



Director's Letter No. 11

by Fr. Karl Stehlin, Director of the Militia Immaculatae

The Sacred Heart of Jesus

Dear Knights of the Immaculata!

Amongst the deepest considerations in St. Maximilian Kolbe's conferences and writings has to be mentioned the mystery of the union of Jesus and Mary, and precisely of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculata. We can summarize his thoughts about this mystery with the famous words of St. John Eudes: "We must never separate what God himself has so perfectly united. Jesus and Mary are so intimately bound together that everyone who sees Jesus can see Mary. Everyone who loves Jesus loves Mary; everyone who honours Jesus reveres Mary."

All in the life of our holy founder is about the mystery of Love! Thanks to her union with the Holy Ghost Our Lady's Heart is the summit of love: "In the Holy Spirit's union with her not only does love join these two beings, but the first of the two [the Holy Spirit] is the entire love of the Holy Trinity, while the second [Mary] is the entire love of creation; and thus in this union heaven is joined with earth, all of heaven with all of earth, all uncreated love with all created love; it is the summit of love." The LOVE of the most holy Trinity has appeared totally and fully in the Immaculata, in the depths of her very being, in her heart, because the heart is the greatest intimacy; it is fullness in its source of everything that man is and has.

But as the Holy Ghost is in God the Love of the Father to the Son, and the love of the Son to the Father, so in the mystery of Mary the Holy Ghost is so to speak the love of Our Lady to God and particularly to her Son, as He is the Love of the Son to His mother. In other words, the most precious treasure of all creation is the immensity of love that these hearts have for one another, and this is precisely the deepest object of the devotion to the UNITED HEARTS of Jesus and Mary. Saint John Eudes pointed out the miracle of this union, presenting Mary as the new ark of the covenant: "The heart of Mary was represented by the ark of Moses. First of all, the ark was made an indestructible tree. The Immaculate Heart of the Queen of angels has never been defiled by any sin. Secondly, as the ark that was adorned with pure gold inside and outside, the heart of the Mother of Beautiful Love has always been completely overlooked by the golden gold of love within, that is, in the eyes of God, and without, that is, in our eyes. Thirdly, as the ark contained tables of God's commandments, so the Holy Spirit wrote all the holy commandments that our Saviour brought to us from heaven in golden letters in the holy heart of the divine Mother. **Fourthly, just as the ark contained the manna which God had ordered to fall from heaven to nourish his chosen people in the desert, so the Heart of the Mother of Jesus contained in itself all the mysteries which her Son had performed for us on earth; it also contains all the words of life and divine truths which He brought from heaven, just like the most dear and sweet manna, to feed us and give life to our souls. O Jesus, the only Son of God, the only Son of Mary, I offer You the loving Heart of Your Heavenly Mother, which is**

more precious and beautiful to You than all other hearts. O Mary, the Mother of Jesus, I offer you the most holy and glorified Heart of your beloved Son, which is the life and joy of your Heart."

We can approach this mystery from two sides: generally we first consider the glories of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, afterwards those of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and then we join them together. Symbolically the Christian art presents this when placing the two hearts one beside the other. We can see two hearts and two rivers that mercifully pour themselves out into our souls purifying and sanctifying them. But we can also consider directly the UNION of both which makes them so to speak "one soul and one heart", which is the very essence of love. Christian art presents this when placing the two hearts one interlocked with the other as shown in, for example, the emblem of the MI. Both sources (the hearts) have melted into one immense river flowing towards each human heart, begging to enter, to purify, to transform and to absorb us in the mystery of God's love.

The sorrowful mysteries are a great light in this respect. Each of them in turn reveals the secrets of these Hearts and the river of graces, which emanates from every wound, from each singular pain and suffering of the New Adam and the New Eve. In her Heart is repeated and made present everything that He has suffered in His body.

The Agony of Christ in the Garden in its almost infinite abundance has to do with what sin is, because Christ's holiness is the absolute opposite of sin. There was only one person who had the knowledge of the horror of sin similar to Christ, because her immaculateness is also the absolute opposite of sin. When he drank the cup of all evil to pay for it, she drank it with Him, because the Redeemer and Co-redemptrix have everything in common. If the suffering of His agony is expressed in drops of blood trickling down to earth, the suffering of her agony is expressed in her tears, which were more abundantly shaken from her heart than from her eyes. And these tears are still falling down and will be pouring as long as people sin. Here is the weight of her tears shown in La Salette, Syracuse, Akita *etc.*

As we consider his **flagellation**, we participate in the crushing of His flesh, and her spiritual flagellation is like an attempt at the assassination of her immaculateness and purity. He and she carried these insults and this blasphemy with the greatest patience. Thus, they rewarded the profanations made by people and became a source of purification for poor sinners.

The **coronation with a crown of thorns** is atonement for our pride. The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus is usually depicted as surrounded by a crown of thorns, and the Immaculate Heart is depicted in a wreath of white roses. Well, during the last revelation of Our Lady to Sister Lucia, 13 June 1929, in Tuy, the Sister had a famous vision of the Holy Trinity, and she saw Mary next to the Crucified Lord: "Under the right arm of the cross stood our beloved Lady with her Immaculate Heart in her hand (it was Our Lady of Fatima holding her Immaculate Heart in her hands, pink and without sword, **but surrounded by a thorny crown and flames**"). This vision shows how much their hearts were united, somehow identical. If her Heart is pierced with the thorns of Christ's crown of thorns, this means that everything that Christ suffered on His head at the cruel moment of the crowning with thorns, Mary suffered with him in her Heart. And their suffering continues, because people still sin. And that heart sufferings are not less than physical sufferings will be confirmed by every good mother who experiences the torments of her beloved child more than her own.

Under the sign of these completely united hearts, we should also consider each station of the **Way of the Cross**. This time He did not want her to be only spiritually with him. At the 4th station they stood opposite each other. The two most suffering Hearts in the world, the most loving, the most devoted ones meet. Our sinful hearts are as if in the middle of them, between them, and are the cause for both of their never-ending torments. When we look at Him, he looks at her; when we look at her, she looks at Him. As if each of them would like to say to us:

"Look out there — it's for you". Out of these two rivers the living invigorating water spills out into the desert of our souls.

And now these hearts take us with them up to the top of **Calvary**. When we see His Heart pierced by the spear, we understand that He loved us to the end. And when at the 13th station we see her heart pierced by seven swords, we understand that she loved us to the end.

Dear Knights, instruments in Our Lady's hands to make her known and loved, understand your important task of introducing yourself, your family, your relatives and acquaintances into this mystery of Love! To put all hearts into the Heart of Jesus, that he may give them to his Mother so that she can form them as her true and devoted children, slaves and knights. And equally to put all hearts into the Heart of Mary, that she may present them together with her Heart to Jesus, so that he will graciously accept this offering!

In this way alone can we answer the solemn request of Our Lord: "My son, give Me thy heart!"

Once hidden in the mystery of these most Holy Hearts nothing can harm us any more, nothing can trouble us, because being united with the UNITED HEARTS our minds and hearts are already taken to the eternal regions, our innermost being already dwells in heaven. The Fathers of the Church frequently name Mary "God's Heaven". Saint John Eudes spoke of her Heart as the "heavenly heaven" in which God is much more present than in heaven. She is such a masterpiece of God that, as the heavens surpass the earth in her dignity and glory, so she is high above the heavens. It is inconceivable what this might mean. All the heavens, all the perfection and love of all the saints are only a distant echo of the "heavens of heaven", which is the Immaculata.

If we have found here our true home, all trials and tribulations in this world will appear to us in their truth: crosses to carry to grow in love towards God and to be better knights, *i.e.* to help her save more souls!

Singapore, Feast of the Sacred Heart 2018

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