

ON THE SACRED HEART

Author: Pope Pius XI

CARITATE CHRISTI COMPULSI (On the Sacred Heart)

Pope Pius XI

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To the Venerable Brethren the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries of Localities having Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See.

Venerable Brethren, Health and the Apostolic Benediction.

1. Constrained by the Charity of Christ, in Our Encyclical Letter *Nova impendet* on the second day of October in last year, we incited the children of the Catholic Church—and, indeed, all men of good heart—to a pious emulation in love and in helpful action, so that the terrible evils that come from the economic crisis, and are everywhere oppressing human society, might be in some measure mitigated. Our invitation, indeed, was warmly welcomed with remarkable unanimity, through the active liberality of all. Nevertheless, since the distress is increasing and the hosts of men in affliction by enforced idleness are almost everywhere growing greater; and since seditious men make use of these difficulties and turn them to the advantage of their own several factions, it has come to pass that public institutions themselves are in a most critical situation, so that a very grave danger of disturbances and of a general upheaval is threatening civil society. In this state of things, Venerable Brethren stirred up by the self-same charity of Christ, We once more address you all, and the faithful committed to your care, and indeed all men, exhorting all and several that with all their forces united in a spirit of charity they should endeavour to withstand, by every possible effort, the calamities by which civil society is now afflicted and those yet graver calamities threatening it in the future.

2. Anyone who considers carefully the prolonged and bitter series of sufferings, the unhappy heritage of sin, whereby, as by so many stages, we mark the course of fallen man in this mortal pilgrimage, can hardly find any occasion since the flood, when the race of man was so deeply and so

commonly tried by so many and such great distresses of body and of mind as those which we lament to see in the present troubles; for even the most terrible calamities and disasters which have left indelible traces on the records and the life of nations did but devastate now one people, now another. But in this troubled time the whole human race is so pressed by the scarcity of money and by the straits of the economic crisis that the more it struggles to get free, the more it feels itself inextricably fettered. And from this it comes that there is now no nation, no state, no society, no family, that is not either itself oppressed, more or less gravely, by these calamities, or else seems likely to be dragged down headlong by the ruin of others. Nay more, those very men, very few indeed, who since they are endowed with immense riches, seemed to control the government of the world, those very few, moreover, who, being addicted to excessive gain, were and are in great part the cause of such great evils; those very men—we say—are often, with little honour, the first to be ruined, grasping the goods and the fortunes of very many unto their own destruction; so that we may see how the judgment, spoken by the Holy Spirit concerning guilty individual men, is now verified in the whole world: "By what things a man sinneth, by the same also he is tormented" (Wisdom xi. 17).

3. Lamenting this unhappy state of things from our innermost heart, We are compelled as by a certain necessity to express, according to our weakness, the same words that came from the love of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, crying out in like manner: "I have compassion on the multitude" (Mark viii. 2). But, indeed, the root itself from which this most unhappy state of things arises is yet more to be lamented; for if that judgment of the Holy Spirit, proclaimed by the Apostle St. Paul, "the desire of money is the root of all evils," was always in close agreement with the facts, this is more than ever true at the present time. For is not that avidity for perishable goods which was justly and rightly mocked, even by a heathen poet as the execrable hunger of gold, "auri sacra fames"; is not that sordid seeking for each one's own benefit, which is very often the only motive by which bonds between either individuals or societies are instituted; and, lastly, is not this cupidity, by whatsoever name or style it is called, the chief reason why we now see, to our sorrow, that mankind is brought to its present critical condition? For it is from this that come the first shoots of a mutual suspicion which saps the strength of any human commerce; hence come the sparks of an envy which accounts the goods of

others a loss to itself; hence comes that sordid and excessive self-love which orders and subordinates all things to its own advantage, and not only neglects but tramples upon the advantage of others; and, lastly, hence come the iniquitous disturbance of affairs and the unequal division of "possessions, as a result of which the wealth of nations is heaped up in the hands of a very few private men, who—as We warned you last year, in Our Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo anno*—control the trade of the whole world at their will, thereby doing immense harm to the people.

4. Now if this excessive love of self and of one's own, by an abuse of the legitimate care for our country and an undue exaltation of the feelings of piety towards our own people (which piety is not condemned but hallowed and strengthened by the right order of Christian charity) encroaches on the mutual relations and the ties between peoples, there is hardly anything so abnormal that it will not be regarded as free from fault; so that the same deed which would be condemned by the judgment of all when it is done by private individuals, is held to be honest and worthy of praise when it is done for the love of the country. In this way, a hatred, which must needs be fatal to all, supplants the Divine law of brotherly love which bound all nations and peoples into one family under one Father who is in Heaven; in the administration of public affairs the Divine laws, which are the standard of all civic life and culture, are trampled underfoot; the firm foundations of right and faith, on which the commonwealth rests, are overturned; and, lastly, men corrupt and obliterate the principles handed down by their ancestors, according to which the worship of God and the strict observance of His law form the finest flower and the safest pillar of the state. Furthermore—and this may be called the most perilous of all these evils—the enemies of all order, whether they be called Communists or by some other name, exaggerating the very grave straits of the economic crisis, in this great perturbation of morals, with extreme audacity, direct all their efforts to one end, seeking to cast away every bridle from their necks, and breaking the bonds of all law both human and divine, wage an atrocious war against all religion and against God Himself; in this it is their purpose to uproot utterly all knowledge and sense of religion from the minds of men, even from the tenderest age, for they know well that if once the Divine law and knowledge were blotted out from the minds of men there would now be nothing that they could not arrogate

to themselves. And thus we now see with our own eyes—what we have not read of as happening anywhere before—impious men, agitated by unspeakable fury, shamelessly liking up a banner against God and against all religion throughout the whole world.

5. It is true, indeed, that wicked men were never wanting, nor men who denied the existence of God; but these last were very few in number, and, being alone and singular, they either feared to express their evil mind openly, or thought it inopportune to do so. The Psalmist, inspired by the Divine Spirit, seems to hint this in those words: "The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God" (Ps. xiii. 1, lii. 1); as though he showed us such an impious man, as one solitary in a multitude, denying that God his Maker exists, but shutting up this sin in his innermost mind. But in this age of ours, this most pernicious error is now propagated far and wide amid the multitude, it is insinuated even in the popular schools, and shows itself openly in the theatres; and in order that it may be spread abroad as far as possible, its advocates seek aid from the latest inventions, from what are called cinematographic scenes, from gramophonic and radiophonic concerts and discourses; and possessed of printing offices of their own, they print books in all languages, and, taking a triumphant course, they publicly display the monuments and documents of their impiety. Nor is this enough; for dispersed among political, economical and military parties, and closely associated with them, through their heralds, by means of committees, by pictures and leaflets, and all other possible means, they labour diligently in the evil work of spreading their opinions among all classes and societies, and in the public ways; and to carry this further, supported by the authority and work of their universities, they succeed at last by forceful industry in binding fast those who have incautiously allowed themselves to be aggregated to their body. When We consider all this careful labour devoted to the advantage of an unlawful cause, that most sad complaint of Christ our Lord spontaneously rises in our mind and on our lips: "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light" (Luke xvi. 8).

6. Now, the leaders and authors of this iniquitous faction do all they can to turn the present distress and need of all things to their own purpose; and they seek, by infamous cavils, to persuade the people that God and religion are to blame as the cause of all these great evils; and that the sacred Cross of Christ our Saviour itself, the ensign of poverty and humility, may be compared with

the ensigns of the modern lust of domineering; as though, forsooth, religion was joined in friendly union with those conventicles of darkness which have brought such an immense mass of misery upon the whole world. And by this line of argument they strive, not without fatal effect, to mix up the struggle for daily food, the desire to possess a small holding, to have a fair wage, an honourable home and, lastly, those conditions of life that are not unworthy of a man, with their iniquitous war against God. It may be added that these same men, going beyond all measure, treat alike the legitimate appetites of nature and its unbridled lusts, so long as this seems to favour their impious plans and institutions; as though the eternal laws promulgated by God were in conflict with man's happiness, whereas they create it and preserve it; or as if the power of man, however much it may be augmented by the latest inventions of art, could prevail against the most mighty will of God the Best and Greatest and give to the world a new and a better order.

7. And now, indeed, which is much to be lamented, immense multitudes of men, having completely lost touch with the truth, adopt these delusions, and believing that they are fighting for livelihood and culture utter violent invectives against God and against religion. Nor is this directed against the Catholic religion alone. For it is against all those that acknowledge God as the Author of this visible world, and as the Supreme Ruler of all things. Moreover, the Secret Societies, which by their nature are ever ready to help the enemies of God and of the Church—be these who they may—are seeking to add fresh fires to this poisonous hatred, from which there comes no peace or happiness of the civil order, but the certain ruin of states.

8. In this wise, this new form of impiety, while it removes all checks from the most powerful lusts of man, most impudently proclaims that there will be no peace and no happiness on earth until the last vestige of religion has been uprooted, and the last of its followers beheaded— as though they thought that the wondrous concert wherein all created things "show forth the glory of God" (cf. Ps. xviii. 2) could ever be reduced to everlasting silence.

9. We know very well, Venerable Brethren, that all these efforts will come to nought, since without doubt, and in His own appointed time, "God shall arise, and his enemies shall be scattered" (Ps. lxxvii. 2); We know that the gates of Hell shall never prevail (cf. Matt. xvi. 18); We know that Our Divine Redeemer,

as was foretold of Him, "shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth" (cf. Isaias xi. 4); and there will be a dreadful hour for those wretched men, when they shall fall "into the hands of the living God" (cf. Heb x. 31).

10. Our unshaken hope in this complete victory of God and of the Church receives daily confirmation (such is the infinite mercy of God!) from the noble ardour of innumerable souls whom we see turning themselves to God, in every country and in all classes of society. For most certainly a very powerful afflatus of the Holy Spirit is rushing through all lands, and is moving the hearts, especially the hearts of the young, to mount upwards to the highest summits of the Christian law, and, raising them above the vain observance of men, makes them ready to undertake even the most arduous deeds. This divine afflatus, We say, stirs the souls of all, even those who were unwilling, filling them with an intimate solicitude, and gives the yearning for God even to those who do not dare to acknowledge it. In like manner Our invitation to laymen, calling them to join the hosts of Catholic Action in order that they might become partakers in the apostolate of the hierarchy, has been accepted by the multitudes of the docile and the magnanimous in all lands; and the number of those who are striving with all their strength to defend the Christian law and to bring the whole life of the commonwealth into harmony with it, is daily growing both in the cities and in the country; and these men strive likewise to confirm the principles they preach, by the example of a blameless life. But when We behold so much impiety, so much trampling under foot of the most holy institutions, such great destruction of immortal souls, and lastly such great contempt of the Divine Majesty, We cannot refrain, Venerable Brethren, from pouring out the most bitter sorrow by which We are oppressed, and from lifting up Our voice with all the strength of 478 the apostolic heart, in defence of the outraged rights of God, and of the holy desires of the human soul in its absolute need of God; and We do this the more readily because these hostile hosts, raging with diabolical spirit, are not content with declamation, but are striving with all their strength to give effect to their nefarious plans as speedily as possible. Woe to the race of men if God, being treated with such contempt by the natures He has made, should leave an open course to these floods of devastation, and should use them as scourges to punish the world withal!

11. It is needful, therefore, Venerable Brethren, that we should unflinchingly set up "a wall for the house of Israel" (Ezechiel xiii. 5), and that we too should join all our forces together into one solid band against these hostile ranks which are hostile both to God and to mankind. For in this fight we are contending for the greatest question that can be proposed to human liberty: either for God or against God; here, again, is a debate in which the fate of the whole world is concerned; for in every matter, in politics, in economics, in morals, in discipline, in the arts, in the state, in civic and domestic society, in the East and in the West, everywhere we meet with this debate, and its consequences are a matter of supreme moment. And so it comes to pass that even the masters of that sect which foolishly says that the world is nothing but matter, and boasts that it has already shown for certain that there is no God—even these are constrained, again and again, to institute discussions about Him, though they thought they had done away with Him altogether.

12. Wherefore, We exhort all, private individuals as well as states, in the Lord, that now when such grave matters are agitated, critical questions concerning the welfare of all mankind, to lay aside that sordid and selfish regard for nothing but their own advantage, which blunts even the keenest minds, and cuts short even the noblest enterprises if they go the least bit beyond the narrow bounds of self-interest. Let all, then, join together, if need be even at the cost of serious loss, so that they may save themselves and all human society. In this union of minds and of forces, those who glory in the Christian name ought surely to take the foremost place, remembering the illustrious examples of the Apostolic age, when "the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul" (Acts iv. 32). but besides these, all whoever sincerely acknowledge God and honour Him from their heart should lend their aid in order that mankind may be saved from the great peril impending over all. For since all human authority must needs rest on the recognition of God, as on the firm foundation of any civil order, those who would not have all things overturned and all laws abrogated, must strive strenuously to prevent the enemies of religion from giving effect to the plans which they have so openly and so vehemently proclaimed.

13. Nor are We unaware, Venerable Brethren, that in this fight for our altars we must also use all the legitimate human arms which are ready to our hands. For this reason, in Our Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo anno*, following in the

footsteps of Our predecessor, Leo XIII of illustrious memory, We contended so strenuously for a more equal division of earthly goods, indicating all those things by which the health and vigour of all human society may be most efficaciously restored, and peace and tranquillity may be given to its labouring members. For since a most vehement desire of obtaining a certain honourable happiness, even on this earth, has been implanted by the Maker of all things in the minds of mortal men, the Christian law has ever regarded with benevolence and actively fostered all legitimate efforts to promote the progress of true science, and to lead men by the right path to a higher condition.

14. However, in the face of this satanic hatred of religion, which reminds Us of the "mystery of iniquity" (Thess. ii. 7) referred to by St. Paul, mere human means and expedients are not enough, and We should consider ourselves wanting in Our apostolic ministry if We did not point out to mankind those wonderful mysteries of light, that alone contain the hidden strength to subjugate the unchained powers of darkness. When Our Lord, coming down from the splendours of Tabor, had healed the boy tormented by the devil, whom the disciples had not been able to cure, to their humble question: "Why could not we cast him out?" He made reply in the memorable words: "This kind is not cast out but by prayer and fasting" (Matth. xvii. 18, 20). It appears to Us, Venerable Brethren, that these divine words find a peculiar application in the evils of our times, which can be averted only by means of prayer and penance.

15. Mindful then of our condition, that we are essentially limited and absolutely dependent on the Supreme Being, before everything else let us have recourse to prayer. We know through faith how great is the power of humble, trustful, persevering prayer. To no other pious work have ever been attached such ample, such universal, such solemn promises as to prayer: "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened" (Matth. vii. 7). "Amen, amen I say to you, if you ask the Father anything in my name He will give it you" (Jo. xvi. 23).

16. And what object could be more worthy of our prayer, and more in keeping with the adorable person of Him who is the only "mediator of God and men,

the Man Jesus Christ" (I Tim. ii. 5), than to beseech Him to preserve on earth faith in one God living and true? Such prayer bears already in itself a part of its answer; for in the very act of prayer a man unites himself with God and, so to speak, keeps alive on earth the idea of God. The man who prays, merely by his humble posture, professes before the world his faith in the Creator and Lord of all things; joined with others in prayer, he recognizes, that not only the individual, but human society as a whole has over it a supreme and absolute Lord.

17. What a spectacle for heaven and earth is not the Church in prayer! For centuries without interruption, from midnight to midnight, is repeated on earth the divine psalmody of the inspired canticles; there is no hour of the day that is not hallowed by its special liturgy; there is no stage of life that has not its part in the thanksgiving, praise, supplication and reparation in common use by the mystical body of Christ, which is the Church. Thus prayer of itself assures the presence of God among men, according to the promise of the divine Redeemer: "Where there are two or three gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matth. xviii. 20).

18. In addition, prayer will remove the fundamental cause of present day difficulties, which We have mentioned above, that is the insatiable greed for earthly goods. The man who prays looks above to the goods of heaven whereon he meditates and which he desires; his whole being is plunged in the contemplation of the marvellous order established by God, which knows not the frenzy of earthly successes nor the futile competitions of ever increasing speed; and thus automatically, as it were, will be re-established that equilibrium between work and rest, whose entire absence from society today is responsible for grave dangers to life physical, economic and moral. If, therefore, those, who through the excessive production of manufactured goods have fallen into unemployment and poverty, made up their minds to give the proper time to prayer, there is no doubt that work and production would soon be brought within reasonable limits, and that the conflict which now divides humanity into two great camps struggling for transient interests, would be changed into a noble and peaceful contest for goods heavenly and eternal.

19. In like manner will the way be opened to the peace we long for, as St. Paul beautifully remarks in the passage where he joins the precept of prayer to holy desires for the peace and salvation of all men: "I desire, therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all men; for kings and all that are in high station, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all piety and chastity. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of truth" (I Tim. ii. 1-4). Let peace be implored for all men, but especially for those who in human society have the grave responsibilities of government; for how could they give peace to their peoples, if they have it not themselves? And it is prayer precisely, that, according to the Apostle, will bring the gift of peace; prayer that is addressed to the Heavenly Father who is the Father of all men; prayer that is the common expression of family feelings, of that great family which extends beyond the boundaries of any country and continent.

20. Men who in every nation pray to the same God for peace on earth will not kindle flames of discord among the peoples; men who turn in prayer to the divine Majesty, will not set up in their own country a craving for domination; nor foster that inordinate love of country which of its own nation makes its own god; men who look to the "God of peace and of love" (II Cor. xiii. 11), who turn to Him through the mediation of Christ, who is "our peace" (Eph. ii. 14), will never rest until finally that peace which the world cannot give, comes down from the Giver of every good gift on "men of good will" (Luc. ii. 14).

21. "Peace be to you" (Io. xx. 26) was the Easter greeting of Our Lord to His Apostles and first disciples; and this blessed greeting from those first times until our day has ever found place in the sacred Liturgy of the Church, and today more than ever should comfort and refresh aching and oppressed human hearts.

22. But to prayer we must also join penance, the spirit of penance, and the practice of Christian penance. Thus Our divine Master teaches us, whose first preaching was precisely penance: "Jesus began to preach and to say, Do penance" (Matth. iv. 17). The same is the teaching of all Christian tradition, of the whole history of the Church. In the great calamities, in the great tribulations of Christianity, when the need of God's help was most pressing,

the faithful either spontaneously, or more often following the lead and exhortations of their holy Pastors, have always taken in hand the two most mighty weapons of spiritual life: prayer and penance. By that sacred instinct, by which unconsciously as it were the Christian people is guided when not led astray by the sowers of tares, and which is none other than that "mind of Christ" (I Cor. ii. 16) of which the Apostle speaks, the faithful have always felt immediately in such cases the need of purifying their souls from sin with contrition of heart, with the sacrament of reconciliation, and of appeasing divine Justice with external works of penance as well.

23. Certainly We know, and with you, Venerable Brethren, We deplore the fact that in our day the idea and the name of expiation and penance have with many lost in great part the power of rousing enthusiasm of heart and heroism of sacrifice. In other times they were able to inspire such feelings, for they appeared in the eyes of men of faith as sealed with a divine mark in likeness of Christ and His Saints: but nowadays there are some who would put aside external mortifications as things of the past; without mentioning the modern exponent of liberty, the "autonomous man" as he is called, who despises penance as bearing the mark of servitude. As a fact the notion of the need of penance and expiation is lost in proportion as belief in God is weakened, and the idea of an original sin and of a first rebellion of man against God becomes confused and disappears.

24. But We, on the other hand, Venerable Brethren, in virtue of Our pastoral office, must bear aloft these names and these ideas, and preserve them in their true meaning, in their genuine dignity, and still more in their practical and necessary application to Christian life. To this We are urged by the very defence of God and Religion, which We sustain, since penance is of its nature a recognition and a re-establishment of the moral order in the world which is founded on the eternal law, that is on the living God. He who makes satisfaction to God for sin, recognizes thereby the sanctity of the highest principles of morality, their internal binding power, the need of a sanction against their violation. Certainly one of the most dangerous errors of our age is the claim to separate morality from religion, thus removing all solid basis for any legislation. This intellectual error might perhaps have passed unnoticed and appeared less dangerous when it was confined to a few, and belief in God was still the common heritage of mankind, and was tacitly presumed

even in the case of those who no longer professed it openly. But today, when atheism is spreading through the masses of the people, the practical consequences of such an error become dreadfully tangible, and realities of the saddest kind make their appearance in the world. In place of moral laws, which disappear together with the loss of faith in God, brute force is imposed, trampling on every right. Old time fidelity and honesty of conduct and mutual intercourse extolled so much even by the orators and poets of paganism, now give place to speculations in one's own affairs as in those of others without reference to conscience. In fact, how can any contract be maintained, and what value can any treaty have, in which every guarantee of conscience is lacking? And how can there be talk of guarantees of conscience, when all faith in God and all fear of God has vanished? Take away this basis, and with it all moral law falls, and there is no remedy left to stop the gradual but inevitable destruction of peoples, families, the State, civilization itself.

25. Penance then is, as it were, a salutary weapon placed in the hands of the valiant soldiers of Christ, who wish to fight for the defence and restoration of the moral order in the universe. It is a weapon that strikes right at the root of all evil, that is at the lust of material wealth and the wanton pleasures of life. By means of voluntary sacrifices, by means of practical and even painful acts of self-denial, by means of various works of penance, the noble-hearted Christian subdues the base passions that tend to make him violate the moral order. But if zeal for the divine law and brotherly love are as great in him as they should be, then not only does he practice penance for himself and his own sins, but he takes upon himself the expiation of the sins of others, imitating the Saints who often heroically made themselves victims of reparation for the sins of whole generations, imitating even the divine Redeemer, who became the Lamb of God "who taketh away the sins of the world" (Jo. i. 29).

26. Is there not perchance, Venerable Brethren, in this spirit of penance also a sweet mystery of peace? "There is no peace to the wicked" (Is. lviii. 22), says the Holy Spirit, because they live in continuous struggle and conflict with the order established by nature and by its Creator. Only when this order is restored, when all peoples faithfully and spontaneously recognize and profess it, when the internal conditions of peoples and their outward relations with other nations are founded on this basis, then only will stable peace be

possible on earth. But to create this atmosphere of lasting peace, neither peace treaties, nor the most solemn pacts, nor international meetings or conferences, nor even the noblest and most disinterested efforts of any statesman, will be enough, unless in the first place are recognized the sacred rights of natural and divine law. No leader in public economy, no power of organization will ever be able to bring social conditions to a peaceful solution, unless first in the very field of economics there triumphs moral law based on God and conscience. This is the underlying value of every value in the political life as well as in the economic life of nations; this is the soundest "rate of exchange." If it is kept steady, all the rest will be stable, being guaranteed by the immutable and eternal law of God.

27. And even for men individually, penance is the foundation and bearer of true peace detaching them from earthly and perishable goods, lifting them up to goods that are eternal, giving them, even in the midst of privations and adversity, a peace that the world with all its wealth and pleasures cannot give. One of the most pleasing and most joyous songs ever heard in this vale tears is without doubt the famous "Canticle of the Sun" of St. Francis. Now the man who composed it, who wrote it and sang it, was one of the greatest penitents, the Poor Man of Assisi, who possessed absolutely nothing on earth, and bore in his emaciated body the painful Stigmata of His Crucified Lord.

28. Prayer, then, and penance are the two potent inspirations sent to us at this time by God, that we may lead back to Him mankind that has gone astray and wanders about without a guide: they are the inspirations that will dispel and remedy the first and principal cause of every form of disturbance and rebellion, the revolt of man against God. But the peoples themselves are called upon to make up their minds to a definite choice: either they entrust themselves to these benevolent and beneficent inspirations and are converted, humble and repentant, to the Lord and the Father of mercies, or they hand over themselves and what little remains of happiness on earth to the mercy of the enemy of God, to the spirit of vengeance and destruction.

29. Nothing remains for Us, therefore, but to invite this poor world that has shed so much blood, has dug so many graves, has destroyed so many works, has deprived so many men of bread and labor, nothing else remains for us,

We say, but to invite it in the loving words of the sacred Liturgy: "Be thou converted to the Lord thy God."

30. What more suitable occasion can We indicate, Venerable Brethren, for such a union of prayer and reparation, than the approaching Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus? The proper spirit of this solemnity, as we amply showed four years ago in Our Encyclical Letter *Miserentissimus*, is the spirit of loving reparation, and therefore it was Our will that on that day every year in perpetuity there should be made in all the churches of the world a public act of reparation for all the offenses that wound that divine Heart.

31. Let, therefore, this year the Feast of the Sacred Heart be for the whole Church one of holy rivalry of reparation and supplication. Let the faithful hasten in large numbers to the eucharistic board, hasten to the foot of the altar to adore the Redeemer of the world, under the veils of the Sacrament, that you, Venerable Brethren, will have solemnly exposed that day in all churches, let them pour out to that Merciful Heart that has known all the griefs of the human heart, the fullness of their sorrow, the steadfastness of their faith, the trust of their hope, the ardour of their charity. Let them pray to Him, interposing likewise the powerful patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mediatrix of all graces, for themselves and for their families, for their country, for the Church; let them pray to Him for the Vicar of Christ on earth and for all the other Pastors, who share with him the dread burden of the spiritual government of souls; let them pray for their brethren who believe, for their brethren who err, for unbelievers, for infidels, even for the enemies of God and the Church, that they may be converted, and let them pray for the whole of poor mankind.

32. Let this spirit of prayer and reparation be maintained with keen earnestness and intensity by all the faithful during the entire octave, to which dignity it has pleased Us to raise this feast; and during this octave, in the manner that each of you, Venerable Brethren, according to local circumstances, shall think opportune to prescribe or counsel, let there be public prayers and other devout exercises of piety, for the intentions We have briefly touched on above, "that we may obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid." (Hebr. iv. 16.)

33. May this be indeed for the whole Christian people an octave of reparation and of holy austerity; let these be days of mortification and of prayer. Let the faithful abstain at least from entertainments and amusements however lawful; let those who are in easier circumstances deduct also something voluntarily, in the spirit of Christian renunciation from the moderate measure of their usual manner of life bestowing rather on the poor the proceeds of this retrenchment, since almsgiving is also an excellent means of satisfying divine Justice and drawing down divine mercies. And let the poor, and all those who at this time are facing the hard trial of unemployment and scarcity of food, let them in a like spirit of penance offer with greater resignation the privations imposed on them by these hard times and the state of society, which divine Providence in its inscrutable but ever-loving plan has assigned them. Let them accept with a humble and trustful heart from the hand of God the effects of poverty, rendered harder by the distress in which mankind is now struggling; let them rise more generously even to the divine sublimity of the Cross of Christ, reflecting on the fact, that if work is among the greatest values of life, it was nevertheless love of a suffering God that saved the world; let them take comfort in the certainty that their sacrifices and their trials borne in a Christian spirit will concur efficaciously to hasten the hour of mercy and peace.

34. The divine Heart of Jesus cannot but be moved at the prayers and sacrifices of His Church, and He will finally say to His Spouse, weeping at His feet under the weight of so many griefs and woes: "Great is thy faith; be it done to thee as thou wilt." (Matth. xv. 28.)

35. With this confidence, strengthened by the memory of the Cross, sacred symbol and precious instrument of our holy redemption, the glorious Invention of which we celebrate today, to you, Venerable Brethren, to your clergy and people, to the whole Catholic world, We impart with paternal love the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, on the feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross, the third day of May in the year 1932, the eleventh of Our Pontificate.