Catechism. We are not the only ones saying that. The Vicar of Christ, Pius X, preached these words: "The work of the Catechism is the most excellent to which we can dedicate ourselves; better than to preach and to confess and go on missions, to teach in the Seminary and other ministries".

It is not at all surprising, then, that the Church has always looked favorably on the teaching of the Catechism.

Search all the legislation of canon law of all times and in all ages and you will find many orders that establish and encourage instruction of the catechism not only to those in charge of healing souls and the simple Priests, but also to all the faithful of both sexes.

If you do not want to bother that much, leaf through our legislation of the diocese and you will see that not only our synod constitutions but all our predecessors in the Diocese have filled their constitutions with the importance and need for teaching the catechism.

If we are allowed to cite, among others, the Illustrious Bishop Aguilar, who, in advance of the Catechism Congresses and even the general regulations of the Church that form part of the new Code today, established it for this Diocese and established the regulations for the Brotherhood of the Christian Doctrine.

The orders given by Aguilar, were substantially confirmed and ratified by the illustrious Bishops Cerezo and Massanet, albeit adapted to the provisions of the *Acerbo Nimis*³⁶ Encyclical and the publication of the *Catechism* of Pius X.

For our part, we do not want to add any regulation to the ones already mentioned. We only propose to recall them and confirm them by ordering their observance.

2223 By virtue of which, all those entrusted with the curing of souls in this Diocese:

1. Shall teach the children the catechism for one hour, in your respective Parish churches, on Sundays and holy days.

2. Shall instruct the children so they can receive the Sacraments of Penance and Communion as soon as advisable, as prescribed in Canons 1320 and 1331.

3. The text that all teachers of the Catechism shall use is the short Catechism of Pius X.

4. To fulfill what is ordered in Canon 1333, they shall explain the Catechism to adults on Sundays and holy days, at the most suitable hour for the townspeople to attend and using language adapted to the abilities of the faithful.

5. Shall establish in their respective parishes, if they have not already done so, the Brotherhood of the Christian Doctrine, as provided for in Canon 711.

³⁶ Cf. PIUS X: *Acerbo Nimis*: ASS 37 (1905), pp. 613-625.

6. The Archpriests shall focus special attention on observing the prior regulations and in their report of the visit to the Parish Churches of their Archpriest area they will note the number of boys and girls attending the Catechism in each Parish church.

7. We earnestly urge our collaborators in healing souls not to neglect to watch over education, since the Law of Public Education and current Regulations gives them that right, and the most important Articles can be seen in number 498 of our Bulletin.

Finally, we remind all Priests of our Diocese who have responsibility for the healing of souls and even the simple faithful to encourage, spread and take an active part in the teaching the Catechism by any means your zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls suggests. It is the main way of contributing to the true rebirth of our Homeland.

Segorbe, 2 November of 1923.

† THE BISHOP

59

Cases of Morality and Liturgy
(B. Seg 43 [1923], pp. 195-198)

2224 All of you, beloved brothers, know the need the Priest has for knowledge.

The words *You are the light of the world*³⁷ that Jesus address to the Apostles were also spoken to us. Yes, we are the light of the world and therefore we must enlighten the intelligences of mortal men with the heavenly doctrine that our Divine Master brought to the earth.

But how do we bring out about this enlightenment if we are deprived of the knowledge that must lead men along the shining paths of truth and virtue?

Yes, we need knowledge and must try to acquire it with our full effort, so that the curse that God directed in another time to the priest of Israel through the words of the prophet Hosea does not fall upon us: *Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will reject thee, that thou shalt not do the office of priesthood to me*³⁸.

But what knowledge is it he demands of us? Not a profane knowledge that has nothing in common with our missions, but rather knowledge par excellence, the knowledge of knowledges, the knowledge of the duties Christians of all classes have to believe and practice to achieve the eternal Beatitude.

2225 And will we be able, beloved brothers, to acquire and preserve this knowledge without our own effort, without constant and thorough effort and study on our part? It is not enough, no, to have learned the ecclesiastical sciences; it is

³⁷ Matthew 5:14.

³⁸ Hosea 4:6.

necessary to recall them frequently since the memory easily forgets what it once learned.

See in the new Code, in Canon 129, that orders all the clergy not to abandon the sacred studies once they have received their priesthood.

To give you, then, an opportunity to spend more and more time in study, venerable brothers, and to comply with what is prescribed in Canon 131, we have decided to re-establish in our beloved Dioceses the morality and liturgy lectures, interrupted by circumstances beyond our control.

Therefore, we come to order and are ordering that beginning from next January, these lectures are to be verified monthly in our Diocese as follows: in view of the difficulties and inconveniences that the reunions of Priests in an Archpriest area or other central locations, the lectures will be written.

All Priests of the Diocese, with the exception of the Illustrious Chapter priests and those who make up the court appointed below and those who for a just reason or cause that We exempt, will send in writing to our Council Secretary, before the 20th, the answer to the questionnaire and the solution of the moral and liturgical cases which with proper advance notice we will propose in the Ecclesiastical Bulletin of the Diocese.

The friars of the religious orders, even if exempt from our jurisdiction, who have received permission from Us to confess will also satisfy the obligation we just established for the Priests of the Secular Clergy, if their houses and convents do not hold liturgy-morality lectures.

2226 For the purpose of having those involved in the Conferences know whether they are correctly applying the principles of Theology, the solution of the moral and liturgical cases will be published in the Bulletin the month after the conference.

Similarly, to honor some and provide incentive for others, that Bulletin will also publish the names of those who obtained the first censure.

The priests who earn the first qualifications in five or six conferences over the year will be awarded the extension of ministerial permissions for one year. The priests who would earn qualification in 10 or 12 conferences would be rewarded with the extension of the permission for two years.

The Parish priests must contest the justifications obtained with the first censure, in order that they consider them as points of merit.

On the contrary, if there is not something to fear, one or a few Priests would stop sending the written lectures without any justified reason and approved by Us, they shall be punished with the loss of reduction of one of two years of permission, according to whether they would fail five or ten conferences.

If those failing the conferences were Parish priests, We will take the suitable measures concerning them, in accordance with the provisions of Canon 2377 of the Code.

To prepare the materials for the Conference and examine the works of the priests taking part in the conferences and marking their works, we appoint a court

composed of: the Most Illustrious Mr. Luis Morro, Penitent Canon Priest; Dr. Leonardo Pérez; Mr. Joaquín Hernández, Mr. Silvino Pérez and Mr. Lorenzo Cortés. Segorbe, December of 1923.

† THE BISHOP

60

Consecration of Spain to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

(B. Seg 44 [1924], pp. 73-74)

2227 In one of the sessions of the venerable Metropolitan archbishop, they were remembering that good Spaniards made an effort to commemorate each year the honorable event for the religion and homeland of the Consecration of Spain to the Sacred Heart of Jesus by our Catholic and beloved Monarch on 30 May 1919.

We did not have ponder for any time at all how pleasing it would be to remember this auspicious event, and as proof of that we came to order the following:

1. In all the Churches and Parishes that celebrate the worship during the month of Mary, the exercise on the 30th shall be with display of the Divine Master and the Parish priests and whoever is responsible for them will try to have the faithful receive communion on that day.

2. With the Divine Master displayed, the act of consecration that is inserted below shall be read.

3. All Catholics are invited to hang tapestries on that day.

The Priests, by whatever means seem most appropriate to them, will make their parishioners aware of our wishes and urge them to practice them.

With respect to the Holy Cathedral Church, the Illustrious Council shall agree to whatever is appropriate.

Segorbe, 15 May of 1924.

† THE BISHOP

61

The Lack of Modesty in the Way People Dress

(B. Seg 44 [1924], pp. 97-100)

2228 Approximately five years have gone by since We were lamenting the lack of modesty in Spanish Christian women in our Advent sermon.

We are greatly hurt by the indecent fashions invented through the instigation of Satan in order to make people lose their souls. After highlighting the damage, both moral and physic, caused by the manner of dressing in vogue today, we urged the Christian women to dress modestly and decently, in accordance with their rank

and position, always fleeing from any immodest fashion that could make them abominable in the eyes of God, an object of horror to the angels and the cause of condemnation by men.

What effect did our pastoral sermon have? Sad and painful it is to confess that, judging by what one sees in our streets and plazas, and even our temples, our voice fell into the void; it was the voice that preaches in the desert. Yes, these indecent fashions have been increasing and have become extremely indecent. It does seem that the sentence by St. Paul that we cited, "Let your modesty be known to all men"³⁹ has been replaced by this one: "All men know your lack of modesty and inhibitions".

This lack of modesty in dress is not only observed in the unfortunate women who have lost their modesty; it can be seen in Ladies and Young Ladies who surely would become indignant if someone were to suppose anything in them other than integrity; some of these Ladies and Young Ladies make a great display of their devoutness, have their name entered in some Marian Congregation and wear the scapular and Medal of the Virgin, and perhaps call themselves Daughters of the Virgin Mary. What a distressing way to imitate the Most Pure, chaste and modest Mother of God!

2229 But if that were not enough, they have the audacity to wear these immodest styles when entering the Temple of the Lord, to bring to it mocking, lascivious glances and turn the house of God, the place of prayer and penance, into a place of dissipation and sin.

Still more: you will see these half-dressed Ladies and Young Ladies approach the prie-dieu to light the candle of the Holy Sacrament and advance up to the altar to receive in their naked bosom the Holy Communion, that is, the unblemished Lamb, He who grazes among irises and lilies and takes his pleasure in living among Virgins and chaste souls.

Does it not seem to you, Venerable Brothers and beloved children, that this is an abomination in the holy sanctuary? These profaners of the Christian temple would well deserve to have Jesus come down from the altar, where he really is truly present, and cast them out of the House of God lashing them with a whip, as he did in another time when he chased the money changers from the temple of Jerusalem.

2230 To cure evils of such magnitude to the best of our abilities; we have resolved to order the following:

1. All Priests, both secular and regular clergy, shall try to reprimand and stigmatize immoral and indecent fashions from the pulpit, in the confession booths and individual conversations to induce the Christian woman not to follow the way of fashion and to sign up in the Crusade for Christian Modesty, blessed by all the Prelates of Spain.

2. The nuns dedicated to teaching shall instill their students with Christian modesty and refuse to admit in their Schools whoever presents themselves wearing indecent clothing.

³⁹ Philippians 4:5.

3. We pray that the Teachers of our Diocese who cooperate in this work of moral cleansing to earnestly urge their students to show modesty in the way they dress, the main ornament of the Christian girl and young woman.

4. The Priests and other Rectors of Churches shall attach to the doors and gates of their respective churches the notice they shall receive together with this Circular Letter.

5. All the Priests who administer Holy Communion shall deny it to those Ladies and Young Ladies who present themselves in clothing which violates the provisions of that Notice.

6. The Priests and Rectors who are mainly responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions of the mentioned Notice shall abide by the private instructions to be communicated to them in order to have uniformity in interpretation of the circumstances.

Segorbe, 1 July of 1924.

† THE BISHOP

62

Regulation for Priest in Charge of Chapels

(B. Seg 44 [1924], pp. 137-138)

2231 To avoid any politics in the future appointments of those responsible for chapels existing in the Parishes of our Diocese and prevent any interference by incompetent authorities who upset our beloved Parish priests on more than a few occasions, we are entrusting to one of the Archpriests of our Diocese the creation of a regulation that would resolve such inconveniences.

In deference to our pleas, the chosen Archpriest wrote the requested regulation which, modified somewhat and approved by Us, we are publishing below so they can serve as rules for the priests who have more than one chapel in their Parishes.

If any Parish priest believes it necessary or advisable to vary or add something, given the special circumstances of their Parish, they must inform us in writing.

Meanwhile, and as long as we have nothing else to order in individual cases, it will be mandatory in all the Parishes of our Diocese.

† THE BISHOP

63

Jubilee of the Holy Year

(B. Seg 45 [1925], pp. 51-54)

2232 Our Holy Father Pope Pius X, after publishing the graces and spiritual privileges added to the visits to the Basilicas of St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John Lateran

and St. Mary the Elder in Rome could do no less, given his paternal heart, than to remember whoever found it impossible to personally come to the Holy City in this Jubilee year. Hence, in the *Apostolica Numeri*⁴⁰ Constitution, he authorizes the ordinary clergy to recognize the devout acts required for earning the Jubilee for that group of people.

Making use of this authority and focused on the spiritual progress of those whom His Holiness wanted to favor with such a singular privilege and also paying attention to the situation of our Diocese, at present We are making the indicated recognition in the following way:

2233 1. To the cloistered nuns of our Diocese, their postulants and novices who live in the Monasteries to be at their service, we recognize the visits to the Basilicas indicated above for ten visits to the main Altar of your church, praying on each one the full Station of the Most Holy and praying for the special intentions that the Pope proposed in this Jubilee. Additionally, the people indicated before can choose any of the approved confessors who, in the confession done to earn the Jubilee, will be able to absolve them of their sins and condemnations reserved for Us and the Holy See, except the ones reserved to the latter *specialissimo modo* (very special way) and in the case of formal and external heresy, imposing salutary penance and the punishments under canon law which applied to the case, and dispense to the nuns the private vows that would have been issued to them after the solemn profession and are not opposed to regular observance.

2. To the nuns of simple vows, uncloistered, whether by Pontifical or Diocesan Law, and their postulants and novices, to the internal students paying half room and board of their schools-boarders, those who live in the religious home as legal address or quasi-address, we make the same recognition under the same conditions as those listed in Provision One. They can also choose the confessor to recognize their private vows, except those reserved to the Holy See or Roman Pontiff, which would have been issued, and the facts sworn, recognized and absolve them.

3. To faithful of both sexes who, due to illness or delicate health, could not go to Rome in the Jubilee year or could not complete the prescribed visits to the Patriarchal Basilicas there; to the full-time nurses of the hospital, volunteer or paid; the workers who live from their work and could not abandon it for as many days as the trip to Rome needed; whoever was confined in prisons and finally, those over 70 years old, we recognize the prescribed visits of the pilgrims for the 10 altar visits that number 1 speaks of. The residents of this city must do them in the Holy Cathedral Church, the parishioners in their respective Parish churches or House of Aid of the Parish church, and the prison inmates in their churches there. The confessor will be able to recognize the impossibility of going to church to make these visits for other devout acts at his discretion.

2234 Finally, we warn that to earn the Jubilee one needs, as previously indicated, a special confession followed by receiving the Holy Eucharist, done for

⁴⁰ Cf. AAS 16 (1924), pp. 316-320.

this specific purpose, as neither the annual communion nor an invalid one will be enough, and to pray for the intentions of the Hugh Pontiff. By repeating the visits and devout works established, they can earn the Jubilee twice in the current year.

We urge all our parishioners not to waste this opportunity this year offers them to hoard merits of sanctification, by attending some of the pilgrimages to the Holy City, or whoever cannot do so, enriching themselves by following the provisions in this Circular Letter.

Segorbe, 25 February of 1925.

† THE BISHOP

64

Works Project in the Holy Cave⁴¹

(B. Seg 45 [1925], pp. 144-146)

2235 We were spending a few days in the Sanctuary of Our Lady of the Holy Cave when the Carmelite Fathers who take care of it informed us about the project they had for building a shrine to Our Lady and showed us the drawing of the stations for the 15 mysteries of the Rosary, which we suggested to the friars on another occasion, they plan to build on the trail going from the Sanctuary of the Cross.

The idea of the shrine, as they explained it to us, and the design of the stations deserved our approval and together with that, we also dedicated encouraging words to the Carmelite Fathers of the Sanctuary for both projects to quickly become a reality that would redound in honor of the Holy Virgin. We promised them our help individually, and I do not know if we promised more than we should have, we think not, since we also promised at the same time the help of our clergy and members of our diocese.

Two things occur to everyone who visits the unique image of Our Lady of the Holy Cave in her equally unique Cave as necessary things to do: a better arrangement of the shrine so that the Virgin can contemplate all the sites in the Cave, and the removal of the arches that offer nothing of any benefit and are detrimental to the perspective of the Cave as it exists there. Well, fine, the planned shrine is inclined to satisfy those two issues.

2236 Also in a Marian Sanctuary, and we have a good example in the Sanctuary of Montserrat, with the importance that has which concerns us, they lack the stations of the Holy Rosary to satisfy the devoutness of the faithful who would wish to practice this devotion to the Virgin, having its mysteries there in plain sight, and the building of the planned stations tries to provide for that desire.

⁴¹ The Sanctuary was obtained by Luis Amigó on 13 January 1922 and delivered to the Carmelite Fathers on 3 April 1922 (cf. 231-232 above)

To leave the building of all this to the Community responsible for the spiritual service of the Sanctuary would amount to little more than renouncing the possibility of seeing these needs satisfied, since many, many years would have to pass for the Fathers to execute them; however, everyone who visits the Virgin today cannot help but recognize that these Fathers have introduced significant improvements in the short time they have been in charge, and are even planning others to make the stay more pleasurable for whoever comes to the Sanctuary or leave that everything the Community, but the ones the ones that concern us cannot nor should not be the work only of the friars.

What cannot happen, as we have indicated before in noting the many years that would have to pass in order to realize the project, and why it should not be just their work along is because the exclusive goal of projects of that nature pursue is to honor Our Lady of the Holy Cave, and this must be the work of all those who love Her. Those of us who belong to the Diocese of Segorbe cannot stand by and allow others who are not from the Diocese to contribute to this work in honor of the Holy Virgin without adding our own humble contribution.

2237 Making an appeal to the beloved members of our diocese so they may contribute to the works with their alms that we are informing them of is the intent of this Circular Letter. We hope that all the Parish priests and Priests make a great effort in their parishes and among their acquaintances so that, whether with a small or large amount, they can be associated with this tribute of love to the Holy Virgin.

Our wish is that the first station of the Holy Rosary can bear the inscription that it was built by the Prelate and Clergy of the Diocese. In order to facilitate the donations to the priests, although We are working to find them, we propose that they celebrate some kind of Mass (although not the second ones when they hold two in one day, because those have a determined goal) to our intention and with this goal, because if we manage to find a stipend for them, we will apply them to this purpose and in this way the financial effort the works ask of us more bearable.

All donations that are collected in the Parishes, as well however many Masses are celebrated with this intention, will be sent to our Council Secretary, who is keeping an open list of them.

Segorbe, 10 November of 1925.

65

Jubilee of the Holy Year

(B. Seg 46 [1926], pp. 144-146)

2238 The Holiness of the reigning Pontiff, giving yet another proof of his wishes for the Sanctification of the souls, has deigned, through the pre-inserted

Servatoris Iesu Christe Constitution⁴², of 25 December of last year, to extend to the entire Catholic world the graces and privileges of the extraordinary Jubilee, which one could benefit from in the Eternal City last year.

By virtue of this extension, then, all the faithful of both sexes who want to benefit from these graces during what remains of the present year, which we forcefully urge you to do, will be able to do so in accordance with the following conditions:

1. You can earn the Jubilee two times, once for yourself and the souls of the deceased and the other applicable only to the latter.

2. Confession and communion is required, without the Easter confession and communion counting.

3. For a period of five days, either consecutively or broken up, each day you must visit the main Church and three others, with those designated for the visits in the city of Segorbe, in addition to the Cathedral, the parish churches of Santa María and San Pedro and the church of the Seminary of the Diocese.

For the other Parishes, we will leave them to the discretion of each Parish priest or whoever is standing in for him to indicate the other three churches and public chapels in addition to the Parish church which their parishioners must visit. If there are not that many, the four daily visits will be done in the Parish church if that is the only one, or in a greater number of sacred places when there are more than one but not as many as four, or if there are four and the distances between them are great.

4. It would give Us great pleasure if the parishioners in all the Parishes made the visits together, with solemn ceremony and through the streets. For those who do, presided over by the Parish priest or another Priest delegated for that purpose, only two days of visits are indicated to benefit from the Jubilee, and three days of visits for those whose Parish church limits the solemn ceremony to inside the church for one reason or another but are congregating there in common for the visits.

For the Seminary students and boarding and non-boarding students of the schools, devout societies and brotherhoods, if they decide to benefit in common from the Jubilee, we indicate the same number of days, according to each case, indicated for when they are done in common and publicly or inside the temple.

5. The friars and nuns, whether cloistered or not, and the students who live with them, will be able to benefit from the Jubilee by visiting their own church four times each day for five days, either consecutively or broken up. If anyone finds it impossible to do the visits, the regular Prelate or the confessor will and should reduce the number of them or recognize them through works of religion or devoutness.

⁴² Cf. AAS 17 (1925), pp. 611-618.

6. The Parish priests or whoever is standing in for them will be able to, according to the circumstances and peoples, reduce the number of visits, to separate the visits prescribed for one day over several days, and recognize for devout works their parishioners affected through incapacity or illness, age or the nature of the work they perform if they are day workers, as they deem advisable.

Finally, we urge all the confessors to focus their attention on the pre-inserted Constitution, so you can bear in mind the authorities it grants you and we order the Parish priests and those responsible for Churches to read this circular letter to the faithful once a month for the rest of the year, on the first Sunday of the month, explaining to them at the same time what the grace of the Jubilee is and the requirements for benefiting from it.

Segorbe, 20 April of 1926.

† THE BISHOP

66

Prayers for Peace in Mexico
(B. Seg 46 [1926], pp. 131-132)

2239 Joining together with the wishes of the Holy Father, recalled by His Eminence, the distinguished Nuncio in the previous letter, we order the Reverend Parish priests and Rectors of Churches, including those of friars and nuns, that on next 1 August public prayers are to be addressed to the Almighty demanding that the persecutions suffered by our brothers, the Catholics of Mexico, at the hands of the leaders of that Republic cease and the light of spiritual peace, so necessary to individuals and nations, may soon shine upon them. We urge the faithful to unite their prayers and that God wants the persecutors of our sister nation to come to understand how unspeakable their conduct is, so they may repent and thus erase the embarrassing stigma that has befallen the history of their nation.

Segorbe, 20 July of 1926.

† BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

67

The 200th Anniversary of St. John of the Cross
(B. Seg 46 [1927], pp. 63-64)

2240 We wholeheartedly support what our venerable Brother, the Bishop of Segovia, proposes to us in the preceding letter and with pleasure we offer the collaboration he requires of us so that the 200th anniversary of the Canonization of

the great Spanish ascetic and doctor St. John of the Cross turns out to be worthy of one of the most eminent saints of our Homeland.

We demand this same cooperation of the beloved members of our diocese, calling on them to visit the grave of the Saint this year and through their alms contribute to make his mausoleum as rich materially as the remains contained there were spiritually rich.

For what our venerable Brother asks of us, we grant 50 days of indulgence to whoever contributes their alms towards the works of the tomb.

If some of the churches or convents of this Diocese would have some memento that relates more or less directly to St. John of the Cross and would be easy to transport, we give our permission to bring it to the exhibition that they are holding in Segovia, albeit that you must previously make us aware of the memento that you are dealing with.

In order that there is an organization in the Diocese to that communicate with the central one, we have appointed the Board that is inserted below.

Segorbe, 11 April of 1927.

† THE BISHOP

68

25th Anniversary of King Alfonso XIII

(B. Seg 47 [1927], pp. 69-71)

2241 The 25th anniversary of the reign of Alfonso XIII is on 17 May. For any impartial historian, the accomplishments and events that have occurred in our Homeland in which the Monarchy has more or less directly intervened during this period will be an indication that our Monarch has always been worthy of the position he holds and always had his sights set on the good of Spain.

These well-guided acts of the King, who has aroused such sympathy and admiration among his subjects as well as foreigners, are the irrefutable proof of the special providence of God towards him, most notoriously manifested at his birth and later by saving him from the insidious attack of his enemies on his wedding day and various other occasions, well known to all the beloved members of our diocese⁴³.

To this special divine favor towards our Catholic monarch, he has responded with devoutness and filial support to the King of Kings and Lord of all He rules, and to his Church, both in his private life and publicly, proving it with such splendid acts as the Consecration of Spain to the Sacred Heart of Jesus at the Cerro de los Ángeles⁴⁴ and the visit to our most Holy Father, Pope Pius XI.

⁴³ The assassination attempt on the wedding day —31 May of 1906— left 20 people dead and over 100 wounded.

⁴⁴ This consecration took place on 13 May 1919.

It is only fair, then, as Spaniards and Catholics, that we associate ourselves on that day to the jubilation all of Spain must experience and at the same time we pray to God to continue assisting King Alfonso XIII with the his divine lights and special providence.

We invite all the beloved members of our diocese to do so and to put it into practice we order the following:

1. In all the Masses held on the 17th of this month, our venerable Priests will say the “*Pro Rege*” prayer.

2. The conventual Mass on that day, both in the Cathedral and the Parish churches, will be celebrated with display of the Divine Master and once concluded, the “*Te Deum*” will be sung and the blessing given.

The Rectors of the Churches will let the parishioners know of these special worship services and their intention with the due amount of advance notice, by inviting them as well as making a special invitation to the Authorities.

Segorbe, 2 May of 1927.

† THE BISHOP

Religious Persecution in Mexico

(B. Seg 48 [1928], pp. 3-8)

2242 The cruelty of the persecution our brothers, the ardent Catholics of Mexico, are suffering is known to all of you. In that Republic, daughter of Spain, through the work of Freemasons the scenes of hatred against Christ are being revived that were first witnessed in the earliest centuries of the Church. But the divine grace, with His omnipotent help today as in those days, is making the Mexican martyrs die in prisons and their homes, the city and the country, confessing to the Christ-King with the same fortitude as the Christians of the catacombs did before the Roman emperors.

The bloody persecution in Mexico causes a double pain and grief in our heart, by virtue of being directed against brothers who are doubly loved, as Catholics and as children of the common mother Spain. What astonishment it would produce in us if we did not know the value that should be given phrases that are beautiful, more or less, but so much at odds with the facts, seeing that, in spite of the multitude and enormity of crimes committed by the Mexican tyranny in the name of freedom in this century of tolerance for everything against that freedom, despite the repeated outcries by our Holy Father Pope Pius XI against such horrors and barbarities unworthy of any civilized country (Address to the Council of December 1926)⁴⁵, the more or less friendly intervention in the name of the relief policy of civilized nations and even the

⁴⁵ Cf. AAS 18 (1926), pp. 515-517.

Christian and Catholic ones, and of the same race no less, has not openly expressed and demonstrated their will to end a persecution whose only aim is to eliminate whatever bears the name of Catholic, whether they are individual people or institutions.

2243 But if the indignation against this spectacle sprouts in all truly Catholic breasts, a spectacle we can categorize as collective cowardice, but this indignation, beloved children, does not reach the point of restraining the loving impulses of the heart, but instead is an incentive towards feeling more intensely the pains and calamities our brothers are suffering and affirm the determination to help them with our prayers so that God may give them strength, and to show them our modest support in a tangible way. This last way of cooperation is what we are going to propose to you, convinced that you will accept it through love and enthusiastically.

Do not ignore that the illustrious Diocese of Mexico is scattered far and wide, unable to occupy its Sites, nor watch over and guide the flock the High Pontiff commended to their apostolic zeal. It is not only the Shepherds, but also that chosen portion of assistants in the ministry of the souls, the clergy, who have had to abandon the Republic and hide themselves in order not to fall victim to the rifle bullet fired by a traitorous hand.

Cathedrals, houses of rectors and ecclesiastical buildings either closed or converted into secular offices and workshops is what one sees in Mexico.

2244 But the Divine Providence, which puts to the test but does not abandon, found the means for ruining this diabolical plan, and the idea emerged of having Mexican seminary students come to Spain to continue their studies, something impossible to do there, and not suffer any interruption in the appropriate preparation of the future evangelists of the Republic. This idea was explained to the Spanish dioceses who unanimously and generously accepted it and it is already being carried out.

Two of these seminary students have been in our Seminary since 11 January and when they were introduced to us, we could not help but to embrace them and through them embraced all the brave Mexican Catholics. Both come from the Seminary of the Tepic Diocese, where they were first year Philosophy students, and their venerable Prelate tells us they trust in the generosity of Mother Spain and the zeal of its dioceses.

There is no doubt our Seminary, since it keeps most of its students almost without charge, would be able to take care of their meager pensions and provide the clothes, books and whatever else these Mexican seminary students are lacking, who from that moment became are our children. But we wanted them, on returning to their dioceses the day the Divine Providence has arranged, to be able to say to their Prelate: "Sir, you commended us to the generosity of Mother Spain and it did not disappoint our hopes. The seminary of Segorbe welcomed us with love, the superiors treated us as their children and the students as brothers from the very first moment. Within the limits of their poverty, the Priests and faithful in the Diocese were competing to contribute to all our expenses".

This is what we would want them to say, and we are convinced that it must happen. To that end, we order that in all the churches of our Diocese, on 12 February, the anniversary of the coronation of His Holiness Pius XII, who suffers so much, through our Circular letter urge the faithful and the Parish priests to contribute an alms for the indicated purpose even though it might be a small one, so that everyone can give something, and to make our Council Secretary aware of the amount raised before the end of the month. They should do so even if the result from the collection would be negative, something we hope does not happen.

Segorbe, 15 January of 1928.

† THE BISHOP

70

Pilgrimage of the Sick to Lourdes

(B. Seg 48 [1928], pp. 53-54)

2245 The Most Eminent Archbishop of Valencia, our venerable and beloved metropolitan, has published an Address that is inserted below, inviting and encouraging the faithful members of his diocese to attend the pilgrimage to Lourdes.

After making this invitation our own, because it touches on our beloved children of this Diocese, we recommend with great interest that they turn out and take part in the pilgrimage, as long as the wish of the work "Valencia Hospitality of Our Lady of Lourdes" is not exclusive to the Diocese of Valencia, but extends and takes root in all the other Dioceses making up the ecclesiastical province.

† THE BISHOP

71

Day of the Catholic Press

(B. Seg 48 [1928], pp. 85-88)

2246 Once again, fulfilling the wishes of the most Eminent Cardinal Primate, we have to approach the beloved members of our diocese to call their attention to the significance and necessity of promoting the "Good Press" in our Homeland.

After all that has been written on the subject and what experience is teaching us through examining new facts and events, in which the press plays such an important role, it is unnecessary to repeat the reasons, since to giving new ones is not as important as encouraging the need that Spain has of a Press which, taking the teachings of the Church as its guide, will be the spokesmen for true national needs, without partisan views, at the same time it blocks so much unfounded news

as the bad press spreads to the discredit of the Religion and the Homeland. As an example, we just finished talking about the false news of someone flying in Valladolid and thanks to the efforts of the Good Press, all the sensible people could be convinced that it was a pure invention.

And this service of the Good Press, to refute the slanderous kinds of news, albeit something so important for the good name of the Religion and Homeland is not even its only or most important service. Instead, as the Eminent Cardinal Primate said in his address published in issue number six of the Bulletin this year; the more Catholic the Press and the greater coverage it achieves in a town, it will undoubtedly exercise greater influence in the Christian education of hearts and minds, mold public customs in the most Christian way, more accurately orient the opinion of the masses to the common good, contest more powerfully the advance of evil and defend more valiantly the good cause.

Let us give, then, all that any great good, like what the Good Press does, demands of us, so it can fully achieve that good and let us pray, spread and help with our donations to promote the day of the Catholic Press at all times and especially on 29 June, the day specifically indicated for it.

Our beloved Parish priests and Priests, in order to inspire the faithful to practice those three goals to fill that particular day⁴⁶, shall try to speak of them in the doctrinal address on the preceding Sunday, in order to prepare their spirit, inspiring them to receive communion on the day of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul and to contribute with the alms to the collection that will be done in all the Parish churches.

From the zeal of the Committee of the Diocese for the "Good Press" and the cooperation the Parish priests and Priests offer them with no less interest, we have high hopes for the three goals of the "Day of the Catholic Press and promise that our Diocese will slip from the rank it usually maintains despite its poverty; that is, of being one of the dioceses which each year increases the amount collected for the "Good Press".

After the 29th, all Parish priests and the others responsible for making collections, will inform our Secretary of the Council and Government of the amount raised.

Segorbe, 5 June of 1928.

† THE BISHOP

2247 In the splendid encyclical published and dated 8 May of last year about the common atonement owed to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, our Holy Father

⁴⁶ Cf. 2183 above.

Pope Pius XI orders that each year in the festivities of the Sacred Heart⁴⁷, which he elevates to a first class rite with eight days of celebration, the act of redress inserted at the end of the aforementioned Encyclical be solemnly prayed in all the temples all over the world.

2248 For the present we order that in this year and coming ones the act of consecration that is copied at the end of this Circular Letter is to be recited after concluding the Holy Mass said on these festival days, with the Parish priests and those responsible for the Churches, along with whoever is in charge of the churches of Convents and Religious houses, able to exhibit the Divine Majesty for the recitation of said act of redress.

Segorbe, 5 June of 1928.

† THE BISHOP

73

Mission Day of the Domund

(B. Seg 48 [1928], pp. 129-132)

2249 Our Holy Father Pope Pius XI, through the rescript dated 14 April 1926, prescribed that on the next-to-last Sunday of October a Mission Day of Prayer and Propaganda for the Conversion of the Unfaithful is to be celebrated every year in all the Dioceses, Parish churches and Catholic Institutions, leaving it to the prudent discretion of the Ordinary Clergy to arrange the best way of executing his sovereign will.

To make the clergy and faithful focus their attention on the importance of the Missions and the obligation all true Christians have to cooperate in the work of Christ, meaning to the work through which the Eternal Word became incarnate in the pure womb of the Holy Virgin Mary and was dumbfounded to the point of taking the form of Servant and burden himself with all the iniquities of men and suffer the death on the Cross to redeem us from the servitude of the sin and hell for the deserved mortal sin. This divine Work was continued by the missionaries, teaching the unfaithful the doctrine of Christ and regenerating them with the healthy water of the Baptism; make sure that all know the work of the Spreading of the Faith, the first, in the words of the Sovereign Pontiff himself, of the works founded to help the missions and people associate to it with their prayers and the modest quota indicated for this purpose. In this way, they can (in addition to deserving the incomparable reward that Jesus Christ promised to those who ease the labor of his apostles and try to secure a good superior to any consideration for their unhappy brothers sitting in the darkness and shadows of death), receive the very numerous full and partial indulgences granted to the members of that holy Work

⁴⁷ Cf. PIUS XI: *Miserentissimus Redemptor*: AAS 20 (1928), pp. 165-178.

by the Roman Pontiffs who approved and blessed them since their foundation; to establish, in short, a universal crusade that impels the Sacred Heart of Jesus so that it accelerates the acknowledgment of its royal nature for all the human lineage, royalty whose festival the Church celebrates on the last Sunday of October. Such were the purposes that His Holiness proposed to organize the celebration of Mission Day we refer to, which does not exclude the other mission days that certain locations of the Mission Union of the Clergy may consider advisable to celebrate.

2250 Even though our Diocese has known the Holy Work of the Spreading of the Faith for many years now and appears in an honorable position, given its small size and poverty, among the Dioceses of Spain which cooperate in such a well-merited work, there are still many Parish churches who do not make their humble contribution to this laudable goal. It is very advisable that not a single non-contributing church remains among them, because it will revive and give new brilliance to the lukewarm and weakened faith of anyone as a prize for the light your prayers and alms will ignite among the unfaithful.

In fulfillment, then, of the prescription of our Holy Father, we order that all the Parish priests and those responsible for Churches to celebrate the Mission Day mentioned above on the second-to-last Sunday of October, organizing it with the greatest possible thoroughness and care, for which they will be given timely instructions in the next issue of the Bulletin and the Board of the Diocese for the Propagation of the Faith will provide them with propaganda material.

We urge the religious institutions of the contemplative life to multiply their prayers to the Almighty, so that the efforts of the Missionaries and their collaborators are fruitful, to speed up the time when the wayward and scattered sheep enter in the fold of the Supreme Shepherd of the souls, and there is no more than one single flock and one single Shepherd in the entire world.

To the institutions of active life, which fortunately also have their missionaries, we hope they will put all the zeal, activity and wisdom into fulfilling the sovereign will of the Pontiff as they constantly show and will convince their faithful with their preaching and advice to cooperate in the Extraordinary Work of the Spreading of the Faith, so highly recommended by the Vicar of Christ.

Segorbe, 6 September of 1928.

† THE BISHOP

2251 There will be no one in our Diocese who is unaware that the illustrious city of Seville is preparing to celebrate the Spanish-American exposition next year, which in addition to highlighting the colossal material progress in the Peninsula

and overseas nations by civilized Spaniards and Portuguese will serve to strengthen the ties of union that must never be broken between brother peoples.

For this occasion, His Excellency the Archbishop of Seville had the inspired initiative to convoke a Spanish-American Marian Congress for the love of the peoples of our race for Heavenly Sovereign, and to propose the means of counteracting the demoralizing tendencies of present-day society, which can only be contained through imitation of Her virtues and by the maternal protection of the Holy Virgin.

Our most Holy Father Pius XI has blessed the idea; the Reverend Prelates of the nations taking part in the exposition have gratefully received it and many who desire to cooperate in the exaltation of the Mother of God take pleasure in the idea.

We trust that our Diocese, with its heritage as true followers of Mary, must answer to its glorious history and to this end we encourage the zeal of all the Parish priests, Priests and the faithful so that they subscribe as partners and secure subscriptions from societies and brotherhoods, and individuals to such a meritorious Congress.

We cherish the high hope that the small size of the Diocese will not be an obstacle to showing it is one of the most enthusiastic and fervent, and we ask the Lord to spread plentiful graces upon those who contribute to the success of such a laudable undertaking.

† THE BISHOP

75

Jubilee Year of His Holiness Pius XI

(B. Seg 49 [1929], pp. 21-22)

2252 The most Reverend Metropolitan archbishops, presided over by His Excellency the Cardinal Primate, have very correctly come to an agreement that Spain must make a special effort to formally and solemnly mark the jubilee year of our Holy Father Pope Pius XI, happily reigning.

Various acts have been proposed for that purpose to be carried out over the course of the year, such as collections for Peter's Pence, Pilgrimages to Rome and others, but the first act that must be celebrated, formally and solemnly, is the so-called Day of the Pope, the day of his exaltation to the Papal Throne, which falls on the 12th of this month.

On that day, the Tuesday of Carnival, we hope that all the Catholics of our beloved Diocese will raise their prayers to heaven, at the same time as the societies of the devout and Catholic social works, and express their fervent and filial support to the Holy Father through his Secretary of State.

In our Holy Cathedral Church, in agreement with our Illustrious Council, which wishes to give solemnity to the day of the Pope, we have agreed on the celebration of a Communion mass and another solemn mass at the end of which, with the Divine Master displayed, a solemn "*Te Deum*" will be sung. In the afternoon, with

the Lord displayed, the Trisagion will be sung and there will be a sermon. The authorities are invited to all these acts.

To those we are directing this letter, we urge them to organize acts in their churches similar to the ones in our Cathedral, to the degree they are inclined to do so, on 12 April, and try to inspire the parishioners and devout believers to support our wishes by whatever means they consider most appropriate.

Segorbe, 8 February of 1929.

† THE BISHOP

76

The Death of Queen María Christina of Seville

(B. Seg 49 [1929], pp. 24-25)

2253 The unexpected death of Her Majesty the Queen Mother María Christina is known to all our beloved Clergy and congregations, her loss having filled good Spaniards who appreciated her excellent qualities as a leader and Christian mother with pain and sorrow.

The Spanish Church, which through its Pastors gave her the tribute she merited by proclaiming the virtues of this Queen while she was alive, now asks its faithful children for the best tribute that one can pay her after death, your prayers for her eternal rest.

For that reason, We presently have come to order that all the Parish churches of our Diocese hold a solemn funeral ceremony in her suffrage, making the Parish priests responsible for organizing it and letting their parishioners know of the day and hour, inviting them to attend and doing the same for the authorities.

Segorbe, 8 February of 1929.

† THE BISHOP

77

The Golden Anniversary of His Holiness Pius XI as a Priest

(B. Seg 49 [1929], pp. 79-80)

2254 It is common knowledge among all our beloved Parish priests that our Holy Father Pope Pius XI celebrates the 50th anniversary of his ordination as a priest this year. On his part, He has opened the treasures of the Church in favor of the faithful for that reason, granting them an extraordinary Jubilee in spiritual graces and they, in turn, are preparing to pay tribute of their filial affection in various ways.

Apart from the pilgrimages being organized in Rome, and by agreement with His Excellency the Cardinal Primate, whereby Spain must show the common Father of the faithful its support and devout tribute, one of them is a collection in all the Spanish dioceses, whose total will be offered by the said Cardinal Primate to the Pope in their names. This collection, according to the agreement, must be made during one Sunday or every Sunday during the coming month of May in all churches.

But as the parishioners of the Parishes of this Diocese are reduced in number, we believe that two Sundays is enough so that everyone is aware of the collection and its destination, above all if the Parish priests explain it to their congregations, as we earnestly commission them to do. Therefore, we order that they carry out this collection on the 19 and 26 May and we hope not a single Parish is missing from contributing to it.

You will inform us of the amount raised in the period between 26 May and 10 June in order that we can send the total to the most Eminent Cardinal Primate as soon as possible.

Segorbe, 30 April of 1929.

† THE BISHOP

78

Jubilee of the Anniversary of His Holiness Pius XI as a Priest

(B. Seg 49 [1929], pp. 141-145)

2255 The year 1929 can call itself a year of grace and full jubilee for the Catholic world. The Divine Providence has wanted to join the pure jubilee joys over the 50th anniversary of the ordination as a priest of the happily reigning Vicar of Christ to the splendid event of the re-establishment of the temporal Sovereignty of the Roman Pontiff, seized during a bad period by the revolution, the violator of all law and enemy of the true Religion, and the celebration of the 60th wedding anniversary of the dogmatic definition of the Immaculate Conception of the Exalted Virgin, predestined to crush the head of the snake, and once again has exercised her consoling prerogative of having the slaves triumphing over the infernal dragon.

All these graces of the Almighty demand a worthy reciprocation from his children, who have felt their hearts beat with surging waves of gratitude and thank the Mother of God for her love, from whose hands they receive all the goods that the All Powerful bestows upon the earth.

2256 It is only fair then, to set all the yearnings of the faithful in an impressive act, an act which is recognized as serving equally as an incentive for new and more magnificent demonstrations of Christian piety and as a magnet attracting new and more plentiful blessings from heaven.

This well-received act has taken shape in the organization of numerous pilgrimages, who came to deposit at the feet of the Roman Pontiff the testimonial of their faith, love and unbreakable support and to display in heartfelt messages raised to the infallible Chair of truth the wish of the Christian people that the crown of the Holy Virgin shine with pearls, which undoubtedly appear now gleaming in heaven, that is solemnly defining as a dogma of the faith the glorious Assumption of Our Lady in body and soul to heaven and her universal mediation subordinate to that of her Divine Son.

But as not all have the resources necessary to undertake such a long and costly pilgrimage, he thought of a means within the reach of whoever want to express their Christian and devout yearnings and is not prevented by a legitimate reason.

2257 This means is the formation of pilgrimages to the most famous Sanctuaries of each Diocese, as all of Spain are preparing to do, supporting the inspired initiative of the Pontifical and Royal Bibliographical-Marian Academy, approved and blessed by the Prelates of the Church and by His Eminence the Cardinal Primate, Father Director of Catholic Action of our Homeland.

There is nothing more in accord with our love of the Holy Virgin and our desire for the flock entrusted to our pastoral concern that it becomes more worthy of the benefits of such a good Mother every day, not missing any opportunity to honor her as good children must do with devout projects such as the pilgrimage.

For the same reason, and with the enthusiastic support of our clergy and our people, we order that the Archpriests organize the pilgrimage in their respective areas which will be carried out in accordance with the instructions stated below, on 27 October, the day when the High Pontiff will receive one of the Spanish pilgrimages.

If the Archpriests still believe any new instruction is necessary or encounter some difficulty, they can direct themselves to the delegate for these pilgrimages, the Illustrious Mr. Luis Morro, the penance priest of our Cathedral.

As the most adequate place for fulfilling this order, we indicate for the Archpriest area of Segorbe, the Sanctuary of Our Lady of the Sacred Cave; for the Archpriest area of Jérica; the Sanctuary of Our Lady of the Lost Child; for the Montán, Our Lady of Sorrows; for Chelva, Our Lady of Remedio; for Alpuente, Consolation of Corcolilla; and for Ademuz, Our Lady of the Countryside.

If some Parish is very far away from the Sanctuary indicated for their Archbishop area, they can join the pilgrimage organized at the closest Sanctuary of the ones mentioned.

From the zeal and prudence of the Archpriests, Parish priests and those in charge of churches in the parish, we hope they will announce the object and date of this pilgrimage in timely fashion, use all available means for inspiring enthusiasm and achieve the greatest possible number of pilgrims, and give them appropriate instructions so that the pilgrimages, since they are not penitents as they were in the days of purest devotion and recently have been in some towns in Catalonia and

provinces in the Basque region, are at least exemplary, devout and adapted in all respects to the spirit of the Church.

2258 In the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the culminating act of the pilgrimage, the holy orator will explain to the faithful the goals of the prayers that must be directed to the Almighty, to wit: To give thanks to God for the dogmatic definition of the Immaculate Conception, the Jubilee of the Pope as a Priest and the restoration of the temporal Sovereignty of the Pontiff, to ask the Holy Virgin for the expansion of the Church of Christ all over the world, prosperity and long life to His Holiness and the realization of his intentions, the dogmatic definition of universal Mediation and Assumption of May, and the advent of the full social kingdom of the Sacred Heart of Jesus through his heavenly Mother.

At the same Sanctuary if possible, or immediately after the pilgrimage from the most suitable point, they will address telegrams to His Holiness, informing him of the celebration of the pilgrimage and its goals and the remission of the requests of the dogmatic definitions of the truths mentioned above.

A model of the memorial will be published or sent shortly that can serve to orient the Archpriests, who will be able to provide the pages to the congregations of their Archpriest area for them to record the signatures that accompany each memorial.

If the Archpriests encounter any difficulty in sending these memorials and sheets of signatures to Rome, send them to our Council Secretary, who will immediately dispatch them to the Holy See in Rome.

Once the pilgrimage is confirmed, the Archpriests will send to our Delegate as promptly as possible notice of the pilgrimage and the number who attended, as well as a brief report of everything that happened, in order that it can be published in our Bulletin and thereby inform anyone who is interested.

May the Almighty make these impressive acts, directed to his glory and the glory of his Mother the Virgin Mother, be the beginning of a resurgence of the old and stable devoutness, which raised the name of the Diocese of Segorbe so high in the old days.

Segorbe, 1 October of 1929.

† THE BISHOP

2259 A date is approaching, beloved children, that cannot pass unnoticed for those who feel love for the Virgin, our Mother. This date, as virtually everyone knows, is the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the dogmatic declaration of the mystery of her Immaculate Conception.

The Spanish people were always distinct in their devotion to the Holy Virgin and their steadfastness in defense of the great prerogative of the unblemished Conception of the Virgin. So it is not any stretch of the imagination that this year all our children of the Segorbe Diocese would celebrate in a more devout and solemn manner the festivities of 8 December.

Not only as Spaniards, but as children of Segorbe and its Diocese, we have a special duty to celebrate with splendor and fervor the festivity of the Immaculate Conception this year, since Segorbe holds the honor that one of its great Prelates, the unforgettable Canubio, was the first Spanish bishop who, without making amends in human eyes, published on the streets of the capital of the Diocese the Bull of the immortal and holy Pope Pius XI on the mystery of the Immaculate Conception of the Holy Virgin.

For that reason we want the members of our diocese to prepare to honor our Mother Mary in this celebration, and to that end the Parish priest must order a General Communion in the churches for the 8th. They will invite all the parishioners, but especially the Marian congregations, and in the afternoon will hold some devout exercise in the most solemn manner that the circumstances permit.

The Parish priests in the city of Segorbe are urged to attend the Communion to be celebrated at 6.30 am in the Cathedral and the Triduum exercises to be performed in the same church on the afternoons of the 6th, 7th and 8th of December.

Segorbe, 14 November of 1929.

† THE BISHOP

80

Instructions on the Holy Eucharist

(B. Seg 50 [1930], pp. 114-117)

2260 It would appear futile to us, beloved children, to ponder for long the subject the previous instruction of the Sacred Council of Sacramental Discipline deals with, because it is nothing less magnificent than the Sacred Sacrament of the Eucharist⁴⁸.

But even though it is extremely important for the subject alone, it is even more so when we consider that it orders the Ordinary Clergy to be aware of the regulations adopted in order to better keep what the Instruction cautions against. Through that order, we have to understand the great interest its fulfillment has for the Sacred Council.

We are convinced that no serious abuses concerning the reception and preservation of the Holy Eucharist occur in our beloved Diocese, but if there were

⁴⁸ Cf. AAS 21 (1929), pp. 631-642.

abuses we were unaware of, and with the aim of ensuring they do not introduce themselves here, we come to order the following:

2261 First: We would want our venerable Priests to make a careful and thorough reading of the Instruction, so that it may be remembered and put into practice better. The aim for doing this is our desire that the moral and liturgical subjects of the future cases, however many are advisable, for the Conferences of the Clergy are based on the doctrine explained in it.

Second: The Rectors of the Church must think of the responsibility of conscience that would be contracted if, through an error or thinking of worldly economic benefits, the materials for the Communion of the faithful and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass are provided by places that do not offer guarantees or their purity and quality, exposing the Sacrament to being nullified. Be sure to comply, then, with the regulations the Instruction gives on this point and try to have the altars, mantles, and objects in which they guard the sacred forms properly clean so they can distinguish the particles in them.

Third: In order that the particles of the sacred forms do not fall on the ground, since they can fall apart when not properly made, because there frequently are an abundance of little fragments around the edges in such cases, try to vigorously sift them before putting them in the ciborium in which they have to be consecrated. And even though that precaution has been taken, during the act of distributing the Holy Communion to the faithful do not stop using a tray or large paten, since this object has now been introduced in many Churches, but try to have it made of gold metal or gold-plated silver, slightly concave and without adornments of any kind.

Fourth: We specially want to bring the attention of the Parish priests and Rectors of parochial and affiliated churches to the contents of Number III, section a) and b) of the Instruction, because it clearly expresses there the doctrine and rubrics concerning the preservation of the Holy Sacrament in the last three days of Easter week. For the lack of a clear idea of the precepts or believing that they may better develop devoutness by doing it this way, they often commit faults in this point, which is necessary to avoid.

Of the interest of the Priests in supporting the decisions of the Holy See, as well as their love for the Lord of the Sacraments, whose honor benefits from whatever is said, we hope they will make a determined effort to comply as exactly as they can with what the repeated Instruction and present Circular Letter order.

Segorbe, 28 June of 1930.

† THE BISHOP

The Lack of Modesty in the Way People Dress

(B. Seg 50 [1930], pp. 122-126)

2262 Once more we have to address our beloved priests and the faithful of this Diocese seeking cooperation and obedience to the orders of the Holy See. And we say once more because there have been several times we have cried out, and we can almost say futilely, against what the Sacred Congregation of the Council points out to and is trying to contain in the previous Instruction⁴⁹.

But not because we have turned a deaf ear to it, and not to those who ordinarily scorn the precepts of Catholic morality and the warnings of the Father and Shepherd that we give them, but rather to those who pride themselves on being Catholics, attend the religious acts and frequently receive Communion, we have to protest against the shamelessness of feminine fashion, and with even greater reason now that the Sacred Congregation of the Council is urging us to insist on the measures it adopted. This Circular Letter is directed at fulfilling this appeal.

2263 The first thing we have to declare is that both the Parish priests and the Rectors of Churches, including those in the religious houses, have to bear in mind that the printed warnings we gave them on 22 June 1926 so they would be put on the doors to the churches for the faithful coming to the temple to comply with, or make them comply if someone tried to violate them, are still in effect now since what we prescribed is unfortunately just as necessary to apply today as when we gave them, despite the four years that have gone by.

Regarding the Instruction inserted before which, like this Circular Letter, we want read in all Masses on the Sunday after receiving this Bulletin, we must especially call the attention of the Parish priests, directors of the devout societies and the priests of our Diocese who dedicate themselves to preaching, to it so they take what it prescribes with interest and put into practice as a means very conducive to finish with this leprosy of shameless dressing that that is eroding society today.

The preachers urge *Opportune, Importune*⁵⁰, because this sermon will always be timely for the laudable goal it pursues, against indecency in the way people dress; it comes from the directors of the female devout societies who maintain an iron hand against admitting women who do not dress modestly or to dismiss previously admitted members if they do not change their ways after being warned, even though doing so may reduce its ranks substantially, whenever those who behave this way offer irrefutable proof that they lack the religious spirit that must inform the person who should belong to that kind of society. The parish priests and rectors of Churches are acting with complete scrupulousness and strictness regarding admission to the temple, receiving the Sacraments and the Administerring of them in accordance with our warnings and Number IX of the Instruction and hoping that

⁴⁹ Cf. AAS 22 (1930), pp. 26-28,

⁵⁰ II Timothy 4:2.

the wave of immorality in the way people dress may be contained, as the Sacred Council believed on proposing all these solutions.

We give those Parishes with schools directed by nuns within their jurisdiction the responsibility of informing them what the Instruction prescribed for them in Number VI and demand their fulfillment on our behalf, warning them that if they act to the contrary they have to answer to us and We will take the appropriate measures.

2264 We give this same responsibility to the Directors of public and private schools concerning Number IV and V, and if our jurisdiction over these schools on this subject is much more limited than over the schools of the nuns, the spirit of devoutness these Directors are possessed with, the consideration of the moral responsibility that could reach them if they neglect the education of modesty, the prized gift and ornament of women, and the fatal consequences that this neglect has for society, would be reasons for them to incline towards and make the effort to cooperate in this work of moral cleansing that must be so pleasing for all educators.

If the Holy Father insists time and time again on this currency so characteristic of the universal Shepherd: Christian modesty at all cost, at any cost, we, priests and the faithful, his obedient collaborators, have to provide the means by which it can become reality.

Our Mother and Lady, the Holy Virgin, the mirror of modesty, is the one who has to open the eyes and make any parent unaware of the evil they are doing to the souls of their daughters by allowing them, when they themselves are not encouraging them, to dress in a way so inappropriate of modest damsels and to them, it is also the heavenly Mother who instills in their heart the wish of imitating her purity and modesty.

Segorbe, 7 July of 1930.

† THE BISHOP

2265 A constant concern of the Church, from the Roman Pontiff and his honorable representatives in Spain, whether by precepts of canon law or Concordats, down to the last step of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, without overlooking the meritorious ecclesiastical Councils, Priests who lead Churches and Religious Communities, has been the conservation of the artistic heritage that the genius and devoutness of our ancestors have bequeathed to the Churches and Corporations. Thanks to that concern, today our nation glories in being one of the nations possessing the most jewels of art.

But this fact, which naturally would seem likely to be a unanimous cause for gratitude among Spaniards and confidence in the management by the church, on the contrary inspires indiscreet jealousy among some and biased insinuations aimed at making the ignorant believe at times what the facts prove to the contrary, and others to restrict the legitimate freedom of any true owner of some item. It not only seems like, but there are in fact more or less clear proposals, to strip the Churches of what is rightfully theirs little by little and pass it into the hands of other owners, under the pretext of a nationalism that is not applicable in this case.

In opposition to this trend, the Spanish Dioceses, in a collective letter published in this Bulletin last year, clearly set forth the bases upon which the ownership of the Churches for the so-called National Artistic Treasures they possess rests. Another time, and no less clearly nor with less abundance of doctrine, the most Eminent Cardinal Primate returns in his Pastoral Instruction, which we insert below, to explain the reasons in accordance with which who is the true legal owner of the objects referred to can be deduced.

The reason why we are publishing this Circular Letter is so that the beloved members of our Diocese know our line of thinking on this question, which has recently begun to arouse passions again. Its purpose is to support the doctrine held by his Eminence the Cardinal Primate in the referred document, and we consider it advisable that the faithful knows its contents.

Segorbe, 20 August of 1930.

† THE BISHOP

83

With Respect to the Second Republic

(B. Seg 51 [1931], pp. 53-55)

2266 We are more than aware of the change in regime that occurred in our Homeland, beloved children, and in the face of such a significant event, we believe it to be our duty to direct a few brief words to you as a guide in the confusion that events of this nature often produce in the souls.

Our adorable Redeemer and Master Jesus Christ, on a certain occasion related by the Evangelist St. Matthew, said this famous phrase: "Give unto God what is God's and unto Caesar what is Caesar's"⁵¹, and wanted to teach us that we all had two duties to fulfill, one towards Him and others towards those who exercise authority.

You also know that a constant doctrine of the Church, also based in verses from the Holy Scriptures, is that the Catholics give their obedience to the constituted powers of each nation and town, without any other limitations than those coming from the respect due to the divine Law on the part of those powers.

⁵¹ Matthew 22:21.

However, the Divine Providence, which watches out for Spain, has made this change of regime take place without violent convulsions and the Authorities of this new regime have protected the law and respect of things and people and religious beliefs. Their behavior, together with the principles which we indicated before, places all faithful children of the Church with the duty of cooperating so that these proceedings of peace and respect are strengthened. Both the priests and faithful must not forget that the increase of the Catholic religion and the renewed vitality of the peoples, as well as the salvation of the souls of the rest and our own, to which we must aspire, are not linked, and there are examples in history, to a certain form of government, but can be achieved in all of them.

Let us pray to God, from whom all light comes, so that He may enlighten us all in these difficult times and shows us his divine will at every moment, so we may obey it and follow it. On behalf of everyone, let us not deny our cooperation to the Authorities who desire it, so that our Spain continues along the path of peace, order and respect on which it has now started, with the aim of achieving the prosperity and well-being of its citizens.

Segorbe, 20 April of 1931.

† THE BISHOP

84

Month of the Sacred Heart

(B. Seg 51 [1931], pp. 73-75)

2267 With the month of June approaching, especially dedicated to honor the fine qualities and kindnesses of the Sacred Heart of Jesus towards men, we want the Divine Heart to be venerated in a special way this year, in order that with our pleas and greater signs of devotion towards Him, we may attract upon each one of us and upon our common Mother Spain, in which he has promised to reign in an individual way, his blessings and graces.

If prayer is always necessary, there is no doubt whatsoever that it is much more so during our times, both for strengthening in us the priceless gift of the Faith and to adapt our acts to the divine will, to beseech its return for those of our brothers who lost their faith or strengthen it in those whose faith was weakened so they may recognize and obey the gentle yoke of Jesus Christ.

Ah, if the Divine Savior knew of all these unhappy disturbances that have filled so many souls chosen by Him with consternation that they are profaning his houses and burning his temples!

If he knew of them, we would not have been faced such a shameful spectacle, which as patriots humiliate us before foreigners and as believers forcibly leaves bitter pain and indignation in our breasts. Take pity on them, because they know not what they do.

And this unawareness of the tenderness of the Son of God upon the souls subject to his rule; the false concept that the beneficial activities of his spouse the Catholic Church, through which these tender actions are lavished in an ordinary way for a multitude of people, imposes on us the duty of charity, the obligation to pray to Jesus Christ insistently for it, in order that they may know and take part in it. The proper time for this is the month of June, when they are devotedly considered and meditated on by those who have the incomparable gift of knowing of his existence and to receive them.

For this purpose, then, we urge our beloved Parish priests, Rectors of Churches and Superiors and chaplains of religious Communities to encourage their faithful over whom they exercise their ministry to pray next month for the needs of the Church and the Homeland. Encourage them to join to their prayers wholesome mortifications and penances, and to extend their prayers in favor of so many of our brothers, in whom the fire of his Divine Heart has not ignited in their souls, so they may burn in Him.

With this aim, it is our will that all the churches in which everyone we mentioned in the previous paragraph are in charge, celebrate the month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus this year with lesser display of the Divine Majesty in all the public holidays and with greater display in the holy days, hoping that all of them must put our wish into practice, will do so diligently and with due zeal, as is the norm for our beloved Clergy and Communities.

Segorbe, 20 May of 1931.

† THE BISHOP

85

The Priest in Politics

(B. Seg 51 [1931], pp. 73-75)

2268 In our Circular letter of the 20th of last month we were indicating to our beloved priest and faithful based in the doctrine of the Church the obedience that is owed to the constituted power.

Recall that at present, we urge our venerable Clergy to adapt your actions to your priestly character, abstaining in the exercise of your ministry of what could be construed as a motive for or mean political action, since this is forbidden to the priest in accordance with the Sacred Canons.

Segorbe, 20 May of 1931.

THE BISHOP

86

Cases of Morality and Liturgy

(B. Seg 52 [1932], pp. 1-2)

2269 In the Circular Letter published in our Ecclesiastical Bulletin dated 5 December 1923 re-establishing the morality and liturgy readings, we instilled in our beloved Clergy the obligation the priests have to comply with the precepts found in Canon 131 of the Canon Law Code. Similarly, we indicated the penalties that would be imposed on those who neglected to fulfill this duty.

Once again we repeat what was ordered and enacted in that Circular letter, warning all priests, whether from the parish or not, that it is a serious obligation and anyone who fails to fulfill it without a justified reason approved by Us cannot rest easy in their conscience.

Whoever is negligent in fulfilling this duty, in addition to lacerating our paternal heart, should not forget they will be punished without any further warning.

Once again we urge our beloved priests that they dedicate themselves with great determination to the study of ecclesiastical science and to always bear in mind these words of the prophet Malachi: *For the lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth*⁵².

The Priests will inform the other clergy of their parish churches of this Circular Letter so they have knowledge of it.

Segorbe, 14 January of 1932.

† THE BISHOP

87

Teaching of the Catechism

(B. Seg 52 [1932], pp. 9-11)

2270 Once again we have to draw the attention of our beloved collaborators in the great mission of the salvation of souls concerning the religious instructions of their parishioners, especially the so-called teaching of the Catechism.

We did this before in an Instruction published on 2 November 1923 and the Pastoral Instruction dated 10 November 1930 and we wanted our beloved priests to always bear in mind those two appeals of ours for the fulfillment of the serious obligation of indoctrinating the faithful.

If we considered it necessary to give our regulations at those times, it cannot escape anyone how advisable it is today to recall them in view of the course that official education is taking in our Homeland.

⁵² Malachi 2:7.

Up until now, the school was a valuable assistant of the parish priest in the obligation of teaching the Christian Doctrine that is mainly incumbent on him, because the teachers are generally good Catholics and did not neglect giving the children the proper religious instruction. But today, with the Crucifix banished from the school and the teachers prohibited from teaching religion, our beloved priests will understand that it is not enough to lament this state of affairs now but rather it requires them to redouble their efforts and apply the solution in order that these words do not fall upon us: *The little ones have asked for bread, and there was none to break it unto them* (Lamentations 4:4).

We address those who know perfectly well the evils to which religious ignorance leads, so we do not even have to name them in this Circular Letter; our intention is only to sound the alarm of the Shepherd to his young shepherds so that the flock does not stray due to the lack of true light to illuminate the path of life for the flock.

We urge, then, our priests to redouble their efforts in indoctrinating the children from today on, and not once a week, as is often done ordinarily but today would be very little; taking on this ministry with the precision that its significance requires, and even more so in the present day, and taking care to put into practice the wish of the Church recalled by us and urged on you in the previously mentioned Instruction on establishing the Brotherhood of the Christian Doctrine in each Parish. This is the most suitable means so that the teaching of the Catechism develops better and brings greater rewards and becomes the new light of moral and religious education that now is turned on as the light of the school is turned off.

Segorbe, 12 February of 1932.

† THE BISHOP

Dissolving of the Society of Jesus

(B. Seg 52 [1932], pp. 15)

2271 We wanted to bring the heartfelt protest over the dissolving of the Society of Jesus, which is inserted above, to the pages of our Bulletin to make clear our agreement with what our venerated brother the most Eminent Cardinal Archbishop of Tarragona expresses in it and make it our own.

In the letter of the General Father of the Society of Jesus to the Reverend Fathers and Brotherhoods, he reminds them that God wanted to found through St. Ignatius this minimal Society (the words of the Church in the prayer of the Saint) to spread the greater glory of his name through it; and that the friars fulfill it faithfully is beyond doubt to any honest and impartial spirit. And would this not perhaps be the reason for the measures stirred up against it everywhere?

This theory gains credence with other words of the same General Father in the aforementioned letter when he says: You should be happy, because you have been considered worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus⁵³.

For a religious order, suffering for such an exalted name is truly a stamp of glory, but for our beloved Homeland, it will be an irreparable break in the cultural, beneficial and religious fields in which the dissolved Society carried out its wonderful activity.

Let us remember sadly the date it was dissolved, but with our hope place in God we pray to him for the return to legal life for such zealous workers in his vineyard.

Segorbe, 8 February of 1932.

† THE BISHOP

89

Month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

(B. Seg 52 [1932], pp. 34-36)

2272 With the month of June approaching, especially dedicated to honor the fine Sacred Heart of Jesus, it is our wish to celebrate that month with the solemnity we ordered on our Circular Letter of 20 May of last year.

Today this desire of ours is joined by another one of our Holy Father Pope Pius XI, who in his latest *Charitate Christi Compulsi* Encyclical⁵⁴ exhorts the faithful to pray and do penance against the two great evils that currently threaten the world: the thirst for gold and the loss of faith, these evils which translate into the breakdown of the social order that can be observed everywhere and a general offensive against the best guarantee of peace and social justice, our Holy Mother Church.

The Holy Father says that human strength alone is not enough to battle against these enemies, and therefore you have to take recourse in the two supernatural means that the Divine Master was indicating when he said: "You do not defeat these kinds of demons except through prayer and fasting"⁵⁵.

Let us pray, then, and do penance, beloved children, as this is what the Pope wants on the day of the Sacred Heart and during its eight days of celebration, adding the rest of the month to those days, as is the practice in our beloved Spain, in which he has promised the Sacred Heart of Jesus will rule in a special way.

2273 And so you know how much the Pope wants you to pray and do penance to the Divine Heart, there is no better way than to copy his words:

⁵³ Cf. Acts 5:41.

⁵⁴ Cf. AAS 24 (1932), pp. 177-194.

⁵⁵ Mark 9:29.

“And what better and more appropriate occasion could we indicate to you, beloved brothers,” says the Holy Father, “for such a union of prayers in an act of compensation than the upcoming festivities of the Sacred Heart of Jesus?”

The spirit itself of that solemn ceremony, as we fully demonstrated four years ago in our Encyclical Letter, is precisely the spirit of loving compensation; and this is why it is held perpetually on this day every year public acts of remorse are celebrated in all the Churches around the world for the many offenses that wound the Divine Heart. This year the festivities of the Sacred Heart of Jesus are like a holy competition for the entire Church; a day of compensation and acts of supplication. All the children of this anguished Mother approach the Eucharistic table; they run to worship Jesus under the veil of the Sacrament that you, venerable brothers, have solemnly displayed that day in all the churches; spilling from that merciful heart which has known all the pains and sorrows of the human heart, the full range of its pain; and confirm before Him the strength of their faith, the holiness of their hope and the ardor of their charity.

Invoke the Sacred Heart of Jesus, interposing the powerful backing of the Holy Virgin Mary, the mediator of all the graces, for herself, her families and the Church. Invoke the Sacred Heart of Jesus for the Vicar of Christ on earth and for yourselves, the Pastors, who with Us take part in bearing the formidable weight of the spiritual governing of souls. Invoke the Sacred Heart of Jesus for the wayward brothers, the skeptics, the unfaithful, the enemies themselves of God and the Church, in order that they convert; in a word, for all of poor humanity.

And keep this spirit of prayer and remorse alive in all the faithful and in full activity for the eight days of festivities, in such a way that you, beloved brothers, according to the local situation, believe most advisable to prescribe and suggest. Have public prayers and other devout exercises in accordance with the intention that We have hinted at above concerning obtaining mercy and finding grace in timely assistance.

2274 Have the faithful abstain from all public shows and all other diversions, even though it is legal. Those who are most well-off, voluntarily and with a spirit of Christian austerity, will give up something from their customary way of life, dispensing it generously to the poor, the reward for so many hardships, since alms are also an excellent way for satisfying the Divine Justice and attracting the divine mercy.

The poor, in turn, and all those subject to the hard test of the lack of work and shortage of bread the Lord offers in this period, displaying the same spirit of penance and great resignation in the face of the hardships imposed on them by the difficult times today and the social condition which the Divine Providence, with loving intent, wanted to assign them and accept with a trusting spirit, as from the hand of God, the effects of poverty, aggravated today by the financial difficulties afflicting all humanity. Rise up more generously to the divine sublimity of the Cross of Christ, thinking that, if work is one of the greatest values of life, it was also the love of the patient God which has saved the world. Finally, confirm the certainty

that his sacrifices and his pains suffered in a Christian manner will effectively try to accelerate the time of mercy and peace.

The Divine Heart of Jesus cannot help but be touched by the prayers and sacrifices of his Church and will conclude by saying to his Spouse, so that his divine feet are reinforced beneath the weight of so many sorrows and evils: "Great is your faith: do with it as you want"⁵⁶.

Given in Segorbe, 25 May of 1932.

† THE BISHOP

90

Day of the Catholic Press

(B. Seg 52 [1932], pp. 41-42)

2275 Every day the need becomes more evident of developing the Catholic Press, the extremely strong bulwark of the Church and society, which is suffering such a relentless battering in the coverage of the godless press, falsifier of facts and corruptor of customs. Every day the foolishness is more evident of those who glory in the name of Catholics and lovers of order yet favor with their money the same press that is the enemy of religion and destroyer of the social order. This is why it is time for everyone to open their eyes and hurry to repair the damages caused by the bad press, denying them your support and working so that whoever preserves some trace of good sense refuses them and supports the good press with subscriptions and donations from everyone to best of their abilities, and through personal action, many times more valuable than money, and prayers to the Almighty, who as punishment for the sins of men has opened the springs to the abyss and unleashed the waterfalls of Heaven, but is always disposed to forgive and re-establish the kingdom of peace, and show us in the Sacred Heart of his Divine Son the rainbow of abundance he put between the wrath of heaven and the crimes of the world.

Even when that support of the Catholic Press must be offered the entire year, because it is offering its eminent services to the cause of the truth and good in everything, the faithful children of the Church should especially do so in the Days of St. Peter the Apostle, chosen by the High Pontiff for this special purpose, and enriching it with full indulgences for those who confess, receive communion and pray as is the intent of His Holiness and make a donation, no matter how small it may be, to the Catholic Press.

Hoping that the Parish priest will undertake with full determination to support the wishes of the High Pontiff and urge the faithful to fulfill this duty imposed by the circumstances of the times, and whose fulfillment must yield so many benefits not only to society but to individuals, threatened in their spiritual and worldly

⁵⁶ Matthew 15:28.

interests by the destructive principles of the godless press. These are tasks which the Parishes, Communities and Religious Societies can help with, and their help will be particularly gratifying to us.

We hope the zeal of the Board of the Diocese for the Good Press will collaborate with all its forces to the great success of the Day of the Catholic Press.

Segorbe, 16 June of 1932.

† THE BISHOP

91

Mission Day of the Domund

(B. Seg 52 [1932], pp. 65-66)

2276 The preferential treatment of attending to your own needs, great at the moment and even greater in the near future, must never extinguish in the Christian breast inflamed by charity the desire to collaborate, to the best of their ability, in resolving the needs of others, especially when they are spiritual and can be solved through spiritual means. Although it is true that for the conversion of the unfortunate unfaithful material resources are needed to sustain the missionaries, teachers of the Catechism, schools, hospitals and other institutions necessary for the development of the Missionary Work, the continuation of the work of our Divine Redeemer, it is also true that the most important need for the unfaithful is obtaining the grace of the faith and the humble, fervent and persistent prayers of those who already have the good fortune of believing is very helpful in obtaining that. It is also true that by the express mandate of the same Redeemer, the apostles and their successors have to evangelize among all peoples so that everyone can attain eternal life, which can only be attained through the knowledge of the true God and his Son Jesus Christ.

This is what moves us to once again urge our beloved Priests to eagerly promote, within their sphere of activity, the holy Work of the Spreading of the Faith and take advantage of the Missionary Day prescribed by His Holiness Pius XI, happily reining, to be held on 23 October this year, to renew in the faithful the knowledge and love of a goal so pleasing to the eyes of God. To that end, the Parish priests and those in charge of Churches shall announce from the Sunday before the celebration that it will take place on that day and what solemn and formal acts will be part of it. They will mainly dedicate their preaching to that subject, recommending above all the prayers of the faithful and urging everyone who still does not belong to the Holy Work of the Spreading of the Faith to sign up for it, or at least give a humble contribution out of your charity, however small it may be, in favor of the poor unfaithful.

We hope this work of prayer and propaganda may effectively help the Reverend Parish priests, Communities and religious Societies, be sure of obtaining the divine

assistance for the solution of their own needs if they show their generosity in contributing to the solution for others.

Segorbe, 24 September of 1932.

† THE BISHOP

92

Religious Persecution in Spain

(B. Seg 52 [1932], pp. 69-72)

2277 Beloved members of my diocese: Our spirit is distressed as much as yours by the persecution which is presently afflicting our Holy Mother the Church in Spain, and perhaps our heart is even more intensely tormented than yours due to the serious weight that rests upon us, we thought many times of addressing some words of encouragement and strength to you so that you bear with resignation the tribulations the Lord is allowing in order to purify our souls.

And what words will be better able to comfort and inspire us than those of the Lord himself, when he tells us through St. John: "If the world hates you, know that it hated me before you, because the disciple cannot be greater than his Master. The world hates you because you are not of the world, because it loves those who are its own; but I am He who has chosen you, and for that reason the world hates and persecutes you"⁵⁷.

These are words of great encouragement and force, beloved children, capable not only of comforting us in our tribulation, but also able to instill happiness and holy joy in us when we consider that we suffer with Christ and for Christ, our Master and model, who tells us: "Blessed are those who suffer persecution by the law, because theirs is the kingdom of heaven"⁵⁸. And since we aspire to that happiness, we do not shy away from following Jesus Christ proudly, and come what may, nothing frightens us away.

Do not be surprised by the insults, injustices, false accusations and persecutions of all kind you will have to suffer for your religious beliefs, nor should this dissuade you from serving Jesus Christ, since this is precisely the surest sign of your predestination and that you are true disciples of the Divine Master, who suffered death and passion for us. Do not hate or ask for revenge against your persecutors, but take pity on them for the serious damage they are doing to their souls, and ask the Lord to take pity on them, saying with the Divine Master: "Forgive them, Lord, because they know not what they do"⁵⁹, and believe that is the truth, because many persecutors of the Church are acting from the instigation of the spirit of evil.

⁵⁷ John 15:18-20.

⁵⁸ Matthew 5:10.

⁵⁹ Luke 23:34.

2278 However, what must concern us, beloved children, is the sad situation in which your Fathers in Christ, the Priests, are going to be in beginning next January, when they are deprived of the fair compensation the State was giving them for their ministerial services. This payment that on the other hand was nothing but a compensation for the goods the State usurped from the Church, as they are now trying to take its treasures, art objects and buildings, reducing it to poverty and misery. Do not believe those given to saying that the priests are rich and have no need of anything. I can assure you that that immense majority of them are poor, from poor families whom they have to help, and their modest payments are barely enough for them to eat and dress poorly. And that after a career of twelve years at least; to earn their positions, the majority of them, in rigorous competition!

For my part, I have to say, beloved children, this thought deprives me of sleep and takes away my health. One of the things that most discourages me is seeing how the faithful look with such indifference on the sad situation of the churches and their Pastors, and do not even respond to the most pressing collections: Have you thought, beloved children, what the situation is going to be like in our Parish churches the day the Priests, the men in charge of them, with all the pain and sorrow in their hearts, have to leave them under the threat of dying from hunger?

That you think of good in your obligation, in the good of your souls and the good name and decency of your towns is what your Prelate and Servant of God asks and desires for you, and he blesses you.

Segorbe, 15 November of 1932.

† BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

93

200th Anniversary of the Promises of the Sacred Heart

(B. Seg 53 [1933], pp. 23-24)

2279 As is well known, on 14 May of the year 1733 at San Ambrosio in Valladolid, the Divine Corazon of Jesus Christ made to his beloved disciple, the Venerable Father Hoyos, that Great Promise it that had to reign in Spain with more veneration than in the rest of the world.

With the 200th anniversary of that comforting promise approaching, it is necessary that the beloved faithful of our diocese not let it pass by without pleas and requests so that the Lord may take pity on them and speed up the fulfillment of the anniversary. This is why we urge our beloved Parish priests and Directors of the various Societies in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to display in their Parish churches and among these societies their activity in organizing worship services of compensation and supplication on 14 May. A necessary and integral part will be a general Communion of compensation and an exercise with display of the

Divine Master during the afternoon, and all the Parish priests and those in charge of Churches are authorized to carry out that display.

Segorbe, 10 April of 1933.

† THE BISHOP

94

Holy Year of Redemption
(B. Seg 53 [1933], pp. 31-33)

2280 Our most Holy Father Pope Pius XI, happily reigning, in the Apostolic Constitutions given to regulate everything related to the spiritual benefits of the Holy Year⁶⁰, marking the occasion of the 1900th year of the Redemption of the World through Jesus Christ has established it from 2 April 1933 to 2 April 1934, in the third constitution dated 30 January of this year. It marks for a special grace those who, without the need of going to Rome and visiting the Basilicas, can benefit from the Indulgence *as often as happens (toties quoties)*, without leaving their homes or towns.

Eight groups are covered in the account as included by the Pope in this very singular grace, and among them appear the Nuns, whether cloistered or not, their postulants and novices, the girl who are educated as lodgers or half-pension lodgers in their Convents and Houses, the ones who run errands there and however many others are residing with the nuns, even unofficially, and eat from the same table.

They also include in the account the prison inmates, those who are sick or in delicate health whose illness or precarious physical condition makes it reasonable to foresee they will not be able to go to the Eternal City and do the prescribed visits to the Basilicas over the course of that entire year; the nurses in the hospitals who practice their ministry with the sick continuously; whoever needs their daily wages to earn enough to support them themselves; the elderly over 70 years old; all those and any other cases we have not indicated since they do not ordinarily occur in the diocese but it is advisable that all the Priests and all the confessors have them in mind if, only as an exception, they may occur among their parishioners or penitents, so they can, through the benevolence of the Holy Father who, as we said, earn the benefit from the Jubilee in their Houses or the Parish Churches, by attending to what was prescribed by the Pope himself.

2281 There are his mandates: that with due sorrow they confess and receive absolution for their sins in the Sacrament of Penance, and nourish and gather their strength by receiving the Holy Eucharist, and afterwards, do not stop praying for the intentions of His Holiness, that is, for the increase of the Catholic Church, the

⁶⁰ Cf. AAS 25 (1933), pp. 14-19.

elimination of errors, for harmony among the Princes and peace and tranquility of all human society.

Instead of the visits to the four Basilicas in Rome, the Holy Father says all the previously indicated groups will have to carry out those acts or works of devotion and charity that the Prelate of their Diocese or through their confessors indicates.

In fulfillment of the above, we indicate that for all the nuns who are not ill and those who live with them as mentioned above, four visits to their own church or chapel and in each visit they will pray the same that is prescribed for the visit to the Basilicas, that is: Five Our Fathers, Ave Mariás, Glorias, and another Our Father with Ave Maria and Gloria for the intention of the Pope, before the altar of the Sacrament; before the altar of Holy Christ, if there is one and if not, before the Crucifix, three Creeds and one single time the short prayer, "We adore you Christ, and we bless you, that through your Holy Cross the word was redeemed"; before the altar of Our Lady of Sorrows, or another image of the Virgin, seven Ave Mariás en memory of the seven sorrows and one single time the short prayer: "Holy Mother, make the wounds of the Crucified be indelibly engraved in my heart"; and before the altar of St. Peter, and if there is none, before the Main altar, you will make profession of Catholic faith with the praying of the Creed.

With respect to the nuns who are ill or in delicate health, as well as the prisoners, lay people who are sick, nurses in hospitals, the elderly, day workers, etc., their usual confessors or the ones chosen for this object of earning the benefit of the Jubilee will indicate to them, according to their discretion and prudence, we have previously prescribed what they will have to practice in place of the four visits and prayers. The confessors themselves, for the effects of the Jubilee, are authorized by Us to absolve however many of these members of the Diocese approach them for this purpose of earning the Indulgence.

Segorbe, 2 May of 1933.

† THE BISHOP

2282 One again, and if possible more effectively than in previous years, we are recommending the celebration of the Day of the Catholic Press, which the Roman Pontiff has assigned to the holy days of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul on 29 June, enriching it with full indulgence and recommending its celebration each year with more intense appeals.

The events in the world makes us see with greater clarity every day the need to develop the Catholic Press as the most suitable means for repairing the damage caused by the bad Press in all aspects of life. Now you can feel that the war against

God is no more than the starting point of the war against society, whose foundations they want to destroy, since experience verifies that much-trumpeted rights of man have turned into the links of the chains that placed the human species in chains at the feet of a few individuals more astute and unconcerned about them than other men. Just as someone would be foolish to deny a small compensation to the guardian of their house and then open their bag to someone who assaults them in broad daylight or undermines its foundation in the darkness of night, they should with good reason categorize as foolish someone who denies their help to the good Press that defends the principles of order in society, and offer it instead to the godless and disruptive press, who openly or clandestinely fights them, and whose rewards are the ruins of the most splendid monuments of Christian civilization.

We earnestly request, then, to the Board of the Diocese for the Catholic Press and all the Reverend Parish priests and those in charge of churches to put all their determination and effort into making the celebration of the Day of the Press more extensive and more intense than in previous years. This means that it be celebrated in a greater number of Parishes and Churches and be better known by a greater number of the faithful, through explaining its aim and beneficial results in advance through all the means of oral and written propaganda they judge most appropriate for the circumstances of each Parish.

And for the religious Communities, members of Catholic Action and all the faithful in general we hope they will collaborate to the best of their abilities in the most splendid celebration of that day. They can be sure that, even in the present life, their generosity towards the press defending their moral and material interests will be productive for them, and in the future they will receive an immortal prize for all those acts of prayer, propaganda and generosity that for the glory of God and benefit of their fellow man, beloved by God, they practice in this life.

Segorbe, 20 May of 1933.

† THE BISHOP

2283 With the Universal Day of Missions prescribed by His Holiness Pius XI, happily reigning, now at hand, we recommend to the Reverend Parish priests and those in charge of Churches of the Diocese to try to celebrate it as effectively as possible, announcing it on the Sunday before it is held, specifically preaching on its purpose and the excellence of the Missions on the indicated day, which falls on 22 October this year. They should also recommend to the faithful the combination of their prayers in favor of converting the unfaithful and their alms to defray the enormous costs required for the sustenance of the Missionaries and teachers of

the Catechism, and the construction and maintenance of the churches, schools, hospitals, orphanages and so many other works necessarily for the development of missionary activity in all parts of the world.

The truth is the present situation of the Spanish church demands special attention from the Catholics to their own needs; but it is no less true that the combination of prayers in no way taxes the economic resources of the faithful; that a small sacrifice less than the one that many make to please the senses would be enough to comfortably take care of the needs of the Missions; that God has promised to compensate even for a glass of water given in his Name and reward with the prize of prophet whoever helps the prophet because of his nature as a prophet; the merciful will attain mercy and if we want to attain the divine mercy to remedy all the needs afflicting us and above all, for the preservation in Spain of the priceless gift of the faith, we must use mercy with the poor who do not have it, collaborating with the activities of the missionaries continuing the work of Christ, so they also may be illuminated with that light that makes the darkness of error in which they are submerged disappear and open the horizons of truth and infinite happiness.

Do not be less generous than the Catholics of other nations who also must attend to the needs of their own church but are not content with that and invest much greater amounts in favor of the Holy Work of the Spreading of the Faith; do not be less generous than the faithful of some recently founded Missions who fight against persecution and poverty yet still part with, at the cost of sacrifices, a portion of what is needed to communicate to the unfaithful the benefits that they just received. Let us all work together and, especially, let all the Communities and religious Societies of the Diocese help in their parish activity in favor of the Mission, reminding us that it is not the amount of the alms, but the will with which it is given, that the Supreme Redeemer most values of our good works, and whose Vicar on earth is promoting with such great effort and determination the development of such a holy work granting so many spiritual graces to its collaborators.

Segorbe, September of 1933.

† THE BISHOP

97

For a Collection

(B. Seg 53 [1933], pp. 77-79)

2284 In his second letter to the Thessalonians, the Apostle St. Paul says that: "The charity of each one of you abounds among you"⁶¹. And the Apostle St. John, in

⁶¹ I Thessalonians 1:3.

his first Epistle, warns us that "How can the charity of God be in him, who closes the heart of his mercy to others?"⁶²

These two texts outline for us what is always a duty for all Christians and especially today, they must urge the fulfillment of an act of charity that we are asking for at present and that our beloved Parish priests and Priests must cooperate with their full enthusiasm for its greater success.

The Reverend Metropolitan Archbishops, during one of their reunions, decided that Christian and priestly solidarity would be expressed for the current precarious economic situation of the Worship of God and his ministers in an annual collection destined for a special fund with the purpose of providing assistance to the poorest Spanish dioceses. This collection will have to be verified in all the churches on 25 July, the holy day of the Apostle James, but this year must be done before the extraordinary collections of 8 and 25 December that have been practiced since 1931.

Several dioceses have already done this collection and others intend to carry it out this month or at the beginning of the next. The latter is what we are ordering for our diocese, that this collection be done in all the churches for the indicated aim on 3 December.

The poverty of our Diocese has transcended its natural limits and it very probable that it will be one of the Dioceses this fund has to care for. If it seems at first glance a contradiction in terms that We are asking for a contribution to the fund that we need, in fact it is not if we carefully consider the spirit of this collection, none other in the spiritual order than giving an example of fraternal unity, in accordance with the words of the Epistles we cite at the beginning, and that we can give, albeit poorly, without denying our charity and spirit of union by doing so.

We earnestly ask, then, our parish priests and those in charge of churches to comply with what was previously ordered and on the prescribed days, and encourage the faithful to contribute to the mentioned collection. Given that what money is raised must be sent as soon as possible to the central bank, we pray with interest that the money is sent to our office or at least a note of the amount as soon as possible.

Segorbe, 19 November of 1933.

† THE BISHOP

2285 Supporting the wishes of the Holy Father that since we are on the verge of finishing the Holy Year of Redemption, thanks be given to God for all his benefits and especially for the Eucharist and the Priesthood, we come to order the following:

⁶² Cf. I John 3:17.

1. On 15 March at 5.00 pm, an hour of solemn worship to Jesus of the Sacrament will be held in the chapel of our Episcopal Palace, to which all the priests of the city have to attend unless they have a serious reason for being excused. We would be pleased to see if the priests from all the neighboring parishes would attend that act if they have enough time and could return to their parishes the same afternoon when the service is over.

2. In the major Archpriest areas, excepting the biggest, the respective Archpriests will order an act equivalent to the one mentioned above, at a timely hour of the same day, and will invite the priests of their areas to attend it.

3. On 18 March, Passion Sunday, in each parish of the Diocese, the respective parish priests will order the celebration of the Holy Hour, with display of the Holy Virgin, inviting the faithful to attend the service, in order that they give thanks to God for the benefits indicated. In that act, they will especially urge them, as a complement, to receive the Holy Communion on Holy Thursday.

Segorbe, 20 February of 1934.

† THE BISHOP

Jubilee of the Holy Year of Redemption

(B. Seg 54 [1934], pp. 35-37)

2286 Beloved children, the extraordinary Jubilee concluded happily and with a great benefit to the souls, marking the 1900th anniversary of our Redemption granted to the Catholic world by our Holy Father, but which must benefit can only be earned in Rome. Countless thousands of the faithful from all over the world were able to do so and had the good fortune of kneeling before the tomb of the most Holy Apostles and receive the blessing of His Holiness to earn the Jubilee. Although Catholics from all nations of the world attended to support the wishes of the Roman Pontiff, we can say with great satisfaction that our poor and unfortunate Spain perhaps sent the largest contingent of pilgrims to Rome. It certainly served as great comfort to the Holy Father, very afflicted by the situation of our Catholic nation, and give satisfaction to good Spaniards to see that, although Hell bellows and Satan roars, the faith of Spain will not die.

In our Circular Letter to you announcing the just-concluded Jubilee we were telling you, beloved children, that for those of you who saw it would be impossible to go to Rome to benefit from it, in accordance with the wish of His Holiness, to trust that the Holy Father, who desires the good of all his children, would grant it the next year for all the faithful of the Catholic world who could benefit from it in their respective churches. And if fact, beloved children, today we can announce

to you this great new granting of the Jubilee, in the form and conditions, for the parishes of our Diocese⁶³.

2287 1. In the city of Segorbe, 12 visits will be practiced, in the style and form indicated in the Apostolic Constitution, split among the four churches: Cathedral, St. Mary, the Seminary and St. Peter, with three visits to each one.

2. In the remaining towns of the Diocese, the respective parish priests, interim priests, and regents will indicate the four churches for making the visits, if there are that many, taking into account the requirements of that Constitution with respect to the safeguarding of the Holy Virgin and the existence of a visible and appropriate place for the images of the Crucified Lord and the Holy Virgin. If there would only be one church filling those conditions, they shall visit it 12 times, and if two churches, six times apiece, and if three, four times.

3. When the collective movement of those who went for the Jubilee is not prudent in a parish church, bear in the mind what section 4 of Number VII of the Constitution says.

4. In each parish church, the priest in charge will try to instruct and prepare the parishioners about this Jubilee and the conditions for benefiting from it, earnestly encouraging them about the advisability of taking advantage of this unique grace the Holy Father is granting us.

5. Sections 2 and 3 of Number VII speak of whoever is prevented from benefiting from the Jubilee subject to the general regulations, as well as the council members, priests and confessors of the diocese, as our delegates, bearing in mind the rules for the recognition of prayers and reductions of visits. And concerning the powers the Holy Father grants to the confessors, they should try to know well the sections of Number VIII.

Segorbe, 18 May of 1934.

† THE BISHOP

2288 Since the institution of the Day of the Catholic Press in 1916, we have fervently recommended to the beloved members of our diocese that they fully cooperate in making a work so pleasing to the eyes of God and so useful to the spiritual and material interests of men as the Catholic press a success. It is the most universal means of spreading the wholesome doctrine, which many times reaches places where the voice of the ministers of the Sanctuary cannot reach and the only dike capable of holding back the overwhelming waves of error allied to

⁶³ Cf. AAS 26 (1934), pp. 137-148.

the unrestrained passions that inundate the modern world in the form of partisan newspapers, pornographic novels and magazines, loose leaflets, books that under the veneer of a false essence mask the poison of falsehood and corrode the vital tissues of a society threatened with extinction from the impact of such numerous and powerful elements of destruction.

Once again we approach the intelligent and farsighted generosity of the faithful of our Diocese, even knowing so many burdens weigh upon them, and we urge them to make a sacrifice in favor of the Catholic press, with greater effectiveness, if possible, than in previous years. We are certain that this sacrifice will be the seed that will yield one hundredfold in this life, strengthening the foundations of society that are swaying and, above all, attract upon you the blessings of the Almighty who is the guarantee of the spiritual graces granted by the High Pontiff to the collaborators in this holy work.

We hope the Reverend Parish priests and those in charge of churches will give the preparation for the Day of the Catholic Press on 29 June, the holy day of the Holy Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, their greatest attention, explaining beforehand to the faithful the triple purpose, that is prayer, propaganda and alms, the graces granted with the customary conditions plus a small alms for practicing some suitable literary act wherever they think it convenient and the most appropriate religious acts on the 29th. They will report all this and the result of the collection to the Subcommittee of the Diocese of the Good Press, which we make responsible, as usual, for preparing everything concerning the celebration of this day, as will the religious Communities and devout and cultural Societies which collaborate with total enthusiasm and effectiveness to the great success of such a deserving work.

Segorbe, 28 May of 1934.

THE BISHOP

101

Collection in Favor of the Worship and Clergy

(B. Seg 54 [1934], pp. 43-44)

2289 By order of their Excellencies and most Reverend Metropolitan archbishops, all the parishes, churches and public chapels, even of Religious Orders, must hold an extraordinary collection on the day of the Apostle James, the Patron Saint of Spain, to subsidize the urgent needs of the Worship and Clergy. We urge all members of our diocese to be active organizers of this collection and to contribute to it as faithful children of the Church.

The Priests and those in charge of Churches will send the amounts collected to our Council Secretary until the middle of August.

Segorbe, 17 July of 1934.

† THE BISHOP

102

Mission Day of the Domund

(B. Seg 54 [1934], pp. 69-70)

2290 The next-to-last Sunday of October, which falls on 21 October this year, is the one indicated by His Holiness Pius XI, gloriously reigning, to celebrate the collection in favor of the Missions in all churches of the Catholic world, so that the alms given in this collection are exclusively for that holy work, in accordance with the papal instructions.

The voice of the Pope is raised more intensely each year to plead with all his children to, in spite of their own needs, dedicate a portion of their resources, however small it may be, to this excellent work for which the Son of God descended to earth, and entrusted his Church with the continuation of the work until the end of time.

Echoing the voice of the Vicar of Christ, we address our voice again to the beloved members of our diocese to commend them to, even at the cost of sacrifices, not stop from supporting the wishes of the Roman Pontiff, certain that the divine Providence shall reward you and even more for your hardships even in the temporal world, and will fill you with spiritual goods, the only ones worthy of esteem for their excellence and because, when used well, they assure the possession of the eternal and infinite good.

The progressive increase in the number of conversions obtained in the most recent years is a very eloquent proof of the effectiveness of the Missions.

That same increase and the apostolic yearning of the Missionaries, a yearning that all Christians must share as the Kingdom of Christ expands every day, makes the need of resources for sustaining the Missions grow as well, meaning, the missionaries, the teachers of the Catechism, churches, orphanages, leper colonies, schools, chapels, universities, hospitals, asylums, presses and other means of missionary activity that are only sustained by the assistance of Christian charity.

We hope the Reverend Parish priests and those in charge of churches will put all their effort and determination into securing the success of the Universal Day of Missions, announcing it to the faithful on the previous Sunday, explaining its aim and significance for the spiritual and worldly good of society, and the graces granted by the High Pontiff to whoever contributes to it. The main one, full indulgence, by confessing, receiving communion and giving alms for this purpose, even if small; in the Sunday sermon they shall mainly preach on the missionary theme and organize the collection in the form they think most appropriate, and the religious and cultural acts which can contribute the best results. We are confident the religious Communities and directors of Societies and Catholic Schools of the Diocese will help this work with all their zeal and effort.

Segorbe, 15 September of 1934.

† THE BISHOP

CONSTITUTIONS OF THE CAPUCHINE TERTIARY SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY

1885

IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

BEGINNING OF THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE CAPUCHINE
TERTIARY SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY

INTRODUCTION

The Constitutions written by Luis Amigó for his Capuchine Tertiary sisters and friars are the masterpieces of his work as Founder.

From the various constitutional texts, whose preparation Luis Amigó was involved in over the nearly fifty years he lived after the foundation of his two institutions¹, we have selected only the texts from the first Constitutions² for the present edition, considering them to be the ones that most genuinely contain the spirit he wanted to instill in his sisters and friars.

Bearing in mind that both the Congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family and the Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows definitively emerged in the spirit of Luis Amigó as the reward for his apostolic work heading the lay Franciscan Third Order³, it is easy to figure out the eminent place the spirituality of St. Francis himself occupies in the original Constitutions, which were born, on the other hand, from the prayer that Luis Amigó directed to God "imploring his divine assistance"⁴.

In fact, the Constitutions of 1885 and 1889 are a true compendium of the fundamental values of the Franciscan nature of the Third Order. This summary, realized with the particular spirit Luis Amigó wants to transmit as distinctive to

¹ These texts for the sisters were dated in 1885, 1902, 1911 and 1928; and for the friars, in 1889, 1902, 1910 and 1928 (Cf. AMIGÓ, L.: *Constitutions Written, Adapted and Amended...*, Madrid 1978).

² They are the Constitutions of 1885 for the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family, and the Constitutions of 1889 for the Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows.

³ Cf. 60-66 above; and especially, 68, 83.

⁴ Cf. 68, 98.

his children includes for that reason the spiritual values of penance, contemplation, insignificance and fraternity that collectively make up all Third Order spirituality.

Penance

Penance is understood by Franciscans as a constant conversion to God and to the brothers starting from self-denial, personal renunciation and bearing the burden of their own cross, and constitutes one of the essential elements in the lifestyle that Luis Amigó conceives of for his nuns and friars.

The educators of the spirit must try, as one of their fundamental commitments, to “prudently test” their disciples “in internal and external mortification, humility and self-deprecation so that with the old man of appetites and lusts conquered and mortified, he may be clothed anew as someone born in justice and holiness”⁵.

This mystical concept of penance, simultaneously loving and transforming, must be experienced above all through the three religious vows, which in Amigonian teaching are explicitly three radical forms of death to the individual “I” and birth of a new spiritual reality in which the center of attraction passes to God and the brothers⁶.

On the other hand, only with a truly penitential spirit can brotherhood⁷ be built and apostolic service can act in favor of the brothers with all “the concern and effort”⁸, and all the availability that Luis Amigó asks of his foundations⁹.

Meditation

In any active Franciscan project, meditation occupies a privileged position, from which the apostolic power starts up definitively.

Luis Amigó, who wants to insist to his foundations on the evangelical task of “serving the brothers”¹⁰, “of helping them in their physical and spiritual needs”¹¹, and, in addition, wants these same foundations “to transmit and communicate to their fellow man the fires of divine love”¹², is conscious that this is only possible to the extent that his nuns and friars know “to devote themselves to the sweetness of meditation”¹³, “inflaming their will in the love of God through prayer”¹⁴. Hence, he will stress with special emphasis the importance of this spiritual value concerning the ministry when he warns:

⁵ Cf. 2329, 2403.

⁶ Cf. 2347-2354, 2431-2438.

⁷ Profoundly fraternal relations are only possible to the extent they have the willingness to deny themselves, “treating the brothers as superiors, giving them preference, and doing everything for everyone” (cf. 1819 above).

⁸ Cf. 2293.

⁹ Cf. 2360.

¹⁰ Cf. 2360.

¹¹ Cf. 2293.

¹² Cf. 2293, 2360.

¹³ Cf. 2293.

¹⁴ Cf. 2360.

— “Yes, the friars should involve themselves in the service of their Brothers; but not forgetting that the true love of your fellow man cannot exist without the love of God, and the best means of doing good to others is by being well filled with the spirit of the Lord, which is charity; and one acquires this spirit in the practices of devotion, especially prayer”¹⁵.

Insignificance

Insignificance is that attitude by which the friar in willing to serve others, to “wash their feet”¹⁶, experiencing the conversion towards God and towards the brothers from the perspective of self-denial, poverty and humility which involves “leaving your particular condition”¹⁷ and “do everything for everyone”¹⁸.

In the context of the original Constitutions, Luis Amigó invites his followers to experience this Franciscan value which he sets up for them as “servants” according to the gospel:

— *as much on the apostolic level, doing so through his concern for doing “everything for everyone”¹⁹, that his service is done with an “effort”²⁰ in which he “does not pardon any means to that effect, up to sacrificing his own life if it was necessary”²¹;*

— *as on the fraternal level, each one putting himself last with respect to the brothers²², and with luck this way the fraternal love²³ could emerge that must be the basis of relations in the community.*

Fraternity

The type of fraternity that Luis Amigó proposes in the first Constitutions for his Capuchin Tertiary sisters and friars explains the elements that tend to identify it with a true Franciscan fraternity²⁴.

The Capuchin Tertiary community, always in agreement with this basic document, must distinguish itself:

- *By putting Christ as the center of all its activities; through a constant “following of the spirit and the steps of Our Lord Jesus Christ”²⁵;*
- *By a renewed vitality in prayer, which is the best means of becoming inflamed with the love that has to be transmitted to the brothers²⁶;*

¹⁵ Cf. 2361.

¹⁶ Cf. John 3:4-14; 1R 6:3, in *St. Francis of Assisi. Writings, Biographies, Documents* (BAC, Madrid, 1978) p. 96.

¹⁷ Cf. Philippians 2:6-8.

¹⁸ Cf. I Corinthians 9:22.

¹⁹ Cf. 2359.

²⁰ Cf. 2293, 2360.

²¹ Cf. 2359.

²² Cf. 1819 above.

²³ Cf. 2297, 2430.

²⁴ Cf. IRIARTE, L: *Franciscan Vocation* (Valencia, 1975), pp. 162-182.

²⁵ Cf. especially 2293, 2328, 2331, 2347, 2350, 2352, 2359, 2423, 2431 and 2436.

²⁶ Cf. what was noted above about *Meditation*.

- By being founded in charity in such a way that the brothers are inclined, taken by a kind and sacrificial love, to “mutually wash each other’s feet”²⁷, and to act as “insignificant and servants”²⁸;
- By conceiving of and acting towards the authority in the heart of the community itself as “service”²⁹.

Nevertheless, the element which shows, if not with greater profundity then more vividly, a comparison between the Capuchin Tertiary fraternities that Luis Amigó wanted in writing his first constitutions, with the original Franciscan fraternities yearned for by the Seraph of Assisi, is of “a mutual balancing among its different members”.

St. Francis did not want distinctions between “the learned and unlearned”³⁰; nevertheless, his idea was soon enough forgotten, and the differences emerged with the introduction of the clergy into the Order.

In the 19th century, Luis Amigó dares to vigorously and forcefully resurrect this same ideal:

— “As opposed to other Congregations in which some Sisters are distinguished from others, calling some of them Choir Members or Mothers, and others of obedience or lay sisters, in this congregation” —he writes in 1885— “there will not any distinction among the sisters; all the nuns will work without distinction in the services in which holy obedience places them...”³¹

— “This congregation” —he notes in 1889— “will be composed of Religious Priests and Coadjutor Brothers; although concerning the works the Institution is dedicating itself to, the latter shall be more numerous”³².

²⁷ Cf. John 13:4-14; 1R 6:3, in works cited, p. 96; and 1819 above.

²⁸ Cf. what was noted above about *Insignificance*.

²⁹ Cf. especially 2296, 2326, 2366, and 2397.

³⁰ Cf. 2C 198, in works cited, p. 341.

³¹ Cf. 2294.

³² Cf. 2362. In the overall perspective of the legislation, you can appreciate how the Brothers come to be considered by Luis Amigó as members with “full rights” within the Institution, and as much concerning the exercise of the ministry itself (cf. 2362) as the exercising of authority (cf. 2400, 2406).

CHAPTER I

On the Purpose of the Congregation

2291 1. Three are three paths along which God leads the souls he has chosen to serve him in the Religion. He wants some souls to devote themselves completely to meditation on heavenly things to the extent that they live alienated from all things worldly, without taking into account more than their soul in imitation of Mary Magdalene. He wants other souls to be diligent and careful like Martha in the ministering of service to their brothers, in whom he wants them to see Himself, promising to receive the services they give to them as if they were done to Himself. Finally, he is calling other souls to the highest degree of perfection, and wants them to follow exactly in the footsteps of his Son and Our Lord Jesus Christ, who united action with contemplation. From that comes the distinction that exists between the various Religions and Congregations and distinguishes the church of God, in contemplative, active and mixed life.¹

2292 2. Concerning the perfection and excellence of these various genres and conditions of living, the one with a more noble and excellent purpose will be bigger and more means will be provided to achieve it. Where the Religions and Congregations that profess a purely contemplative life, and only God as its purpose and prayer as its means; those which profess as active have the purpose of being useful to their fellow man and physical fatigue as their means, and are undoubtedly more perfect than the others. The ones which profess the mixed life have as their purpose both God and their fellow man and as means both prayer, from where they can climb to the most intimate union with God, and work and fatigue to be of use to their fellow man and give them a transfusion of the fires of divine love, this is where these Congregations overtake and are superior to the others in perfection.

2293 3. The Sisters of the Congregation of Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family, following the spirit and footsteps of Our Savior Jesus Christ and his faithful imitator Our Father St. Francis, shall serve the Lord in mixed life, devoting some of their time to the sweetness of meditation and diligently dedicating their full concern and effort at other times to the aid of the physical and spiritual needs of their fellow man in the hospitals, asylums and educational centers, particularly Orphanages; as these are exercises of charity, this Institution will especially embrace them. Nevertheless, if at any time the Sacred Congregation of True Propaganda would ask for them for the Missions to the unfaithful they shall serve with complete submission. But the General Mother Superior will not be able to send any nun to those Missions if she does not ask to go and, even when she makes that request, is well warned beforehand as to whether she has the necessary qualities for this difficult and arduous undertaking. According to St. Bonaventure in the

¹ Cf. 2359.

explanations of the Rule of the Friars Minor, these are the necessary qualities: they are physically healthy and robust; steady and strong in their faith; testing in their virtue, and have always led an exemplary life in the Religion.

CHAPTER II

Organization of the Congregation

2294 4. As opposed to other Congregations in which some Sisters are distinguished from others, calling some of them Choir Members or Mothers and others of obedience or lay sisters; there will not be any distinctions among the sisters in this Congregation. All the nuns will work without distinction in the positions in which holy Obedience places them, welcoming with the same spirit the honorable charge of Professor as the humble one of Cook, bearing in mind that God does not distinguish among his creatures by the grandeur of their ministries, but by the greatness of their works instead². However, to preserve humility in them, the foundation of all virtue³, they shall receive the most despised occupations with great joy.

5. The Mother Superiors will be careful to examine what positions the nuns are best suited for in order to employ them in those positions so that the Congregation may be better served; but this does not mean they should stop from assigning them to other tasks from time to time, so it is possible to assign the nuns to any task and all of them will have the ability to carry them out.

2295 6. In each House of the Congregation, one nun will be placed in the position of the local Superior, to whom all the nuns of that family must obey as their Prelate and as a sign of respect they shall be given the name of Mother.

7. In addition, for the cases when the Mother Superior would be absent or prevented from attending to the governing of the Community, a nun shall be designated to stand in for her and be given the name of Vicar. In the absence of the Superiors, the Vicar Sisters are authorized to the same degree as the Superiors; nevertheless, they must follow the regulations established by the Mother Superior concerning the government of the House, and in no way will they have the authority to give orders to the contrary.

8. The Superior will also have assigned to her two other nuns, who are among the most serious, ascetic and discreet, to give her their opinions and advise her in all business matters of any significance. They will have the name of Councilors.

2296 9. When the Congregation has various Houses, a general Superior shall be appointed and all the important business matters of the Congregation shall be reserved. She will be helped in her administration by six nuns who will form the General Council.

² Cf. Romans 2:6; I Peter 1:17; Revelation 20:12 and 22:12. Cf. 2362.

³ Cf. 1018, 1234, 1313 above.

10. All nuns, including the local Superiors, must look with full veneration and respect and offer unlimited obedience to the General Mother Superior, as a representative of our Seraphic Father St. Francis, and approach her with all their needs with the confidence of children approaching their mother.

11. To this end, the General Mother Superior shall try to make herself more loved than feared by the nuns⁴; and will welcome them affably and pleasantly so they may feel free to communicate their needs to her and show their innermost feelings without reservation.

12. The local Superiors should behave the same way thinking, as the Constitutions of the Capuchin Fathers say, “the Religious Prelates must not be like gentile princes, who grow in stature through their rank, but instead must lower themselves through humility when their position carries a greater burden”⁵. And they should remember they are ministers and servants of their Sisters⁶.

2297 13. Leaving to one side individual friendships⁷, the plague of the Communities, the nuns will love each other mutually with that holy love so recommended by Our Savior Jesus Christ, who said that his disciples have to be known for it, and our Seraphic Father St. Francis wanted us to feel it even more intensely and strongly than the love a mother professes for her carnal child⁸.

14. This way the nuns will behave with great familiarity and naturalness towards each other, calling themselves sisters, and use *Your Charity* as the form of address, in order that everyone knows the union that exists among them and the love they profess towards each other, so they are edified and convinced that it really is a very good and joyful idea for all brothers to live as one, to use the expression of the royal Prophet⁹.

15. All the nuns will address the General Mother Superior as Our Mother, and will give her the form of address of *Your Reverence*. The local Superiors and the general Councils will be given the form of address of *Your Charity*.

CHAPTER III

On Admission to the Congregation

2298 16. If any young woman, wishing to embrace this life, approaches any nun requesting entry into the Congregation, refer her to or advise the General

⁴ Cf. ST CLARE: *Rule* 4:10, in *Writings of St. Francis and St. Clare* Ed. Lázaro Iriarte (Valencia, 1983, p. 193. Cf. 2366.

⁵ Cf. CAPUCHINS: *Constitutions of 1638*, Chapter 8. Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 1R 5:10, in *St. Francis of Assisi* (BAC, Madrid, 19878), p. 95.

⁶ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 1R 4:6, in works cited, p. 94, note 10.

⁷ Cf. ST. CLARE: *Rule* 4:11, in works cited, p. 193.

⁸ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 1R 9:11, in works cited, p. 98. 2R 6:8, in works cited, p. 113.

⁹ Psalms 132:1.

Mother Superior by letter, who has the responsibility with her General Council for the admission of applicants.

17. The General Mother Superior and her Councilors are warned this is one of the most difficult obligations of their position, for the greater good or bad the admission of a young woman can cause in the Congregation. For this reason, they must look very closely at whoever they admit without being carried away by individual affections or passions; preferring that the nuns be few in number and good rather than many and inadequate.

18. Examine, therefore, if the candidate has the ideal qualities the first chapter of the Rule asks for, where it says: "They must be faithful Catholics; not suspected of any heresy; strong in their obedience to the Roman Church; they are tied by the bonds of matrimony; free from debts; physically healthy; quick-witted; not known for any common infamy, and at peace with their neighbors".

19. In addition, they must also pay attention to whether the application has ever been in another Congregation; is not over 40 years old; has not been married; is the daughter of a legitimate marriage, and comes with the sole and exclusive purpose of serving God.

2299 20. In order to know all this, then, in addition to the Baptism and Confirmation certificates, and the secret information, the Prelate of the Diocese in which the candidate lives will be asked for their permission and approval.

21. Although the spirit of poverty must inspire this Congregation, and begging for alms must be the only source of wealth for the nuns, thereby showing themselves to be beyond any material interests¹⁰, nevertheless, to obey the provisions ordered under Canon law, the applicants will be required to make a modest dowry, which will be guarded until their profession, so that in the event they would leave, it would be returned to them in full.

22. Nonetheless, if the applicant would have the title of Professor, she will be admitted without the dowry. Anyone else can be admitted without the dowry who is judged to be very useful to the Congregation; but not without the permission of the Ordinary.

2300 23. Because it is impossible to know the qualities of a young woman and her vocation at first glance, nor can she know whether or not the rigors of the order are greater than her strength, she will spend three months as a postulant before she is given the Holy Habit; she will pass this time in the Novitiate following all the exercises in which the novices are employed.

24. After the three months as a postulant have passed, the Teacher of Novices and the local Superior and will report on and give their opinion about the young women to the General Mother Superior who, in agreement with her Councilors, will order her admission to the Novitiate or her expulsion.

25. When the postulant is admitted for the taking of the habit, the Prelate of the Diocese will be informed so that he deigns, either himself or through a delegate, to

¹⁰ Cf. ST. CLARE: *Rule* 8:1-6, in works cited, p. 199.

do the examination the Sacred Canons¹¹ prescribe, and the postulant will prepare as best as possible to take on her new name by doing spiritual exercises for 10 days and making her general confession.

CHAPTER IV On the Novitiate

2301 26. In order for the novices to become well-rooted in virtue, and acquire the Seraphic spirit that must inspire the daughters of the Patriarch of Assisi¹², they will not take part in the external ministries of education and service to the ill until after their profession.

27. During their Novitiate, they will not be sent as family to any House or Orphanage of the Congregation, but shall necessarily pass this time in the Convent designated for the Novitiate, which will be designated with the name Mother-House; and the General Mother Superior will usually reside there.

2302 28. There will be no more than one Novitiate for the entire Congregation, no matter how much it may expand. The Superiors are warned that to establish a new Novitiate, or to transfer the already established one to another Convent, requires the authorization of the Holy See.

29. The period of the Novitiate will last for one year. The Novices will be under the direction of a Teacher, a discreet, prudent, and observant nun enlightened in the path of virtue, who can teach them not only with words but especially through their works¹³ about what the life of the perfect nun and the true Capuchin Tertiary Sister entails¹⁴.

2303 30. During this year, she will be voted to the Novitiate three times: the first after four months, the second at eight months and the third at 10 months. To be admitted for the profession she must have half the votes plus one, with the General Mother Superior having the decisive vote in the event of a tie; and outside of this case, she will have no more than one vote, just like the other nuns.

31. The newly professed nuns in the Congregation will not have a vote in admitting the Novices for profession, until they finish the four years wearing the habit, and only in this way will they be able to and must voice their opinion. Similarly, they cannot vote with their vote on the Novice on those nuns who transferred into the Mother House but have not yet spent three months with the Novice and experienced her vocation for that time; but if this nun went to the

¹¹ Cf. *Romani Pontifices* Decree, of 25 January 1848, in *Enchiridion de Statibus Perfectionis* (Rome 1949), n. 188.

¹² Cf. 2376.

¹³ Concerning preaching with words and by example, you can consult: ST. FRANCIS: 1R 17:3, in works cited, p. 102; and LM 8:1 in works cited, p. 428.

¹⁴ Cf. 2376.

Mother House in the position of local Superior or Teacher of Novices, the vote will be held one month after their stay in the House-Novitiate started.

32 Being incumbent on the family of the Novitiate to vote with their vote for the Novice, the General Mother Superior cannot, not by herself nor with her council, admit her for profession, under penalty of having it nullified. The Novice who is not favored with the majority of votes must be expelled from the Congregation; but if this was the first vote, she will be able to wait for the second and even third vote, if the nuns find it advisable; because the votes against her could be changed to favorable if they would observe new virtues or correction of her faults in her.

2304 33. In accordance with the provisions of the Papal Decrees, the Novices will be completely separated from the nuns who have Professed, and will only join with them in the Choir and Dining Hall¹⁵.

34. They are forbidden from speaking with any professed nun, except their Teacher and the local Superior. With even greater reason, they are also prohibited from speaking with their families during their Novitiate year.

35. In the same way, with the exception of the General Mother Superior, the local Superior, the Teacher of Novices and her Assistant, the other nuns cannot enter into the Novitiate; and if at some time they have to enter it out of necessity, they will go accompanied by the Teacher of Novices or her Assistant.

CHAPTER V On the Profession

2305 36. According to the common feeling of the Holy Fathers, along with St. Thomas, the sacrifice of self that the Religious Soul does for the Profession of her vows, which in the same moment it consecrates itself to God with them, leaving it as clean and pure as before the Baptism, with all the temporal penalties due for its sins forgiven, is so excellent and pleasurable to God that the soul would fly immediately to Heaven should it die in that act. This is why the Religious Profession is called a second Baptism¹⁶.

37. Therefore the Novice, in order not to lose this grace, must prepare herself for as much as human frailty can suffer to cast their vows, doing spiritual exercises and annual confession to that end.

38. When the day of the Profession is determined, his Excellency the Illustrious Bishop of the Diocese will be informed so that they can proceed to the Canon examination prescribed for before the profession.

¹⁵ Cf. CONCILIO VATICANO I: *Schemata Constitutionum de Regularibus*, n. 6, Chapter I, in *Enchiridion de Statibus Perfectionis*, n. 220.

¹⁶ Cf. ST. THOMAS: *Summa Theologica*, 2-2, q. 189, a.3, ad 3. Cf. also ST BERNARDINO: *Del Precepto y La Dispensa.*, 54; PL 182:889.

2306 39. If the Novice has goods to dispose of, she will have to make her will before her profession, and name a person of her full confidence to administer them, and apply the gains to the ends she designates; because the vow of poverty taken by the Third Order nun does not lose ownership but only the use and administration of her assets for her vows being simple, albeit perpetual¹⁷.

40. To change or redo her will following profession, the nun will need authorization from the Holy See, in addition to her own General Mother Superior; but on the contrary, the permission of the Reverend General Mother Superior would be enough to dispose of the assets which could come to her through inheritance or in some other way.

41. The nuns, and above all the Superiors, must guard against giving advice to the Novice about the arrangements of her will and distribution of her goods; before she asks about them, refer them to some God-fearing person, whose advice can accurately guide the Novice. Do not lead her to leave any worldly goods to the Congregation, knowing full well that it is impossible to join together riches and poverty; but they could accept some alms if the Novice wanted to leave some in her will.

2307 42. The nuns will not make their perpetual vows until they have completed seven years of wearing the habit. In the course of that period, they will renew their temporary vows twice, doing so each time for three years.

43. They will come to the Mother House for the renewal of vows, where they will do their spiritual exercises beforehand.

44. When the nun is ready to complete her seven years of wearing the habit, she will write with all due humility to the General Mother Superior, pleading with her to deign to receive her for the profession of perpetual vows. The Mother Superior will meet in Council with her Councilors and propose to them the request of the nun, who, if they would find the petition worthy, would admit her for the Profession of perpetual vows; but if they find to the contrary, they shall make her renew her temporary vows for as long as the Council would determine necessary. When this trial period has passed and there is still no sign of making amends or correction of faults that the Council desires, she must be expelled from the Congregation. Similarly, if it is found that it is not advisable to have any Professed nun of temporary vows in the Congregation after the three years are up, she will be expelled.

2308 45. The General Mother Superior and her Councilors should nevertheless bear in mind, in such a delicate and important matter, they must proceed with great prudence and by consulting God through prayer. They are also advised that a single sin, no matter how serious, is not enough to deny a sister the Professions, just as the unfaithfulness of St. Thomas or the denial of St. Peter were enough for the Lord to exclude them from the Ministry, and that it is necessary for exclusion that the faults

¹⁷ Cf. 2382.

be uncorrectable. In the matter, the ruling should never be given without taking a secret vote beforehand¹⁸.

46. If any nun (which God does not allow) would be expelled from the Congregation or want to abandon it of her own volition before completing the period, whether she is of perpetual or temporary vows, it cannot be forgiven by anyone other than the High Pontiff.

CHAPTER VI On the Holy Habit

2309 47. Because whoever lives in the house of the Lord must not care about pomp and vanities, because they do not have to be known for their external ornaments but for the internal adornment of their soul, as Our Father Jesus Christ says that those who dress in delicate clothing are in the palaces of the Kings¹⁹; and even more so the spouses of the Lamb who elected to follow him along the austere paths of mortification and penance; the nuns are urged to dress in the most vile and poor woolen cloth of the country where they live, so everything about them preaches poverty and contempt for the world²⁰.

48. The Habit of the Sisters will be made up of a tunic with a rope for a belt, cloak, wimple and veil.

49. The tunic will be chestnut-colored coarse woolen cloth like that used by the Capuchin friars, and cut in the shape of a cross. The cord shall be white wool, with three simple knots representing the three vows of the Religion.

50. The Rosario of seventy beads, called the Franciscan crowns, will be suspended from the rope, with a medallion of the Immaculate Virgin, Father St. Francis and a cross.

51. The cloak will be of the same fabric as the tunic, and long-sleeved to the end of the hands. The nuns will use it from All Saint's Day until the Ascension of Our Savior and whenever necessary due to illness or some other reason.

52. The wimple will be of white linen and the veil of wool, black and waist-length; but when going outside the house, they will cover it with a much longer veil.

2310 53. In addition to these pieces which make up the habit of the Third Order nun, for greater decorum and decency, they will also wear a Scapular of the same color and fabric as the habit; it will fall in front and back, until close to the inner fringe of the tunic, something like half a hand shorter than that, and will be 33 centimeters wide. Sewed on this scapular in front on the chest, there will be a coat of arms of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, to whom the

¹⁸ Cf. 2383.

¹⁹ Cf. Matthew 11:8. Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 1R, 2:14, in works cited, p. 93.

²⁰ Cf. ST. CLARE: *Rule* 2:25, in works cited, p. 190.

Congregation will be consecrated: and beneath the scapular on the side of the heart, a Crucifix.

54. Footwear will be made up of socks of linen or wool and woolen shoes, all the same color as the habit.

The underwear will be of canvas, linen and wool.

55. The habits of the Novices must be completely the same as those of the Professed nuns, excepting the veil, which will be white and they will not be allowed to wear the cloak until their profession.

2311. The Nuns shall try to never take off, not even to rest in bed, those pieces which essentially make up the habit of the Franciscan Order, such as the tunic and rope; and it would be desirable if they would follow the wholesome custom always observed by the Capuchin friars and praised by the Pontiffs, to not remove them even when ill, no matter how much the Doctors are convinced to the contrary. In this way, they will not be exposed to dying without their habit on, something that would be highly reprehensible.

CHAPTER VII **On the Elections**

2312 57. The General Chapter will meet every six years to proceed to the election of the General Mother Superior and the Councilors. If for some reason the celebration of the chapter meeting is delayed for some time, those who hold the positions will continue exercising their functions.

58. Three months before her term in the position expires, the General Mother Superior will meet with her Council and indicate then the Convent where the Chapter should meet. She later will writer the Prelate of the Diocese what Convent she has chosen, to see if he may deign to preside over of the elections, either himself or through a Delegate, in accordance with what is prescribed by the Church, and set the day for celebrating it.

59. When the General Mother Superior has received the response of the Bishop, she officially announce to all the Communities the designated day and location for the Chapter meeting; she will request prayers to attain the lights of the Almighty, and will summon the members, ordering them, by virtue of holy obedience, to present themselves at the indicated place on the eve of the elections. In the event that someone would have a physical impediment that could prevent them from attending the Chapter meeting, they must immediately advise the General Mother Superior so that she can justify their absence before the Chapter members.

60. The Chapter will be composed of the General Mother Superior, the outgoing Councilors of the Council, the General Secretary and the local Superiors.

2313 61. On the eve of the day designated for the celebration of the Chapter meeting and with all the Chapter members gathered together, each one will be

designated the place corresponding to them for their position and seniority, and the outgoing General Mother Superior will either read herself or will have read an account of the state of the Congregation and the administrative actions during her government. Then the present Chapter of the Constitutions will be read, and the President will explain their obligations to the members before everyone leaves to prepare themselves in prayer for the elections the next day.

62. From the time the Chapter meeting begins until its conclusion, the Chapter members must maintain the strictest silence, and are not even permitted to communicate among themselves.

63. On the day of the elections, after the Mass of the Holy Spirit, the members will gather in the Chapter room, and invoking the Divine assistance with the *Veni Creator* and the protection of the Holy Virgin, our Seraphic Father St. Frances and St. Isabel, the President will declare the Chapter constituted and proceed to call the names of all the members to be seen if any are absent.

2314 64. Next, in agreement with the General Councilors, she will appoint the three scrutineers, one chosen from among the oldest members, another from the youngest, and the third from the ones around the average age. Appointed as Scrutineers of the Chapter, they will be located at the President's table to the right of the President. Any Scrutineers suspected of indiscretion or unfaithfulness in her position will be deprived of her active and passive voice in the three consecutive Chapter meetings of elections.

65. The General Mother Superior will immediately stand in the place she occupies to the left of the President, give the President the seal of her position, and then kneeling in the middle of the Chapel, she will recite the *mea culpa* for her faults in the governing of the Congregation, and once the President has heard this correction, she will return to the place corresponding to her position, and the meeting will proceed immediately to the election of the new General Mother Superior.

66. For the election, the Scrutineers of the Chapter meeting will call each member one by one and give them a ballot or blank piece of paper and they will go in order to a table prepared for that purpose in the middle of the Chapter meeting, in plain sight of all the Sisters, where they will write down their vote and deposit the folded ballot in the urn on the President's table. Once the vote is concluded, the urn will be shaken and the ballots emptied on the table, where they will be counted to make sure the number is equal to the number of voters. Then the President will unfold them one by one and, mark down the names written on them on a list, and pass them along to the first Scrutineer who will also write them down, and similarly pass them along to the second and third Scrutineers, who will write their names on their list at the same time. The ballots will be guarded until the final result is proclaimed, and then burned before the full Chapter meeting.

2315 67. Once the scrutiny is done, the President and Scrutineers will compare their lists, and if they are in agreement, the President will announce the result by saying: "There is an election", or if not, "There is no election", and will announce without appointing them the nuns who received votes and number of votes. If

there was no election, they will proceed to a second scrutiny and, in the event that vote would not produce an election, either, then proceed to a third, fourth and a final fifth scrutiny.

68. If none of the five scrutinies produced an election, the Chapter meeting will move on to the election of the General Councilors, and once chosen the new Councilors will retire from the Chapter meeting with the President and they will resolve among them which of the nuns who received votes was it advisable to appoint. Once in agreement, they will re-enter the Chapter meeting and the President, acting as the delegate of the Holy See, will appoint her as interim General Mother Superior while requesting and receiving the confirmation of the Sacred Congregation for the sister who was elected.

69. Take note that for there to be an election, it is required the Mother Superior-elect must have more than half of the votes. Similarly, it is not legal for absentees to send their vote by mail.

70. According to the decrees of the Sacred Congregation, one must appeal to that Congregation for confirmation of the General Mother Superior in the position when her six-year term is concluded. For this reason, if the previous Superior would be favored with the greatest number of votes, she will be appointed as provisionally elected and will exercise the functions of the position while the confirmation is requested.

71. If the vote goes to a nun who does not meet the conditions the Sacred Congregation asks for, to wit: She is not 40 years old and have completed eight years of profession and therefore not made her perpetual vows, the President, after declaring there is no election, will nullify the ballots naming that Sister and advise the members of the obligation to cast their votes for those who meet the required conditions.

2316. 72. Once the General Mother Superior is elected, the meeting will proceed to the election of the Councilors in the same way, but the members can vote for all of them by writing the names of the six nuns they wanted to select on the same ballot. If all of them were not elected in the first vote due to some lacking sufficient votes, there will be a second, third and however many rounds of voting were necessary until the number of councilors was completed; advising them that the outgoing councilors can be re-elected.

73. The Chapter members must not forget that any election, under penalty of mortal sin, must proceed in a pure, holy fashion under canon law, electing whoever according to the dictates of their consciences is the most worthy, putting human respect above all else, because nothing could bring a greater evil to the Congregation than to be governed by an inept or unworthy Mother Superior. Also bear in mind the anathemas hurled by God and the Church against whoever tries to secure positions through illegal means; and let it be on the record that any nun who might do so will have an unequivocal proof of not being called to those positions by God.

2317. 74. When the election is concluded, a written report will be made of it with three copies, all three signed by the President and the Scrutineers, and sealed

with the stamp of the Congregation. One copy will be saved in the archive of the Mother-House, another will be sent to the President and the third will be sent to Rome together with the other acts of the Chapter meeting.

75. Then the bill will ring to summon the Community to the Church for the proclamation of the election. The new General Mother Superior will kneel before the Main Altar with her Councilors flanking her on both sides, and the President will make the following proclamation:

“In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, of his Holy Mother, of our Seraphic Father St. Francis, our blessed Mother St. Isabel and the entire Heavenly Court, we declare elected under canon law to the position of General Superior of this Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family Sister N.... who obtained votes, and as Councilors Sister N.... who obtained votes; Sister N.... who obtained votes; Sister N.... who obtained...., etc., etc.”

76. In the event the Reverend General Mother Superior were appointed de oficio, without an election and any Scrutiny, the following proclamation will be made:

“In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, etc., we declare elected under canon law to the position of Councilors Sister N... who obtained votes, etc., etc. And by virtue of the Apostolic delegation granted to us, we provisionally appoint as General Superior of this Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family, Sister N...”

2318 77. With the announcement made, the President will say the “Te Deum”, during which all the nuns, both from the Chapter meeting and the Community, will offer their obedience to the new General Mother Superior and receive from her the kiss of peace, and the ceremony will conclude with the prayers of thanksgiving and the blessing of the Holy Virgin.

78. The next day the Chapter will meet again, presided over by the General Mother Superior, for the appointment of the General Secretary and to make all the agreements and regulations necessary for the good and progress of the Congregation.

79. As the General Chapter meetings are of great usefulness and significance for the Congregations, and since they should not gather for elections more than six times in six years, the Chapter will meet one time during this period, presided over by the General Mother Superior, to deal with the serious matters of the Congregation. This Chapter meeting will take place three years from the time of the meeting held for the elections.

CHAPTER VIII

On the Government of the Congregation

ARTICLE I

On the General Mother Superior

2319 80. The General Mother Superior is the head and guide of the entire Congregation; and above all the Mother of all the nuns in it.

81. For this reason, whoever is elected to such an honorable position must be a nun who is committed to observance, inspired by great zeal for the good of the Congregation, and so impeccable in her customs that she can be a model for the Sisters. Similarly, she will have to be endowed with a big heart, honest spirit, a strong will but with great gentleness in her behavior, and above all an exquisite caution and prudence.

2320 82. It will be duty of the General Mother Superior to preside over the General Council, appoint or dismiss the local Superiors in agreement with the Councilors; watch over the local Superiors to be sure they are fulfilling the functions of the position properly; visit all the Houses of the Congregation at least once a year, making a special effort to keep the punctual observation of the Rule and these Constitutions; and finally prevent any abuse of them from being introduced into the Communities.

83. The General Mother Superior is forbidden from making or authorizing any expense greater than 800 *reales* without the consent of the Councilors, to whom she will give an account every year of her individual expenses during that year.

2321 84. After three years of her administration and following the last year she holds the position, the General Mother Superior will write a detailed account of the material and spiritual state of the Congregation and make two copies. One will be sent to the Sacred Congregation and the other presented to the Councilors and other Superiors in the General Chapter meeting, and saved afterwards in the Archive of the Mother House.

85. In this account, the Mother Superior will record in the material part, the number of houses the Congregation has, where they are located, the number of Sisters who live in them, the works they are destined to perform, their material status, owners, financial situation, the approximate value of the furnishings belonging to the Congregation and the full total of income and expenses at the end of the year and of the three-year period.

86. Concerning the spiritual state, they will indicate the number of Sisters, Professed sisters and Novices, the deaths that occurred, and the professions that were verified.

87. The account will also mention the regulation existing in the Congregation, the way they understand the obligations of the Religious life and observe the Rule and these Constitutions, continuing on to end with the result of the visits made, and explaining in detail the state of the Novitiate. Concerning the works of the Congregation, they will state the number of Schools, Orphanages and Hospitals entrusted to the care of the nuns; the number of boys and girls they direct in the asylums and the sick who are cared for in the Hospitals; the results obtained in these various works, the difficulties they encounter and protection or opposition they find with the administrative authorities.

2322 88. If the General Mother Superior would die during the term of her government, or become incapacitated and unable to undertake the functions of

her post, the first Councilor will take over the governing of the Congregation, and if she becomes unable, then the second will take over and take care to convoke the Chapter meeting in due time for the election of the new General Mother Superior.

ARTICLE II
On the Councilors

2323 89. The same qualities mentioned above which should adorn the General Mother Superior must also apply to her Councilors, so that they can perform the difficult position entrusted to them, and be truly superiors to the sisters, not only in rank, but even more for their virtues, and thereby a cause for instruction and not destruction in the Congregation.

90. The Councilors shall show perfect obedience and filial submission to the General Mother Superior, always marching in harmony with her because they must be considered as her simple assistants. Nevertheless, this should not stop them from expressing their opinion when it is advisable or asked for with full liberty and without any deference, as they should similarly warn the Superior if they see something objectionable in her behavior, proceeding in this with all due humility.

2324 91. The normal residence for the Councilors will be the Mother House, of which the first Councilor will by law be the local Superior and the second Councilor will fill the position of Teacher of Novices. The third Councilor will be accountable for everything concerning the moral estate of the Congregation, closely watching over the preservation of good order and devoutness in it, and will write the Book of the Chronicles or Annals. The fourth Councilor will be in charge of the worldly businesses of the Congregations, watching over them so the local Superior may administer their Homes with charity and economy; for that purpose she will require every month the accounts of income and expenses, and the existing funds. The Fifth Councilor will be responsible for everything concerned the Schools and educational asylums of the Congregation, and will direct the Sisters who are involved in these ministries in matters related to teaching and education, closely watching to see that the studies are regular and as complete as possible. Finally, the sixth Councilor will be in charge of the charity works, that is, of the Hospitals and Orphanages, having the Sisters employed in service to the sick under her orders.

92. The Councilors must bear in mind that they are not independent in the positions entrusted to them and, therefore, they cannot do or change anything without the approval of the General Mother Superior. In addition, they are required to inform her every three months of the developments in the obligations of the position she holds.

2325 93. The designation of the Councilors elected in the General Chapter meeting to hold these particular positions, is left to the discretion of the General Mother Superior, who will objectively indicate the Councilor for each position who is most perfectly suited for it in her judgment; and they will take the number in

order in the Council according to the position they will be holding, so the sister designated as Superior in the Mother House will be the first Councilor; the nun given the position of Teacher of Novices will be the Second Councilor; and so on for the others in the order indicated above.

94. Sisters must be 35 years old and made their perpetual vows to be eligible to be elected Councilors, even if they live the religious and approved life and have the good customs for holding this position.

95. If any General Councilor would become ill and it became impossible for her to perform the duties of her position, over six months before the Chapter elections meeting, the General Mother Superior and the Councilors shall appoint a nun to replace her until the Chapter meeting, where this nun would have active and passive voice even if she was not a local Superior; but if this would happen less than six months before the Chapter meeting, no substitute will be appointed.

ARTICLE III

On the Local Superiors

2326 96. The local Superiors will be appointed by the General Mother Superior and the Councilors for an indefinite period so that they will be arbitrators of any decisions to remove the local Superior from their position or change them from one house to another, depending on what they judge most advisable or convenient.

97. Both the General Mother Superior and her Councilors are advised not to be accepting of people or moved by any worldly view in filling these positions but instead by paying attention purely to the glory of God and the good and benefit of the Congregation, they should select the most capable, prudent and exemplary Sisters, so that they can govern their subjects through the doctrine and by their example²¹. They shall not elect as local Superiors any nuns who, apart from possessing the mentioned qualities, are not yet 30 years old and made their perpetual vows.

2327 98. The authority of the local Superiors will not extend beyond matters concerning the administration of the House, and the guidance of the Sisters entrusted to her. With respect to the former, the local Superior will be able to make all the necessary expenditures for the maintenance of the life, good order and government of the House. Nevertheless for the repairs and works whose cost would exceed 400 *reales*, they shall approach the General Mother Superior to request her authorization. With respect to the latter, the local Superior must watch closely to ensure the nuns fulfill their service properly; take care of all their spiritual and worldly needs and secure that they faithfully observe the Rule and these Constitutions.

²¹ Cf. ST. CLARE: *Test* 46, in works cited, p. 213. Cf. 2397.

99. The local Superior will be informed each month by the Councilors responsible for all income and expenses, and the religious and material status of the House she presides over.

ARTICLE IV
On the Teacher of Novices

2328 100. The prosperity and good spirit of the Congregation depends in large part on the Teacher of Novices; for this reason, the General Mother Superior must put a great deal of thought and attention and proceed with great prudence in their selection.

101. The Teacher of Novices shall be at least 35 years old and be a professed nun of perpetual vows. Similarly, she must have sufficient intelligence and discretion to be able to thoroughly understand and be able to teach the Novices the truths of the Religion; the nature and obligations of religious life; the sense and explanation of the Rule and these Constitutions; the services and ceremonies of the Choir; the different spiritual exercises and finally, the customs and practices of the Congregation.

102. The Teacher must try to imbue herself well of her obligations through meditating upon them in the presence of the Lord. Take inspiration in the spirit of charity of our Savior Jesus Christ and the Seraphic Father St. Francis²² and try to take care of the spiritual and worldly needs of your Novices with maternal concern.

2329. 103. Test them carefully at the same time in internal and external mortification, in humility and self-deprecation²³, leading by example in these and other virtues, so that her own life is a perennial preaching and a rule of conduct for the Novices. Finally, work to shape your spiritual daughters into worthy Spouses of Jesus Christ, which over time will become the glory and splendor of the Congregation.

104. In order that the Teacher of Novices can better fulfill her difficult position, the General Mother Superior will assign her a nun as her Assistant, who will be exclusively at the orders of the Teacher; and the Superior should take care that the Assistant is educated, prudent, virtuous, exemplary and at least 30 years old.

²² Cf. 2403.

²³ Cf. 2378, 2403.

CHAPTER IX
On the External Mortifications

ARTICLE I
On Fasting

2330 105. In addition to the fasts imposed by the Rule and those prescribed by the Church, the nuns are urged to also fast on Saturday in honor of the Holy Virgin.

Those who need exemption from the fasts of the Church, will address the Prelate or the ordinary Confessor; concerning those of the Rule, if some nun by reason of her work or through illness it becomes impossible to fulfill them, the Superior will commute them to some other penance better adapted to their strength, in order to conform to the intentions of the church and preserve the spirit of mortification.

ARTICLE II
*On Discipline*²⁴

2331 106. In memory of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and especially of his excruciatingly painful flagellation, and to better subordinate the body in order that it does not rebel against the spirit but instead is obedient to it in everything, the nuns will practice the discipline on all Wednesdays and Fridays of the year and on the following days: the entire Easter Week, the vigilance of the Pentecost holy days, Assumption, All Saints Day, the Immaculate Conception, our Father St. Francis, Mother St. Isabel, the day of Commemoration for all the deceased faithful, and of the deceased of the Order.

107. During this holy exercise they will pray the *Miserere* and *De Profundis* psalms with the antiphone *Christus Factus Est*, etc. verse and the *Respice quaesumus*, *Domine* prayer, the *Salve* and the *Deus Qui Per Immaculatam* prayer, finishing with an Our Father and Ave Maria for the benefactors of the Congregation.

ARTICLE III
*On Silence*²⁵

2332 108. Silence is one of the virtues that the religious soul must make a determined effort to try and achieve, for the great benefits it brings to us and the even greater troubles it saves us from; because silence is the guardian of all the virtues, and without we cannot have any true virtue, because, as the apostle James says, the Religion of he who does not know how to restrain his tongue is vain²⁶.

²⁴ Cf. 2423.

²⁵ Cf. 2425-2426.

²⁶ Cf. James 1:26.

109. For this reason, then, it is ordered that the Sisters keep the evangelical silence at all times and in all places, which consists of not uttering a single idle word; and concerning the regular silence it will be perpetual in the Church, Choir, Sacristy, Dormitory and cells; and if some necessity occurs that forces people to speak in these places, they will do so briefly in a low voice. In addition, from the end of the midday recreation period until the Vespers are concluded, and from the Angelus at nightfall until after the morning Mass, the strictest silence will be kept everywhere. In the same way, they will stay silent in the dining hall, from the blessing at the table until thanks are given, unless the local Superior would exempt it for some good reason on some day.

2333 110. Because our spirit cannot always be raised in God, and as taking some decent recreation is very advisable both for spiritual advancement and preserving physical health, it is ordered that all Houses of the Congregation set aside one hour after the midday meal, and half an hour following the supper or light meal to this end, for the relaxation of the nuns. The Superior will take care to ensure all the Sisters attend it just as regularly as the other acts of the Community and will prevent them from forming small groups or having conversations different from what is established, with the aim of tightening the union and love of the Sisters and not coming to serve as a means of division among them.

111. Similarly, the Superior will try to rigorously keep the rules about discretion and charity so necessary in any religious Community.

2334 112 When the nuns are required to go outside the House, proceed in everything with much caution and care; particularly in the words, since they must remember that more than ever, then they have to fulfill the words of the Apostle, who says: We are made a spectacle to the world, to the Angels and men²⁷. To leave and enter the house, they will kneel before the Superior and ask her blessing; they will go in the streets with much devotion and silence, their minds occupied in holy thoughts; and in conversations with laymen, they will always try to leave them edified.

ARTICLE IV

*On the Chapter Meeting of Mea Culpas*²⁸

2335 113. Although the Seraphic Father St. Francis did not want the Rule of the Third Order to force some of his children to sin, nevertheless he ordered them to submit with humility to the penances that the Superior would impose on them for their transgression, and he wanted that they promise it in their profession²⁹.

²⁷ Cf. I Corinthians 4:9.

²⁸ Cf. 2425-2426.

²⁹ Cf. *Rule of the Regular Third Order of the Seraphic Father St. Francis*, approved by Leo X, n. 23-24.

In order then, to conform with this prescription of the Rules and to keep the observation of these Constitutions and the laudable customs of the Congregation, the local Superiors are ordered that every Friday of the year, and if some celebration would fall on Friday, on another day of your choice, to listen to the *mea culpa* of their subjects in a public Chapter meeting³⁰, scolding them with prudence and charity, and imposing some penance on them.

114. The Teacher will do the same with her Novices, with the difference that they will say the *mea culpa* three times a week, on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

115. The Sisters will humbly receive the warnings and penances without offering excuses nor answering in any way to the Prelate, bearing in mind that they have not come to the Congregation for anything else than to cry for their sins and humble themselves in Jesus Christ. However, when they might have committed some fault that could have given a bad example to the sisters, they must be the first in accusing themselves and asking forgiveness of the Community.

CHAPTER X Exercises of Devotion

ARTICLE I *On The Mass*

2336 116. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass perpetuates in the Church the Sacrifice on the Cross. It brings us the memory and applies its merits to us³¹, and this is why the Sisters will try to attend mass every day with great fervor and devotions to become more imbued with the spirit of immolation and sacrifice which is the foundation of religious life and what makes us similar to Jesus Christ crucified. And do not let pass such an opportune time for receiving Jesus in your hearts, at least spiritually, nor forget to pray to Lord for your benefactors both living and dead.

ARTICLE II *On the Service of Our Lady*

2337 117. Although our Seraphic Father St. Francis establishes the praying of the Divine Office in the Rule of the Third Order, nevertheless, the speakers of that same Rule, and above all the Statues approved by Paul III and Innocent XI declare that this precept is fulfilled by reciting every day the Parvo Office of the Holy Virgin according to the Roman Breviary. As that is the situation, then, and it being advisable on the other hand that the Office be as brief as possible so that the Sisters have the time necessary to occupy themselves in the ministries of charity, it is decided to recite the Parvo Office of Our Lady instead of the Divine Office but

³⁰ Cf. ST. CLARE: *Rule* 4:15, in works cited, p. 193.

³¹ Cf. DENZINGER 938.

also adding the commemoration of the Seraphic Father St. Francis at Lauds and Vespers. However, the Divine Office will be prayed on the last three days of Easter week.

118. For the recital of the Office the Sisters shall gather even in the smallest Houses, in the Choir or Chapel, where they will pay the Lord the tribute of divine praises with attention, devotion and reverence.

119. When a nun may be late to the Choir, after worshipping the Holy Sacrament, she will go to whoever is presiding to explain the reason for her tardiness, and after kissing the ground will return to her place to continue the Service with the others.

120. The sisters who would have to read in the Choir will try to review their reading beforehand, as St. Bonaventure did, our Seraphic Doctor, so that they do not take away the attention and devotion of the other Sisters by committing a mistake in their reading.

ARTICLE III *On Prayer*³²

2338 121. As prayer is the food of the soul, and the basis and foundation of true devotion, the nuns must place this holy exercise before all the rest, and dedicate all the time they can to it.

122. To that end, one hour of daily prayer is ordered, to be split into two sessions, half an hour in the morning and another half hour in the afternoon. The praying will be done in Community, and the Mother Superior will not easily exempt nuns from this exercise. If necessity requires the exemption to be granted to some nun, it is understand that this exemption is solely granted from attending the act of Community, but in no way from the prayer itself, which the nun must do as soon as possible..

123. The Novices will have another hour of prayer in addition to the Community prayer, so that their hearts are ignited with the fire of the love of God which purifies them and prepares them to celebrate their nuptials with the Immaculate Lamb, and ablaze with this holy fire, can transmit it later to the rest with their words and by their examples³³.

ARTICLE IV *On Confession and Communion*

2339 124. In accordance with the provisions established by the Holy Father Benedict XIV in the Bull that begins *Pastoralis Curae*³⁴, and to the other Apostolic Constitutions, the Mother Superiors will request of the Bishop of the Diocese, a

³² Cf. 2419.

³³ Cf. 2292 above.

³⁴ Cf. BENEDICT XIV: *Pastoralis Curae*, in *Benedicti XIV Bullarium*, Vol. II (Rome, 1749). Ed. Sacred Congregation of True Propaganda, pp. 471-481.

devout, educated Priest of sound judgment for the position of ordinary Confessor. All the nuns will confess to him, warning that this Confessor can only be appointed for three years in the same convent, as the church has declared several times, and once that period has passed the Mother Superiors will have to again approach the Prelate to change the Confessor.

125. Similarly three or four times a year, and one of those during the annual exercises of ten days, the Mother Superiors will ask the Prelate for an extraordinary Confessor, and all the nuns will have an obligation to appear before him.

126. The Sisters will confess at least once a week and are warned, following the advice of our Seraphic Father³⁵, not to utter any word foreign to the Confession in the Holy Tribunal, confessing their faults with the greatest simplicity and humility, and as briefly as possible, maintaining the same behavior when receiving the instructions and advice the Confessor requests for their spiritual guidance.

127. The Mother Superiors will give the nuns all the necessary freedom of conscience in the Holy Tribunal.

They are not to try to spiritually guide their subjects, because the Lord has not established them as directors of the souls; therefore, they will limit themselves to asking to account for their external shortcomings and the regular observance. But they must, nonetheless, prevent them from having pointless conversations with the Confessor, both inside and outside the confession booth.

2340 128. The Sisters will receive communion on Sunday, Thursday and Saturday every week, the days on which the Church celebrates some of the Mysteries of the Lord and the Virgin; on the holy days of the Saints of the Order in which Full Indulgence is granted, on the day of their Patron Saint and the anniversary of their profession.

129. Granting permission to an individual nun to increase the number of Communions is the responsibility of the Confessor, and the Mother Superior will therefore not interfere in that, or in prohibiting the Communion from anyone, since she would be making use of an authority that does not belong to her.

130. The Communion will be done at the most opportune time and, if possible, in the Mass when the priest receives it; and no nun will be exempt from the General Communion without previously advising the Mother Superior.

131. The Sisters must be prepared whenever possible to receive this noble and divine Sacrament with dignity, considering their unworthiness and the greatness of the gift that the Lord in his great charity makes to us with it; but they should not receive it to the detriment of their souls but rather in increased grace and virtue. Before receiving the Lord, as a sign of humility, they shall ask forgiveness of each

³⁵ Clearly, Father Luis refers here to the advice contained in the Rule of St. Clare (cf. ST. CLARE: Rule 3:13, in works cited, p. 192). The fact that he cites this text as belonging to St. Francis is due to the fact that this rule, although written by St. Clare, is profoundly inspired in the spirit of St. Francis himself. In fact, Pope Innocent IV, in the bull of approval, calls this rule: "The form of life that the word of the blessed Father St. Francis gave (to the poor women)" (cf. *Bull of Approval of the Rule of St. Clare*, 16, in *Writings of St. Francis and St. Clare*. Ed. Lázaro Iriarte [Valencia, 1983], p. 187.

other for the lack of charity they may have committed, and the bad examples they may have given.

ARTICLE V

On the Examination of Conscience

2341 132. As the examination of conscience is such an interesting means for acquiring virtues and banishing the passions that dominate and tyrannize us, and therefore was highly recommended by our Seraphic Father³⁶, the Sisters will dedicate 15 minutes every night to examine their conscience with respect to the errors they might fallen into that day, arousing their pain and sorrow and imposing some penance on themselves.

CHAPTER XI

On the Behavior the Nuns must Observe Inside and Outside the Convent

ARTICLE I

On The Convents

2342 133. The Sisters must have in all their establishments a section completely separated from the other rooms of the House for their living quarters. This section will be closed and its door always locked with a good strong lock and key entrusted to a nun of proven virtue who combines a strong character with great pleasantness and sweetness in her behavior towards others.

134. When someone has need of entering the compartment of the Sisters, the Mother Superior and Doorwoman will accompany them and ring a bell beforehand so that the nuns can leave.

135. After all the nuns have entered their quarters each night, the Doorwoman Sister will take the keys to the Mother Superior who will guard them until the next day.

2343 136. Each nun will have a separate cell, but small and poor. The furnishings will consist of a platform of a straw mattress and pillow, and the blankets necessary to cover her; a large wooden cross; a table and a bench to sit on.

³⁶ Cf. *Rule of the Regular Third Order of St. Francis*, approved by Leo X, n. 9. However, the prescription about the examination of conscience was not contained in the rule of the Third Order of 1228 (cf. SABATIER, FATHER: *Opuscles de Critique Historique*, Vol. I [Paris, 1903], pp. 1-30); nor in the rule approved for the same Institution by Nicholas IV (cf. SANT'ELIA A PIANISI, FATHER ANTONINO: *Manuale Storico-Giuridico-Prattico sul Terz'Ordine Francescano* [Rome, 1947], pp. 484-492).

137. No cell will have a lock, with the exception of those for the higher and local Superiors, and no nun can enter the cell of another without permission of the Superior.

138. No nun will be allowed to stay outside the sleeping quarters of the Sisters for the night, unless watching over the children in the Asylums or caring for the sick in the Hospitals. In those cases, a single nun will never be allowed to stay outside by herself.

2344 139. All the Houses will also have next to the section of the Sisters, but open, a poor but decently furnished room where they will receive the visitors who come to see the nuns; and it will be arranged in such a way that the doorwoman Sister can see what is going on without hearing the conversation.

140. The Sisters will never go to the visiting room if not advised by the Superior, who will designate a Sister to listen. They must try to maintain their restraint, modesty and composure, show themselves as distant and removed from wanted to know any news of the world, and never revealing what happens in the House and Congregation.

ARTICLE II

On Letters and Leaving the House

2345 141. The Sisters can always write as much as they want to the higher Superiors without the local Superior being able to prevent, nor open or stop the letters, and any action to the contrary will be severely punished by the General Mother Superior.

142. With respect to laymen and laywomen, the communications must be rare, and the letter will be delivered open to the Superior so that she can read them and even hold them if she considers it advisable. Nevertheless, she must act with caution in this matter, not allow herself to be caught up by curiosity or passion, and know how to make a distinction between the veteran and newer nuns.

2346 143. The nuns will avoid leaving the House whenever possible, but when it is necessary they will go two by two and without entering any house, even those of relatives, without permission of the Superior, and will go directly to the place where they are sent. They will attempt to go through the streets with so much modesty and composure that whoever sees them is edified.

144. The local Superior cannot order any nun to go anywhere more than two hours distant from the Convent without the permission of the General Mother Superior.

CHAPTER XII
On the Vows

ARTICLE I
*On the Vow of Obedience*³⁷

2347 145. The greatest sacrifice and the one most pleasing to divine eyes is the vow of obedience that the religious souls make, because they deny themselves through it, renouncing forever their own will and subjecting themselves to the will of others for the love of God. This is the same sacrifice our Lord Jesus Christ also offered his Holy Father for our love, obeying it to the death, and death on the Cross³⁸, and therefore, the Sisters must take inspiration from such a divine example to overcome all the revulsion and difficulties they may find in obedience. Never look at the person who commands you, but rather at what she represents and the authority with which she commands you, which is the authority of God; and in imitation of our Seraphic Father St. Francis, you must be ready and willing to obey the orders of the least of the Sisters, if this is the wish of the Mother Superior, as the most elderly and dignified sister of the Congregation³⁹.

2348 146. The Superiors will never let any offense of obedience go unpunished, but must be careful not to let themselves be overcome by passion, and measure the penalty and punishment to the seriousness of the sin committed.

147. They are similarly advised that the use of their authority must be exercised with great caution and not to resort easily to imposing precepts of holy obedience on their subjects when it is not required by necessity. The Sisters, in turn, must try to act as young children in the hand of the holy obedience, not judging it nor allowing any hesitation or delay in fulfilling it, because they must think that they are not obeying the creature but the Creator himself instead.

ARTICLE II
*On the Vow of Poverty*⁴⁰

2349 148. The love that our Seraphic Father St. Francis professed for holy poverty above the other virtues was such that he established it as a foundation, and wanted it to be the identifying characteristic of his Holy Religion⁴¹; and he gave it to all his children for a mother by choosing it for his given spouse to whom he was always faithful, as he himself says.

³⁷ Cf. 2431-2432.

³⁸ Cf. *Philippians* 2:8.

³⁹ Cf. 2C 151, in works cited, p. 317; LM 6:4, in works cited, p. 415. Cf. 1817 above.

⁴⁰ Cf. 2433-2435.

⁴¹ Cf. 2C 55, in works cited, p. 263; LM 7:6, in works cited, p. 424. Cf. 1282, 1832 above.

149. In order, then, to imitate the Seraphic Father in this virtue of poverty, which is what his true daughters must do, the nuns will make a great effort to live without all worldly things and look only to God as the only and true good⁴².

150. Although the Sisters, through the vow of poverty, cannot completely deprive themselves of the right to ownership, they must nonetheless practice the most absolute poverty in their customs. Everything will be shared among them and they will not be able to give or lend anything, either inside or outside the House, without permission of the Prelate, and they must give her what they receive so that she may be dispose of it as she judges best for the common or individual good.

2350 151. As the Sisters have voluntarily made themselves poor for the love of Jesus Christ, they are thereby established as heirs to the assets that the Lord has deposited for the poor in the hands of the rich; that is, the alms they will ask for the love of God by going door to door, without being ashamed because the Lord made himself poor for us. And they will be able to receive all they are given, whether in coins or currency.

2351 152. The poverty the Sisters profess will stand out in everything they use, in the factory of the Convents, or the sections intended for their living quarters in the Asylums and Hospitals. The General Mother Superior will severely punish any abuse in this regard during the visit under canon law, forbidding the use of everything that is contrary to Franciscan poverty and simplicity. Nevertheless, this poverty will not extend to the churches, which can have all the riches they want for the divine service and worship.

ARTICLE III

*On the Vow of Chastity*⁴³

2352 153. Through the vow of chastity the nun is raised to the sublime rank of the Spouse of Jesus Christ, and observing it faithfully during her life gives her the right follow the Immaculate Lamb anywhere⁴⁴. For this reason, the Sisters will not forgive any means to ensure these divine rewards.

154. They will not be content with avoiding the serious offenses, but will flee from everything which directly or indirectly could put the perfect purity of their hearts at risk. For this reason, when they find themselves required to speak with members of the opposite sex, they will try to keep their dress very mortified, be brief and reserved in conversation, and not display familiarity or levity.

2353 155. With respect to their Sisters, the nuns will keep a great modesty together with the most tender cordiality, avoiding in every situation words or manners that could diminish the mutual respect they must have for each other.

⁴² Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 1R 23:9, in works cited, p. 109.

⁴³ Cf. 2436-2438.

⁴⁴ Cf. Revelation 14:4.

2354 156. To preserve intact this precious virtue of chastity, you should always have your body and spirit mortified; remain humble and do not trust yourselves, and expect the preservation of the sublime prerogative of the Spouses of Jesus Christ only in God.

CONCLUSION OF THE CONSTITUTIONS⁴⁵

2355 157. Just as with the Rule of the Third Order of Penance, the Seraphic Father St. Francis⁴⁶ did not even want to obligate his professed children to venial sin, it is also not our intention to give these Constitutions any greater force of obligation. Nevertheless, the nuns must keep from breaking them as not obligatory to sin, because this would constitute a contempt that he would never be able to excuse. Remember that the Son of God, even though he was not obligated to the law He himself gave nonetheless wanted to keep it for the well-being of each one of us; and think that it is the duty of the good and faithful servants to fulfill not only the things their Lords command them through threats, but also to give them pleasure in many others. Therefore, make a determined effort to exactly fulfill these Constitutions so that this adds grace upon your heads that they may deserve eternal life for these holy services.

158. In order for this to be well engraved in the mind of the nuns and for them to keep it better, the Superiors are ordered to have these Constitutions read at least once every two months.

2356 159. It is also ordered, and formally forbidden to the Mother Superiors, that nothing in these Constitutions may be changed, added or reduced, because experience teaches that frequent changes in the Constitutions reduces the regular observances and causes many other damages to the Congregations. Nonetheless, if the changing times and circumstances would occasionally make it necessary to make some modification in them, this will be deliberated in the General Chapter meeting, and if approved will be presented a second time after six years for examination and approval of the Chapter, and if the two decisions are in agreement, confirmation will be requested from the Prelate and the Sacred Congregation, if these Constitutions would have been approved by it. In that event, everything changed or modified would have the same force as these Constitutions.

2357 160. The nuns shall make every effort to keep the observance of the Rules, and have it understood that although some things appear difficult at first, holy custom will make them easier and more delightful. They should also not forget

⁴⁵ Cf. 2439.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Rule of the Regular Third Order of St. Francis*, approved by Leo X, n. 23. Cf. also the Rule of 1228, cap. 12:7 in SABATIER, FATHER: *Opuscules de Critique Historique*, Vol. I (Paris, 1903), pp. 28; and the Rule of Nicholas IV, cap. 20, in SANT'ELIA A PIANISI, FATHER ANTONINO: *Manuale Storico-Giuridico-Prattico sul Terz'Ordine Francescano* (Rome, 1947), pp. 492.

the words with which the Seraphic Father urges us to precise observance, saying: We have promised great things but greater still are those that have been promised to us, we keep these and aspire to those; the pleasures are short, the pain perpetual; the work is little, the glory infinite. Many are called, few are chosen. Everyone will receive the award for their works⁴⁷.

2358 160. By behaving in this way, they will undoubtedly achieve the paternal blessing that in the name of the entire Blessed Trinity the Seraphic Father left to all his true children at the time of his death, and the glory that on behalf of God was promised us on the day of our profession⁴⁸.

L.D.M.F.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL,
Provincial Definitor and Guardian

There is a seal saying: Sig. FF. MM. Cap. Conv. S.M. Magdalena (Convent of Capuchin Friar Minors of St. Mary Magdalene)
Massamagrell.

CERTIFICATION OF AUTHENTICITY OF THE
PRECEDING CONSTITUTIONS

Valencia, 7 May 1885.

These Constitutions are a faithful and exact copy of the Constitutions that, for their approval were acted on together with the official document as instructed in this Secretary under my responsibility, which I certify.

Dr. Carrasco, Secretary

There is a seal saying: Archbishop of Valencia.

⁴⁷ Cf. 2C 191, in words cited, p. 340: LF 18, in works cited, p. 833.

⁴⁸ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: Test 40, in works cited, p. 124

DEFINITIVE DECREE

In the Archbishop Palace of Valencia, on the 27th day of the month of April of 1885, the most Eminent and Reverend Doctor Antolín Monescillo, by the Divine Mercy Cardinal Presbyter of the Holy Roman Church and Archbishop of this Diocese, having before me the undersigned Secretary of the Council and Government, gives: Having seen the request subscribed by the most Reverend Mother Superior of the Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family of the Convent of Benaguasil, soliciting in union with the other nuns of this Congregation the approval under canon law of the Constitutions this Institution must abide by in the future, and having examined them and found them very appropriate for forming a Congregation of great spiritual perfection, very useful to society for the great services it has to offer in the Hospitals and Asylums, and completely in accordance with the spirit of the Holy Church and the provisions of the sacred Canons, in accordance with the report by the attorney of the Archdiocese, we approve what corresponds to us and the declared Constitutions have a place in law, which accompany them to that end. The corresponding certifications of these Constitutions are issued by this decree, retaining the original in the archive.

This is agreed upon, orders and signed by his Eminence, the most Reverend Cardinal Archbishop, my lord, which I certify.

The Cardinal Archbishop

This certified document is issued.

By order of His Eminence, the most Reverend Cardinal Archbishop, my lord.

Dr. Aureo Carrasco

CONSTITUTIONS OF THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FRIARS OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS 1889

CHAPTER I

Object and Purpose of the Congregation

2359 1. According to the Apostle St. Paul⁴⁹, charity is the complement to the Law and the soul of the remaining virtues, without which perfection is impossible, as the Apostle himself indicates when he says: “If I had the gift of prophecy, could penetrate all the mysteries and possess all the knowledge; even when I would have enough faith to move mountains from one place to another; and although I could distribute my goods among the poor, and deliver my body to the flames, if I am lacking in charity, all that would not serve me for anything”. For this reason, then, the various Religious Institutions which make the Church of God more beautiful, as they are schools of perfection, are especially dedicated to the practice of this virtue, although not of all of them in the same way: because the Lord, in his mysterious designs and almighty providence, wanted to provide through them a cure for the various evils of society. In this way, He makes some devote themselves to a purely contemplative life as Mary did, are dedicated exclusively to his worship and service, beseeching in this way the divine mercy in favor of his brothers and appeasing the divine justice irritated by the sins of the peoples. Others, doing everything for everyone, like the Apostle, for the purpose of winning them all for Jesus Christ, are always concerned with serving their fellow man like Martha, not sparing any means to this end, even to the point of sacrificing their own life if necessary. And finally, there are those who, combining the sweetness of meditation with the care and concern for the spiritual and worldly good of their fellow man, serve the Lord in mixed life, even more perfect than the others in that it conforms more to the life of our Lord Jesus Christ⁵⁰.

2360 2. The last is the path this Congregation shall follow, as outlined by God. Therefore, the friars in the Congregation will work diligently on educating their spirit and inflaming their will in the love of God through prayer, so that they can communicate the fires of divine love to their fellow man in this way and be more inclined to serve them in the ministries to which this Congregation will especially dedicate itself: the teaching of adults and young children in the Sciences and Arts;

⁴⁹ Cf. I Corinthians 13:2-3.

⁵⁰ Cf. 2291-2292 above.

caring for the sick, especially at home, and the system and direction of the Jails and Prisons.

2361 3. The Superiors, then, will try to arrange the tasks of the friars in such a way where they do not lack time to look after their souls; at the same time the friars must be careful not to devote themselves so much to external works that they thereby lose the spirit of holy prayer and devotion and abandon their inner life. Yes, let them look after the service of their brothers, but without forgetting that the true love of their fellow man cannot exist without the love of God and the best way of doing others good is to be full of the spirit of the Lord, which is charity; and this spirit is acquired in the practices of devotion, especially prayer.

CHAPTER II

Organization of the Congregation

2362 4. This congregation will be composed of Religious Priests and Coadjutor Brothers; although concerning the works the Institution is dedicating itself to, the latter shall be more numerous.

The Priests will look after the spiritual direction of the prisoners; of attending to the dying, especially those entrusted to the care of the Congregation, and secondary education. The Coadjutor Brothers will dedicate themselves to the care of the sick and the prisoners, elementary education and instruction in Arts and Trades.

5. The Superiors will try to closely examine the qualities and inclinations of their Subjects, in order to employ them in those ministries and trades for which they discover greater aptitude. At the same time, the Subjects will make a determined effort, by denying their own will and judgment, to serve their fellow man in those ministries that they were commended to through holy obedience; bearing in mind that the most perfect work we can do, and therefore the most pleasing to the Lord, is that which will most closely follows his holy will, which is passed on and expressed to us through the Superiors⁵¹, who are his vice-managers on earth and illustrate and lead with special assistance to accurately carry out his intentions. Similarly, the friars must bear in mind that God does not distinguish among his creatures by the grandeur of their ministries but by the greatness of their works⁵² instead; nor does he ask them for an account of how many but rather how well they have worked. This is why they must joyfully throw themselves into the arms of the holy obedience and abandon all their cares in it.

2363 6. This Congregation will be governed by a General Superior and six Definitors, who will make up the General Defining Council, and all the most significant causes and business matters of the Institution will be reserved for it.

⁵¹ Cf. 1834 above.

⁵² Cf. Romans 2:6; 1 Peter 1:17; Revelation 20:12 and 22:12. Cf. 2294 above.

2364 7. In addition, for the good order and system of the Congregation, it will be divided into Provinces whose territorial boundaries will follow those of the old Kingdoms in Spain and those of the Archdioceses overseas; they will take their names jointly with that of some Saint who will be the Patron Saint of the Province.

8. At least six Houses will be required to form a Province; and the personnel in them will not fall below 12 friars.

9. The Provinces will be governed by a Provincial Superior, who will be helped in his government by four friars acting as Definitors, collectively making up the Provincial Defining Council, which will deal with the most significant matters of the Province.

2365 10. Each house of the Congregation will have a Friar in Ministry assigned to it whom all the other friars of that family will respect and obey like a father. In the event the local Superior would be absent, or prevented from attending to the care of his Community, he will designate a friar as Vice-Minister, who will have the same powers as the Minister, although he will not be able to change in any way the order established by the Superior in the system and government of the House. In addition to the Vice-Minister, the local Superiors will be assisted by two Councilors, who must be from the same family, and whose service will be to help the Superior with their advice and opinions in all matters of any importance and always when he asks for it.

2366 11. All the friars will have the utmost respect and veneration to the Superiors as Vicars and representatives of our Father St. Francis, and will approach them with all the confidence of a son approaching his father. And the Superiors, bearing in mind that they are ministers and servants of their Brothers, shall attempt to attract them through love, treating them affably and pleasantly so that by winning over their hearts, they have greater influence over them and their Subjects more freedom to show all their innermost feelings without reservation⁵³.

12. Each Province will have its own Mother-House where it will receive the candidates to the Institution and spend the first year wearing the habit and novitiate under the direction of the Teacher of Novices.

2367 13. In addition, three Houses will be designated as Seminaries, where the friars will be instructed in the Arts and Trades to which they will later dedicate themselves, or in the Sciences appropriate for the state or occupation in which holy obedience places them. One of these Seminaries will teach the Philosophical and Theological Sciences to the friars destined for the Priesthood. In the second, they will teach the courses of the Teaching Profession to whoever has been designated for elementary instruction. Finally, the third Seminary will teach, both theoretically and practically, the Arts and Trades to those who will be put in charge of the Workshops.

14. In order that the Institution stand out for the spirit of the uniformity that is desirable over all things, the General Father and Provincial Fathers are responsible

⁵³ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 2R 10:5-6, in works cited, page 115. Cf. 2296 above.

for determining by mutual agreement the method that should be followed in educating the Youth, and indicate which Authors and texts they have to study, always giving preference to the Franciscans so that the young people become filled with the spirit and love of the Order, and value their vocation ever higher⁵⁴.

15. In order that the Novitiates and Seminaries are well cared for, all the Houses in the Province will contribute to their maintenance, in the form and manner ordered by the general Chapter meeting.

CHAPTER III On the Holy Habit

2368 16. The Habit must remind the friars that the world has died for them, its pomp and vanities, and now they must only occupy themselves with adorning their souls, created in the image and likeness of God, rescued with his blood and attired in the virtues⁵⁵.

17. The Habit will be composed of a tunic belted with a rope and a Scapular. The tunic will be chestnut-colored coarse woolen cloth and the rope shall be white wool, with three knots representing the three vows. A Rosary of seventy beads, called the Franciscan crown, will be suspended from the cord. The Scapular will be chestnut, with a coat of arms of Our Lady of Sorrows to whom the Congregation will be devoted and bear her name. The Scapular will be 35 centimeters wide and four fingers shorter than the Tunic in length. A hood of the same color will be attached to the Scapular.

2369 18. The underwear will be of canvas, the stockings of black wool, and their footwear will be low-cut shoes but without clasps or bows. During winter, they will be allowed to add a jacket and short pants of black wool to their underwear.

19. To leave the House, they will wear always wear an overcoat over the Habit like those the Clergy use; they will cover their head with a woolen or beaver hat, somewhat smaller than the broad-brimmed *canal* hats, but with the brims open.

2370. The friars shall never take off the tunic and cord, which make up the essence of the habit, not even to sleep; but they can take off the Scapular since this is not as fundamental to the integrity of the habit. Nevertheless, in countries where the regular Habit is not allowed to be worn in public, or in abnormal situations, and always when it would be necessary to be able to exercise the services of charity to their fellow man to which the Institution is dedicated, the friars will be allowed to take off the habit; however, judging the need remains limited to the Provincial Father, and in urgent cases that do not allow for delay, to the local Superior. In that case, they will wear a short undertunic beneath them that is the same color as the Habit and belt it with a thin rope that will also be concealed.

⁵⁴ Cf. 1974, 1978 above.

⁵⁵ Cf. 2309 above.

21. In those cases when the friars are required to remove the Holy Habit, the Priests will wear a full-length suit in the style of the Clergy of the region where they live; and the Coadjutor Brothers a secular suit that must be black and tries to combine poverty and modesty with decency and cleanliness.

2371 22. The Priests will wear the circular *corona* haircut like those of the lay Clergy, although somewhat bigger. And with the aim of instilling greater respect when carrying out their arduous and difficult missions, and to imitate even in this regard our Savior Jesus Christ, our Father St. Francis, and the Capuchin Fathers who were the founders of this Congregation, the friars will also wear a beard.

2372. 23. By way of notice: 1. The abstinence of Monday, outside of the prescribed ones for Lent, were exempted by Clement VII in his Bull beginning *Ad Uberes Fructus*⁵⁶. 2. Similarly, the fasts of the Rule are exempted, as the friars are now involved in the present exercise of begging for alms. 3. The Superior can exempt the friars from fasting and abstinence with a legitimate reason.

24. Supported by the previous declaration and in view of the arduous and laborious purposes of the Institution, the most Reverend Father Brother Luis of Massamagrell, its Founder, having consulted to that end the most Reverend General Minister of the Order, exempts the abstinence of Saturday *in perpetuum*, thereby leaving the days of abstinence reduced to two, to wit: Wednesday and Friday.

CHAPTER IV On the Admission of Postulants

2373 25. When anyone wishing to embrace this life presents himself to a friar of the Congregation and requests entry into it, they will send him to the Provincial Father, who is responsible for the admission of Postulants with his Defining Council. The Provincial Father, before proposing the postulant for admission to the Council, will inquire in depth about the nature, qualities and conditions of the candidate in order to fully inform the Definitors so they can proceed more correctly in a matter of such significance.

2374 26. . Both the Provincial Fathers and Definitors are advised this is one of the most difficult obligations of their position, for the greater good or bad the admission of a young man can cause in the Congregation. For this reason, putting aside individual affections or passions and according to their consciences, they must admit only those who bring together the required conditions and they judge may be useful to the Congregation; preferring that the friars be few in number and good rather than many and inadequate. Examine, therefore, if the candidate has the ideal qualities the first chapter of the Rule asks for and also whether they are of sound mind, do not have any tendency towards mental derangement; a strong will so they

⁵⁶ Cf. CLEMENT VII: *Ad Uberes Fructus*, in WADDING, L.: *Annales Minorum*, Vol. XVI, pp. 687-697.

can easily conquer themselves; a generous heart capable of great undertakings; if they have some physical handicap or moral incapacity that makes it impossible for them to hold the positions and carry out the obligations of the Institution, and if they have some noticeable physical deformity.

27. The preferred age for admission will be from 16 to 30 years old: the Provincial Defining Council may grant exemptions and admit Candidates with special conditions until they are 40 years old, and even older if they were Priests.

28. The Candidate will be required to provide his Baptism and Confirmation certificates, as well as a Certificate of good behavior. And in accordance with the Decree of His Holiness Pius IX, the Prelate of the Diocese the candidate lives in will be asked for the Testimonial letters⁵⁷.

2375. 29. In order that those requesting entry into the Institution can know whether or not the rigors of the order are greater than their strength and embrace them through greater knowledge of the reason for them; and also so the Congregation can know the qualities of the Candidate better, the Congregation will have them as Postulants in one of the Houses of the Institution until the time indicated for their taking of the habit comes, which they will prepare for with ten days of spiritual Exercises, to be done in the Mother-House under the direction of the Teacher of Novices Father, and make general confession of their entire life in order to take the habit as the new man.

CHAPTER V On the Novitiate

2376 30. In each Province of the Congregation, one House will be designated for the Novitiate, where the young men will be instructed in the matters of the spirit and the rules and practices of the Institution: they will be given discreet Teachers, prudent and precise in observance and illuminated on the path of virtue, so that they can teach them not only with words but primarily through example, what the life of the perfect Friar and true Capuchin Tertiary friar means. In this way, after making their vows, they are well prepared for the obligation they are acquiring, and imbued with the spirit that must inspire the children of the Seraphic Father⁵⁸.

31. *The period of the Novitiate will be one full year*, starting from the day they take the Holy Habit. During this period, the Novices will not be sent to any business or as family anywhere else, not even to put them in charge of any department or offices of the Community.

2377 32. The taking on of the habits will be done at two determined times during the year, in spring and autumn; and, if possible, on Good Friday when the

⁵⁷ Cf. *Romani Pontifices* Decree, of 25 January 1848, in *Enchiridion de Statibus Perfectionis* (Rome 1949), n. 188.

⁵⁸ Cf. 2301-2302 above.

Church commemorates the sorrows of our Mother, the Virgin Mary, and the day of the appearance of the stigmata of our Father St. Francis.

33. In accordance with the provisions of the Papal Decrees, the Novices will be completely separated from the friars who have Professed during their year as Novices, and will not gather with them apart from the acts of the community⁵⁹.

34. The Novitiate will be separate from the quarters for the Professed friars and locked with a key to be kept by the Teacher or his Assistant. The Professed friars will not be allowed to enter the Novitiate, except for the higher and local Superiors, and even the latter must go there accompanied by one of the most solemn friars of the family. The Novices will not be allowed in the cells of others without permission of the Teacher, nor leave the Novitiate without a companion, and even less to speak with any professed friar, except the Superiors, without it being in front of the Teacher and with his permission. With even greater reason, they are also prohibited from having visits from their families or maintaining a correspondence with them.

2378 35. In order that the Novices can confront and emerge victorious from the persuasion the enemy will use to attempt to disturb them during their year of probation, they must have a very clear conscience with the Teacher Father, to whom they will bare their innermost feelings, concealing nothing, giving him an account of conscience every week or at least every 15 days.

36. During this probation year, the Novices will do nothing other than educate and strengthen their spirit through prayer and practice of the virtues, especially the ones most appropriate to their state, such as: humility, self-denial, obedience, charity and meditation and silence⁶⁰. But as it is impossible for the seeker on the path to heaven to always be elevated in God, and to fulfill the law of work given by God to man as penance for his sin, the Novices must spend the rest of their time outside the time destined for their spiritual exercises engaged in manual labor.

CHAPTER VI On the Profession

2379 37. To vote with their vote for the Novice for Profession belongs to the Novitiate family; it is to be done so that the Provincial Father is not the arbiter, personally or with his Defining Council, to give the Profession to the Novice against the opinion of the Community under penalty of having it nullified. Nor may the Community dare to profess the Novice, without the verbal and written permission of the Provincial Father and his Definitors.

2380 38. The Novices will be voted on twice a year; the first time at five months and the second at 10 months; to be admitted for Profession, with the

⁵⁹ Cf. CONCILIO VATICANO I: *Schemata Constitutionum de Regularibus*, n. 6, chapter I, in *Enchiridion de Statibus Perfectionis*, n. 220.

⁶⁰ Cf. 2403; 2329 above.

Provincial Father having the decisive vote in the event of a tie; outside of this case, he will have no more than one vote, just like the other friars. They will have to have one half the votes plus one, with the vote of the Provincial Father being decisive in the event of a tie. If the first vote goes against the Novice he can wait for the second; but if he is still not favored by the majority of votes, he must be expelled from the Congregation. The counting of the ballots, in this and all other votes, will be secret. But in order that the voters on such a delicate question, can act with greater awareness of the reason, everyone will be asked individually what they may have observed in the Novice, especially the Teacher Father, who in good faith must give his objective opinion of the moral and physical qualities of the Novice, the hopes and expectations that can be based in him and the strength of his vocation.

39. In these and any other votes, the Friars who have not entered into their third year of profession will not have a vote but nonetheless should give their opinion. Those friars who are destined as family to the Mother-House and have not been there for three consecutive months cannot use their vote for voting for the Novice, unless they went there in their capacity as Superior of Teacher of Novices, in which case they will have the vote after the first month of their stay.

40. Ten days before the fulfillment of the year of Novitiate, the Superior will summon the Community to investigate if something had occurred to block their Profession since the last vote; if not, they will call the Novice and will ask some questions in a public Chapter meeting inquiring about his will and freedom of choice and, after making a brief address to him, will order him to enter into Exercises to prepare for his Profession.

2381 41. During the days of Exercises, the Novice will try to fully purify his soul and prepare himself as much as possible to attain the extraordinary grace God grants religious souls at their profession, so that, according to St. Thomas, it is so clean and pure as it was after the Baptism that all the temporal penalties owed for its sins are forgiven⁶¹.

2382 42. If the Novice has assets to dispose of, and had not disposed of them before his entry into the Congregation, he will have to make his Will before the Profession. Both the friars and Superiors will completely separate themselves from it, even abstaining from giving advice if he would ask for, so that he can have full freedom in arranging whatever God inspires him to do. In addition to the document, the Novice must formally entrust a person of his full confidence and good conscience to administer his assets, indicating the ends for investing the profits they may produce; because the simple, albeit perpetual vow of poverty taken by the friar of this Congregation does not deprive them of ownership, but only the use and administration of his assets⁶².

2383 43. The vows the Novices will make after the year of probation, will be for three years, and once that period is concluded, they will renew them for another three years; and after seven years of wearing the Habit, they will make

⁶¹ Cf. ST. THOMAS: *Summa Theologica*, 2-2, q. 189, a.3, ad 3. Cf. 2305 above.

⁶² Cf. 2306 above.

their perpetual vows. These vows, both of the three-year period before the time is completed and the perpetual vows, can only be dispensed through the Holy See.

44. The permission for renewing the three-year vows, or issuing of the perpetual vows, must be requested by the interested party himself to the Provincial Father who, after requesting reports about the friar from the Superiors of the House where he was part of the family after his most recent profession, and the opinion of all the friars of the House where he is living then, will present his request to the Defining Council so they can grant or deny the requested permission by mutual agreement.

45. If at the conclusion of the seven-year period, the Defining Council judges that it is not advisable to give permission to the friar to make their perpetual vows, the temporary vows will be renewed for another three-year period, but once that is completed, he will not be able to postpone it any longer: he must be admitted for the Profession if worthy or expelled from the Congregation if not. The Provincial Fathers and the Definitors are given the responsibility to proceed with great prudence in such a delicate and significant matter; and bear in mind that a single sin, no matter how serious, is not enough to deny a friar the Professions, just as the denial of St. Peter or the unfaithfulness of St. Thomas was not enough for the Lord to cast them out of his Ministry, but rather it is necessary for exclusion that the shortcomings be uncorrectable. And so that they may work in this matter with greater freedom and independence after a good discussion and deliberation, the decision will be made through a secret ballot⁶³.

CHAPTER VII

On the government of the Congregation

ARTICLE I

On the General Father

2384 46. The General Superior is the head and guide for the entire Congregation; and above all the Father of all the friars in it. This is why he must be very concerned for its spiritual and worldly prosperity, and lead his Subjects through doctrine and by example.

47. To be elected to such an honorable position, the friar must be a priest; of perpetual vows; 40 years old; have been at least a local Superior and also bring together these qualities: 1. Be very exact in regular observance, so that the friars may have a mirror to see themselves in and a model to imitate. 2. Be very zealous for the good of the Congregation, not sparing any sacrifice for it. 3. Be prudent and discreet, in such a way that too much indulgence does not open the door to relaxation, nor excessive strictness lead to despair. 4. Have a generous heart and

⁶³ Cf. 2308 above.

a strong will capable of great undertakings without being intimidated by their difficulties. 5. Gentle and humble of heart following the example of Our Savior Jesus Christ, so that the first of these virtues wins over the hearts of his subjects, and through the second remains aware of his own insignificance and misery in the midst of the high position, never attributing anything good to himself but referring all glory to God, from whom all perfect gifts come. Finally, maturity, discretion and affability must stand out in him, along with all the other qualities and virtues that are required in any good Pastor.

48. The election of the General Father and his Definitors will take place every six years in the general Chapter meeting to be held for that purpose. His habitual residence will be the Provincial House, which cannot be declared the Mother House of the Province where it is established, nor can the Provincial Defining Council reside in it.

2385 49. These are the duties of the General Superior: Preside over the General Chapter meetings and the monthly meetings of the Defining Council for dealing with matters pertaining to the Congregation. Resolve the serious and difficult cases submitted to the Council. Visit all Houses of the Institution at least once during the term of his government. Watch over the local Superiors to be sure they are diligent and fulfilling the functions of the position properly. Attempt to keep the exact observation of these Constitutions and the practices of the Congregation and prevent any abuse of them from being introduced. Give the title of Preachers and Professors to those friars who have been approved in their studies by the Provincial Defining Council. Authorize new foundations as well as acquisitions of the houses, lands, etc. for them. Approve the transfer of friars from one Province to another, with the prior agreement of both Provincial Superiors. Give the sentence of expulsion to the incorrigibles, with prior approval from the Holy See, whether they are friars of perpetual vows or the three-year vows before the term is completed. Finally, it is incumbent on him to look out for the spiritual and worldly good of the Congregation and the Friars entrusted to him.

2386 50. At the end of his six-year term, The General Father will write a formal Report or detailed account of the moral and material state of the Congregation. This account will record the number of Provinces and the number of houses the Congregation has in each one; the Novitiates and Seminaries; the Schools for primary and secondary education, the Workshops and Prisons they have under their care. It will also include the number of Professed friars and novices in each province, and the ministries in which they are employed. Finally, it will record the number of children and young people being educated in the sciences and arts, prisoners being taught and guarded, and the sick who have received their attention. A copy signed by the General Father will be sent to the Sacred Congregation and the original, signed and sealed by General Father and the Definitors, will be read in the General Chapter meeting, and archived later in the Provincial House.

2387 51. In the event the General Superior should die during the term of his government, or becomes incapacitated and unable to undertake the functions of

his position, the first Definitor will take over the governing of the Congregation. If he would happen to die, the second will take over, and on through the third and remaining Definitors. They will take care to call the general Chapter meeting as soon as possible for the election of the new General Superior.

52. All the friars, without exception or distinct, will make it a duty to love the General Superior as their Father, obey him productively and promptly and venerate him as a success of our Father St. Francis, and they will give him the form of address of the most Reverend Father, which he shall retain even after leaving his position.

ARTICLE II *On the General Definitors*

2388 53. As the Definitor Fathers are assistants to the General Superior in his difficult position, they must be gifted with great qualities, distinguished above all else by their good sense, seriousness and sound judgment, so necessary in those called to govern and rule over others.

54. They must consider themselves very obligated by their responsibility, of being the rule and model of their friars, and must stand out among them for their virtues and example more than their rank.

55. They shall hold the General Father in the utmost veneration and respect and always move ahead in all matters by mutual agreement with him. They must also be the first in paying him the obedience owed him, but without stopping them from expressing their opinion freely with respect to the affairs of the Defining Council and always whenever it is requested; and warn the Superior if they see something objectionable in her behavior or government with all due charity and humility.

56. The Definitors must carefully study the Rule, Constitutions, uses and customs of this Congregation to make all their agreements conform with them, and the solution to the doubts and questions raised to the Defining Council are totally in keeping with their spirit.

2389 57. These are their powers: To give their deliberative vote or issue their opinion in all matters the most Reverend General Father proposes to them in the meetings of the Defining Council, but especially those related to constituting Preachers and Professors; to approve the new foundations in their conditions and bases; to authorize the acquisition of houses and lands for tem, and give the sentence of expulsion for the incorrigibles.

58. In addition, to help the General Superior as much as possible in carrying out his responsibilities, they will serve Secretaries: One will serve him in all matters pertaining to the good order and direction of the Novitiates and Seminaries; another in everything concerning the moral and spiritual state of the other Houses of the Institution; a third in the business and affairs of the Jails and Prisons entrusted to the Congregation; another in everything related to primary and secondary education; another dealing with everything concerning the teaching of Arts &

Trades; and finally the last Definitor will help with all the matters looking towards and related to caring for the sick. It is incumbent on the Superior to designate each Definitor for the position he is going to carry out and the Definitors, in exercising the functions of their respective responsibilities, will always act under the authority of the General Father.

59. The Definitors must be Priests; of perpetual vows and at least 40 years old.

2390. 60. If death should befall any Definitor during the term of their government and there is over one year until the celebration of the general Chapter meeting, the General Father and Definitors will appoint through secret ballot the friar who shall replace him for the rest of the term of the Defining Council; the appointee will have both active and passive voice in the next general Chapter meeting. But if there is less than one year until the Chapter meeting, the vacancy will not be filled.

61. The general Definitors *in actu* (active) will have the same form of address as the General Father: once they leave their position, they will be addressed as the Reverend Father.

ARTICLE III

On the Provincial Ministers

2391 62. The Provincial Ministers are, after the most Reverend General Father, the higher superiors of the Province, the Fathers of all the friars in it and therefore they must be looked upon with the utmost veneration and respect, giving them the name of Father and the form of address as the Reverend Father for life.

63. The election of the Provincial Minister and his Definitors will be held every three years, in the provincial Chapter meeting and they will have their habitual residence in the Mother-House of the Province.

64. The friars who may be elected and carry out the position of Provincial ministers, in addition to the qualities of ability, sound judgment, maturity and discretion, among others that the importance of the position demands, are required to be at least 35 years old, Priests of perpetual vows, and have been local superiors, or at least Vice-ministers.

2392. It is incumbent on the Provincial Ministers: to attempt by all possible means to achieve the precise observance of the Rule and these Constitutions; work zealously and tirelessly for the increase of material and moral prosperity of the Province entrusted to them; to visit at least once a year all the Houses in the Province, to be aware of and find solutions for the needs of their subjects and prevent abuses and decline; preside over the provincial Chapter meeting and the sessions of the Defining Council, which will take place at least every two months, and propose the topics these sessions should deal with; inform the local Superiors of the agreements of the Defining Council; appoint or dismiss, in agreement with the Definitors, the Ministers, Vice-ministers, Teachers of Novices and Lectors, and all the other

employees of the Houses in the Province; closely observe them to ensure they are fulfilling their respective positions; preside over and approve the examinations of whoever wants to be constituted as Preachers or Professors, send the criticism of the Defining Council to the General Father; give the obediences signed by his hand and the seal of his position to the friars who would be transferred to a different residence by the Defining Council and those who will have to temporarily leave the territory of the Province for a justifiable reason; and finally, everything related to the good order, system and government of the Province and the friars who are in it.

2393 66. Every year after the visit under canon law, the Provincial Ministers will write a well-detailed account of the moral and material state of the Province to send to the General Father. They will save a copy of the account in the Provincial Archive, so that it can be read before the provincial Chapter meeting at the end of his three-year term.

67. If a Provincial Minister should die during his term in the position, or it becomes impossible for him to carry out his duties, the first Definitor will assume his authority; and if he dies before the term ends, the authority will pass to the second Definitor and so on for the rest. The Definitor Father who becomes the Provincial Vicar, will call the Chapter meeting for the election of the new Provincial Minister as soon as possible.

ARTICLE IV

On the Provincial Definitors

2394 68. As the job of the Definitors is to assist the Provincial Ministers in carrying out the functions of their position, they must possess the gifts and qualities required for them and also standing out for their seriousness, maturity and sound judgment which make them Council members and the reserve and silence so necessary to the Superiors.

69. The Provincial Definitors must be Priests over 35 years old, and have made their perpetual vows.

70. They will attempt to have a unity of viewpoint and thought with the Provincial Father, and proceed in total harmony with him; but if the Superior is missing something in their judgment, they must advise him of it with complete freedom and charity.

2395 71. The matters the Definitors must participate in with their deliberative vote are: the election, appointment and dismissal of the Ministers, Vice-ministers, Teachers of Novices, and lectors; the examination and approval of whoever will be constituted as Preachers and Professors; the admission and expulsion of Novices; the authorization for the profession of Novices, the renewal of the three-year vows and making the perpetual vows: the transfer of friars, and other serious matters that may occur in the Province.

72. As there would always be a variety of opinions in the Defining Council on some matter, they must turn to a secret vote for the solution, and the Provincial Father will have only one vote, equal to the Definitors.

2396. 73. The first Definitor, acting as the Provincial Secretary, will be responsible for issuing everything related to the Mother-House and Seminaries; the second those documents concerning the Schools of primary and secondary education, and Arts and Trades; the third of Jails and Prisons; and finally the fourth in whatever refers to the assistance to the sick. They will act and resolve all these matters under the due authority of the Provincial Minister.

74. If any Definitor would die during their three-year term and there is over one year until the celebration of the general Chapter meeting, the Provincial Minister and Definitors will appoint the friar who would replace him through secret ballot; if less than one year remains until the Chapter meeting, no substitute will be named. The friar elected to fill the vacancy of a deceased Definitor will have voice and vote in the next Provincial Chapter meeting.

ARTICLE V *On the Ministers*

2397. 75. The Ministers of the Houses of the Institution, as Fathers and heads of the family entrusted to them, must always go ahead of their subjects with the doctrine and by example⁶⁴, in a ways that their behavior alone comes to encourage the good, reassure the weak, reprimand the lukewarm and raise up the fallen⁶⁵; making themselves in this way and through their paternal charity everything for everyone, in order to win all of them to Jesus Christ, as the Apostle says⁶⁶.

76. The Minister Fathers must similarly be inspired by a great zeal for regular observance, not allowing the introduction of any abuse or relaxation in the keeping of the Rule and these Constitutions; using their authority for this purpose to warn, correct and punish the wrongdoers, but attempting to combine those actions with justice, gentleness and humility so that the sacred deposit of the authority that God has entrusted them with is used in the instruction and not the destruction of their subjects⁶⁷.

2398. 77. It is incumbent on the Ministers to: preside over all Community acts, which they cannot assign to anyone else, and from which they will only be relieved in the presence of the Most Reverend Provincial Father; dictate the regulations they consider advisable for the good order and government of the House; designate the friars who should carry out the lesser positions of the House; to visit their building and make the Officials in charge of them fulfill their obligation properly;

⁶⁴ Cf. ST. CLARE: *Test* 46, in works cited, p. 213. Cf. 2326 above.

⁶⁵ Cf. Ezekiel 34:4; Micah 4:6-8; TC 58, in works cited, p. 562.

⁶⁶ Cf. I Corinthians 9:22.

⁶⁷ II Corinthians 10:8. Cf. 1634 above.

reprimand and correct their subjects of their shortcomings, privately or publicly in the chapter meeting of blames, but prudently and with charity; to forgive their subject with obvious need in the observance of the precepts of the Rule and these Constitutions; resolve the serious cases that do not allow time for approaching the higher Superiors, consulting their Councilors regarding it and then giving notice to the Provincial Father; and finally, everything concerning the administration of the House and guidance of the friars entrusted to him.

2399 78. They will keep a frequent correspondence with the Provincial Father, to keep him up to date on the matters regarding the House. And at least every six months, they will give an account of the moral and material state of the House to the Definitor Father to whom it corresponds.

79. In the Mother-House, apart from the Community acts, the Minister Father will not be involved in the system and guidance of the Novices, as that belongs to the Teacher Father. In the same way, the Superior of the Seminaries will give the Lectors all the necessary freedom without interfering in matters related to the plan and order of studies, limiting their vigilance of the Students to the moral and religious aspects.

80. The Ministers of the Provincial and Mother Houses, as local Superiors, will occupy the first place in all the public and community acts after the higher Superior; and the same holds for those of the other Houses, whenever the General Father or Provincial Minister may be there.

2400 81. The election of the Minister Fathers is the responsibility of the Provincial Defining Council. The term of their appointment will be at the discretion of the Council.

82. To be promoted to this position, the Friars must be at least 30 years old; already made their perpetual vows; and if they are to be the Ministers of the Provincial or Mother House or the Seminaries, they must also be Priests; but in the other Houses of the Congregation, the Coadjutor Brothers could be promoted when the number of Priests is in short supply, or the priests there do not fill the required qualities and conditions, and always that this would be for the good of the Congregation.

83. The local superiors will have the form of address of Reverend Father, and will retain it even after they leave the position.

ARTICLE VI

On the Vice-Ministers

2401 84. In the absence or illness of the Minister Father, the Vice-ministers will direct the Community, with all the powers that correspond to it, although they will not be able to change or introduce anything new into what was established by the Minister Father; but outside of these cases, they will have no authority.

85. The Archive of the House will be their responsibility and they will stand in as the Secretary of the Minister Father.

86. This position can be carried out by the Coadjutor Brothers, but they will be required to meet the same conditions regarding age and profession as the Ministers.

87. The Vice-ministers will also be given the name of Father and the form of address of Reverend, but only for the period of time they occupy the position.

ARTICLE VII

On the Teachers of Novices

2402 88. The spiritual and worldly good and prosperity of the Congregation depends to a large extent on the Teachers of Novices, who have the responsibility of educating the heart and spirit of the young men according to the particular spirit of the Congregation. For this reason, the Provincial Defining Council must proceed with great caution and consideration in choosing them.

89. Those destined for this position must be Priests over 35 years old, and of perpetual vows; and given the great significance of this position will have to combine special qualities of intelligence, sound judgment, discretion and seriousness, with a great love and zeal for the Institution.

2403 90. The Teachers of Novices will try to attend to the spiritual and worldly needs of their Novices with paternal care and concern, imitating the charitable spirit of our Father St. Francis⁶⁸ and, at the same time, they will prudently test them in inner and external mortification, humility and self-contempt, so that the old man with his appetites and lusts are vanquished and mortified, he is clothed as a new man born in justice and holiness; coming in this way to be of great use in the Congregation and illuminate it with his behavior and example.

91. So that the Teacher of Novices can attend to and better fulfill the obligations of his position, the Provincial Defining Council will assign him an Assistant, who will be completely subordinate to him in everything related to the Novitiate.

CHAPTER VIII

On Chapter Meetings and Elections

ARTICLE I

On the Chapter Meetings

2404 92. The Chapter meetings held in this Congregation will be celebrated in three ways, to wit: general, provincial, and conventual. The first will consist of

⁶⁸ Cf. 2328 above.

the Provincial Fathers and the other Chapter member, presided over by the most Reverend General Father and his Defining Council, to deal with the matters of the Congregation in general, or for the election of new General Superiors. The second will consist of the meeting of the Minister Fathers of the Houses of the Province and other members, presided over by the Most Reverend Provincial Father and his Definitors, for the appointment of new Provincial Superiors and to deal with and resolve the matters related to the Province. Finally, the third is the board meeting or meeting of all the professed friars of the same House or family, summoned and presided over by the local Superior to deal with the matters pertaining to the House.

93. The General Chapter meeting will gather every six years for the election and appointment of the General Superiors and, additionally, always whenever the General Father considers it necessary or advisable. The Provincial meetings will be every three years for the appointment of the Provincial Superiors and apart from that, when the Provincial Father considers it prudent. The Conventual meetings will always be whenever the Minister Fathers consider there is need to hold one.

2405 94. The plan and method the Lectors must be subject to in studies of the friars will be decided in the general Chapter meetings; the numbers of years to employ in their course of studies and the authors they will have to study. Similarly, concerning the foundations, the bases and conditions the provincial Definitors are to establish for their acceptance. They will also write the Regulations for the system of the different works commended to the Congregation, such as: Jails and Prisons, assistance to the sick, and the Schools and Workshops. Finally, the general Chapter meetings must occupy themselves with and dictate laws on all those things where uniformity within the Institution is advisable or necessary.

95. Ordinarily, the general and provincial Chapter meetings will be celebrated during the holy days of Pentecost⁶⁹, as it is very convenient for this purpose; except when the Chapter is meeting due to the death of the General Superior or Provincial Minister, and therefore must be held as soon as possible to elect the successor.

96. The designated point for the celebration of the Chapter meetings will the Provincial House for the general meetings and the Mother-House for the provincial meetings.

2406 97. Each Province will send a representative to the general Meeting, in addition to the Provincial Father, who will be responsible for bringing the needs of the Houses of the Province and the friars to the meetings. He will be chosen in a secret vote from among the Minister Fathers, who will send their vote to the Defining Council in a closed sheet of paper and whoever has the most votes will be elected.

98. In the same way, each Community will appoint a representative by secret ballot, who must be a friar of the same family, so they may go to the provincial Chapter meeting with the Minister Father and be responsible for bringing the needs of the friars of the Community to the meeting.

⁶⁹ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 2R 8:2, in works cited, p. 114.

2407. 99 The order of the Chapter member Fathers will be as follows: In the general Chapter meetings, the presidency will be occupied by the most Reverend General Father and his Definitors; followed by the Provincial Fathers in the order of length of service of the Provinces in the Order and following those the Representatives for the length of service in wearing the habit.

100. The official notification for the celebration of the general and provincial Chapter meetings will be done one month before they are held, and on the same day in all the Provinces and Houses, proceeding immediately in each one to the election of the Representative and the publication of his name.

101. If any of the Chapter member Fathers would find it physically impossible, or for any serious reason, to be able to attend the Chapter meeting, they will inform the Defining Council with sufficient time in advance so that a replacement can be provided.

2408 102. The Chapter meetings for the election of the General or Provincial Superiors will be preceded by a Triduum of spiritual retreat that all the Chapter members will do together, in order to beseech the Holy Spirit for the necessary enlightenment to make the correct decision in the election. In the extraordinary Chapter meetings, they will have a similar retreat of just one day.

103. The strictest silence is imposed on Chapter members, who must keep it from the moment the spiritual retreat of preparation for the Chapter meeting begins until it has ended.

104. From the moment or the announcement of the celebration of the general Chapter meeting, the members must make continuous and fervent prayers, both privately and in common, in all the Provinces and Houses of the Congregation, so the Lord deigns to direct everything related to the meeting to His greater glory and honor, and the good and usefulness of the Institution and its friars. The same is to be done for the celebration of the provincial Chapter meeting, in all the Houses and by the all the friars in the Province.

105. In the Triduum of preparation for the election Chapter meetings, and the retreat day of the extraordinary meetings, the Divine Majesty will be displayed in the morning and a Mass will be sung with full ceremony, followed by the *Veni Creator* with verses and prayers to the Holy Spirit, Our Lady of Sorrows and our Father St. Francis. On the day of the Chapter meeting, the Lord will be displayed as on the previous days but for the entire time the meeting lasts, with two friars continuously watching over its presence.

ARTICLE II *On the Elections*

2409 106. On the election days of both the general and provincial Chapter meetings, at the hour designated by the Superior, all the Chapters members will meet in the Presbytery, placing themselves in the order indicated in the previous

article, and with the Divine Majesty displayed, they will sing with full solemnity the Mass of the Holy Spirit led by the Superior presiding over the Chapter meeting. Once completed and the priestly vestments are removed, kneeling in the middle of his Definitors on the lowest step of the Altar, they will sing the *Veni Creator*, which all the Chapter members will continue and sing in chorus, and conclude with the verses and prayers to the Holy Spirit, Our Lady of Sorrows, Our Father St. Francis and of the Sacramento. Then, in procession and in the proper order, they will move to the Chapter Hall, singing the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and having arrived at the Hall and concluded the Litany with the appropriate prayer of time, the Superior will swear the first oath to not look for anything in the election other than the glory of God and the good of the Institution, and to elect, to this end, whoever according to their conscience they consider the most suitable, putting that before all human respect. Afterwards, the Chapter members will swear the same oath one by one and the Superior will declare the Chapter meeting officially constituted.

2410 107. With the Chapter members in their respective places, attendance will be taken and the absences noted, with the designated substitutes appointed to replace them; then, this Chapter of the Constitution will be read, and proceed to the election of two scrutineer Secretaries, doing so by secret ballot in this way: the Chapter member will leave one by one, starting with the Superior, and go to a table prepared for that purpose in the middle of the Hall of the Chapter meeting, where they will write down their vote and deposit the ballot in an urn on the President's table. Once everyone's vote is collected, the last two Definitors will do the scrutiny, counting first the number of voters against the number ballots to see if they are equal, and then taking note of the votes one by one; when that is done, they will announce the results of the scrutiny out loud.

108. In this vote for the scrutineer Secretaries, it will be sufficient for whoever is elected to have a relative majority in relation to the others who also received votes, even if the total does not reach a majority of half the votes plus one.

109. Once the scrutineer Secretaries are appointed, they will be placed at a table in front of the presidency and the urn for the votes will be put there.

2411. 110. Afterwards, the Definitor Fathers will leave their places and say their *mea culpa* in public Chapter meeting of their negligence and errors in fulfilling the responsibilities of their position, and having humbled themselves and heard the encouragement of the Superior, shall withdraw from the Presidency and locate themselves in the first row of the benches of the Chapter members. They will immediately move on to the election of new Definitors, in the same way described above for the scrutineer Secretaries, but with the difference that the majority must be absolute for this election, that is, to be elected they must receive half the votes plus one. Once the voting is finished and the scrutiny done, the Scrutineers will announce the results out loud; and if it happens there are not enough friars with a majority of votes to fill all the Definitor positions, there will be a second and even

a third vote. Following the third round, if there still was no majority, those with the greatest number of votes must be appointed.

111. The place each Definitor must occupy in the Defining Council will be assigned by the number of votes he received, and if it happened that two Definitors had the same number of votes, preference would go to the friar with longer service in the habit.

2412 112. With the Definitors elected, they will take possession of the Presidency, and the Superior, rising, will deliver the seal into the hands of the newly elected first Definitor, to indicate that he is resigning from the authority, and later kneeling in the middle of the Chapter meeting, he will say the *mea culpa* of his errors in governing the Congregation or Province entrusted to him, and having heard the advice of the President, will withdraw to the place corresponding to his position, the first after the Presidency. The meeting will immediately move ahead to the vote for the new Superior, carrying out this vote the same way as the others; the Superior-elect must obtain half of the vote plus one for there to be an election, repeating the vote until that result is achieved.

2413 113. With the voting finished and the scrutiny done, the Secretaries will announce the results; and with the Minutes of the Chapter Meeting issued, read and signed by those two Secretaries, the newly elected Superior, re-dressed in surplice and stole, and holding in his hands the Minutes of the Chapter meeting, will sing the *Te Deum* which the Chapter members will continue and sing in chorus. They will go in procession to the church with the Community, which will join them on leaving the Chapter Hall, to present the new Superiors to the Lord and ask Him to confirm their election and shed abundant graces upon them.

114. Reaching the Presbytery, the Superior will climb up to the Altar and, on his knees, place the minutes of the election on it. When the *Te Deum* is finished, the first thanksgiving prayer in the Ritual will be said, the prayer of Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Father St. Francis, and the Divine Majesty will be safeguarded before the blessing with the Sacrament. Then, with the new Superiors kneeling on the floor at the foot of the Altar, one of the scrutineer Secretaries of the Chapter meeting will take the Minutes from the Altar and read it out loud, giving it later to the Superior who, climbing to the altar with his Definitors, will make the profession of Faith collectively with them and then sit on the side of the Gospel to receive the obedience that his subjects will offer by kissing his hand and giving them the fraternal embrace at the same time.

115. When the elected Superiors would not be from among the Chapter members and are absent, committees will be appointed to go notify them of their appointment and accompany them to the Chapter meeting, postponing the aforementioned ceremonies until their arrival.

CHAPTER IX
On the Visit under Canon Law

2414 116. One of the most effective measures for maintaining the vigor of regular discipline is the Visit under Canon Law that the General Father must make at leave once during the term of his government and the Provincial Ministers must make every year and always whenever necessity demands it.

117. The Superior must announce the Visit through a Circular Letter addressed to all the Communities. When going from one House to another, he will give advance notice of the day and time of his arrival, so they are forewarned and can welcome him with the ceremony due him.

118. The appropriate way to welcome the official Visitor and thereby turn this into the Holy Visit, will be as follows: The Community will leave and line up in two rows leading to the door of the church, with the members of longest service closer to the door; the Minister Father and Vice-Minister Fathers will stand in the doorway of the church, the former holding the stole in his hand and the latter with the aspergillum. When the Visitor Father arrives, the Minister will put stole on him as a signal that all authority now resides with him, and the Vice Minister will present the aspergillum, at which point everyone will kneel so that the official Visitor can sprinkle them with holy water. He will then sing the *Te Deum*, which the friars will continue singing in two choruses as they head towards the Presbytery. On arriving there, the Visitor Father will kneel and pray briefly until the Hymn is finished; he will then rise and say the following prayers: *Deus Qui Corda Fidelium*, *Deus in Cuius Passione*, *Deus qui Ecclesiam Tuam*, and *Actiones Nostras*. Once concluded, he will climb up to the Altar and receive the obedience of all the friars.

2415 119. The same day or the next one, at an indicated time, the Community will meet in the Chapter Hall, and singing the *Veni Creator* with the corresponding prayer the Visitor Father will make an address declaring the Visit open, and confer the merit of Holy obedience on the members of the order, so they may state everything they believe needs a solution and show the progress and state of the House.

120. Later, everyone will accompany the Visitor Father to the Church, who will put on the surplice and stole on his arrival there and open the Tabernacle to view the hygiene, cleanliness and decency with which the Holy Sacrament is kept, while the Community sings slowly and with great majesty the *Tantum, Ergo* and *Genitori*. When that is completed and after burning incense and saying the prayer of the Sacrament, it will be safeguarded and the Community will retire. Immediately thereafter, the Visitor Father, having removed the Vestments and accompanied by the Minister, Vice-Minister and Councilors, will begin the visit of the Church, Sacristy, Cells and other buildings of the House, and all the sections designated for the work the House is dedicated to, such as Workshops, Halls or Stables and Classes, etc. He will focus on and make note of the state of cleanliness and hygiene and if all the items and tools they use are well-preserved and in good condition. He will then

move on to examine the books of revenues and expenses, the Annals in which the most notable events, and accomplishment of the House are to be recorded, and the orders of the official Visitors, and the books of accounts, registrations, etc., of the work to which the House is dedicated.

2416. Having concluded the Holy Visit with those acts, the Visitor Father will meet again with the Community in the Chapter Hall, and after a brief address urging them to faithful observance of the Rule and these Constitutions and the practice of virtues, he will make the warnings and reprimands he considers necessary, and reading the orders entered in the Annals book, he will hear the *mea culpa* of all the friars, and end by giving them the absolution granted for these cases and the blessing of Our Father St. Francis.

CHAPTER X Exercises of Devotion

ARTICLE I *On the Holy Mass*

2417 123. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass perpetuates in the Church the Sacrifice on the Cross, bringing us the memory and applying its merits to us⁷⁰: this is why our Seraphic Doctor St. Bonaventure says with good reason that the Holy Mass is the summary of the wonders God has done with man⁷¹. And this bloodless Sacrifice has such great value before God that according to the Council of Trent, the Lord is appeased by it and grants the grace and gift of penance⁷². The Pope St. Eugene says: to hear a Mass does more for the remission of guilt and sorrow than the prayers of everyone. In the same way St. Francis of Sales rightly calls it the son of spiritual exercises, the heart of devotion, the soul of devoutness and center of the Religion⁷³. For this reason, the Friars must try to not let a day pass without attending Mass and listen with the greatest possible devotion, in order to thoroughly imbue themselves with the spirit of immolation and sacrifice which makes us similar to Jesus Christ crucified and is the foundation of religious life. Nor should they miss such an opportune time for receiving Jesus in their hearts, at least spiritually, nor forget to pray to Lord for your benefactors both living and dead.

⁷⁰ Cf. COUNCIL OF TRENT, s. 22, Chapter 1., in DENZINGER 938. Cf. 2336 above.

⁷¹ Cf. ST. BONAVENTURE: *In the Lord's Supper*, in *Works of St. Bonaventure*, t. II, (BAC, Madrid 1946), pp. 551-577.

⁷² Cf. COUNCIL OF TRENT, s. 22, Chapter 2, in DENZINGER 940.

⁷³ Cf. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES: *Introduction to the Devout Life*, Part 2, Chapter 14, n. I, in *Selected Works of St. Francis of Sales* (BAC, Madrid 1953) p. 105.

ARTICLE II
On the Divine Office

2418 124. The religious Clergy and Priests will pray the Divine Office according to the rite of the Holy Roman Church, making use of the *Ordo* of the Capuchin Friars Minor. The Coadjutor Brothers, as the Explainers of the Rule of the Third Order and the Statutes of Paul III and Innocent XI⁷⁴ declare the precept of the Divine Office may be fulfilled by praying the Parvo of Our Lady, will pray it in place of the Our Fathers that the Rule orders for those to those who do not know how to pray the Liturgy of the Hours. Nevertheless, when someone cannot pray the Parvo Office due to physical illness or great material occupation or any other reasonable cause, they will pray the Our Fathers the Rule orders in chapter IV, in the form and way established there.

125. They will attempt to pray the Divine Office in community, even in the smallest houses, at the times and hours prescribed in the Regulation established by the Provincial Chapter. Nonetheless, they will pray it individually when they would be occupied at those times by holy obedience.

ARTICLE III
*On Prayer*⁷⁵

2419 126. As prayer is the food of the soul and the foundation of true devotion, the friars must place this holy exercise before all the rest, and dedicate all the time they can to it after completing the works and ministries commended to them by holy obedience. To that end, one hour of daily prayer is ordered, to be split into two sessions, half an hour in the morning and another half hour in the afternoon; this time must be observed so strictly that they may deduct from it the reading of a point of meditation and any other preparatory prayer.

127. This exercise shall be done in Community, in the time prescribed by the Regulations; and no one can be excused from it without making the Superior aware of the reason, and even then they will have to make it up at another time.

128. As a preparation for this exercise, they will say the Litanies of the Saints in the morning prayer, and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the afternoon.

129. The Novices will have another hour of private, individual prayer in addition to the Community prayer, similarly divided between the morning and afternoon.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Statutes of Innocent XI*, chapter VIII, in SANT'ELIA A PIANISI, FATHER ANTONINO: *Manuale Storico-Giuridico-Prattico sul Terz'Ordine Francescano* [Rome, 1947], p. 496.

⁷⁵ Cf. 2338 above.

ARTICLE IV

On the Examination of Conscience

2420 130. One of the main means we can use to banishing the passions in us and plant virtues in their place is the examination of conscience; this is why it was so highly recommended by the St. Ignatius⁷⁶ reached the point of preferring it over prayer in the event there was not enough time to fulfill both practices. For this reason, then, the friars will dedicate 15 minutes every night before going to bed to examine their conscience with respect to the errors they might have committed that day, arousing especially all the sorrow and imposing some penance. In addition, they will try every day to resolve to practice some virtue, always looking for the one they most need; and do a brief examination on how well they have fulfilled it before the midday meal.

ARTICLE V

On Confession and Communion

2421 131. The members of this Congregation will confess at least once a week, with legitimately authorized Priests of the Congregation⁷⁷. Nonetheless, if there would not be a Religious Priest to hear the confession in any House, the local Superior in this case will be able to designate one of the secular Priests approved by the Ordinary Prelate who, in his judgment, brings together the best qualities for the guidance of the friars.

132. Three or four times a year, and one of them during the annual ten day exercises, the Superior will grant all the friars an extraordinary Confessor, and they will all have the obligation to appear before him.

133. In addition to the ordinary confessors, a Prefect for spiritual matters will be indicated for each House, whom the friars must appear before month to give him an account of conscience and receive his instruction concerning the issues of the spirit and regular observance. The Superiors are to look closely and carefully when designating the Prefects, because this service is extremely delicate and significant. In the Houses where there will not be a Religious Priest for this position, one of the Coadjutor Brothers with the greatest experience and education in matters of the spirit will be appointed; in this case, the friars will only inform them of external matters related to regular observance in some way, reserving consultation of purely spiritual topics for the ordinary confessor.

2422 134. The Religious Clergy and Coadjutors will receive communion on Sunday, Thursday and Saturday every week, the days on which the Church

⁷⁶ Cf. ST. IGNATIUS: *Spiritual Exercises*, Annotation 18, in *Complete Works of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, (BAC, Madrid 1953), p. 158; and *Notas sobre Ejercicios Dadas de Palabra*, *ibid.*, pp. 249-250.

⁷⁷ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: 1R 20:1, in works cited, p. 14; 2R 7:1-2, in works cited, p. 114.

celebrates one of the holy days of the Lord or the Holy Virgin; on the holy days of the Saints of the Order in which Full Indulgence is granted, on the day of their Patron Saint and the anniversary of their profession, and always with the Prelate giving them permission.

135 The friars must be prepared whenever possible to receive this noble and divine Sacrament with dignity, considering their unworthiness and the greatness of the gift the Lord so clearly is making us, so they do not receive it in detriment to their souls but rather as an increase of grace and virtue. As a sign of humility, and to be better prepared to receive Him, before they approach the altar they will ask forgiveness of each other for the lack of charity they may have committed and the bad examples they may have given.

CHAPTER XI On the External Mortifications

ARTICLE I *On Discipline*⁷⁸

2423 136. In memory of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and especially of his extremely painful flagellation, and to better subordinate the body so that it does not rebel against the spirit but instead is obedient to it in everything, the friars will practice the discipline on all Wednesdays and Fridays of the year and on these days: the entire Easter Week, and the main holy days of the Lord, the Holy Virgin and Our Father St. Francis.

137. During this holy exercise they will pray the Psalms *Miserere* and *De Profundis* psalms with the antiphon *Christus Factus Est*, etc. verse and the *Respice quaesumus*, *Domine* prayer, the *Salve* and the *Deus Qui Per Immaculatam, Beati Patris Nostri* and *Fidelium Deus* prayers, finishing with an Our Father and Ave Maria for the benefactors of the Congregation.

ARTICLE II *On the Chapter Meeting of Mea Culpas*⁷⁹

2424 138. Although the Seraphic Father St. Francis did not want the Rule of the Third Order to force some of his children to sin, nevertheless he ordered them to submit with humility to the penances that the Superior would impose on them for

⁷⁸ Cf. 2331 above..

⁷⁹ Cf. 2335 above.

their transgression, and he wanted them to promise it in their profession⁸⁰. In order then, to conform with this prescription of the Rules and to keep the observation of these Constitutions and the laudable customs of the Congregation, the local Superiors are ordered on every Friday of the year, and if some celebration would fall on Friday on another day of their choice, to listen to the *mea culpa* of their subjects in a public Chapter meeting reprimanding them with prudence and charity, and imposing some penance on them. The Teacher will do the same with his Novices, with the difference that they will say the blame three times a week, on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The Brothers will humbly receive the warnings and penances without offering excuses nor answering the Prelate in any way, bearing in mind that they have come to the Congregation for no other reason than to cry for their sins and humble themselves before Jesus Christ. However, when they might have committed some error that could have given a bad example to the Brothers, they must be the first to accuse themselves and ask forgiveness of the Community.

ARTICLE III
*On Silence*⁸¹

2425 139. One of the mortification which the friars must make a determined effort to exercise is silence, for the great benefits it brings to us and the even greater troubles it saves us from; because with silence all the other virtues are well guarded, while they cannot have any true virtue without it, because, as the apostle James says, the Religion of he who does not know how to restrain his tongue is vain⁸².

140. Keep the evangelical silence, then, at all times and in all places, which consists of not uttering a single idle word; and regarding the regular silence it will be perpetual in the Church, Choir, Sacristy, Dormitory and cells. In addition, silent will be kept everywhere during the midday rest period and from the time the bell sounds for prayers at night until the conventual Mass is finished the next morning.

141. As the friars must act with great discretion at all times and in all places, particularly with words, they must be even more careful when they leave the House, so that they fulfill the words of the Apostle, who says: "We are made a spectacle to the world, to the Angels and men⁸³". When leaving and entering the house, they will kneel and request the blessing of the Prelate; and they will try to go well mortified on the streets and with great meditation and silence, their minds focused on holy thoughts, and if they would speak with laymen, always try to leave them edified.

⁸⁰ Cf. *Rule of the Regular Third Order of the Seraphic Father St. Francis*, approved by Leo X, n. 23-24.

⁸¹ Cf. 2332-2334 above.

⁸² Cf. James 1:26.

⁸³ Cf. I Corinthians 4:9.

2426 142. For the relaxation of the friars, it is ordered that one hour be set aside after the midday meal, and half an hour following the supper or light meal so that the friars may have some decent recreation.

143. As this is a measure practiced and recommended in all the Religious Orders and very advisable both for spiritual advancement, preserving physical health and tightening the bonds of fraternal charity, no friar will be exempt from it without permission of the Prelate. The Superior will watch so that small groups do not form in the recreational activities, nor that none of the rules of religious discretion, charity and courtesy are lacking, so necessary to maintain peace and fraternal union in any religious Community.

CHAPTER XII

Various Documents Concerning the Houses of the Institution and Behavior of the Friars both Inside and Outside the Institution

2427 144. All the Establishments entrusted to the Congregation must have a section for the living quarters of the friars, completely separated from the rest of the building although with an interior connection to it. It will contain the rooms necessary for a Community, such as: Entrance area, Reception Hall, Cells, Gallery or Choir to the Church, Dining Hall, Kitchen, Pantry, Infirmary, Clothing Closets, etc.

145. This section will be closed and closely guarded; its door will be always locked with a good key entrusted to a friar of proven virtue who combines a strong character with great pleasantness in his behavior towards others. Every night when he goes to collect the friars, the Doorman will take all the keys to the doors opening to the street, countryside, patios, etc. as well as the section where the Community lives and to the Establishment itself to the cell of the Prelate.

2428 146. Each friar will have a separate cell, small and humble; and they will not have locks, with the exception of the Superiors.

147. The furnishings of the cells will be uniform, simple and poor and consist of: a platform with a straw mattress, wool pillow, and the necessary blankets; a large wooden cross; a table and a pair of chairs. Whoever is dedicated to studies can also have a small shelf for the books they need and a desk where they can keep their papers and writings.

148. The higher and local Superior will have, adjoining their cells and with an entry to it, a decently furnished room that can serve them as an office, through which one will enter a smaller one that will serve as the Archive.

149. No friar will enter the cell of another without great need and permission of the Superior.

150. The hallways, bedrooms and bathroom must be illuminated all night.

151. No distinction will be made for anyone in the Dining Hall, except with the elderly, sick and very weak friars.

2429 152. Communication with laymen, outside of what the job of each friar demands, must be rare and discreet; no friar will go to the reception room without the permission of the Superior. In their conversation, they must show themselves as distant and removed from wanting to know of any news of the world, and very cautious in order to never reveal what happens in the House and Congregation.

153. They will avoid leaving the House for no good reason, but when it is necessary they will go in pairs directly to the place where they were sent without entering into any house, even those of their relatives, without permission of the Superior.

2430 154. Until they have made their perpetual vows, they will not write any letter without the permission of the Superior. The friars will deliver any writing open, even if they are of perpetual vows, and will not dare to send or receive letters without them first passing through the hands of the Prelate, who will be able to open them if he has any doubts and hold them if he considers it advisable. With respect to letters addressed to the higher Superiors, they will similarly send them through the channel of the local Superior, but he will not be able to open or halt them and will be severely punished if he does so.

155. Putting aside the affected ceremonies of this century, the Friars will treat each other with such familiarity, simplicity and religious courtesy that everyone will see they love each other with fraternal love and are edified by it. The form of address they shall have will be Your Charity for the Priests, and your Charity for the Brother Assistants.

CHAPTER XIII

On the Vows

ARTICLE I

*On the Vow of Obedience*⁸⁴

2431 156. The greatest sacrifice and the one most pleasing to divine eyes is the vow of obedience that the religious souls make, for they deny themselves through it, renouncing forever their own will and subjecting themselves to another will for the love of God. This is the sacrifice our Lord Jesus Christ also offered his Holy Father for our love, obeying it to the death, and death on the Cross⁸⁵, and therefore, the friars must take inspiration from such a divine example to overcome all the revulsion and difficulties they may find in obedience. Never look at the person who commands you, but rather at what he represents and the authority with which he commands you, which is the authority of God; and in imitation of our Seraphic Father St. Francis, you must be ready and willing to obey the orders of the least

⁸⁴ Cf. 2347-2348 above.

⁸⁵ Cf. Philippians 2:8.

of the Brother, if this is the wish of the Superior, as the most elderly and dignified brother of the Congregation⁸⁶.

2432 157. The Superiors will never let any offense of obedience go unpunished, but must be careful not to let themselves be overcome by passion, and measure the penalty and punishment to the seriousness of the sin committed.

147. They are similarly warned that the use of their authority must proceed from sound judgments and it is not going to be easy to impose precepts of holy obedience in their subjects when necessity does not require it. The friars, in turn, must try to act like little boys in the hand of the holy obedience, not judging it nor allowing any hesitation or delay in fulfilling it, because they must think that it is not the creature who they are obeying, but the Creator himself instead.

ARTICLE II *On the Vow of Poverty*⁸⁷

2433 159. The love that our Seraphic Father St. Francis professed for holy poverty, above the other virtues, was such that he established it as his foundation, and wanted it to become the distinctive quality of his Holy Religion⁸⁸; and he gave it to all his children for a mother by choosing it for the given spouse to whom he was always faithful, as he himself says.

160. In order, then, to imitate the Seraphic Father in this virtue, which his true sons must do, the friars will make a great effort to part with all worldly things and look for nothing more than God, the only true good.

2434 161. Although the friars through the vow of poverty cannot completely part with the right to ownership, they must nonetheless practice the most absolute poverty in its use. Everything among them will be common and they will not be able to give or lend anything, inside or outside the House, without permission of the Prelate, and they must give what they receive so that he may be dispose of it as he judges best for the common and individual good.

2435 162. The poverty the friars profess will stand out in everything they use, in the factory of the Convents, or the sections intended for their living quarters in the Asylums and Hospitals. The General Superior will severely punish any abuse in this regard during the visit under canon law, forbidding the use of everything that is contrary to Franciscan poverty and simplicity. Nevertheless, this poverty will not extend to the churches, which can have all the riches they want for the divine service and worship.

⁸⁶ Cf. 2C 151, in works cited, p. 317; LM 6:4, in works cited, p. 415.

⁸⁷ Cf. 2349-2351 above.

⁸⁸ Cf. 2C 55, in works cited, p. 263; LM 7:6, in works cited, p. 424. Cf. 1282, 1832, 2349 above.

ARTICLE III
*On the Vow of Chastity*⁸⁹

2436 163. Through the vow of chastity the religious soul is raised to the sublime rank of the Spouse of Jesus Christ, and observing it faithfully during his life gives him the right to follow the Immaculate Lamb anywhere⁹⁰. For this reason, the friar will not spare any means to ensure these divine rewards.

164. They will not be content with avoiding the serious offenses, but will flee from everything which directly or indirectly could put the perfect purity of their hearts at risk. For this reason, when they find themselves required to speak with members of the opposite sex, they will try to keep their dress very mortified, be brief and reserved in conversation, and not display familiarity or levity.

2437 165. With respect to their Brothers, the friars will keep a great modesty together with the most tender cordiality, avoiding in every situation words or manners that could diminish the mutual respect they must have for each other.

2438 166. To preserve intact this precious virtue of chastity, be careful to always have your body and spirit mortified; maintain yourself in humility and distrustful of yourselves, and expect only from God the preservation of the sublime prerogative of the Spouses of Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION OF THE CONSTITUTIONS⁹¹

2439 167. Just as with the Rule of the Third Order on Penance, the Seraphic Father St. Francis⁹² did not want to force his professed children even to venial sin, it is also not our intention to give these Constitutions any greater force of obligation. Nevertheless, the friars must keep from breaking them as not obliging them to sin, because this would constitute a contempt that he would never be able to excuse. Remember that the Son of God, even though he was not obligated to the law He himself gave, nonetheless wanted to keep it for the well-being of each one of us; and think that it is the duty of the good and faithful servants to fulfill not only the things their lords command through threats, but also to give them pleasure in many others. Therefore, make a determined effort to comply with these Constitutions precisely so that it adds grace upon your heads and you deserve eternal life for these holy services.

⁸⁹ Cf. 2352-2354.

⁹⁰ Cf. Revelation 14:4.

⁹¹ Cf. 2355.

⁹² Cf. *Rule of the Regular Third Order of St. Francis*, approved by Leo X, n. 23. Cf. also the Rule of 1228, Chapter 12:7 in SABATIER, FATHER: *Opuscles de Critique Historique*, t. I (Paris, 1903), pp. 28; and the *Rule of Nicholas IV*, Chapter 20, in SANT'ELIA A PIANISI, FATHER ANTONINO: *Manuale Storico-Giuridico-Prattico sul Terz'Ordine Francescano* (Rome, 1947), p. 492.

168. In order for these Constitutions to be well engraved in the mind of the friars and for them to remember it better, the Superiors are ordered to have them read at least once every two months.

2440 169. It is also ordered, and formally forbidden to the Superiors, that anything in these Constitutions be changed, added or reduced, because experience teaches that frequent changes in the Constitutions reduces the regular observances and causes many other damages to the Congregations. Nonetheless, if changing times and circumstances would make it necessary to occasionally make some modification in them, this will be done in the General Chapter meeting.

2441 170. The friars shall make every effort to keep the observance of the Rules, and have it understood that although some things appear difficult at first, the holy custom will make them easier and more delightful. They should also not forget the words with which the Seraphic Father urges us to precise observance, saying: We have promised great things but greater still are those that have been promised to us, we keep these and aspire to those; the pleasures are short, the pain perpetual; the work is little, the glory infinite. Many are called, few are chosen. Everyone will receive the award for their works⁹³.

2442 171. By behaving in this way, they will undoubtedly achieve the paternal blessing that in the name of the entire Blessed Trinity the Seraphic Father left to all his true children at the time of his death, and the glory that on behalf of God was promised us on the day of our profession⁹⁴.

BROTHER LUIS OF MASSAMAGRELL,
Provincial Definitior and Guardian

Diligence

These Constitutions are in accordance with the original that was prepared in this Secretary under my responsibility which I hereby certify.

There is a seal saying:
Secretary of Council and Government
Archbishop of Valencia

DR. OLIVER
Interim Secretary

⁹³ Cf. 2C 191, in works cited, p. 340; LF 18, in works cited, p. 833.

⁹⁴ Cf. ST. FRANCIS: Test 40, in works cited, p. 124.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSTITUTIONS BY HIS EMINENCE THE
CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF VALENCIA

MR. JUAN BAUTISTA OLIVER Y CLARI

Presbyter, Doctor of Sacred Theology, Beneficiary Priest of this Holy Church Metropolitan Basilica and Interim Secretary of Council and Government of the most Eminent and Reverend Doctor Antolín Monescillo y Viso, Cardinal Archbishop of Valencia, etc., etc.

I certify: that by virtue of the proceedings practiced in this Secretary under my responsibility for the approval under canon law of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows, the definitive decree dictated in the following terms: In the Archbishop Palace of Valencia, on the 8th day of the month of April of 1889, the most Eminent and Reverend Doctor Antolín, by the grace of God and the Holy See of the Holy Roman Church, Presbyter, Cardinal Monescillo y Viso, title of St. Augustine in Urbe, Archbishop of Valencia, et., etc., having before me, the undersigned, Secretary of the Council and Government, said: Having seen the request signed by Brother Luis of Massamagrell, Provincial Definitor and Guardian of the Convent of Capuchin Friar Minors of St. Mary Magdalene, soliciting to establish in this Diocese, with the profession of the Rule of the Third Order written by Leo X and the Constitutions by which this congregation must abide, can dedicate themselves to the education of adults and children, assistance to the sick, especially in their home, and the care of prisoners. Having seen and being in agreement with the report by the attorney of the Archdiocese, we approve in what corresponds to Us and has a place in law the establishment of the aforementioned Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrow and the Constitutions that accompany them for that purpose. The corresponding certifications of these Constitutions are issued by this decree, retaining the original in the archive. This is agreed upon, ordered and signed by his Eminence, the most Reverend Cardinal Archbishop, my lord, which I certify.—Antolín, Cardinal Monescillo y Viso, Archbishop of Valencia.—By order of His Reverend Eminence, the Cardinal Archbishop, my Lord: Aureo Carrasco, Secretary.

In witness thereof for the appropriate effect, I issue the present certification, endorsed by the Most Illustrious Ecclesiastical Governor, Full See and stamped with the seal of the Cardinal in the Archbishop Palace of Valencia on the 10th day of the month of April of 1889.—Approval: Dr. Carrasco, Juan Bautista Oliver.

BY THE ILLUSTRIOUS BISHOP OF SEGORBE

In our episcopal Palace of Segorbe, on 5 February 1889.

Knowing through experience the need for the Christian Order to be introduced and take root in the Prisons and other penal establishments, we approve and applaud the thought of forming a Congregation of devout men who are going to dedicate themselves to comfort, assist and reconcile with God and society the prison inmates, who many times are waiting for nothing more than loving advice to distance themselves from the road of evil and enter onto the paths of virtue.

FRANCIS OF ASSISI,
Bishop of Segorbe

VARIOUS WRITINGS

INTRODUCTION

Under the term various, we include several writings by Luis Amigó which appeared in different publications but did not comfortably fit into any of the previous sections. We allowed ourselves to exclude some, such as his vow of souls because the text is not original, but simply a case of sealing it with his own blood and also the first of his two wills, dated 20/6/1916. The one included in these complete works reflects the last will and testament of Luis Amigó, and the first differs from it only in minor details.

As for the rest, these brief writings clearly show Luis Amigó as profoundly Franciscan in nature¹, a lover of the homeland and its traditions², and with his focus centered on Christ the merciful and redeemer³.

For its part, the will —the concluding document of the work— shows us a complete friar Minor, who lived the poverty of his Capuchin profession, profoundly loving of his nuns, friars and close friends, and holding great affection for his own relatives. More than a proper will, it is an entire catalogue of his small, poor, humble, sentimental objects, the majority of which are found today in the museums of his two Congregations⁴.

¹ Cf. 2245, 2248.

² Cf. 2244.

³ Cf. 2243, 2246, 2247.

⁴ The respective museums are found in the School of the Sacred Family, Plaza de la Constitución, MASSAMAGRELL (Valencia), and the Seminary of St. Joseph, GODELLA (Valencia).

"TRULY HE WAS THE SON OF GOD"¹

2443 How incredibly blind were the Jewish people! They knew from the predictions of the prophets that the time when the promised Messiah must come to the world had arrived; knew very well the exact fulfillment that all the prophecies had in Jesus Christ, the great miracles never seen before that he worked by giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, movement to paralyzed people, cleansing the lepers and resurrecting the dead; in addition, they were given clear testimony of who He was; several times they had heard him say, with that irresistible force of the eternal truth, that He was the Son of God. Nonetheless, blind and stubborn, they did not recognize him and did not welcome his followers², but rather asked for his death and that his blood would fall upon them and their children, a stain that people never can or will be able to erase³.

All of nature bears witness to recognizing their Savoir in Jesus Christ. The heavens, leading the King of the Orient by a star to his birthplace⁴; darkening the sun⁵ and coloring the Moon in blood on his death: the sea, obeying his reign and offering a firm path for his footsteps so that he could walk upon the water⁶; the elements, unleashing their furies at his command⁷; the earth, moving as if it were breaking apart from pain and sorrow when He breathed his last breath on the Cross⁸; only man remained blind and unaware in recognizing Jesus Christ as his Creator, as it took the general upheaval of the Universe on his death, comparable only to the one it will experience at the end of the world for them to fall on their knees at the foot of the Cross and confess their error, saying: "Truly he was the son of God"⁹.

But less forgivable are those born in the heart of the Christian Religion with their souls washed by the regenerating waters of holy Baptism that instilled faith in Jesus Christ in them, demonstrating by their deeds that they do recognize and even avert their eyes from Him in order not to be obligated to follow him. Even less forgivable are those shameful Christians who do not dare to publicly confess their faith and practice its doctrine, and even much less so are those who insult and renounce their father, whoever tramples on and scorns its precepts and those who follow the Holy Religion . On Judgment Day, all of them will be required to confess

¹ Matthew 27:54. This Article was published in the *Pla de Bages* on 15 April 1908.

² Cf. John I: 10-11,

³ Cf. Matthew 27:25,

⁴ Cf. Matthew 2:2.

⁵ Cf. Luke 23:44.

⁶ Cf. Matthew 14:25.

⁷ Cf. Matthew 8:26.

⁸ Cf. Matthew 27:51.

⁹ Cf. Matthew 27:54.

before everyone, with great fear and confusion, that Jesus Christ truly was the son of God. *Vere Filius Dei Erat Iste.*

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP AND APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR OF SOLSONA
Solsona, 4 April 1908.

NOBLESSE OBLIGE¹⁰

2444 The day the Church decides to commemorate the virtues and unprecedented merits of the saint of miracles, Vincent Ferrer, Valencia, my beloved homeland, will overflow with jubilation and enthusiasm, which will not be limited to showing the lavishness of the religious ceremonies in its temples but the public display, everyone shining in their best clothes and adorning its streets and plazas where lovely, artistic altars will be built, filling the air with the sweet music of the classic *tabalet* and *donsaina* and joyful pealing of the bells.

With good reason, because this saint, a prodigy of grace; this apostle, the indefatigable preacher of Justice; this angel of the Apocalypse, as he himself testified, resurrecting a dead person as confirmation is one, and perhaps the most evident of his miraculous works and therefore, his glory and crown. Because if, as it says in Proverbs, "the virtues and honor of the parents are the glory of their children:" (Proverbs 17:6), it is even truer that the triumphs and trophies of the children are the crowns the parents wear on their brows.

What reason we people of Valencia have to take pride in having such an extraordinary man as our compatriot, who was admired all over Europe and adviser to kings and popes! But beware that this *noblesse oblige* itself forces us to imitate him and follow his advice because, as our divine Redeemer said to the Jews who took pride in being the children of Abraham: "If you are the children of Abraham, do the works of Abraham" (John 8:39), they can say to us in the same way; if you glory in being compatriots of St. Vincent Ferrer, work in accordance with the instructions he gave us in his admirable preaching.

And here is the reason for confusion for Valencia! It is called the Mother of saints, because those who were born there were truly very extraordinary. But, oh, "how they have obscured the pure gold of its virtues and muted its beautiful color!" (Lamentations 4:1). Toned down and even challenged by some of its children watering down the faith of their ancestors, engaged in a continual fratricidal war through the partisan spirit that broke the connection of fraternal union so deeply instilled by this saint, devoted to their idle pursuits and lax standards, the Valencia of today looks nothing like the city during the time of St. Vincent.

People of Valencia, remember your "noblesse oblige" and do not go back on your ancestors or dishonor the noble title of religious feeling they bequeathed to you. To that end, look and engrave in your heart the always living preaching of St.

¹⁰ The article was published in *El Altar del Mercat*, of Valencia, on 18 April 1908.

Vincent Ferrer: "Fear God and give him honor, because the day of his judgments is approaching"¹¹.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP AND APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR

Solsona, 10 April 1908.

THE MAN WHO IS NEEDED TODAY¹²

2445 Seven centuries ago a man was *sent from God*, an armed knight of Christ with the mark of the Holy Cross that an angel engraved on him¹³, walking barefoot through this world and its vain splendors, scorning as useless the means by which it credited the success of its great ventures, divested of all human support and without aspiring to any knowledge other than knowing Jesus Christ and to be crucified¹⁴, launched himself on the conquest of the world in the middle of a corrupted, indifferent and materialistic society. This society immediately disdained his exhortations and ridiculed his examples of life to the point of mistreating him and branding him as crazy, but very soon understood the nobility of his madness, which was nothing less than the same one that made the Son of God want to die on the Cross for the love of man, and masses of people followed him with fervent enthusiasm, eager to hear his advice on life and admire his prodigious examples of virtue, just as they did with the divine Redeemer in another time.

This determined champion, Francis of Assisi, imbued by the noble mission that Providence confided in him, raised the banner of his seraphic militia and saw himself surrounded by barely twelve disciples who, admiring his doctrine and moved by a higher force, took shelter in the shadow of his banner. Thinking that now had enough elements and forces to give battle along the entire enemy line, he would instruct and train them in handling the spiritual weapons they had to wield in the combat against their enemies, encouraging and inspiring them so they would not lose heart from being so few in number and so inept, showing them the countless multitudes from all nations who he had seen in a revelation preparing to follow them and, blessing them, dispersed them through the four parts of the world, in the shape of the cross he would make over them¹⁵.

Only ten years had passed and this valiant leader already had the satisfaction of seeing camped in his orders over 5,000 friars¹⁶, battle-hardened soldiers of the militia of Christ, who soon filled the whole earth, with the Lord multiplying the

¹¹ The theme of the judgment drawing closer is central in the penitential preaching of St. Vincent Ferrer (cf. in *Acta Sanctorum*, April Vol. 1, p. 490 D).

¹² Article published in the *Eco Franciscano* 26 (1909), pp. 247-248.

¹³ Cf. LM 13:3, in works cited, p. 462; TC 69, in works cited, p. 568.

¹⁴ Cf. Galatians 6:14.

¹⁵ Cf. LM 3:7 in works cited, p. 396; AP 18, in works cited, p. 579; 1C 29: in works cited, p. 159; TC 36, in works cited, pp. 551-552.

¹⁶ Cf. LF, 18, in works cited, pp. 831-835.

descendants of Francis over the stars of heaven and the sands of the sea, and it became the most numerous and formidable army of the Catholic Church.

In the 13th century, the spirit of this providential man caused a true transformation in the customs, making men disdain vanities, embrace poverty and putting aside their hatreds and resentments and love each other with a truly charitable love, destroying the passions that were ruining and killing them in this way. This same spirit communicated by his children in the three Orders scattered all over the earth has continued since then revitalizing and informing the acts and customs of families and peoples in centuries that followed. And it is worth pointing out that in our times, through the analogy that can be drawn between them and the times when God sent this human Seraph to the world, it is more necessary than ever to be well-imbued with this seraphic spirit, the only means of reforming this society as the immortal Pontiff Leo XIII said¹⁷.

In fact, what could be better to make men understand the madness of following the false pleasures of the world than the spirit of mortification and penance that is reflected in the Institutions of Francis of Assisi? Who could more effectively instill in them the need to part with the worldly goods that separate them from God than someone who considered them garbage and renounced them for himself and his children? Who can better persuade them of their obligation to society, that the spirit of charity of doing everything for everyone merited the decree of seraph for him?

This, then, is the mission of our Seraphic Father continued over the centuries by the behavior of his children. This is the mission God sent him for, inspired by his own spirit so that he would be the reformer of society through time. But if it was always necessary, it is even more so at present, and therefore Francis of Assisi is the man we need today.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

Solsona, March of 1909.

“MAY HIS BLOOD FALL UPON US”¹⁸

2446 That was how Pilate answered that crazed and foolish people who, having so soon forgotten the miracles and wonders Jesus Christ worked in their favor and to whom they had confessed as the Son of God, how they received him with palms amidst the most fervent enthusiasm and hymns, letting himself be seduced by those who wished him dead out of jealousy and making common cause with them, possessed by an intense furor, he shouted loudly that he would be crucified and “his blood would fall upon them and upon their children”, who before fathering their children had already subjected them to the terrible curse that weighs on them and makes them repulsive and hateful to all peoples.

¹⁷ Cf. LEO XIII: *Auspicato Concesum*: ASS 15 (1882), pp. 145-153. Cf. 1010, 1269, 1978 above.

¹⁸ Matthew 27:25. The article was published in the *Pla de Bages* of 7 April 1909.

We are also asking for the same thing, but in a different way and for a very different purpose, that the blood of the divine Lamb fall upon our souls, but once marked and stamped by it, we acknowledge to the supreme Judge that our souls are his and not to unleash on us the sword of his justice, as the exterminating Angel respected the firstborn children of the people of God, whose doors were marked with the blood of the Lamb¹⁹.

Let it fall upon us and wash us of the stains with which sin has made our soul ugly, because only with this bath can one wash yourself and recover your beauty.

Let it fall upon us and like a divine liquor, let us become drunk in his love, making the worldly pleasures that distance us from Him insipid to us.

Yes, let the blood of the Redeemer fall upon us so that it may justify, sanctify and glorify us.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP

Solsona, 6 April 1909.

“BUT THIS IS YOUR HOUR, AND THE POWER OF DARKNESS”²⁰ (Luke 22:53)

2447 These words that our divine Redeemer Jesus Christ addressed to the traitorous apostle and to the crowd of Jews he led when they were going to take him, explains very clearly to us the reason behind the struggles and battles that the Church and its children have suffered and continuously sustain against the devil and his followers.

Neither the authorities of hell nor all men united against God and his works are capable of overcoming them without his special permission (John 19:11): “You would not have any authority over me” —Jesus Christ said to Pilate— “if it was not given to you from above; that is, without the special permission of my eternal Father”. But as it was necessary for our redemption that the Son of God would suffer and die and the hour of redemption had already sounded, Jesus Christ after making evident his power and the impotence of man and of hell against Him, only needing to say “I am”²¹ to knock that fierce mob of his enemies to the ground, he then authorized them so that they would execute with Him the diabolical decision to kill him, telling them: “This is your hour and the power of darkness”. It was like telling them: you would not be capable of overcoming me, just as Herod could not when he searched for me in order to take my life²², as you could not hurl me from the mountain when you tried that²³, nor were you able to stone me to death when you tried that as I passed calmly among you²⁴; but I wish and long for your

¹⁹ Cf. Exodus 12:7, 13.

²⁰ This article was published in the *Pla de Bages* of 4 April 1912.

²¹ Cf. John 18:6.

²² Cf. Matthew 2:13-18.

²³ Cf. Luke 4:29-30.

²⁴ Cf. John 8:59.

salvation so greatly, and that cannot be carried out without bloodshed (Hebrews 9:22): *And without shedding of blood there is no remission*, and you have me here, such a gentle lamb prepared for the sacrifice; and therefore this is your hour and the power of darkness.

These words which gave freedom to the infernal spirits and ungrateful Jewish people, so that they would torment and cause the death of the Redeemer, were also the words that marked the beginning of their struggle and fight against his followers and his Wife the Church; because (Luke 6:40) tells us "the disciple must not be greater than the Master", and as Jesus Christ himself says (John 15:20): If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you".

Since then, the enemies of the Christian name have not taken a moment's rest in battling the Church. The heretics are attacking its dogmas; the dissidents promoting schisms assault its visible head, the center of unity; the apostates are challenging its holiness with vile slanders; the powers on earth, emulators of its influence and authority, try to contain its progressive advance in the nations, denying it their support and any material resources for that reason; and what is worse, its evil children, like so many other Judases, are betraying or surrendering to the enemies for base interest, and then washing their hands like Pilate to proclaim their innocence.

We could cry out "The poor Church and its poor children!" if we did not have faith in (Matthew 14:26): "The doors of heaven cannot prevail over it". But have no fear, because as (Luke 24:26), "Jesus Christ agreed to enter into his glory through the door of suffering and death", and the hate, humiliations, insults, slanders, tortures and the outrage of his death on the cross he suffered also only served to make his resurrection more glorious. In the same way, the cruel war being waged against the Church and her children will on the contrary serve to make its power more evident and its triumph more glorious. Be joyful, then!, because if the hour has sounded for our enemies and the power of darkness, the hour of our victory and rejoicing is undoubtedly approaching.

These considerations suggest to us the insolence and audacity of the enemies of the Church in our times, in contrast with the apathy and timidity of some Catholics.

No, they should not glory and take pride in their power, because no matter how much the powers on earth unite against God and his Christ, they will not triumph nor will the gates of hell prevail against the Church. They can declare war, because it is its time and the Lord allows it; but once the war is over, those who judged themselves powerful, like Judas, will be severely punished, while the followers of Christ will continue their triumphal march through this world until they receive the laurels and crown of victory in eternity.

BROTHER LUIS, BISHOP AND APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR OF SOLSONA

April of 1912.

PILGRIMAGE OF TEACHERS TO ROME

ADDRESS BEFORE HIS HOLINESS PIUS X²⁵

2448 These children of yours, most Holy Father, that I have the great honor of presenting to Your Holiness, are teachers; Like a sculptor working in marble, every day they are molding in the spirit of the child the knowledge that enlightens the mind, and shaping the will, that mysterious laboratory of nobility when well guided but even more the source of horrible misfortunes when the opposite is true.

They are Spanish teachers: From that land which sanctified the footsteps of the Holy Virgin of Pilar, was watered by the blood of thousands of martyrs and the birthplace of St. Joseph Calasanz, the master of the humble; of St. Ignatius Loyola, the great investigator of psychological mysteries, the educator through his children of countless generations of wise men; and Luis Vives, the Founder of psychology.

They are also *Spanish Catholic teachers*: and this is their most valuable qualification for glory. They are fully convinced that if in all the orders outside of our Divine Savior, everything is ice and darkness, if you do without Jesus in elementary education, this ice and darkness of death kills the delicate spirits of the children, leaving them in the middle of life without hopes that they every again turn their gaze to heaven, leaving them without any brake to contain their instincts.

They are, in addition, Spanish Catholic teachers who constitute a reduced delegation of their many colleagues. However they are not teachers, but humble pupils who present themselves to the universal Teacher to receive your lessons, to remember and preserve them as a rich treasure and a reliable and invariable rule, and to bear witness to your unbreakable support to confirm, next to the Throne of St. Peter, your old Spanish faith.

They are, in addition to pupils, your loving children who approach the heart of the good and beloved Father, to receive the nourishment that consoles them in their daily obligation in the battles for the future.

In their extremely modest sphere of activity, Holy Father, in your name and on behalf of their companions they promise to practice their ministry with the feeling of apostles, to look upon the children with love similar to that the Divine Master used to take them in, reprimanding whoever wanted to move away from Him; with a supernatural love which sees in every child a soul created by God who must be led to Heaven, after having made them useful citizens to society.

In the way they wish to collaborate with your effort in the great undertaking, the goal of your desires, Blessed Father, to *re-establish all things in Christ*²⁶.

²⁵ Cf. *L'Osservatore Romano*, 27 December 1913, n. 355 (16050) 14. Cf. also B. Seg 34 (1914), pp. 31-36.

²⁶ Cf. Pius X: *E Supremi Apostolatus*: ASS 36 (1903 / 1904), p. 131. Cf. 280, 461, 1780, 2155.

MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS OF THIRD ORDER FRIARS²⁷

2449 Among the works of major importance for the needs of our times, Catholics must give a favored place, if not priority, to the Venerable Third Order of Father St. Francis.

In the spirit of this Holy Patriarch, perpetuated over the centuries in his children, the antidote for all the evils from which our society suffers is found; this is the reason why his Holiness Leo XIII recommended it so effectively and after him, the reigning pontiff.

The spirit of discord, the unrestrained passions and excessive luxury which were like so much gangrene eating away at the 13th century society when our saint lived, are the same moths consuming the present century; and this why, if the doctrines and examples of our Father St. Francis were such a powerful means for leading men to practice the gospel and reform of their customs, they would be just as powerful in the present day, if the world would become well-imbued with this revitalizing spirit. Leo XII was convinced of that and said: the reform of society was waiting the spirit of St. Francis.

Therefore, the project of holding a Congress of Third Order Friars in Madrid is greatly satisfying to us, and certainly has to contribute to making this beneficial institution better known, and to spread it wider.

We urge, then, all the Third Order friars and devout members of the Holy Patriarch of our Diocese to try to collaborate and take part in the aforementioned Congress, from which we expect practical results for the glory of God, the good of society and the honor of our Seraphic Order.

In Madrid on 24 April of 1914.
The Bishop of Segorbe

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT²⁸

2450 In the City of Valencia on 23 April of 1925, at 10:15 a.m.

Before me, SALVADOR ROMERO REDÓN, Lawyer, Notary of the Illustrious Association of Valencia, with residence and registered address in Valencia, and the witnesses Mr. Carlos Llana Tarrasa, Mr. Salvador Llana Tarrasa²⁹, both in Commerce, and Mr. Lorenzo Tomás y Lucas, employed, of legal age and with registered address in Valencia, who assure me they are not subject to any of the incapacities with

²⁷ B. Seg 34 (1914), pp. 93-94.

²⁸ Father Luis Amigó made his first will and testament on 20 June 1916, but after the death of his brother Julio in 1921, he made this second and definitive will, which is essentially similar to the previous one (Cf. *The Two Wills of Father Luis Amigó*, in *Pastor Bonus* 32 (1983), pp. 349-361).

²⁹ These are relatives of Father Javier María of Valencia, who were very close to Father Luis (cf. 140 above).

respect to serving as witnesses indicated in the civil Code currently in effect, in the street of the Palau, number one, ground floor, APPEARS:

His Excellency and most Reverend Brother LUIS AMIGÓ FERRER, of legal age, single, Bishop of Segorbe, son of Gaspar and Genoveva, native of Massamagrell, resident of Segorbe living in San Cristóbal street, number five, with a second class personal bond, issued on 1 August last year, check number 3,224.

The witnesses declare they know His Excellency, the gentleman appearing here, whom they regard as being of sound mind and body to make his will and testament, since they find him in full enjoyment of his intellectual powers and of clear and unimpeded speech, for which reasons and legal requirements of this act, I, the notary, in my judgment esteem that his Excellency, the Most Reverend Brother Luis Amigó Ferrer has the legal capacity to formalize this, his last will and testament.

By virtue of this and a previous invocation of the Holy Name of God, the Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, his Mother the Holy Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Sorrows, his protector and Patron Saint St. Joseph, his Holy Father St. Francis and the Angels and Saints of his devotion and his advocates, he proceeds in the presence of myself and the witnesses that they see and understand him declare his last will and testament, which are recorded in the following CLAUSES:

2451 First.— Let it be in the record that through a Rescript of the Holy Congregation dated 24 March 1911, he is authorized to award testaments and make *inter vivos* donations, in spite of his religious profession.

Second.— Declares that as a friar, he has not descendents or ancestors as his parents are dead, he has no heir apparent, can freely dispose of the furnishings, valuable items and money that may belong to him at his death. He does not possess properties, having made a donation to his brothers and sisters of the properties he inherited from his fathers after his profession and could not acquire others by virtue of his profession.

Third.— Orders that if his name appears prominently as a co-owner in any buildings of the Capuchin Order or the Institution of the Capuchin Tertiary Friars, it is understood that he does not want to have any part in the buildings, absolutely renouncing them in favor of the other co-owners and, in their absence, the higher superiors, that is the Provincial Father of the Precious Blood of Christ or the General Minister of the Tertiary Fathers, according to which buildings belong to them. He authorizes his executors so that they can grant the deed of renunciation, donation or sale, in accordance with whatever is convenient for the superiors mentioned above.

Fourth.— He wants it understood to be his wish, before and above all else, even at the cost of the reduction or total loss of what he may assign for suffrages and bequests, that any debts that may be outstanding be paid on his death. But also be sure to have them properly verified, since he always took great care in not contracting debts.

2452 Fifth.— He names as executors of his will, his brother-in-law Mr. Basilio Boada Lluch, the Reverend Father Brother Francisco Javier of Valencia, Capuchin

Tertiary Friar, his nephew Mr. Salvador Escorihuela Amigó, Presbyter, and the very Illustrious Chapter Priest Romualdo Amigó y Ferrer. To substitute for any of them in the event of their death, he names his nephews Mr. Juan Boada Amigó and Mr. José María Amigó Chulvi. To all of them and each one individually so that they may execute everything stated in this last will and testament together or separately.

Sixth.— He chooses as his burial site, duly authorized for it by His Holiness on 5 August 1924, the church built for this purpose in the asylum for orphaned girls in Massamagrell, his birthplace, to which he also had the remains of the padres transferred³⁰, in order that the nuns and orphaned girls would have them more present in their prayers. The Lord Bishop wants the following words engraved on the headstone of his grave, after his name and date of death: *Homo Humus, Fama Fumus, Finis Cinis* (Man is earth, Renown is smoke and Ashes in the end.).

Seventh.— With reference to his burial shroud, he orders that it follow the provisions of the Ceremonial for Bishops, placing the pontifical adornments over his friar's tunic and cord. With regard to the funeral services, he also wants what that Ceremonial stipulates, but requests that there not be a funeral Prayer.

Concerning the embalming stipulated by the Law for the transfer of bodies, he wants his condition of poverty to be taken into account and as little as possible to be spent on it.

Eighth.— On the day of his funeral services, he stipulates that his executors should distribute alms to the poor, both in the Capital of his Diocese and in Massamagrell, leaving to their discretion the number of poor and amount of the alms involved.

Ninth.— He similarly wants alms of 250 *pesetas* or whatever the status of his funds permits to be given to the following Communities and Establishments:

Capuchin Friars of the Magdalene, Massamagrell; Franciscan Fathers, of Segorbe, the Carmelites of the Holy Cave: the Augustine friars of Segorbe; to the Novitiate houses of both his Congregations of Capuchin Tertiary Friars and Sisters, the Hospital of Segorbe, the asylums for orphaned girls of Segorbe and Massamagrell, the Conferences of Gentlemen and Ladies of Segorbe and the Association for the Propagation of the Faith. He also assigns the amount of at least 250 *pesetas* as a memento his lay employees, the doorman and cook.

Tenth.— He bequeaths his best chalice, a gift from Luis Pons, to his Church of the Asylum in Massamagrell, the filigree chalice to the Church of the Novitiate of his Third Order Sisters, his chalice for regular use with its corresponding cruets, a gift from his Third Order Friars at his Episcopal consecration, to the church of the Novitiate of the Third Order friars, the silver basin, composed of a wash bowl and pitcher, he bequeaths to his Cathedral church, the two round silver trays he leaves to the Parish church of Massamagrell in which he was baptized and his gilded silver ciborium to the Church of the Asylum of Segorbe.

Eleventh.— The pectoral cross of diamonds and emerges, with its chain and ring that was a present of Girona, he leaves to his Church of the Asylum of

³⁰ Cf. 225 above.

Massamagrell so that they can be placed in the custody of, or on the chest of the child Jesus of the Holy Family, the larger crosier that was a gift from his hometown to his religious brothers, the Capuchin Fathers, delivering it to the Provincial Father, the second crosier to his children the Third Order friars, with the General Father taking possession of it, the lovely miter that his Third Order sisters made for him is to go back to them, delivered to the General Mother Superior, as will the great capes, so that sacred ornaments are made of them.

Twelfth.— As a demonstration of gratitude to his executors, he bequeaths: to his brother-in-law, the gold chest cross and its chain that he uses regularly; to the Reverend Father Javier, the gold watch which has their portraits engraved, to his nephew Salvador Escorihuela, taking into account that he is the one to whom he has had less need to favor in life, he makes a great bequest than to the others, leaving him his complete silver coffee set; and to his nephew and secretary Romualdo Amigó, he bequeaths another gold watch with his coat of arms engraved on in. And if it would happen that one of these executors should predecease him, the bequest corresponding to him passes to whoever replaces him in accordance with the fifth clause above. In addition, he wants his executors to divide among themselves the books that are in the shelf of his office.

Thirteenth.— To his sister Rosa Amigó, he bequeaths the Image of the Baby Jesus he has in the reception room, and the ring with which he was consecrated, a gift from his godfather Mr. Gabriel Maura, and to Mr. Antonio Asensi, whose services he is very grateful for, he gives a gold watch he was given as a gift in Madrid. He also wants the Image of the Holy Christ in his office be given for worship in the Church of the Asylum of Massamagrell, and the Novices of the Third Order sisters to have the group image of the Holy Family in their individual chapel. He bequeaths to his nephew José María Amigó the watch he has in his office with a chain for one year, and to his older son the portrait of her in the white metal frame. To his sister-in-law Dolores Chulvi, he leaves as a memento the small image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to the sons and daughters of his sister Rosa, the silk cushion bordered in gold and silk threads, the small typewriter, and the pencils of the hall so they can share them among themselves.

Fourteenth.— To the Friars of his Congregation of Capuchin Tertiary Friars, who by arrangement of their superiors have been providing him their services, in addition to the amount he would leave them as a small token of his gratitude, he also gives them all his clothing for their use and an image to each of the following: to Father Pedro the bust of the reclining Lord; to Brother Serafín, the image of Our Lady of Sorrows; to Friar Bruno, the Miraculous Medallion, and to Friar Jesús, the one of Mary the Provider of Assistance.

Fifteenth.— The testator also wants the personal objects he owns and uses in the custody of his sister Rosa and his nephews Salvador Escorihuela and José María Amigó to pass to their ownership. His ornaments and clothing for worship are to be distributed at the discretion of his executors between the houses of his two congregations as mementos, after first allowing his confessor Mr. Rafael Muñoz to choose those he wants, if he survives him or whoever his confessor would be then.

Sixteenth.— The remainder of all the objects belonging to him that were not disposed of in the previous clauses of this last will and testament, whatever kind they may be, the testator wants and stipulates that they are valued and sold by his executors without a public auction, giving preference of purchase to his family and the friars and nuns of his Congregations. That amount, plus whatever money there might be, is to be divided in three parts: one to invest in the good of his soul, which his executors will distributed in Masses and alms at their discretion after taking into account what the testator indicated in the eighth and ninth clauses. He wants the second portion to be distributed equally between his brothers, the Capuchin Fathers, and his sons and daughters of the Third Order friars and sisters, and the third part left as a memento to his nephews and nieces, the children of his brothers and sisters, and to his nephew Romualdo so that they are equally divided among them, putting on the record not to leave the mementos in the name of his brothers and sisters, because they have all predeceased him except for one and he already provided for them in life as much as it was possible for him.

Seventeenth.— He absolutely forbids judicial intervention in the execution of his will for any cause or reason, and also does not want anyone to ask for an accounting of what passed to his servants nor his executors, who he entrusts with the fulfillment in all parts of this, his last will and testament, and in whom he has complete and absolute confidence, wanting everything done with greatest peace and secrecy possible, ordering that anyone who would instigate any question or legal action about this last will and testament be excluded from then on of whatever corresponds to him in accordance with the testament.

Eighteenth.— He revokes and declares invalid and without any effect any other last will and testament he might have drawn up prior to the present one.

He signs this last will and testament before me and the previously named witnesses.

Having informed everyone of their right to read this last will and testament, with their agreement I, the Notary, proceeded to a full and careful reading of the testament out loud, and its content ratified by the testator, who signs it with the witnesses.

In witness whereof, by meeting the Testator, having fulfilled all the legal formalities in a single act without any interrupted and the present document is extended in five sheets of paper of class eight, series F, numbers 4,844,226 and the four following sheets, I, the Notary, bear witness. Brother Luis, Bishop. – Carlos Llana. – Salvador Llana. – Lorenzo Tomás. – Signed. – Salvador Romero. – Signed.

On 30 April 1925, I inform the Dean of the executing that precedes *de oficio* n. 19 of the order. I bear witness, Romero. – Signed.

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MONSIGNOR LUIS AMIGÓ Y FERRER COMPLETE WORKS

This is the first English translation of the *Complete Works* of Monsignor Amigó, the *Teacher and Apostle of Wayward Youth*, whose spirit and work are very much evident in present-day society thanks to the ongoing and selfless efforts of the two religious Institutions he founded: the *Capuchine Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family* and the *Capuchin Tertiary Friars of Our Lady of Sorrows*.

Father Luis Amigó, first as a simple, humble Capuchin friar and later as an obliging and approachable bishop, made the theme of his life the same attitude that distinguished the life of Christ the Redeemer and the Good Shepherd, that is, an attitude always disposed to “to do the utmost so that others can find the life”, always prepared “to save, to fully free his brothers, especially those who were wandering lost”. Society has a debt of gratitude towards this man who, born in the mid-19th century and dead at the end of the first third of the 20th century, knew how to stop alongside his suffering fellow man, especially the wayward children and maladjusted youth, to offer them effective assistance.

It is possible that this publication of his *Complete Works* may help people to know him more deeply, and from there, appreciate more intensely the life of a man whose path towards canonization is now at a very advanced stage.

This text of his works has been divided using a progressive numbering system that greatly facilitates its use and citation. The general introduction introduces the figure of this man of God and offers a first comprehensive overview of his activity as a writer. The introductions accompanying each section which his literary production is divided into highlights the different facets and perspectives of his human and spiritual personality. The text has been carefully studied with respect to some of the details. The critical notes accompanying it are the result of serious research into the subject. At the end, there are several indexes —of names, Bible citations and subjects— which constitute both a very useful resource for using the present work and a point of departure for subsequent studies delving more deeply into the life, spirituality and work of this providential man.