

THE STUDY

of the

PASSION

by

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Leo of the Sacred Heart

Nihil Obstat
Conell Dowd, C.P., S.T.D.
August 14, 1951

Imprimatur
✠ *Samuel A. Cardinal Stritch, D.D.*
August 15, 1951

STUDY OF THE PASSION

LEO OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS, Superior General of the Congregation of the Most Holy Cross and Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ to all the Brethren: Peace and Greetings in the Lord.

1. The Purpose of the Letter.

THE PASSION of Christ presseth us! How appropriate is such a motto for us Passionists, who, "marching under the standard of the Cross, wage warfare against the old serpent by preaching to the people Jesus Christ and Him Crucified!"¹ Of course, we are all well aware that, in the original text which has suggested our motto, it is the charity of Christ upon which St. Paul lays stress: yet the Apostle is quick to emphasize that the strongest proof of this charity is to be found in the fact that "Christ died for all."² Here, then, is an instance in which we may, validly and impressively, employ that classic figure of speech whereby the symbol is used to designate the thing symbolized; and, in this metonymical sense, we can rightly say: The Passion of Christ presseth us! And, if this motto may well serve as a rousing and inspiriting battle cry for all soldiers of the Passion, how much more inspiriting should it be to those who, however undeservedly, have been commissioned as officers in the brigade of Paul of the Cross, and who are charged with the duty of emboldening God's children to fight unto victory the battles of Israel? We can truthfully say that, from the moment of our election to the office of Superior-General, we have accounted it our primary responsibility to whet "the sword of the spirit which is the word of God"³—that word of God which is nowhere more moving than in the preaching of Jesus Christ Crucified. Hence it was that we revealed many of our thoughts about this matter when we wrote to you on the occasion of the sixteenth centenary of the Finding of the Holy Cross:⁴ and we then promised to write you another letter in which we would

give detailed instructions upon the most practical methods of ensuring that, in compliance with the 17th decree of the 31st General Chapter, every effort be made to assist our young men in becoming devoted lovers and skilled exponents of the Sacred Passion. This promise we repeated in our letter of the 27th February, 1928:⁵ and now, at long last, despite the persistent handicaps imposed by our ceaseless care and solicitude for all our Provinces, we have succeeded in isolating an opportunity of fulfilling our promise.

2. The Excellence of Our Theme.

The beneficial value of any study is to be gauged from the worth and excellence of its object. Relying on this commonly accepted standard of evaluation, authors, both ancient and modern, clearly demonstrate how pre-eminent is the place occupied by the Sacred Passion in the scheme of Christianity. "The Cross," says St. Leo the Great, "is the fountain head of all our blessings and the cause of all our graces."⁶ In the *Imitation of Christ* we read: "Behold, in the Cross is contained everything:"⁷ and in the plan of one of Bossuet's sermons we find the following: "All the mysteries of Christ, all the joys of His grace, and all the binding force of His precepts are to be found gathered in the Cross: in fact, the Cross may be termed an unique 'Credo' that gives concise expression to every Christian dogma."⁸ "The profession of the Christian Religion," says another author, "means nothing else than the profession of the Cross and Christ Crucified."⁹ With how much truth, therefore, has it been said that the Sacred Passion is "that most profound and most fruitful mystery which comprises in itself every tenet of our holy religion, whether of faith or of morals"?¹⁰ Yes, truly, "all our worship of God revolves around Christ Crucified":¹¹ "His Cross is the distinctive emblem of our faith, and the comprehensive index of our religious beliefs":¹² and "in His Most Holy Passion everything is to be found."¹³ These few quotations that we have singled out from the massive body of evidence at our disposal, sufficiently reveal the unanimous agreement amongst learned and saintly men of every age that the Passion of Christ, when considered in its causes, in its effects and in its corollaries, can be literally said to constitute the whole economy of our Christian Religion;

and that, as His Eminence Cardinal Pacelli remarked when he took possession of his Titular Church, "the reign of Christ is the reign of the Cross." With good reason was it, then, that St. Paul, "though he knew and preached other mysteries, could, nevertheless, declare that he knew but the one mystery, and preached but the one mystery of Christ Crucified—a mystery, indeed, from which all other mysteries depend and emerge, and to which, as to the source and the epitome of all mysteries, every phase of the Gospel preaching traces its origin."¹⁴ Hence it was that "Paul could call the Gospel itself 'The Word of the Cross,' and could point to Christ Crucified, Whom he terms 'the wisdom of God, hidden in mystery, and predestined before all ages unto our salvation,' as being the principal argument of the Scriptures as well as of the Gospel preaching, and the indispensable center, head, foundation and hinge of all other Christian mysteries."¹⁵ Thus, it is not in any exaggerated sense, but in a sense that is strictly literal, that each of us can say with the Apostle: "I judge not myself to know anything among you, but Jesus Christ and Him Crucified;"¹⁶ for all of the sacred sciences are contained, either directly or by implication, in the science of Christ Crucified. St. Bonaventure wrote a pamphlet that he called *The Reduction of the Arts to Theology*: it would present no difficulty to write a treatise that might be called *The Reduction of Theology to the Science of Christ Crucified*; and, just as a certain author has given the name "Staurophiles" to those who are devoted to the Crucified, so we might well give the name "Staurosophy" to this Science of the Crucified.¹⁷ —(Translator's Note.—The etymological associations of these terms are indicated by the three Greek words: *stauros*—cross, *philos*—lover, and *sophia*—wisdom.)

3. The Outline of Our Plan.

Though there is much more that we could say concerning this pre-eminence of the science of the Sacred Passion, we must let our necessarily brief explanation suffice. We propose now to give you a somewhat detailed program for the study of this science; and we are convinced that this program will tend to prove, more forcibly than could any mere reasoning, the importance and the excellence of this study.

Among the many approved meanings of the word "study," there are four in particular that claim our consideration. In the first place, "study" is very often used to indicate the concentration of our mental faculties upon the acquisition of a distinct branch of knowledge. In this sense, we speak of the study of law, of philosophy, etc.¹⁸ Secondly, it signifies devotion, or better, devotedness, which is "the intellectual appeal and the emotional attraction that moves us to attach ourselves to any person or any cause, even to the point of rendering self-sacrificing service."¹⁹ Thirdly, it denotes inclination, taste, or dominant liking; hence we say: "I am passionately fond of history, of hunting, of engaging in conversation, etc."²⁰ Lastly, "study" is used to express that diligence and zeal which, at expert hands, focus the mind unerringly upon some subject of achievement: and it is in this sense that Cicero writes: "Study means that assiduity and enthusiasm which effect a complete absorption of mind and a resolute determination of will, when these faculties are conjointly bent upon the accomplishment of any purpose."²¹ We shall speak now of the study of the Sacred Passion, in these four meanings of the word "study." We begin with the first, viz., intellectual study, which is, indeed, the principal theme of our letter.

4. The Scope of This Study.

Do not fear that we are about to introduce novelties to you. Rather; we would remind you that "well-nigh beyond reckoning is the number of those men and women who, irresistibly drawn by the magnet of the Cross (to use a common metaphor), have approached nearer and nearer to it, so that they might examine at still closer range the mysteries it enshrines, and might thus come to learn its causes and its effects.... Herein lies the explanation of the fact that the literature of the Passion is far richer than any other like treasures handed down to us through the ages, and that, in these our own times, this treasure is becoming, day after day, enhanced in value."²²

Surely, then, that which other men have been accustomed to consider under the one or the other aspect, we Passionists ought to meditate upon and examine under its every aspect. Cardinal Wiseman is credited with the statement: "Every man should make it his aim to know something about everything and every-

thing about something."²³ Now, if there is a "something" about which we Passionists should make it our aim to know "everything," what else can it be but the Sacred Passion of Christ, from which we take our name? This is not meant to imply, however, that we are bound to undertake an exhaustive study of every book ("and their number is legion")²⁴ that treats of the Sacred Passion, or even that we are bound to read them all; but rather that we should know, and should have indexed for ready reference, the particular points that are specifically treated of in these multitudinous works. For, although what is called, in common parlance, the "Literature of the Passion" is rich beyond measure, its very wealth and immensity has apparently proved an obstacle to the compilation of any handbook that could be used as a Synopsis or Epitome by those who are engaged in the scientific study of the Passion. There is, indeed, a work which was published in Venice in 1618,²⁵ and which was, we imagine, sufficiently comprehensive to meet the requirements of those times. In this work, the Passion is divided into fifty-one points or mysteries, and each point is again subdivided under the following headings:—(1) Description of the corresponding prophecy from the Old Testament; (2) Historical Narrative from the Gospels; (3) Consideration of the more striking features of the mystery; (4) Examination of the causes of the mystery; (5) A devotional meditation; (6) A similar meditation upon the sorrows endured by our Blessed Lady in the mystery under review; (7) Three moral applications, corresponding to the three grades of the spiritual life, viz., the purgative, the illuminative, and the unitive; (8) Some work of devotion or some exercise of virtue suggested by the mystery; (9) An illustration from history or from the lives of the Saints; (10) A description and history of the instruments of the Passion applicable to the mystery under consideration.

However, apart from the fact that copies of this work we have described are so rare nowadays as to be available to very few, and while, furthermore, some of the propositions advanced in the book are untopical—not to say, untenable—in the light of modern research, the book itself, as we should expect, fails to harmonize with much of the Passion Literature of today. We have made mention of it here simply to show that, whereas, on the one hand,

the idea of a "Summa of the Passion" is far from being original, there is, on the other hand, no recent work of this kind that can claim our unqualified approbation. This being so, we have been faced with the necessity of devising for ourselves a practical method for the study of the Passion; and the basis and characteristics of this method will be made quite clear from the explanation we are now about to give, after we have made a few preliminary remarks regarding the preparations for this study that should be begun in the Alumniate and the Novitiate.

5. Preparations for This Study.

Although, according to the 17th decree of the 31st General Chapter, the formal study of the Passion should begin along with the course in philosophy (for in the lower courses it would be next to impossible for all of our Provinces to follow a uniform method and schedule), yet the ground should be levelled, and the foundations solidly laid, for this study even in the Alumniate, and, with far greater reason, in the Novitiate. To determine upon the most profitable way of doing this in the Alumniate, especially by appropriate lectures and timely exhortations, we leave to the Superiors directly concerned; but we believe it will serve a useful purpose to suggest a method which will, effectively and fruitfully, produce the desired result in the Novitiate. The Code of Canon Law decrees that "Novices must not be employed in the study of letters, the sciences or the arts";²⁶ and this decree was reiterated and confirmed by the Supreme Pontiff, Pius XI, in his Apostolic Letter of the 19th March, 1924, in which it is quite clearly stated that Novices must devote themselves solely to the work of their spiritual formation, "wholly laying aside the study of any branch of knowledge whatsoever, or the cultivation, for mere pleasure, of any aesthetic accomplishment." This official pronouncement of the Supreme Pontiff would seem to have abrogated the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Religious²⁷ which ordained that one hour was to be allotted each day to the study of letters; but, as commentators of the Code commonly teach, it is quite evident that, though formal study is now forbidden, this prohibition does not extend to that moderate employment of the mental faculties that will prevent them from being debilitated through lack of exercise.²⁸

Hence, not only in agreement with the current law on the subject, but even highly deserving of commendation is the prescription of our Holy Rule which reads: "Since, during the year of probation, the Novices are engaged particularly in the study of spiritual perfection, every day after the morning prayer and Mass, and in the evening after the Rosary has been recited, let there be given, for at least half an hour, an explanation of some sacred book, especially of the New Testament, from which the Novices should themselves draw some pious reflection or sentiment."²⁹ Now, it is clear from the context that this prescription of the Rule is directed rather to the increase of devotion than to the acquisition of knowledge. Bearing this in mind, and looking to the tenor of the decree of 1910, it is our earnest desire that, in conformity with the spirit of our Congregation, an increase in knowledge of the Sacred Passion should always be the aim of this daily intellectual exercise. If this aim is to be reached, it would be well to choose for consideration those passages of the New Testament that bear closely on the Passion, paying attention to each of the four Gospels separately, or, better still, using a concordance or harmony, of which many excellent editions are available.³⁰

Masters of Novices will find very helpful Cardinal Lepicier's *Harmony of the Gospels* (particularly the fourth volume, which treats of the history of the Passion, etc.), and Bover's *El Evangelio de la Passion*, both of which contain copious explanations of great value.³¹ As it is our custom that the evening classes in the novitiate should take the form of an explanation of some devotional book, and especially a translation and explanation of the Offices of the Breviary, here also a selection should be made of those Offices which have reference to the Passion, such as the special Offices of the Passion of Our Lord and those of Our Lady of Sorrows, together with their respective hymns.³² By this means, the novices will be imbued with the same spirit that moved Conf. Gabriel Nicolini to say: "We Passionists must know the Passion of Jesus; otherwise, how shall we be able to preach it and explain it to others?" They will be imbued, too, with something of that devoted love towards Our Sorrowful Mother which prompted St. Bonaventure to salute her frequently throughout each day with these words: "Hail Mary, full of sorrows."

6. Our Plan for the Synthetic Study of the Passion.

Having finished their novitiate, our young men, beginning immediately their course in philosophy, should begin at the same time the methodical study of the Passion; and this latter study should be continued and consistently developed during the whole eight years of their course, i.e., from the commencement of Philosophy to the end of Sacred Eloquence. If a suitable commentary were available, (or when one is available), it could be conveniently divided into eight sections, corresponding to each of the eight years of the course. In such a case there would be no need for the program we are about to submit. However, lacking such a commentary, we find it necessary, as we have already remarked, to resort to another system; and we will now explain in detail the system that we propose.

Our course falls naturally into two main divisions, viz., the synthetic study and the analytic study, in accord with the accepted meanings of these terms, which will be recalled to your minds by the details that follow. It will prove of great assistance to the Students if, in the first place, they view the Passion in its broad outlines and learn to recognize its most noteworthy features (synthesis): they will then be well prepared to advance to a minute examination of its individual circumstances or mysteries (analysis). We may fittingly apply to the study of the Passion a remark of St. Augustine about the study of Holy Scripture: "He bids fair to become a skilled exegete of Holy Scripture who has first read the whole of it attentively, and, from this reading, is able to recall it, even though he does not understand it."³³ In a parallel sense, our young men may be assured of success in their study of the Passion, if they store in their minds, in trim and orderly fashion, a knowledge of it as a whole, before they proceed to amplify this general knowledge by making a thorough investigation of that endless variety of incidents and circumstances which supply the material of analytic study. Therefore, during the period of their philosophy course, whether this period be of two years or three years, they are to study a suitable textbook that will enable them to visualize clearly the historical background of the Passion of Christ and of the Compassion of the Blessed Virgin Mary.³⁴ Every Friday the time allotted to the usual subject of study and class shall be

somewhat shortened, in order to allow time for this historical lesson; and a systematic program should be arranged for these lessons so as to be spread over the whole of the philosophy course and completed simultaneously with it. From the Passion of the Son to the Sorrows of His Blessed Mother is a very short step, the bridge being the interior sufferings of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the most poignant of which originated in the interior sufferings of His Most Blessed Mother. There was, as Father Faber so beautifully expresses it, such a very strong bond between the Passion of Christ and the Compassion of Mary that "each was the cause of the other. Both were causes and both were effects. It was Our Lord's Passion which filled Our Lady's heart to the brim with bitterness; and it was Our Lady's Compassion which was one of the main ingredients in Our Saviour's Passion."³⁵ If the work chosen as a textbook for the Students is too skimpy in its treatment of the interior sufferings of Christ, particularly during His Agony in the Garden and when uttering His Fourth Word from the Cross, the Lector must endeavor to rectify such a deficiency, by learning what revered commentators have to say on these points and by consulting other approved authors.³⁶ In what concerns the Sorrows and the Compassion of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the following authors have composed works that would serve as ideal textbooks: St. Alphonsus,³⁷ Tiepolo,³⁸ Bossuet,³⁹ and Father Arthur Devine, C.P.⁴⁰ It would well repay the lector, too, to study the works of Fr. Faber⁴¹ and Dragoni.⁴²

7. Plan for the Analytic Study.

After they have acquired, during their philosophy course, this synthetic knowledge of which we have spoken, our young men shall apply themselves, throughout their course of theology, to the analytic study of the Passion: that is to say, they shall strive industriously to amass an intimate and exhaustive knowledge of those individual factors in the Sacred Passion, which, while they may reside in the field of belief or the field of practise, are within the reach of our mental powers. Such a study may be linked, as we are about to exemplify, in close and harmonious association with all other ecclesiastical studies; and, as a result of this association, they will all partake of the fruits of the Passion, and the pervading spirit of our devotion to the Suffering

Man-God will add the final deft touches to the body of our learning in the realm of ecclesiastical science and invest it with its crowning glory. Before we enter upon particulars regarding the various component parts of this study, it would be well to mention that the whole matter of the study admits of two clearly marked divisions: (a) The Passion of Christ in the speculative order—as an historical fact and as an object of theology; (b) The Passion of Christ in the practical order—as the foundation, the warrant and the leaven of the Christian life in its manifold acts and circumstances. Both of these main divisions admit of further countless subdivisions, from which we have chosen for your consideration the selection that follows. Needless to say, we do not regard this selection as being exclusive or all embracing; but it is sufficient for our purpose, and is distinctly adapted to insertion in the general program of studies.

8. The Passion Considered Speculatively.

(a) 1. The Exegesis of the Passion, i.e., the figures and types of the Passion in the Old Testament, and the narrative in the New Testament; the chronology, archeology, and topography of the Passion; the trial of Our Lord Jesus Christ, from the juridical point of view; the actors in the Drama of the Passion, and other kindred subjects; the paranetic interpretation of the Passion in the Epistles of St. Paul. (This latter may also be considered in the practical order.)

2. The Dogmatic Theology of the Passion, i.e., Christ Crucified as Priest, Head of the Church, King and Judge; the corollaries of the Passion, e.g., devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to the Holy Face, to the Precious Blood, to the Five Wounds, to the True Cross and the other relics of the Passion; the Compassion of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Co-redemptrix; the Passion in its relation to grace, to the sacraments in general, and to Baptism, Penance, and the Eucharist in particular, as well as to sacramentals and indulgences.

9. The Passion in the Practical Order.

(b) 3. The Passion in its relation to Moral Theology, both in general, i.e., with regard to the performance of good and the avoidance of evil, and in particular, i.e., in its relation to works

of piety and devotion, such as the Way of the Cross, the Holy Hour, the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to the Holy Face, to the Precious Blood, to the Five Wounds, and to the Seven Dolors of Our Blessed Lady; to the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary, and pilgrimages to holy shrines; devotional practices that evolve from the dogmatic theology of the sacraments, especially towards the Blessed Eucharist both as a Sacrament and as a Sacrifice; and, lastly, the use of sacramentals, the gaining and application of indulgences, and the performance of works of mercy.

4. The Paranesis of the Passion, i.e., the Passion in its relation to those governing principles of the spiritual life that are formulated in ascetico-mystical theology, particularly in so far as these principles are expounded and applied in the Epistles of St. Paul and in the letters and teachings of our Holy Founder, St. Paul of the Cross.

5. The Passion in the writings of the Fathers of the Church.

6. The Passion in liturgical prayers and sacred ceremonies.

7. The Passion in its relation to Church History, i.e., the Passion of Christ in His Mystical Body, the history of the devotion towards the Passion, and the manifestation of this devotion in the lives of the Saints, in the Crusades, and in the cult of the instruments of the Passion; in pious exercises, associations, Orders, prodigies, sanctuaries, and missions; in legends, and in the arts of painting, sculpture and architecture; in poetry, in the theatre, in numismatics, in heraldry, in onomatology (the science of names), in gnomonics (the science of applied horology), in bibliography, etc.

8. Of the Passion in Religious Music, and especially in Liturgical Music.

9. Of the Passion in its relation to the Art of Oratory, and especially in the exercise of Sacred Eloquence.

10. The Insertion of These Subjects in the Program of Studies.

This "schema" will help you to realize what we mean when we say that the analytic study of the Passion should be inserted in the general program of ecclesiastical studies; and it will indicate, too, the correct places in which insertions should be made. We merely make the comment here that this study of the Passion

should be conjoined with the other subjects in the curriculum whenever and wherever such a conjunction is seen to be feasible and timely. Hence, the exegesis and theology of the Passion should not, as a general rule, be commenced until the second year of the theological course, as it would be difficult to find an appropriate place for them in Fundamental Theology and the General Introduction to Holy Scripture. The study of the Passion in its relation to Church History should be made to synchronize with the course in the latter subject. And now, in order to provide a directive to the lecturers and students, we propose to give you a delineation—considerably detailed in some instances, less detailed in others, according as its relative importance would seem to demand—of the various headings of our “schema”; and, to quote the felicitous expression of a certain well-known author, we intend our treatment of these matters “to be persuasive rather than scholarly.”⁴³ We make also some suggestions regarding a suitable bibliography for each of the subjects; yet, while doing so, it is far from being our intention or our desire to single out any works for special preference, or to heap praises upon some to the disparagement of others; for we are well aware of the existence of many other excellent works, written in various languages.⁴⁴

11. The Exegesis of the Passion.

The Exegesis of the Passion is so wide in its scope that, because of this extensive range, the study of the Passion becomes tantamount to the study of the Sacred Scripture itself. This fact provides a splendid illustration for the counsels of those skilled masters who state that “it is the duty of every man to seek, in the reading of the Bible, those things which are more closely related to the specific character of his learning and his particular standards of education, as well as to his manner of life and the obligations of his state.”⁴⁵ “Moreover, the surest and most effective way of increasing one’s knowledge of the Scriptures in general is to acquire an accurate knowledge and a thorough understanding of some particular part of them: for the whole fabric of Sacred Scripture, from the Book of Genesis to the Apocalypse, is enlivened by the same spirit, and it scintillates with such brilliant intermingling of its many-hued features

that, whatever study teaches us of one of its parts, helps us to a higher appreciation of all the other parts."⁴⁶ With even greater truth can this be said of Jesus Suffering, Who has been called: "The Title, The Epilogue, The Theme, and The Prologue of Sacred Scripture."⁴⁷ St. Jerome was, apparently, thinking along similar lines when he made the unequivocal statement: "Not to know the Scriptures is not to know Christ,"⁴⁸ or, to use the words in which Father Gregory of Jesus and Mary, O.S.A., has paraphrased this text: "To know nothing of the Passion of Christ is to be completely ignorant of Holy Scripture."⁴⁹ It is right and proper, therefore, that our study of Holy Scripture be always guided along the path of the knowledge of Jesus Suffering.

If we begin our exegetical study with the types and symbols of Christ the Redeemer, we find that these are portrayed, with very facile pen, by many authors, amongst whom our own Father Seraphim, in his *Promptuarium Passionis*, cites and elucidates many quotations from the Fathers that refer to the Passion in general or to one or other of its mysteries in particular. These subjects are also treated of by Thiepolus,⁵⁰ Van Steenkiste,⁵¹ Maas,⁵² Father Cuthbert,⁵³ and many others. Speaking of the Prophecies, St. John Chrysostom says: "The mysteries of the Cross are to be discovered throughout the length and breadth of the field of Scriptural prophecy."⁵⁴ These Passion Prophecies are skillfully expounded by the authors we have mentioned above.⁵⁵

By way of a prelude to the formal exegesis of the Passion (and, so far as our acquaintance goes, the treatises on this subject most deserving of commendation are those of Van Steenkiste⁵⁶ and Groenen,⁵⁷ there are some items of general knowledge that should be studied, if they have not been already learned in the historical or the synthetic studies. These times, with which it is essential to have some familiarity at least, are as follows:—

1. The Chronology of the Passion, i.e., the year and the day in which it occurred. On this subject, it would be well to consult Fonck,⁵⁸ Groenen⁶⁰ and other notable commentators and writers of a Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. The Topography of the Passion, i.e., the places in which its principal incidents were enacted; and much may be learned about these from Fonck,⁶¹ Martin (Friedlieb),⁶² Bover,⁶³ Tissot,⁶⁴ Coulomb,⁶⁵ and the several handbooks entitled *Guide to the Holy Land*, such as that of Fa-

ther Barnabas Meisterman, etc. . . . Amongst the older writers, Quaeresmius is a recognized authority on these matters.⁶⁶ 3. The Archeology of the Passion, i.e., the affairs, customs and institutions of the places and times of the Passion. These are splendidly dealt with, in the light of modern research, by Fonck, Bover, Tissot and Friedlieb, already mentioned above;⁶⁷ and amongst the ancient writers, by Justus Lipsius.⁶⁸

As to what concerns the Trial of Our Lord in its juridical aspects, the advisability, or rather the necessity, of studying this matter is made evident by a perusal of the writings of such men as Salvador⁶⁹ and Stapfer;⁷⁰ for the main arguments of these men are completely overturned, and their opinions flatly contradicted, by Chauvin,⁷¹ Rosadi,⁷² Hoffman,⁷³ Leman,⁷⁴ Dupin,⁷⁵ and Chaussay.⁷⁶

Turning our attention to the persons who played a part in the Passion of Christ, we must remember that this Drama, "like every other drama, was composed, on the one hand, of those external actions which constituted, so to speak, the public portrayal of a most moving tragedy, and, on the other hand, of those passions and interior feelings that were aroused in the actors by the gradual development of the plot. These passions and feelings became progressively more and more intense until the climax was reached—a climax that proved fiendish for some, holy and sacred for others."⁷⁷ It is essential, therefore, to study "the temperament and character of those actors who played their part in the Passion of Christ,"⁷⁸ "so that we may come to possess such a revealing knowledge of their personality as will enable us to follow, even to the point of crisis, the intensification of those passions they exhibited."⁷⁹ Thus, by reason of the fund of knowledge that he has built up from his study of authors both sacred and profane, the student of the Passion will be equipped to form a correct estimate of the moral qualities of Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of the Apostles—particularly of Peter, John and Judas; as well as of the Jews, the executioners, the holy women, etc. This ability to appreciate the interior dispositions of the characters of the Passion will greatly enrich whatever academic knowledge is acquired, and, (what is of greater worth), will facilitate the commendable process of translating this knowledge into helpful and practical spiritual les-

sons, as is done, for example, by Perroy,⁸⁰ Benson,⁸¹ and Schouppe.⁸² An illuminating insight into the personal characters of these actors in the Drama of the Passion may be acquired by studying the works of Mir,⁸³ Van Steenkiste,⁸⁴ Mechineau,⁸⁵ Monsabre,⁸⁶ Chauvin,⁸⁷ Casciloi,⁸⁸ Chaussay,⁸⁹ and Father Sera-
phim.⁹⁰

Though we might rightly give a place here to the paranetic interpretation and application of the Passion which we so frequently encounter in the Epistles of St. Paul, we prefer to leave its treatment to a later section in which we will deal specifically with this paranesis of the Passion.

12. The Dogmatic Theology of the Passion.

Let us now offer you some few admonitions concerning the dogmatic theology of the Passion. It is the primary duty of the Lector in this subject to labor at a luminous exposition of all those points which have reference to the Passion; and we are forcibly convinced of the supreme importance of this exposition when we recollect that it is the instrument for laying the stable foundations of that devotion which we are vowed to cultivate both in our own hearts and in the hearts of others. It will be the Lector's task, then, to amplify what is not sufficiently stressed or explained in the textbook prescribed for the Students, and to supplement these texts by introducing the many relevant matters they fail to mention. Particularly should this be done during the study of the tracts "De Verbo Incarnato" and "De Deo Redemptore," which treat of the Passion "ex professo." In these studies, the greatest attention is to be paid, and the highest weight attached, to the teachings of St. Thomas,⁹¹ Suarez,⁹² Billuart,⁹³ Jansens,⁹⁴ and the more noteworthy commentators of the Angelic Doctor.

An equally ample treatment is to be accorded, likewise, to the doctrines of the Priesthood of Christ, His Sacrifice on the Cross, and Christ Crucified as King, Judge, and Head of the Church. It would be apposite to remark here that, in ascribing to Christ Crucified the three prerogatives of King, Judge and Head, we do not mean to assert that they must always be predicated of Christ agonizing on His Cross; rather, we wish to insinuate that His title to these prerogatives and His right to exercise them

derive especially from the Sacred Passion, with which they enjoy a transcendental relationship. Because this interpretation of Christ's unassailable claim to the possession and the exercise of His many prerogatives is a dogmatic teaching that admits of far-reaching applications, the Passionist lector must be very painstaking in his efforts to give his students a full and impressive explanation of this teaching; and we ask you to bear well in mind the influence of this same teaching upon the validity of the arguments we propose to adduce in dealing with the remaining sections of our program.

In considering the doctrine of Christ as the head of the Church, the first aspect that rivets our attention is that its logical corollaries in all the other branches of ecclesiastical studies, to which we shall refer in their respective places, are so many and so important as to present us with more-than-sufficient evidence of the necessity of having a thorough and precise understanding of this doctrine. The exalted position that the doctrine occupies in the realm of theology, and the sway it exerts over all of the sacred sciences, are strikingly delineated by St. Thomas,⁹⁶ Suarez,⁹⁷ Salmanticenses,⁹⁸ Anger,⁹⁹ and, above all, Pinto:¹⁰⁰ while the expository methods adopted by these masters have been faithfully followed by many of the more recent commentators on the Epistles of St. Paul, such as Prat¹⁰¹ and Duperray;¹⁰² by such ascetical writers as Marmion¹⁰³ and Tanqueray;¹⁰⁴ and by such apologists as Karl Adam.¹⁰⁵ In the senses that have been canonized by such authors, we are wont to speak of the Whole Christ and the Mystical Body of Christ, in agreement with the terms of St. Augustine's definition: "The Whole Christ is both Head and Body, the Head being the Only-Begotten Son of God, the Body His Church; the two being wedded in one flesh, as bridegroom and bride."¹⁰⁶ Long before St. Augustine's day St. Paul himself had written: "He hath made him head over all the church, which is his body, and the fulness of him who is filled all in all; . . . because we are members of his body; . . . so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members of another."^{107, 108, 109} Of the practical applications of this doctrine of the Mystical Body we shall have something to say later on. It will suffice here to note with Pinto: "Christ Our Lord has become the perfect Head of His Church only in virtue of His

Cross and Passion . . . and hence St. Paul is, as always, in strict accord with sound doctrine, wherever he makes mention of Christ as Head of the Church, or speaks of His Body and its members; for, in all these instances, it is clear that the Apostle has the matter of Christ's Passion and Cross vividly in his mind."¹¹⁰

The doctrine of the Kingship of Christ is established on His twofold right to universal sovereignty, viz., the right of heredity and the right of conquest; and these two rights are, in turn, founded on the Hypostatic Union and the Sacred Passion. Naturally, in explaining this doctrine, our lectors will place special stress upon the second of these rights. The recently promulgated liturgical office of Christ the King undoubtedly grants pride of place to the first; but for us, who are aptly called "Citizens of Calvary,"¹¹¹ there should be a greater appeal in the second, to which there are, too, frequent allusions in the office. Here is an outstanding example from a verse of the Matins hymn:

"Teacher, Priest, and Lawgiver Great!

Thy blood-stained robe records:

'Of kings Thou art the Highest King:

Thou art the Lord of lords.'"

Similar allusions may frequently be found in other places of the Sacred Liturgy, as in the hymns *Vexilla Regis*, *Pange Lingua*, etc. Pinto makes a very thorough examination of these hymns;¹¹² and much useful information about them may be obtained by consulting the pages of the periodical *La Civiltà Cattolica*.¹¹³ Shortly after the Sovereign Pontiff Pius XI, still happily reigning, had issued his Encyclical *Quas Primas*, the *Angelicum* published a scholarly analysis of this Encyclical;¹¹⁴ and equally erudite treatises were written by several skilled theologians, amongst whom Zanchetta merits special mention.¹¹⁵

In dealing with Christ's prerogative of Judge of Mankind,¹¹⁶ particular emphasis should be laid upon the part that the Cross will play when Christ comes to exercise this power, and of the account that He will demand on that dread Day of Judgment of the use that has been made of His Passion.¹¹⁷

13. The Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Let us now pass on to the corollaries of the Passion. Beyond a doubt, the devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus is right-

ly considered to be one of the most significant of these corollaries. The relationship between the devotions of the Sacred Heart and the Passion is readily recognized by those who have a sound knowledge of the former. For the main basis of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus is the consideration of this Heart in as much as it is the symbol of that love "wherewith Christ hath loved us, and hath delivered Himself for us," and which is the Fount from which all our graces flow.¹¹⁸ This truth forms the thematic subject of the liturgical office of the Sacred Heart; and the dominant note is first sounded in the invitatory: "Come, let us adore Christ, Who suffered for us." This same theme is interwoven through the whole office and Mass of the feast.

The many authors who treat of this devotion from the theological standpoint are enumerated by Tanquerey in his *Synopsis of Dogmatic Theology*.¹¹⁹ The theological interpretation that is given to the cult of the Sacred Heart by the majority of these authors is what has been termed "the Parayan,"¹²⁰ as distinct from the slightly older "Berullian," or "Eudist," interpretation. As the name itself would indicate, the Parayan interpretation is that which Our Lord Himself explained to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque; and the Church recommends it before all others, both in liturgical offices and in the pronouncements of the Holy See. The latter interpretation, on the other hand, regards the Sacred Heart as being primarily the symbol of Christ's interior life, i.e., of His spirit and moral personality, and, only secondarily, the symbol of His love. There is, nevertheless, little difficulty in reconciling these two interpretations: for, as Bainvel so learnedly shows,¹²¹ each of them supplies complementary qualities to the other. As a matter of fact, Père Grou, one of the most eminent disciples of the Paray school, has illustrated the harmony that exists between these two interpretations, when he wrote: "The Heart of Jesus is His interior life."¹²² It is in this sense that devotion to the Heart of Jesus becomes, as it were, the very quintessence of the devotion to Jesus Suffering, Whose love we cherish and Whose spirit we follow. Though the manifestation of this love and this spirit reaches its zenith in the Sacred Passion, it shines forth with glittering splendour, too, in the holy Infancy of Jesus.

14. The Devotion to the Holy Infancy.

Since the Infancy of Christ is united to His Sacred Passion by a bond so patent that it is quickly detected by devout souls, it behooves us Passionists not to close our eyes to it; and hence it will not be inappropriate to give it special mention here. As a recent author points out,¹²³ there are many fervent souls who find it an extremely profitable practise to link meditation on the Passion with meditation on the Holy Infancy, mingling, so to speak, the Joyful Mysteries with the Sorrowful. In fact, the salutary benefits of this practise are exemplified in the life of our Holy Founder, St. Paul of the Cross, who always entertained a particular veneration for the allegorical image of the Divine Infant sleeping on a cross, and in the life of the Servant of God, Lawrence of St. Francis Xavier, C.P., who was granted patent rights for the manufacture of statues of the Infant Jesus showing in His hands the marks of the Passion.¹²⁴ With Father Faber we can justly and truthfully say: "The Passion is, as it were, the atmosphere of the Sacred Infancy. By the light of theology and the fire of devotion Bethlehem and Calvary are intimately connected; for the knowledge of Christ, infused at His conception, and His exquisite sensibility permit us to affirm that Bethlehem was the seed of Gethsemani, and that from His infancy Calvary was the constant thought of the Heart of Jesus."¹²⁵ The teaching of the *Imitation* that "the whole life of Christ was a cross and a martyrdom"¹²⁶ has been profusely elaborated in a devotional work written by Father Thomas of Jesus, O.S.A.,¹²⁷ and we, who are honoured with the name of Passionists, should make much of this aspect of Our Lord's life, and give it frequent mention in our sermons and instructions.

15. The Devotion to the Holy Face.

The devotion to the Holy Face is not so widespread as those upon which we have already dwelt; yet, because of its origin and antiquity, and its special significance, it claims our attentive consideration. It traces its source, in some measure at least, to Our Saviour Himself; for it originated in that image of His sacred countenance He impressed on the towel that St. Veronica had offered Him. Explaining admirably the characteristics and the antiquity of the devotion of the faithful towards this sacred

image and its many replicas, the Bollandists¹²⁸ quote the following Sequence from an ancient Mass of St. Veronica:

Hail! Holy Face of Our Divine Redeemer,
Imprinted on a veil of snowy white;
From which shines for the beauty of the Godhead;
The splendour bright.
Veronica, for her devout affection,
Received a gift, all other gifts above;
Presented by the Saviour Whom she pitied,
As mark of love.
Hail! Sweet Face of Mighty God of Ages!
Mirror of all the saints who worship Thee!
Before which heaven's hosts bow down in reverence;
Yet long to see.

This ancient devotion to the Holy Face received a new impetus at the middle of the last century, because of a supernatural prodigy that was witnessed at Rome.¹²⁹ When, on the 6th of January, 1849, the *Santo Volto* was exposed for public veneration in the Vatican Basilica, "the mysterious image, which was nearly effaced, became illuminated with supernatural effulgence." The popularity of this devotion was enhanced, too, by the fame of Mons. Dupont, the "Holy Man of Tours," who was one of its most indefatigable propagators; and, in more recent times, following upon the exposition of the Holy Shroud at Turin in 1898, and the commendatory tribute paid by Pope Pius X to the painting of the Holy Face that was copied from this Shroud by Celine, the sister of St. Therese of Lisieux, the devotion has spread almost throughout the whole world.¹³⁰

Glancing at the import of this devotion, we note its similarity to that of the Sacred Heart, viz., its ultimate object is, not simply the visible lineaments of Christ's countenance, but His whole physical and moral personality, with all the invisible features of His mind and heart and soul: "for the face is the mirror of the soul, and the visible expression of one's moral character."¹³¹ Holy Scripture tells us that "a man is known by his look";¹³² and St. Jerome voices the same thought when he says: "The face is the mirrored reflection of the mind; and the eyes, though they be silent, yet speak the secrets of the mind."¹³³ We may consider the Holy Face, therefore, not only in the light of that

pain and anguish which, as we know from the Image on St. Veronica's towel, suffused it during the sorrowful journey to Calvary; not only in that calm repose of death that is so vividly pictured on the Holy Shroud of Turin; but also in every incident of the Sacred Passion, particularly in those last scenes that were enacted from the Cross. Although "none but the Angel of the Passion could faithfully depict the expressions on that Divine Face,"¹³⁴ yet artists of every age have tried to reproduce, with chisel or brush, one or more of those changing expressions that marked the Face of the Dying Christ, as He pronounced from His Cross those Seven Last Words, which a pious author has called "The Seven Sacraments of the Cross—as many Sacraments as there were Words."¹³⁵ Hoppenot has very well shown¹³⁶ that, by their skillfulness, these artists have exemplified the truth of the old adage: "A picture may speak with all the moving eloquence of language."¹³⁷ A like tribute of praise must be rendered to those many marvelous portrayals of the *Ecce Homo* in which the artistic representation of the Holy Face is usually the most distinctive and the most meritorious feature.

From all that we have said, it will be readily understood how close is the alliance between the devotion to the Holy Face and the devotion to the Sacred Passion; since, as we have shown, the former devotion is an important part and an integral unit of the latter. It will be readily understood, too, why men and women of eminent holiness, such as St. Gertrude, St. Bernard, Blessed Suso and St. Therese of Lisieux, have cherished a great devotion to the Holy Face—a devotion that has always enjoyed many liturgical privileges and indulgences, which were confirmed and extended by a Decree of the Holy Office on May 4th, 1892.¹³⁸

For a full elucidation and elaboration of these points, which, of necessity, we have barely touched, we recommend the following authors: Van Steenkiste,¹³⁹ Foucault,¹⁴⁰ Janvier,¹⁴¹ Gluckselig,¹⁴² Calmet,¹⁴³ Groenen,¹⁴⁴ Janssens,¹⁴⁵ and Venturini.¹⁴⁶

16. *The Devotion to the Precious Blood.*

The Devotion to the Precious Blood "is also a variety of the devotion to the Passion; or, rather, it is a mould in which we can fuse all the mysteries of the Passion into one."¹⁴⁷ The Precious Blood is the price of our Redemption and its most

significant symbol. This truth is emphasized throughout the liturgical office for the Feast of the Precious Blood; and, in the invitatory of this office, the Church gives us the admonition: "Come, let us adore Christ Who redeemed us with His own Blood." "The theology of the Precious Blood is inextricably intertwined and bound up with the theology of the Church and of the Sacraments. Nay, more; in one sense, and a very notable sense, the whole history of the Church is a history of the devotion to the Precious Blood;—for it is that upon which the doctrine of Redemption lays the greatest stress. Viewing it, however, as a special and separate devotion, its history begins with the Apostle Paul; for he well deserves to be called the Doctor of the Precious Blood and the Author of the special devotion to it, if we may judge from the evident fondness with which he dwells upon it in his Epistles, with reiterations made on purpose, as if they were grateful to his love."¹⁴⁸ In their explanation of these truths and the several others that are linked with them, our Lectors will derive the greatest assistance from the renowned works of Father Faber, as well as from those of Blessed Vincent Strambi,¹⁴⁹ Mazzola,¹⁵⁰ Janssens,¹⁵¹ and Father Seraphim.¹⁵²

17. *The Dévotion to the Five Wounds.*

The Five Wounds of Jesus Christ have been venerated with a special devotion from the very earliest days of the Church;¹⁵³ and this devotion has been fostered by the formal approbation of the Sovereign Pontiffs, by the promulgation of Liturgical Offices, and by granting of many precious indulgences. In the same manner as with those devotions we have already mentioned, this devotion to the Five Wounds is identified with the Sacred Passion by those authors who treat of it *ex professo*, as, for example, Quaresmius¹⁵⁴ and Casalicchio;¹⁵⁵ while these Five Sacred Wounds are frequently considered as mystic and symbolic mansions by such mystical writers as Auriemma,¹⁵⁶ St. Bernard,¹⁵⁷ Saint-Jure,¹⁵⁸ Janssens,¹⁵⁹ and Father Seraphim.¹⁶⁰

18. *The Instruments of the Passion.*

An examination of the devotion to the True Cross and to the instruments of the Passion is a further corollary of the tract

De Deo Redemptore. In so far as these matters are to be considered exegetically and historically, we treat of them in other appropriate sections of our program. We remark here that, in dealing with their dogmatic content, it will be the Lector's duty to explain clearly, and to defend with forceful arguments, the cult that is paid to relics of the True Cross, to the instruments of the Passion, and to crucifixes and images of Jesus Suffering. These dogmatic points are fully discussed in the Scholastic Manuals, and in the works of such writers as Petavius,¹⁶¹ Gretser,¹⁶² Billuart,¹⁶³ Card. Marcus Vigerius,¹⁶⁴ and Father Seraphim.¹⁶⁵

19. Other Devotions.

There are many other devotions, each one directed towards some particular mystery of the Sacred Passion, that have been approved by the Church through the granting of an official liturgical office, or that have been warmly recommended by Saints who were wont to practise them, such as the devotion to the Prayer and Agony in the Garden, to the Scourging, to the Crowning with Thorns, and to the Stations of the Way of the Cross (in honor of which the Friars Minor recite a special office). However, lest we should run the risk of being too verbose, we do not intend to speak of these in detail. We merely wish to remark with Fr. Faber: "The theology of these devotions, and the way in which they are started and propagated—make them to be a sort of complement to the four Gospels. They are ascetical reiterations of the inward dispositions of Our Lord Jesus Christ: they are mystical continuances of His life." In their relations to the Church, "these devotions are the giving forth of its private affections and its secret inner life."¹⁶⁶ In this same work of Fr. Faber from which we have quoted we shall find a sound exposition of the theological reasons for the variety and the multiplicity of those devotions that the Church has sanctioned and blessed.¹⁶⁷

20. The Compassion of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

To complete the theological study of the Passion it is essential to study also the Compassion of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We may judge of the nature of this Compassion, when we recall to mind the words of Pope Pius X: "Mother and Son are united

by a bond of intimacy so strong that it could never be severed; and, in consequence, equally applicable to both Mary and Jesus are the words of the Prophet: 'My life is wasted with grief, and my years in sighs.'¹⁶⁸ For, when the Son was yielding up His life in the torment of Calvary, "there stood by the Cross of Jesus His Mother;" yet, not as a mere onlooker at a monstrous tragedy, but as a Mother who rejoiced "that her Only-Begotten Son should be sacrificed for the salvation of mankind: and, so completely was she united in suffering with Him, that, if it had been possible that she were permitted to suffer in His stead, she would have most willingly endured all the torments that were heaped upon Him."¹⁶⁹ It was from this sharing in the sufferings of her Son and this perfect union of her will with His, that Mary "eminently merited to become the Reparatrix of a lost world."¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, as God was pleased to assimilate Mary's work of reparation to the Redemptive work of Jesus, it was befitting that she should become the Dispensatrix of all the blessings which Jesus won for us by His death and the outpouring of His Precious Blood: and, because the sorrow and anguish of Calvary were shared, as we have said, between the Mother and the Son, God granted to this august Virgin Mary the prerogative of being "mankind's most powerful Mediatrix and Advocate with her Only-Begotten Son."¹⁷¹ Since, in offering payment of the debt men had contracted with God, Christ added Mary's sufferings to His own, she merited *de congruo*, as theologians say, what Christ merited *de condigno*.¹⁷² Pope Pius X, in his Encyclical *Ad diem illum*, declares this to be the teaching of the Church. In the light of this teaching, Mary could say, with far greater truth than could the Apostle: "I fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, for His body, which is the Church;"¹⁷³ for, as the sorrows she endured in union with her Son made her our Co-Redemptrix, they made her also, in the words of St. Bernardine of Sienna, "the neck of our Head, through which all of His spiritual benefits pass to His Mystical Body."¹⁷⁴ All of these dogmatic truths are very fully expounded by Faber,¹⁷⁵ Cardinal Lepicier,¹⁷⁶ Meregalli,¹⁷⁷ Campana¹⁷⁸ and Fr. Seraphim¹⁷⁹; and, although the allotted period of the formal theological course does not permit of an exhaustive study of such truths, yet the important place that devotion to the Mother of Sorrows occupied in

truly said, then, that this mystical continuation of the Passion of Christ should be regarded by us as the synthetic reason of all the happenings in the career of the Church? Nay, more; should we not go so far as to look upon the Sacred Passion as the embodiment of the philosophy and the theology of Church History?

46. Growth of the Devotion to the Passion.

It will help us to a clearer understanding of the proposition we have formulated, if we consider now "the works God has wrought through the Cross." To do this effectively, we must examine briefly the manifold influences of the Sacred Passion on history; and the origin, the progress, and the manifestations of the devotion to the Passion. We have already made passing references to these matters in our "schema": and here we must enlarge somewhat upon these topics.

Looking first to the origin of the devotion to the Passion, we are reminded by Father Plus that "the thought of the Cross must have furnished an habitual theme of meditation to those disciples who had seen Jesus die. This era, however, was one of active struggle rather than of quiet meditation: so that Minucius Felix³⁷³ could appropriately put into the mouth of a certain pagan the remark: Today it is more common to carry a cross than to adore one."³⁷⁴ Thus, throughout several centuries, the practice of religion was so closely identified with devotion to the Passion as to provide a perfect illustration of Gretser's statement: "The profession of the Christian Religion means nothing else than the profession of the Cross and the Crucified."³⁷⁵ But, in so far as the Passion may be classed as a distinct devotion, it was reserved for that era we term the Middle Ages to appraise it at its true worth, and to witness such an upsurge of this devotion that it can be truthfully said: "The predominant characteristic and the matchless glory of the Middle Ages was a burning zeal for the Sacred Humanity of Jesus Christ—a zeal which rose to such a temperature that it might almost be called a passion for the Saviour's Passion."³⁷⁶ This spirit of zeal was, in part at least, fired by pious pilgrimages to those places in the Holy Land that had been hallowed by the presence of the Saviour; and the popularity of such pilgrimages prompted, in its turn, those remarkable expeditions which came to be called "Crusades," and which

must be rated as the most signal instances of the devotion of these ages to the Passion of Christ.³⁷⁷ This devotion received a tremendous impetus also from the spirit and teaching of the two great Orders, the Friars Minor and the Friars Preachers, who, as a certain historian has aptly commented, brought it about that "the whole of Europe was to be seen weeping over the wounds of Christ."³⁷⁸

A recent author has set himself, with no small measure of success, to the task of tracing the history of the devotion to the Passion, from the Middle Ages up to our own times.³⁷⁹ It will prove very helpful to consult also Pourrat,³⁸⁰ Bremond,³⁸¹ Tanqueray,³⁸² Saudreau,³⁸³ and Grabman.³⁸⁴

There are some authors, e.g., Morini,³⁸⁵ Meregalli,³⁸⁶ and Pourrat,³⁸⁷ who show us how the devotion to the Mother of Sorrows has originated and progressed simultaneously with the origin and progress of the devotion to the Passion: and all of these authors whom we have cited likewise describe, along parallel lines, the origin and growth of these other kindred devotions, of which we have spoken in our section upon the Dogmatic Theology of the Passion.

47. The Passion in Hagiography.

The progress of the devotion to the Sacred Passion is to be learned principally from a perusal of the lives of the Saints: hence we should make a diligent search of the records that history preserves for us of these Saints, particularly of such as were favored with the stigmata, with revelations, and with other similar supernatural gifts that are connected with the Passion of Our Lord or the Sorrows of Our Lady. Authoritative sources of information on this subject are Thiepolo,³⁸⁸ Father Seraphim,³⁸⁹ Pourrat,³⁹⁰ Hoppenot,³⁹¹ Quaresmius,³⁹² and Imbert-Gourdeyre.³⁹³

48. Instruments of the Passion.

To know the history of the instruments of our Redemption by Christ is a matter that should hold a special interest for all Christians, and, above all, for Passionists. The very limited references to this subject that are to be found in manuals of Church History should be amplified, therefore, by making a close study of some of those many books that deal with this subject in detail, as, e.g., the works of Rohault de Fleury,³⁹⁴ Ollivier,³⁹⁵

rist also enjoys, as a sacrament, an intimate relationship with the Passion, since it consists in the reception of the Host, i.e., of the Victim Who is immolated in sacrifice.¹⁹⁸ This latter truth prompts the teaching of Billuart that the essence of this Sacrament of the Eucharist lies "in the fact of the permanency of the sacrificial act":¹⁹⁹ and, undoubtedly, the very import of the words of consecration shows Christ to be present in the Eucharist in a state of immolation that connotes not only the bloodless liturgy of the Mass, but also the rite of the Passion that was enacted in blood. Wherefore, a certain pious author, borrowing a series of metaphors from the peace offerings of the Old Law²⁰⁰ calls the Eucharist: "The dessert of the Cross, baked on the gridiron of the Cross, roasted in the oven of the Cross, cooked in the frying pan of the Cross."²⁰¹ It is in this strain that, as De La Taille shows at some length, many of the Fathers likened our reception of the Eucharistic Food to a partaking of a sacrificial banquet, in which the Divine Victim nourishes us with His own Body and Blood.²⁰² "Because we eat the Body of Christ," says St. Augustine, "we are nourished by His Cross;" and elsewhere he says: "We are illumined by our eating and drinking of the Crucified."^{203, 204} Many other authors speak of the Eucharistic Food—the Flesh of Christ—as having been "cooked and baked by the fire of the Passion."²⁰⁵

For the time being, we must rest content with these few pointers to a profitable study of the dogmatic aspect of the Blessed Eucharist. Later on, when we arrive at the appropriate sections, we shall have a little more to say about the logical consequences and influences of this doctrine in the field of morals, of ascetics, and of the spiritual life in general.

24. The Passion and the Sacramentals.

It is fitting that the Sacramentals should form the theme of our next section; because the generic relationship of these Sacramentals to the Passion must be sought in the fact that they draw their efficacy from the exercise of the supreme power vested in that Church which, in the words of St. Leo, "is established upon the sacrament of the Cross of Christ."²⁰⁶ We mean to say, in other words, that the Church has instituted these Sacramentals in order that, through the agency of these "Lesser Sacraments,"

as they were frequently termed by the ancients,²⁰⁷ the superabundant graces gushing from the Cross of Christ might be more widely distributed.²⁰⁸ Amongst the sacramentals there are some which are allied to the Sacred Passion even more closely than others, e.g., many of the ceremonies and liturgical prayers of the Mass and of the Divine Office; the solemn blessings for crucifixes which are prescribed in the Ritual; and last, but by no means least, the Sign of the Cross itself. As you have already seen from the plan of this letter, we have allotted a distinct section to our consideration of the Sacred Passion in the Church's Liturgy: and, lest we should anticipate the remarks we intend to make in that section, we make here but one or two cursory references to this sacramental of the Sign of the Cross. The important place that it occupies among the sacramentals may be gauged from the following well-known mnemonic verse:—

"Crux, aqua, nomen, edens, ungens, jurans, benedicens."²⁰⁹ Our frequent use of this Sign is meant "to keep the Passion of Christ before our minds, and to show to the whole world that all our trust is in Christ, in Whose Cross we glory. The efficacy of this Sign is exemplified in many miraculous events narrated by the Fathers of the Church, and in many similar marvels recorded in the Acts of the Martyrs and the Lives of the Saints."²¹⁰

25. *The Passion and Indulgences.*

It is quite easy to detect the link between Indulgences and the Sacred Passion if we recall to mind that the merits of the Sufferings and Death of Christ form the main portion of the Treasury of the Church, from which indulgences are distributed. Treating of this theme, Sertillanges reaches heights of poetry when he writes: "The Sacrifice of the Cross was the first indulgence that was gained for us, and from it all other indulgences are derived. By making His pilgrimage to Calvary, by telling His rosary of sorrows, by wearing His scapular of the Cross, by reciting the prayer of His Five Wounds, by bestowing the alms of His Blood upon a thirsting world, Christ gained for us a Plenary Indulgence, in the fullest meaning of the term; and His followers have added to this treasury of graces by 'filling up those things which are wanting to the sufferings of Christ, for His body which is the Church.'"²¹¹ The same thesis had already

been expounded by Clement VI, in his Apostolic Constitution *Unigenitus Dei Filius*, wherein he had explained that the Treasury of the Church consists primarily in the superabundant outpouring of that Precious Blood which was shed by Christ for the redemption of mankind.²¹² The distribution of the riches of this treasury is bound up with the doctrine of the Mystical Body, in so far as it is through the Redemption of Christ—i.e., the Passion of Christ—that we become members one of another, and of Christ.²¹³

As almost all the Scholastic Manuals of Dogma treat of this subject, it would be futile to cite here a list of authors to be consulted.

26. *The Ethics of the Passion.*

The next step in our study is to consider the Passion in the light of the teachings of Moral Theology; that is, "the teachings regarding those virtues that man must practise and those Christian offices he must fulfil, if he is to attain to his supernatural end."²¹⁴ On this point, we would remind you of the words Our Holy Founder and Lawgiver has inserted in the first chapter of Our Holy Rule. Speaking of the advantages of meditating on the Sacred Passion, he says: "This profitable and salutary meditation is a most efficacious means for withdrawing the minds of men from iniquity, and leading them on to Christian perfection at which we aim." Yes, truly, "in His Passion, Jesus Christ affords us every example, every incentive, every help we need to distinguish what is good from what is evil; to embrace the former and to shun the latter; and, by living righteously, to enter into life eternal."²¹⁵ In the work from which this quotation is taken, Père Janvier presents us with a detailed elaboration of this thesis. He is not satisfied with quoting one or two sentences from the Gospel narratives of the Passion and making of them a textual background for a moral dissertation (as Scalabonius had done before him in a work of equally profound erudition):²¹⁶ but he sets out to prove that the Passion provides the only stable foundations and supports of Christian morality; and he accomplishes this purpose so successfully as to make it quite clear that, in the words of another author, "the Passion is the ethics of the Gospel in practice."²¹⁷ This teaching is in full accord, too,

with that of the Roman Catechism: "We can say with truth that, during the one day of His Passion, Our Saviour gave us a practical example of all those salutary lessons He had inculcated during the whole course of His Sacred Ministry."²¹⁸

27. *The Passion and Moral Theology.*

Over and above this general connection between the Passion and Christian ethics, there are some subjects of Moral Theology that are linked with the Passion in a particular and distinctive way. The very saintly author of that little work *The Goad of Divine Love* (which, though it was for a long time attributed to St. Bonaventure, was more probably written by James of Milan),²¹⁹ examines, in the light of the Passion, the precepts of the Decalogue, the theological and moral virtues, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit, the Eight Beatitudes, etc.²²⁰ Even though cynics may label as "far-fetched" the methods whereby this work discovers, or fabricates, associations, they will not find it so easy to question the validity of associating with the Sacred Passion such subjects as the sacraments and sacramentals, indulgences, exercises of piety, works of mercy, and many others which "love's ingenuity" will suggest.²²¹ As regards the sacraments, the sacramentals and indulgences, we would merely advise that, in the province of Moral Theology, a careful study be made of those points to which we have drawn attention in the province of Dogma. As regards the Blessed Eucharist, it is worthy of special note that many of those remarks we intend to make in a later section that will deal with "The Mass and Holy Communion in their Relation to the Spiritual Life" are equally applicable to this present section.

In the course of the tract "The First Precept of the Decalogue," most Manuals of Moral Theology discuss exercises of piety, under the heading of "The Virtue of Religion" or of "Prayer."²²² It is but fitting that our Passionist Students should spend at least a little more time than usual over such discussions when they are concerned with those exercises of piety that bear a close association with the Passion; e.g., The Way of the Cross, The Holy Hour; the devotions in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, of the Holy Face, of the Precious Blood, of the Five Wounds, and of the Seven Dolors; the Sorrowful Mysteries

of the Rosary, pious pilgrimages, etc.²²³ With reference to pilgrimages, it should be remembered that many theologians treat of these as being an act of religion;²²⁴ hence, in those regions where there is a shrine of the Passion that has become a center of pilgrimage, our students should make a special study of such shrines from the theological standpoint.²²⁵

Of the other distinctively Passionist devotions that we have mentioned above, we would like to say that the outline of these devotions we have drawn in the speculative field should be extended into the field of practice. We will treat of the Divine Office in our section on the Liturgy, and of meditation in our section on Spiritual Theology. For the rest, this will not be an inappropriate place to make a few comments upon the Way of the Cross, the Holy Hour, and the Works of Mercy.

28. The Way of the Cross.

Our Holy Rule imposes a serious obligation upon our Missioners when it decrees: "Let them not only exhort but also instruct the people how to meditate piously on the Mysteries of the Life, Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ."²²⁶ Now, amongst the means that are calculated to achieve this objective, one of the most suitable is the Way of the Cross, because this exercise is readily adaptable to the standards of each and every individual. It is an exercise, too, that has been highly recommended by the Roman Pontiffs, particularly by Benedict XIV. Here are the words of this saintly and learned Pontiff: "So great is the power of the Sufferings, the Crucifixion and the Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ that no more efficacious remedy may be found for healing the wounds of conscience, for clarifying the vision of the mind, and for inflaming the soul with divine love."²²⁷ "After the Sacraments and the Liturgy," says Abbot Marmion, "there is no practice more useful to souls than the Way of the Cross."²²⁸ It was such reasons as these that moved the 31st General Chapter to recommend to all our Missioners the propagation of this devotion, after the example of Our Holy Founder;²²⁹ and it is worthy of remark that our Fathers in the United States have been so zealous in carrying out this recommendation that it is quite easy to recognize, from the numbers who are devoted to this exercise, the parishes in which Passionists have given Missions.

While many authors explain this devotion in its literal sense, there are many others who look rather to its mystical and allegoric sense; e.g., Venturini,²³⁰ Ardito,²³¹ Marmion,²³² etc. The ingenious and quasi-esoteric interpretation proposed by Cordelier in his work *The Path of the Eternal Wisdom*²³³ is interesting enough as an example of pious curiosity and technical erudition; but it is little calculated to arouse fervor and devotion.

We will have something to say later on about the history of this devotion of the Way of the Cross.

29. *The Holy Hour.*

The exercise of the Holy Hour, in a spirit of loving reparation towards Our Lord Jesus Christ in Gethsemani, had its origin in the revelations made to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque; and, "not only has the Church approved this devotion, but it has enriched it with many priceless spiritual privileges."²³⁴ It is well-known to you all that this was a favorite devotion of St. Gemma Galgani; and her "Life" records the abundant spiritual fruit she reaped from this exercise. While there are many books that make passing reference to this exercise, a few authors, such as Fr. Matthew Crawley²³⁵ and Pourrat,²³⁶ have discussed it at considerable length.

30. *The Works of Mercy.*

Much instructive information concerning the Works of Mercy is imparted by commentators on topics of Moral Theology, when they speak of charity towards the neighbor, under which category it is customary to include the exercise of charity towards the Souls in Purgatory.²³⁷ In this regard, Blessed Baptista Varani draws our attention to the illuminating and forceful examples of the exercise of the works of mercy that are set before us in the Sacred Passion; since, throughout every phase of that Passion, but particularly in Gethsemani, Christ took upon Himself all the trials and sorrows endured by every member of His Mystical Body, whether in this life or in Purgatory, so that it was in this sense Our Redeemer fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: "Surely he hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows."²³⁸ Pacciucchelli,²³⁹ Pinto,²⁴⁰ and Nieremberg²⁴¹ formulate the same doctrine; while Cornelius a Lapide teaches that "all the sorrows

which the elect had endured in the past or would endure till the end of time were laid upon the Sacred Humanity of Christ,"²⁴² since He Himself had declared: "As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to Me."²⁴³

If this doctrine is thoroughly explained to our Students, they will learn how compassion towards Jesus Suffering may be transformed into a proportionately strong motive of compassion towards the neighbor.

31. The "Paranetic Ratio" of the Passion.

We now come to the principal part of the ethical study of the Passion, viz., the "paranetic ratio" of the Passion: that is to say, the Passion insofar as it is the pattern, the incentive and the illustration of the spiritual life, whether ascetic or mystical. Hence, for the sake of succinctness we apply the term "Paranesis of the Passion" to that relationship the Passion bears to the theology of the spiritual life, which, in accordance with the 16th Decree of the 31st General Chapter, our Religious are obliged to study. The part played by the Passion of Christ in both the ascetic life and the mystical life may be studied either historically or doctrinally. Under the first aspect, it is a theme of that History of Spirituality which forms a special section of the History of the Church. It is under its second aspect (i.e., doctrinal) that we wish to touch upon it here: for we are anxious to give a few suggestions and directions to Lectors and Students of Ascetico-Mystical Theology. We remark, in the first place, that this branch of theology concerns itself with the subjective psychology of the Interior Life, both deductive and (as it is sometimes called) structural.²⁴⁴ That is to say, it treats of the grades of prayer, both active and passive, and of the influence that is exerted in these various grades by the faculties of the soul, grace, the virtues, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, etc. This study is so essential and so common to all schools of theology that it would be somewhat trite to dwell upon it here. Our purpose is, rather, to speak of the objective psychology of the interior life, viz., of its tenor and spirit, which assumes a variety of distinctive forms under the aegis of the various "schools" of spirituality, such as the Benedictine, the Dominican, the Franciscan, the Ignatian, the Sulpitian, the Salesian, the Oratorian, etc.²⁴⁵ In making reference to these "schools," what we have in mind is

"the aggregation or sum total of those teachings, opinions, exercises of devotion and pious customs, which the founders of these various schools bequeathed as a spiritual heritage to those who follow their most praiseworthy way of life and who constitute the portion of their spiritual posterity."²⁴⁶ We do not mean to infer, of course, that any of these schools claims a monopoly of the most practical methods of spirituality: we simply mean that each school exhibits a divergence of views towards one or other facet of the many-sided and rich-hued object of Christian doctrine; and that the different ways of each school are as so many different routes, each one more readily accessible and more congenial to particular conditions of life and particular states of mind, that converge upon the mount of Christian perfection. Just as there is between the moral virtues such a strong inter-dependence that he who cultivates one of necessity cultivates all the others:²⁴⁷ so there exists between these various schools of spirituality a bond of union so close and so strong that he who allies himself to one necessarily allies himself to all the others. Thus, while singling out one school for particular mention, and describing the distinctive attributes and methods of this school, it is far from our purpose to shut out other schools completely from your purview. Nevertheless, we do wish to focus your attention upon the special type of spirituality that is taught in the School of the Passion;—a school which, while it has always flourished in the Church, proclaims as one of its greatest masters St. Paul of the Cross, who has bequeathed to us, as our spiritual heritage, the task of cultivating the Passion of Christ in our own hearts and propagating it in the hearts of others.

We may estimate how advantageous it will prove to us to make a minute and thorough investigation of the spirit and methods of this School of the Passion, if we recall the elementary principle of spirituality that growth in the interior life is promoted and maintained by the co-operation of human industry with divine grace. It would be well for us to observe, too, that even in the higher grades of the interior life, where there is question of the passive reception of those graces of infused contemplation that are the gratuitous gifts of God and are altogether beyond the scope of merely human attainment, it is not unusual for the soul to experience occasions when God, so to

speak, rouses it from its state of quiet receptivity and demands active co-operation with Him. About these recurrent periods of activity that are encountered even by souls who have been raised to a high degree of contemplation, ascetical writers have many counsels to offer.²⁴⁸ St. Teresa, for example, in her well-known work *The Interior Castle*, draws a series of striking analogies between what she terms the "Six Mansions of the Soul" and the progressive phases of the ecstatic union and the spiritual espousals of contemplatives with God: and, in the course of this work, she commends, even to such advanced souls, the active consideration of the Sacred Passion. "I have come to recognize," she says, "that, even in the higher grades of contemplation, such considerations can never prove a hindrance."

From the life and the words of Our Holy Founder, we may gather convincing evidence that this was also his teaching.

This rather lengthy preamble will help you to understand that, when speaking of the Spirituality of the Passion, our gaze is fixed upon its active element which always precedes and accompanies its passive element. Perhaps, it would be a more faithful expression of our thought to say that, as we learn from a study of the lives of the saints, the influence of the Sacred Passion in intensifying the holiness of souls whom God has raised to a state of passive contemplation generally bespeaks a direct proportion to their active considerations on this theme: for it would seem that, even in conferring graces of contemplation, God so takes into account the acquired dispositions of the souls thus favored, that, to His manner of acting in this regard, there may be applied, with but a slight adaptation, the old adage: "Omne receptum ad modum recipientis recipitur." Though she does not express it in precise terms, St. Teresa teaches the same doctrine when she avers that St. Francis of Assisi's reception of the stigmata (a passive gift) affords a striking proof of the intensity of his active devotion to the Passion of Christ.²⁴⁹

32. *The Spirituality of the Passion.*

After having thus prepared the way, we may now safely proceed to explain the main principles of the Spirituality of the Passion.²⁵⁰ Purposely turning a deaf ear to the controversies about possible distinctions between asceticism and mysticism,

we align them both under the one heading: "The theology of the spiritual life, or of Christian perfection."²⁵¹ This perfection, which, according to the unanimous teaching of theologians, consists essentially in charity and indirectly implies the fulness of all the other virtues,²⁵² is the final objective of every system of spirituality: and, when due allowance is made for the consequences of Original Sin, it may be found pithily condensed in the words of St. Paul the Apostle: "Stripping yourselves of the old man with his deeds, put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, the new man, who according to God is created in justice and holiness of truth, knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that they also who live, may not now live to themselves, but unto him who died for them."²⁵³ In these words, the Great Apostle teaches us that, for those who are still "exiles on their journey homewards," there are two essential elements of Christian perfection, viz., love and sacrifice; and, though spiritual writers agree that, in the ontological order, or the order of dignity, charity is by far the more important of these two elements, they are at variance as to their respective places in the chronological, or practical, order.²⁵⁴ Whatever may be the true facts of the case, it cannot be gainsaid that, the two elements must coalesce and intermingle: for, in this life, love can no more exist without sacrifice than can sacrifice without love.²⁵⁵ Nay, more; these two elements must run along parallel lines: because, on the one hand, sacrifice is the outward expression and the inward stimulus of love,²⁵⁶ and, on the other hand, that "freedom from sin and service of justice," which St. Thomas tells us are integral components of charity,²⁵⁷ have, as their respective counterparts, the practice of mortification and the exercise of the virtues. This is the import of that counsel of the *Imitation of Christ*: "The greater is the violence thou dost to thyself, the more progress shalt thou make."²⁵⁸

After this brief description of the nature and the composition of Christian perfection, let us now examine the means by which the Passion of Christ may be used to acquire it.

33. Devotion to the Passion.

Needless to say, the first means is a special devotion to Jesus Suffering. Here, we do not use the word "devotion" in its strict theological sense, but in the sense in which spiritual writers

frequently use it.²⁵⁹ "A special devotion," says Father Faber, "in the sense in which spiritual writers use the words, means, that, from a natural turn of mind, or from certain association with the secret history of our souls, or from the peculiar attraction of divine grace, we are drawn to particular mysteries of Our Lord's life, or particular attributes of God, or particular angels and saints, rather than to others,"²⁶⁰ in such a way that they exert a special influence upon our spiritual life. In an introductory paragraph of this letter, we mentioned that, among the Latin classical authors, the term *studium* is used in four different senses, in the second of which it is regarded as being synonymous with *devotio*; and we quoted the following definition of this latter term: "The intellectual appeal and the emotional attraction that moves us to attach ourselves to any person or to any cause, even to the point of rendering self-sacrificing service."²⁶¹ In speaking of our *devotion* to Jesus Suffering, we mean, therefore, our intelligent determination and our efficacious purpose of giving Him a prominent place in our interior life. Of course, this devotion to Jesus Suffering should be joined to those other kindred devotions of which we have spoken in our section on the Dogmatic Theology of the Passion.

This, then, is the first means of promoting in our souls a Spirituality of the Passion.²⁶²

34. The Imitation of Jesus Suffering.

The second means we propose is to set Jesus Christ before us, as the Model Whom we are to imitate in every phase of the spiritual life.²⁶³ Though it is true to say that "His whole life was a cross and a martyrdom,"²⁶⁴ it is in the Passion especially that He displays love and sacrifice in such a supereminent degree as to provide us with a most moving incentive to imitation, "a most sublime prototype of every virtue, and a most brilliant example of perfection,"²⁶⁵ in order that, as He "hath loved us, and hath delivered himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness,"²⁶⁶ we might be moved to make ourselves one with Him. We are repeatedly exhorted to do this by the Fathers of the Church and countless other spiritual writers, who recommend us to make Christ our Rule, our Exemplar, our Model, etc.²⁶⁷ We are given, too, a like earnest exhortation by the

Mystical Doctor, St. John of the Cross, whose one desire was "to suffer and be despised," that he might the better imitate Christ Suffering.²⁶⁸

35. *Our Incorporation in Christ Suffering.*

Our third means is based upon a practical application of the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ, in the spirit in which this doctrine was enunciated by St. Bernard: "It is a shame that we appear as delicate members, shrinking at the least smart of pain, under a Head that is crowned with thorns. Surely, there is no occasion for surprise, if a member suffer with the Head, with Whom he is to be glorified: for the Head does not reign in his kingdom without members. If, then, the members are to adhere to each other, and to be all united with their Head, this adhesion must come through the practice of virtue, this union through faith."²⁶⁹ It is thus that we shall fulfil the injunction of the Apostle: "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ";²⁷⁰ or, rather, it is thus we shall become "Christifacti,"²⁷¹ i.e., "incorporated in Christ, that Christ may be in us,"²⁷² not only *ex opere operato*, by reason of our Baptism, but also *ex opere operantis*, by reason of our manner of life (Christianus, Alter Christus). It is thus, too, that there shall exist between us and Christ Suffering that *communicatio idiomatum* to which spiritual writers frequently refer.²⁷³

36. *Meditation on Christ Suffering.*

The fourth means we suggest is that we follow the almost unanimous advice of spiritual writers to make the Sacred Passion the principal and the constant theme of our meditation. "They who are separated from the Passion," says St. Isidore, "are separated from prayer":²⁷⁴ and Tauler has no hesitation in declaring that "devotion to the Passion of Christ is our most powerful aid to union with God."²⁷⁵ In his "Treatise on Mental Prayer," St. Anselm gives expression to his belief that the Passion of Christ is, in its relation to prayer, as bread that is taken with every meal—the "daily bread" that is our essential food, and is the "staff of life."²⁷⁶ "The Passion of Christ," says Blossius, "is both the solid base and the stairway built upon it, providing us with the only sure way of mounting even to the contem-

plation of the Infinite Godhead";²⁷⁷ and another spiritual writer affirms: "I have never found a saintly contemplative soul (and I have been acquainted with many such souls) whose usual method of prayer and contemplation did not consist in reflecting upon the life, Passion, virtues, mysteries, and examples of the Man-God."²⁷⁸ And now, let us make a final quotation from one of the greatest of contemplatives, St. Teresa: "Meditation on the Passion is a method of prayer in which everyone should begin, and proceed, and make an end . . . until Our Lord shall be pleased to raise them to other supernatural (passive) things. I say 'everyone'; for, though there may be many souls who will gain more profit from other meditations, yet we must not forget to meditate frequently on the Passion of Christ, this being the source whence all our good is come, and always will come."²⁷⁹

In the "Ignatian" School of Spirituality meditation on the Passion is assigned to the Illuminative Way. This does not mean, however, that it must be restricted to that Way;²⁸⁰ for it has proved itself to be of incalculable benefit to each of the three Ways, and especially to the Unitive Way,²⁸¹ the first principle and the ultimate end of which is love: "For God so loved the world"²⁸² . . . Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and hath delivered himself for us."²⁸³ It is for this reason that St. Thomas, while teaching that love was the primary motive of the Passion,²⁸⁴ teaches also that the Passion is, in its turn, the most efficacious means of exciting a corresponding love on our part.²⁸⁵ St. Francis de Sales concludes his well-known tract on the Love of God with a chapter entitled: "The Mount of Calvary is the Real School of Divine Love," in which he shows that, where love is not founded upon the Passion of Our Saviour, it is vain and fraught with danger.²⁸⁶ In like manner, our Holy Founder teaches us that, when meditating on the Sacred Passion, the soul is nourished with the milk and honey of Divine Love.²⁸⁷ Finally; a consuming devotion towards Jesus Crucified can raise the soul to that highest degree of union with God that is possible in this life—a "transforming union," as it is called by mystical writers; a union that generates an internal likeness, and, on rare occasions, even an external likeness, to Jesus; a union that so completely merges the soul and Jesus into the one entity, that it speaks of itself, no less than of Jesus, when it exclaims: "My love is crucified!"²⁹⁰

37. The Eucharist and the Passion.

Our fifth means is a devotion to the Blessed Eucharist—a devotion that is founded upon the Sacred Passion, and is endowed with those characteristics of which we have spoken in our section on the Dogmatic Theology of the Passion. We have previously quoted the statement of Schouppe that “all our worship of God revolves around Christ Crucified”;²⁹¹ and St. Thomas makes a similar statement concerning the Blessed Eucharist. “In this Sacrament,” he says, “the whole mystery of our salvation is comprehended.”²⁹² In these two statements, the Altar and Calvary are looked upon as symbols, in the first and second degree respectively. The Altar represents Calvary; but Calvary represents the whole of our religion, and the whole mystery of our salvation.²⁹³ The Sacrifice of the Altar is essentially the repetition and the renewal of the Sacrifice of the Cross,²⁹⁴ and the liturgy of the Mass is an allegory of the whole Passion; or, as Father Faber so well expresses it: “The Mass is itself externally a sort of Drama of the Passion, but internally it is the identical Sacrifice Bloodlessly renewed.”²⁹⁵ It will be readily seen, then, that true devotion to the Sacrifice of the Mass must be founded on devotion to the Passion.²⁹⁶

Looking to the Blessed Eucharist in its aspect of Holy Communion, we recall the teaching of St. Augustine already quoted, to the effect that, in receiving Holy Communion, we nourish ourselves with Christ Crucified; and we should endeavor to do this not only sacramentally, but, so to speak, intellectually as well, by “calling to mind more attentively at this time the benefits of Christ’s Passion and Redemption, for, by doing this, we shall partake spiritually of the Body of Christ and drink His Blood in remembrance of Him.”²⁹⁷ In the course of a very minute elaboration of this point, De La Taille speaks of “our union with Christ, by means of contemplation and the Eucharist, both of which means are always linked together by the Fathers, and notably by Clement.”²⁹⁸ William of St. Theodore also speaks in much the same strain: “From His flesh, (Christ) provides our souls with a wonderful nourishment, of which we should partake with appetites sharpened by hunger, at the same time seasoning this food, and, as it were, digesting it in the stomach of memory, by reflecting upon all that Christ has done and suffered

for us."²⁹⁹ In this way, Holy Communion will hasten, even *ex opere operantis*, that transforming union³⁰⁰ which permits the soul to say with truth: "With Christ I am nailed to the Cross. And I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me... who loved me and delivered himself for me."³⁰¹

Lastly, we look to the sacramental life of Christ Our Lord; and, on this point, Fr. Faber says: "When we speak of the Blessed Sacrament being the subject of a special devotion we mean, not the Sacrifice, nor the Communion, but the Sacramental Life of Our Lord, the residence of Jesus amongst us under the mystic veil of the species":³⁰² and, going on to speak of "the spirit of the Blessed Sacrament," the same author identifies it, at least in part, with the spirit of Calvary, i.e., a spirit of love and sacrifice, which is "the cause of the Church's asceticism and the pattern of its mystical union with God"; and he teaches that Jesus in His Sacramental Life furnishes a perfect Model for every type of Christian and for every stage of spirituality, for, "as many states as there are in the spiritual life of the faithful, so many lives are there which He leads in the Blessed Sacrament."³⁰³ How truly may it be said, therefore, that Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is pre-eminently the Exemplar of our Passionist spirit, in each and all of its several elements, viz., poverty, solitude, prayer, charity and apostolic zeal!—a topic that we strove to elucidate in the "examen" we gave to the Community of this Retreat on last Holy Thursday.³⁰⁴ It is no mere flight of fancy to say that, in the Sacrament of the Altar, Christ mystically relives His Passion; and, while touching upon this topic, it will interest you to learn that a certain Bishop, when giving his canonical "imprimatur" to an anonymous work published at Avignon in 1863, did not deem it incongruous to speak of "the Sorrowful Mysteries of Christ's Eucharistic Passion."³⁰⁵ Furthermore, in his valuable treatise on the Blessed Sacrament,³⁰⁶ Father Faber introduces this very point of doctrine, and illustrates it by instancing apparitions vouchsafed to many souls, in which Jesus appeared in the Host as He was after the Scourging, another time as Crowned with Thorns, another as carrying His Cross to Calvary.³⁰⁷

These few facts we have adduced should be quite sufficient to engender in your minds a vivid realization of the truth that de-

votion to the Blessed Sacrament, as a sacrifice, as a sacrament, and as the Real Presence of Jesus in the tabernacle, is a most potent means of acquiring the true Passionist spirit and of progressing in Passionist spirituality.

38. *Three Other Aids to the Spirituality of the Passion.*

As a sixth aid to the development of a Spirituality of the Passion, we recommend devotion to the Mother of Sorrows, of whom it can be said, with no less truth than of her Crucified Son, that "Her whole life was a cross and martyrdom"; and from whose mind, as theologians teach,³⁰⁸ the Passion of her Divine Son was never absent. This Queen of Martyrs, who was the first to be clothed with the Passionist habit, and who showed it to our Holy Founder, has an unassailable claim to be regarded as the prototype of Passionist Religious; and, *mutatis mutandis*, in accordance with the dogmatic exposition of the Compassion of the Blessed Virgin Mary that we have given above, what we said concerning the influence of the suffering Man-God upon Passionist spirituality enjoys an equally valid application to his Sorrowful Mother.³⁰⁹

The seventh means we recommend is that, in our devotion to the Angels and Saints, we give priority to those who have had a more intimate connection with the Passion:³¹⁰ the eighth means is that we regulate our intellectual life in strict conformity with the tenor and the spirit of the Passion.³¹¹

39. *The Apostolate of the Passion.*

Our ninth and final means is the apostolate of the Cross, i.e., a zeal for promoting devotion to the Passion of Our Lord;—a zeal that results, "not as an ideal attained but as an effect produced," from the flowing-over of an interior life which our fervor has brought to boiling point;³¹² since authors uniformly teach that a Religious Institute of the Mixed Life, as it is called, is not one that has as its end an active apostolate to which prayer is subjoined, but that, on the contrary, it is "one that is devoted primarily to contemplation, as a fructifying agent of external activities."³¹³ This is merely another way of expressing that truth to which we drew your attention some few years ago, on the occasion of the bi-centenary of our Holy Founder's Ordi-

nation to the priesthood: for we then reminded you that our interior life, "to the extent in which it nourishes our spirit of the apostolate, is itself reciprocally nourished by that spirit."³¹⁴ We shall return to this subject later on in our section on Sacred Eloquence, where we intend to show at some length that "Jesus Crucified is the foundation of the apostolate, and furnishes the apostle with the weapons he must use in his warfare for souls."³¹⁵

40. The Spirituality of St. Paul the Apostle.

As we have set ourselves the task of delineating the spirituality of the Passion, it seems to us not only appropriate, but even necessary, to explain briefly what we are taught about this matter by the two Pauls, Paul of Tarsus and Paul of Ovada, both of whom are rightly styled "Paul of the Cross": the latter, because that was the name by which he chose to be known after his clothing with the Habit of Religion; the former, because the Cross of Christ was the basic element of his spirituality and the central object of his love.

In these our times, the Theology of St. Paul the Apostle is being analyzed and discussed in many scholarly volumes: and, since the Passion always looms large in this Pauline theology, no matter from what angle it may be viewed, it is essential that our students be given some acquaintance at least with the main points of these discussions. Though we are not overlooking the fact that it is the office and duty of the Lector of Sacred Scripture, rather than of the Lector of Theology, to explain this branch of doctrine to the students, since, as we have already hinted on page 63 above, it belongs more properly to the Exegesis of the Passion, yet, because it has a definite affinity with the paranetic study of the Passion, it is not altogether out of place to introduce it here.

"In the circle of those saints who had a special devotion to the Passion" says Pourrat, "St. Paul holds a very high rank."³¹⁶ To the mind of the great Apostle, "everything converges towards Calvary: from Calvary everything flows."³¹⁷ "The habitual subject of his meditations is Calvary itself. There he beholds the Savior accomplishing His work of restoration and associating us in His merits; there he beholds the mystery of our aggregation to the Mystical Body of Christ, by grace, faith, and Baptism

... by the virtues, charisms, and the Sacramentals."³¹⁸ He protests that he will not glory save in the Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ: he judges himself to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him Crucified.

By reverting to the few remarks we have made regarding the aims and objectives of Christian perfection, you will be quick to discern that, when "Paul the Divine" speaks of imitating Christ and of "putting on" Christ, he wishes to institute a twofold endeavor, that harmonizes with the two-sided nature of the spiritual life: (1) with Christ to be nailed to the Cross and to die, and (2) with Christ to rise again. Here is the synthesis of all life's noblest purposes: here is the most lifelike reproduction in the soul of the characteristic features of Christ!³¹⁹ This twofold impetus of the spiritual life may be considered either in its relation to justification, or in its relation to perfection. In the first instance, it produces its effect, *ex opere operato*, through the reception of Baptism: "buried with him in baptism, in whom also you are risen again by faith."³²⁰ "For as many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ."³²¹ In the second instance, it accomplishes its purpose *ex opere operantis*, through personal labors and exertions: "If you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above;... mind the things that are above;... mortify therefore your members."³²² "For we are buried together with him by baptism into death; that as Christ is risen from the dead... so we also may walk in newness of life. We have been planted together in the likeness of his death... for our old man is crucified with him."³²³ "Always bearing about in our body the mortification of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifest in our bodies."³²⁴ "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh."³²⁵ "They that are Christ's have crucified their flesh."³²⁶

"Paul the Apostle is so completely dominated by love for Christ that he never wearies of invoking this Holy Name. It is 'in Christ Jesus' that he views everything; and the whole Christian religion, so far as he is concerned, means nothing else than to live in Christ Jesus, by sharing in His sorrows and copying His virtues."³²⁷ Many of you are familiar with his point of view regarding the Church; viz., that the members of the Church Militant must show forth, not the signs of glory, but the stigma-

ta of the Passion; by bearing in their bodies the mortification and the marks of the Lord Jesus,^{328, 329} by abounding in the sufferings of Christ,³³⁰ and by sharing in the fellowship of His sorrows.³³¹

Furthermore, "St. Paul views the Eucharist as a means of uniting ourselves with the Passion of the Lord";³³² and he teaches that this union ought to be constantly strengthened, until one can say with truth: "With Christ I am nailed to the Cross: and I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me."³³³

Finally, the glorious apostolate of St. Paul, with its motto: "We Preach Christ Crucified," affords a striking proof of his love for his Crucified Master.³³⁴

What we have said will be sufficient to show that the spirituality of St. Paul, thoroughly impregnated as it is with the Sacred Passion, is a forceful expression of the spirit of Passionist Religious, and that, in consequence, it is a subject deserving of intensive study on the part of our Lectors and Students.

We consider it advisable to mention, in passing, that, when a certain well-known author denies the truth of the proposition: "St. Paul reduces the whole doctrine of the spiritual life to the knowledge and the imitation of Jesus Crucified," we are ready to agree with him insofar as devotion to the Passion is not the end of Christian perfection; for that end, as we have seen, consists in union with God through charity:^{335, 336} yet we are not ready to agree with him insofar as devotion to the Passion is a means—a most necessary, though not exclusive, means—of advancing towards Christian perfection.

41. The Spirituality of St. Paul of the Cross.

Let us now speak of the spirituality of our Holy Founder, who was "Paul of the Cross," not only in name, but much more in spirit and desire. On this subject, we possess such wealth of matter with which we are all familiar, that, even though it were possible to reduce it to a satisfactory compendium, such a task would seem to be superfluous. Therefore, while referring those who desire fuller information on this point, to the "Letters" of our Holy Father,³³⁷ and to his "Life" written by Blessed Vincent M. Strambi,³³⁸ we restrict ourselves here to an attempt to harmonize the example and the teachings of our Holy Father with those truths we have enunciated above, when speaking of the

spirituality of the Passion. (Pages 86-87) As to what regards perfection itself, we have seen that its two constitutive elements are love and mortification: and love and mortification, both of them fostered by prayer, poverty and solitude, shine out conspicuously in the life of our Holy Founder and in the Constitutions written by him.³³⁹ With reference to what we have said regarding the means of promoting the spirituality of the Passion, we draw your attention to the following points:—(1) In the very first chapter of our Rule, our Holy Founder enjoins upon us devotion to the Sacred Passion; and, in the following chapters, he recommends it over and over again; (2) he places Jesus Suffering before us as our Exemplar, and admonishes us to “exhibit the virtues of Jesus Christ and live in accordance with His spirit”;³⁴⁰ (3) he assigns to us, as the principal subject of our meditations, the Sacred Passion, “from which chiefly all religious perfection and sanctity take their rule and increase”;³⁴¹ he urges us to cultivate a very special devotion to the Blessed Eucharist, i.e., to the Mass,³⁴² to Holy Communion,³⁴³ and to Jesus dwelling in the tabernacle;³⁴⁴ (4) he inculcates a like special devotion to the Mother of Sorrows;³⁴⁵ (5) finally, he prescribes for his children the Apostolate of the Passion.³⁴⁶

It is meet and just, then, that the Church should acclaim our Holy Founder in the following words of praise:—“Thou, O Paul, didst learn wisdom in the wounds of Christ; thou art strengthened for thy labors by the Blood of Christ; thou leadest nations to penance through the Passion of Christ.”³⁴⁷ The “wisdom” here spoken of signifies a life of very high mysticism;³⁴⁸ the “labors” point to the possession of that spirit which moved Paul the Apostle to say: “I fill up those things that are wanting to the sufferings of Christ”;³⁴⁹ the “nations led to penance” are a convincing proof of apostolic fervor and zeal.³⁵⁰

Here we must conclude our brief review of the spirituality of the Passion, which we have examined in the light of principles derived both from the nature of the subject itself and from the teachings of St. Paul the Apostle and St. Paul of the Cross.

42. Patrology of the Passion.

We have now come to that section of our program which is concerned with the Fathers of the Church. During the formal preparatory course for the priesthood, Patristical Studies, as

they are called, are necessarily restricted to those general principles and those particular subjects that are considered as of major importance, whether in relation to the special dogmatic, moral or paranetic studies that are being pursued, or in relation to some definite objective that is held in view. Hence, it will be the duty of the Lectors to direct, by helpful guidance, the thoughts and studies of our young men to Passiological Patrology (if we may be permitted to coin such a term): that is to say, to those Fathers who excel in this branch of doctrine. This task may be greatly facilitated by consulting the Indexes of some standard patristical works, such as Migne's *Patrology*,³⁵¹ or the *Great Library of the Early Fathers*.³⁵² We are also afforded much practical assistance in this matter by Klietsch,³⁵³ Fonck³⁵⁴ etc. If such works as these are not available, considerable help may be obtained from the *Promptuarium* of Father Seraphim;³⁵⁵ for this work, as he himself says, was "compiled solely from those texts of the holy Fathers, which we ourselves, with all possible diligence, have contrived to extract from those writings of theirs, which can never be adequately praised."³⁵⁶

43. *The Passion in Sacred Liturgy.*

The Passion of Christ also occupies a very important place in Sacred Liturgy, especially in the daily Liturgy of the Mass: for, not only does this Holy Sacrifice essentially renew the Sacrifice of the Cross; but it also represents allegorically the Tragedy of the Passion, both by reason of the ordered arrangement of its parts, and in view of the fact that, in putting on the sacred vestments, the priest, as it were, puts on Jesus Suffering, so that he may celebrate the Sacrifice of the Altar.³⁵⁷ Again; the ingenious piety of past ages was not content with accompanying the recital of the Divine Office by reflections on the Passion: it even went to the extent of weaving the Passion closely into every portion of the Daily Office, by dividing it into seven "scenes," corresponding with each of the canonical "hours." This pious custom has been enshrined in the following mnemonic verses:—At Matins we think of Our Lord being bound, in punishment for all our crimes.

At Prime we recall the keen shame He endured, when mockers defiled His Sweet Face. At Tierce we reflect on the cause of His Death—the sins of all peoples and times.

At Sext we behold Jesus nailed to the Cross, His Hands and Feet dragged into place. At None we consider the Wound in His Side, from which the last drops of blood flowed.

At Vespers we contemplate Mary's great grief... She clasps her Dead Son to Her Heart.

At Compline we see Jesus laid in a tomb a loving disciple bestowed.

Thus, at each of the Hours, to Jesus we turn, resolved from Him ne'er to depart.

In a similar manner, the Passion is adapted to the divisions of the canonical hours by Ludolph of Saxony, in his *Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, from the reading of which not a few of the Saints, e.g., St. Francis de Sales, St. Jane Frances de Chantal, St. Teresa, and St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi,³⁵⁸ experienced a noticeable increase in their love for Jesus Christ Suffering;³⁵⁹ and Gerson makes a like adaptation in his work: *The Seven Hours of the Passion*—a work which displays such fervor and intensity of devotion as to prove how solid must be the groundwork supporting the traditional claim that, on two distinct occasions, the illustrious Chancellor preached on the Passion of Christ for twenty-four hours continuously.³⁶⁰ In the thirteenth century, St. Bonaventure had tirelessly advocated this practice of linking the Divine Office with Our Lord's Passion and Death; and the Seraphic Doctor has enshrined this practice in his well-known *Laudismus SS. Crucis*:

Recordate, frater pie,
Septem vicibus in die,
Passionem Domini.
Hanc si amas et honoras,
Dicas illi certas horas,
Adhibendo studium
Horam Primam, Matutinam,
Trinam, Sextam, Vespertinam,
Nonam, Completorium.

Our own Venerable Father Dominic, too, had a special liking for this practice; and several authors who speak of him explain his particular method of following it.³⁶¹ Finally, we may discern a distinct analogy between the principle underlying this practice of which we have been speaking and the principle underlying that

prescription of our Holy Rule which enjoins that, while the Divine Office is being chanted in choir, our Lay Brothers are to say certain specified prayers in memory of the various phases of the Sacred Passion.³⁶²

Coming now, to consider the Sacred Passion in its relation to the feasts of the Church, we are at once reminded of a statement contained in a certain letter of our Holy Founder: "While reading the very first chapter of the first volume of a work written by Father Gregory of Jesus and Mary, you will begin to form an acquaintance with those Latin texts of the holy Fathers which prove, beyond the possibility of doubt, that the feasts of the Church derive their origin from the Passion of Jesus Christ."³⁶³ Our Holy Founder was referring here to a work which, originally written in Italian, and published in three volumes, had been compressed into two volumes in a Latin translation, bearing the title: *The Divinity and the Innocence of Our Lord Jesus Christ as Revealed in His Passion*.³⁶⁴ Here is the particular passage to which our Holy Founder alludes: "We have it on the authority of Augustine himself that the Passion is the genesis of all liturgical festivals; and St. Thomas and almost all other theologians assert that it is the formal and meritorious cause of all feasts. Hence, I am convinced that I do not postulate anything incongruous, when I express my belief that there is no festival celebrated either in heaven or on earth which is not associated with the Passion of Christ Our Lord, and which does not flow from it. Origen is propounding sound theology, therefore, when he tells us that even God has His festivals, and that the festival of Our Savior is to relive His Passion. It is in this sense, too, that St. Paul says: "As often as you shall do this, you shall shew the death of the Lord," or, as St. Anselm interprets this text: "You shall repeat the death of the Lord"; for the Angelic Doctor teaches that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the very repetition of the Passion of Christ."³⁶⁵

With regard to the special liturgical feasts of the Passion and of Our Lady of Sorrows, we may learn much about such feasts by consulting one or other of the various repertories and dictionaries that treat of them.³⁶⁶ In this connection, the Sacred Liturgy of Holy Week is deserving of special study.³⁶⁷

Lastly, we would point out that, in our study of the Sacred

Passion in its relation to the Liturgy, the utmost importance attaches to the several blessings for crucifixes that are to be found in the Ritual and the Roman Pontifical.

44. *The Passion in History.*

The importance and excellence of Church History are plainly evidenced by the fact that it is specifically included among those essential branches of study prescribed by Canon Law for ecclesiastical students.³⁶⁸ It is, however, the teaching of experience that, if this study is to be pursued with satisfaction and success, the student must view the vast panorama of historical events under some special aspect which accords with his particular manner of life and his particular vocation. For this reason, we Passionists will be greatly aided in our study of Church History if we endeavor to correlate its events with the Sacred Passion... "Omnia et in omnibus Christus Crucifixus." This correlation may be effected, as we are now about to explain, both by having regard for the mystical continuation of the Passion, and by looking to the influences it has exerted on the events of history.

45. *Mystical Continuation of the Passion.*

"Our Lord's Passion," says St. Leo, "is being continuously re-enacted until the end of the world: for, just as, in the person of His saints, it is Christ Himself who is honored, He Himself who is loved; just as, in the person of His poor, it is Christ Himself who is fed and clothed; so, in the person of all who suffer wrongs for justice' sake, it is Christ Himself who suffers."³⁶⁹ The Supreme Pontiff, Pius XI, teaches the same doctrine in his Encyclical *Miserentissimus Redemptor*. "The Passion of Christ," he says, "is renewed, and, as it were, continued and filled up in His Mystical Body, which is the Church... Our Lord Himself deigned to declare this truth, when He said to St. Paul, breathing out threats against the disciples: 'I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.'"³⁷⁰ According to the teaching of St. Paul,³⁷¹ the Passion of Christ is filled up with the martyrdom, the sufferings, the penances and the asceticism of the members of His Mystical Body;³⁷² and this teaching displays a most significant example of that *Communicatio idiomatum* that takes place between Christ and His mystical members. Can it not be

the spiritual life of our Holy Founder and of St. Gabriel, is reason enough why, in our schools, a little extra time should be spent on them.

21. *Grace, in its Relation to the Passion.*

After the tract *De Deo Redemptore*, there follows, naturally and logically, the tract *De Deo Sanctificante*, the main theme of which is Grace; and Grace is very closely related to the Passion of Christ. "Every grace," says Tanqueray, "and hence every impulse in the supernatural order derives from the redemptive merits of Christ."¹⁸⁰ It is in this sense that St. John says "of His fulness we have all received";¹⁸¹ it is in this sense, too, that the Council of Trent decreed: "No one can become justified unless the merits of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ are communicated to him; and it is through the merits of the Most Sacred Passion that the charity of God is diffused by the Holy Spirit into the hearts of those who are justified."¹⁸² The same Council further decreed: "It is Christ Jesus Himself Who, as a head to its members and as a vine to its branches, imparts never failing spiritual vigor to those who are justified."¹⁸³ Hence, although the Passion is not the formal cause of grace, yet, by reason of its meritorious causality, we can rightly say that, metonymically, and in the sense implied by the foregoing Tridentine decrees, grace is, so to speak, the spiritual sap and the mystic blood, which, after the manner of the vine to its branches and the head to its members, is diffused by Christ Crucified. It is in this respect that grace is appropriately termed by a certain pious author "The life-blood of the Mystical Body."¹⁸⁴ A detailed elaboration of these doctrines is to be found, under the heading "De Gratia Christi," in the works of dogmatic theologians.¹⁸⁵

22. *The Passion and the Sacraments.*

The relationship that exists between the Passion and the Sacraments is clearly taught by St. Thomas in his *Summa Theologica*. "It is manifest," he says, "that the Sacraments of the Church derive their power especially from Christ's Passion, the virtue of which is, in a manner, united to us by our receiving the Sacraments. It was in sign of this that from the side of Christ hanging on the Cross there flowed water and blood, the former of which belongs to Baptism, the latter to the Eucharist,

which are the principal Sacraments The power of blotting out sin belongs in a special way to Christ's Passion: therefore, the power of the Sacraments (i.e., of Baptism and Penance), which is ordained unto the remission of sins, is derived principally from faith in Christ's Passion."¹⁸⁶ The Angelic Doctor teaches, furthermore, that "a Sacrament is a sign that is both a reminder of the past, i.e., of the Passion of Christ, and an indication of that which is effected in us by Christ's Passion, i.e., grace."¹⁸⁷ A detailed examination of these points will be found in the works of such authors as Billuart,¹⁸⁸ Hugon,¹⁸⁹ Billot,¹⁹⁰ Van Noort,¹⁹¹ Pesch,¹⁹² Haine,¹⁹³ etc.

23. The Eucharist, the Memorial of the Passion.

We flatter ourselves that these few comments of ours have adduced more than sufficient reason for studying, along the lines we have indicated, the Sacraments in General, and particularly Baptism and Penance. This section of our letter would, however, remain very incomplete, if we failed to add some few counsels relative to our study of the Blessed Eucharist, which, by force of its institution, is the special memorial of the Passion; for the Council of Trent has decreed: "Our Lord, in order to leave to His Church a visible sacrifice that would not merely effect a renewal of that immolation in blood He offered on the Cross, but would serve as its memorial until the end of time, instituted a New Pasch, in which the Church, under visible signs enacted by her priests, would immolate Him, anew, to commemorate His passing from this world to His Father, in which, by the shedding of His Blood, He redeemed us, snatched us from the powers of darkness, and transported us into His kingdom."¹⁹⁴ "The Eucharist, therefore, should be primarily considered as a sacrifice," says Anger, "for, as such, it precedes the Eucharist as a sacrament, i.e., as the means by which we share in the Flesh of the Victim Who is offered."¹⁹⁵ The validity of this teaching is unmistakably presumed and insinuated by St. Thomas when he demonstrates that "it is proper to this sacrament for Christ to be sacrificed in its celebration."¹⁹⁶ The relations of this immolation of Christ in the Eucharistic Sacrifice with the Sacrifice of the Cross and Passion are accorded such ample treatment by countless authors that it is scarcely necessary to dwell upon them here.¹⁹⁷ It would be well, however, to point out that the Eucha-

Friedlieb-Martin,³⁹⁶ Van Steenkiste,³⁹⁷ Eschback,³⁹⁸ Noguier de Mailijar,³⁹⁹ Thiepolo,⁴⁰⁰ Arguissola,⁴⁰¹ Beyerlinck,⁴⁰² Nicquet.⁴⁰³

49. Exercises in Honor of the Passion.

We have already made mention, in our section entitled "The Passion and Moral Theology," of some of the more widespread devotional exercises in honor of the Passion; and the history of these devotions is frequently given a brief notice in prayer books and manuals of piety. Naturally, the history of the Way of the Cross, which is one of the most important of such devotions, demands much more elaborate treatment; and this demand has been recognized and satisfied by Father Ignatius Beaufays,⁴⁰⁴ Thurston-Boudinhon,⁴⁰⁵ Father Ubaldus de Alencon,⁴⁰⁶ and other writers from whom they frequently quote.

It is worth while to take here at least a passing glimpse at another devotional exercise that has been devised in honor of the Passion, under the name of "The Way of the Passion." This exercise is divided into two parts, called respectively "The Way of the Captivity" and "The Way of the Cross." The latter consists of the traditional fourteen Stations of the Way of the Cross: the former, likewise, consists of fourteen Stations, with the following titles:—(1) The Sweat of Blood; (2) The Apprehension of Christ; (3) Crossing Over Cedron; (4) Before Annas; (5) Before Caiphas; (6) The Denial of Peter; (7) Christ in Prison; (8) Before Pilate; (9) Before Herod; (10) Preferred to Barabbas; (11) The Scourging; (12) The Crowning with Thorns; (13) The Holy Stairs; (14) Behold the Man.⁴⁰⁷

50. Associations in Honour of the Passion.

Associations, Confraternities, Institutes and Orders, dedicated both to the Passion and to the Mother of Sorrows, are so numerous that, in such a short program as ours, we could not find room even to mention them all. Besides our own Archconfraternity of the Passion, there are countless others, with similar titles and similar objectives,⁴⁰⁸ such as the Association of the Holy Hour, which celebrates this year the centenary of its establishment at Paray-le-Monial. It would be difficult and futile—not to say, impossible—to acquire a knowledge of even a half of these Confraternities and Associations: yet it would be well to inform ourselves of the constitutions and history of such as are established

in those regions where we dwell, or where we are likely to be called for missionary work. With regard to Religious Orders and Congregations that come under this head, we will find most of them listed and described in Dictionaries and Encyclopedias,⁴⁰⁹ as well as in such works as Fontana's *History of the Orders and Congregations*.⁴¹⁰

51. *Prodigies and Shrines of the Passion.*

Innumerable miracles and prodigies that are attributed to the Sacred Passion are recounted by ancient authors, the most noteworthy amongst whom are Quaresmius,⁴¹¹ Astolfi,⁴¹² Cala,⁴¹³ Gretser,⁴¹⁴ Beyerlinck,⁴¹⁵ and Picu de Mirandola.⁴¹⁶ Such prodigies are usually associated with some particular shrine of the Passion;—those quite recently wrought at Limpas providing an outstanding example. Once again, it will be sufficient for our Students to trace the origin and history of those shrines which have become popular in their own countries. To instance but a few of these... At Rome, there are the Shrine of the Holy Stairs,⁴¹⁷ the Basilica a S. Croce in Gerusalemme,⁴¹⁸ the *Calvary Group* at the Mammertine Prison,⁴¹⁹ the Chapel of Christ Crucified in the Church of St. Marcellus;⁴²⁰ in Italy there are the shrines at Varallo,⁴²¹ Como,⁴²² Mogliano,⁴²³ Nemi,⁴²⁴ Lucca,⁴²⁵ etc. Of world-wide renown are the Shrine of the Holy Crucifix at Limpas, and (to mention only the most famous) the remarkable Stations of the Cross at Lourdes, Betharram, and Czenstochowia. We feel that we should make mention, too, of the Way of the Cross that has been erected in our Church at Louisville, where each of the fourteen Stations has been constructed in the form of an altar surmounted by figures that are remarkably lifelike both in size and lineaments.

52. *The Passion and the Missions.*

Our age is an age of apostolic enterprise;—an age in which missionary bands are constantly setting forth to evangelize both believers and unbelievers. As to the former (i.e., the conducting of Missions in Christian lands), our Constitutions give us minutely detailed instructions; and we may gather further invaluable information concerning this work by studying the life and letters of our Holy Founder. Perhaps we are here anticipating somewhat; since, as we all well know, the main work of prepara-

tion for the Missions must be reserved for the School of Sacred Eloquence, where it is pursued *ex professo*. We must, therefore, content ourselves here with the remark that, in this present section of "The Passion in History," we may appropriately include such topics as the origin and history of our custom of using a Mission Cross; and Hoppenot⁴²⁶ affords us considerable enlightenment on these topics.

Turning to the field of the Foreign Missions, as they are called, we are at once reminded of the unwearying zeal with which the present Holy Father, Pope Pius XI (who may God long preserve!), has encouraged and fostered this work of propagating the faith in pagan lands. We recollect, too, how highly Our Holy Founder esteemed this work. Now, the essential feature of this glorious work is "the preaching of the Cross and Christ Crucified"; for, even as far back as the time of St. Justin Martyr, the success with which the faith was propagated was measured by the numbers who learned to invoke the Name of Jesus Crucified.⁴²⁷ That the same measure is still standard in our day is clearly indicated by the symbolic device that goes to form the official "crest" of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, viz., a cross, surrounded by rays of light beaming upon the whole world, "as if to voice the prayer that, as there is but one meet Sacrifice for every victim (the Sacrifice of the Cross and of the Altar), so there may be but one kingdom for all the nations of the earth."⁴²⁸ Hoppenot,⁴²⁹ and many other authors who write in his key, sing in thrilling tones of the triumphs the Cross has won, and is still winning, on the field of the Foreign Missions.

And, surely, we are justified in singing here the praises of our own missionaries! Hail, ye heralds of the Passion! the glory and crown of our Congregation! Hail, ye who have sown in labor and toil the seed of the Word of the Cross! Hail ye who have watered this seed with your lifeblood! Hail, dearly beloved brethren and most desired! our joy and our crown! So stand fast in the Lord, most dearly beloved!⁴³⁰

53. *Legends of the Passion.*

There are a few apocryphal stories, or legends, of the Passion, which still enjoy universal currency, and of which we should have some knowledge: for, such legends have been aptly termed

"the poetry of history";⁴³¹ they have been, with equal aptness described as "the outward expressions of an interior life and of spiritual tendencies";⁴³² and they have furnished the Arts with many an inspiration and stimulus. Of those that exemplify this third reason, there are two legends, or, rather, two series of legends, that especially command our attention. The first of these are the legends of the Cross, recorded by Giacomo di Varagine in his *Golden Legends*,⁴³³ which were a source of inspiration for the pictures of Pietro della Francesca and Arreti,⁴³⁴ and those of Angel Gaddi at Florence;⁴³⁵ the second, is the series of legends of the Holy Grail. These latter tales, half religious and half chivalric, were built around an imaginative knightly quest for a most sacred vessel, supposedly identified as the chalice used by Christ at the Last Supper, and which (so the legends maintained) was again used by Joseph of Arimathea to receive the last few drops of Blood that flowed from the pierced Side of Christ. This fictional quest for the Holy Grail has supplied a theme for the literary works of very many writers, both of poetry and of prose, especially in France, England and Germany. Pride of place among these writers must be given, we think, to Wagner, in virtue of his famous masterpiece, the musical drama *Parsifal*.⁴³⁶

54. *The Passion in Figurative Art.*

To pass from a consideration of Legends as sources of the Arts to a consideration of the Arts themselves is an easy and natural step. Now, the influences that the Passion has exercised upon the Arts have been so strong and so far-reaching that we may well call it, without even a semblance of exaggeration, "the substance and the soul of Religious Art."⁴³⁷ Consequently, this influence of the Passion upon the Arts in general, and upon Religious Art in particular, may rightly be regarded as constituting a distinct branch of study; or, to say the least, it should occupy a distinct place in those courses of Archeology and Sacred Art that are followed in some of the Major Seminaries.⁴³⁸ However, as, on the one hand, it is not customary for our Students to follow these courses, and as, on the other hand, their subject-matter is of such a kind that it may be conveniently included in the study of history,⁴³⁹ it will be proper and sufficient for our Lectors in Church History to draw for their students the broad outlines

of this subject, as they are to be found delineated in some of the popular Manuals of Church History. While paying attention to the latreutic, hermeneutic, and liturgical principles of Sacred Art,⁴⁴⁰ the Lectors should strive to give their students some knowledge at least of the progress artists have made in their attempts to picture Christ Crucified, from the stark symbolical figures in the Catacombs to the realistic portrayals of the present day, and to endow them with the faculty of appreciating those masterpieces of painting, sculpture, mosaic and stained-glass, that have drawn their inspiration from some scene of the Sacred Passion, particularly when these artistic works take the form of Stations of the Cross or of paintings and statues of the Pieta. In this way, our students will be taught, even through the medium of Church History, how to travel with pleasure along that magnificent highway of Religious Art, that is decorated and illuminated by such illustrious names as Fra Angelico, Aubert, Barberi, Blake, Bourriche, Canova, Ciseri, Cisterna, Delaroche, Dietrich, Donatelli, Dupre, Durer, Fugel, Giotto, Goya, Holbein, Lazerges, Le Brun, Maccari, Mantegna, Mastroianni, Memling, Michelangelo, Morgari, Munkacsy, Murillo, Overbeck, Perugino, Pogliaghi, Poussin, Raphael, Raffl, Rembrandt, Reni, Ribera, Rubens, Rude, Scheffer, Schoen, Steinle, Tiepolo, Tissot, Tiziano, Van Dyke, Velasquez, Venusti, Von Oer, Wante, Sick, Zurbaran, etc. As you will have recognized, this long list of names does not follow any chronological sequence; and it is not meant to indicate any preference on our part. We have simply mentioned these brilliant artists in alphabetical order; but we entertain the hope that your interest will be sufficiently aroused to enquire what Michel,⁴⁴¹ Dayot,⁴⁴² Argenville,⁴⁴³ and some of our encyclopedias have to tell us about each of them.

55. Allegorical Representations of the Passion.

Allegorical representations, which so often give very apt expression to religious and ascetical teachings concerning the Cross and Christ Crucified, may hold a subordinate place in Figurative Art: yet they must not, for that reason, be despised by us. On this subject of artistic allegories, we think that special mention should be made of that drawing called *The Tree of the Life of Christ*, with which St. Bonaventure illustrated his little work, *Lignum Vitae*, and in which the Cross of Christ is de-

picted under such allegorical forms as a lyre, a mystical wine-press, the fount of the sacraments, etc.⁴⁴⁴ We would mention, too, the illustrations in the book entitled *The Royal Way of the Cross*, written by Father Benedict Aecten, O.S.B., and published at Antwerp in 1728; and also those to be found in a much smaller book, *The Sanctuary of the Heart*, of which Le Gall was the author.⁴⁴⁵ When we come to inspect similar work by present-day artists, we are quick to commend the "holy ingenuity" that devises such illustrations as appear, for example, in a book called *The Soul in the School of the Divine Master*, published at Venice in 1927, and those emblematic drawings, so frequently reproduced nowadays in devotional treatises on the Mass, which are designed to assist the reader in detecting the parallelisms between the Sacrifice of the Altar and the Sacrifice of the Cross.⁴⁴⁷

56. *The Passion in Architecture.*

That architecture also wishes to sing the praises of the Passion is readily inferred from the many churches that are built in cruciform styles, "to remind us that we must ever imitate our Crucified Saviour,"⁴⁴⁸ and from the slightly pendulous construction of the central arch in our Basilicas, which is intended as a symbolic reminder of the words of the Gospel: "And bowing his head, he gave up the ghost."⁴⁴⁹ Regarding the "Passion Designs" which are such a common ornamental feature of porticoes, capitals, windows and decorative panels, we can draw much useful information from Brehier,⁴⁵⁰ Male,⁴⁵¹ etc.

57. *The Passion in Poetry.*

The Passion of Christ has always been the primary and principal source of inspiration for Christian Poetry. We have abundant evidence of this fact in the rich store of such poetical works that has been handed down to us, and from which we would select, as typical examples, the sacred drama, *The Suffering Christ*, which tradition ascribes to St. Gregory Nazianzen; the rhythmical hymns of Aurelius, Prudentius, Lactantius, Fortunatus, and Claudius Mamertus; and those most expressive lyrics of Rabanus Maurus.⁴⁵² The no less beautiful hymns of St. Bernard, St. Bonaventure, Lanspergius and Thomas a Kempis have been bequeathed to us by the Middle Ages;⁴⁵³ and, even in our own times, the Passion still provides an exhaustless fund of

themes for delightful poetic compositions, clothed in the most attractive vesture of our modern languages. It would be an unenviable task to single out any of these latter for special mention; yet we believe that high praise should be given to those charming "Passion Poems," composed in cruciform verse, by such writers as Botrel and Bayle.⁴⁵⁴

58. The Passion and the Dramatic Arts.

Dramatic Art has never been slow to discover in the Passion of Our Lord a subject of no inconsiderable merit, and one that is peculiarly adaptable to its requirements: and, in this regard, it is interesting to learn that one of the foremost scriptural scholars of recent times⁴⁵⁵ has dramatized the Passion, in a work of four acts, each of which is divided into eleven scenes. Such dramatized versions of the Divine Tragedy became very popular in the Middle Ages, even in Rome itself, where they were frequently performed in the Flavian Amphitheatre.⁴⁵⁶ In more modern times, and even in our own somewhat sophisticated age, "Passion Plays," as they are now called, afford wholesome enjoyment to multitudes of spectators. Needless to say, the most famous of these Passion Plays is that which, in fulfilment of a vow, is presented every tenth year at Oberammergau.⁴⁵⁷ Looking at these dramatized versions of the Passion from the viewpoint of history Cantu,⁴⁵⁸ Ollivier,⁴⁵⁹ Schroeder,⁴⁶⁰ and Father Stanislaus of the Sorrowful Virgin⁴⁶¹ give us many informative details.

59. Symbols of the Passion.

At this stage, we would seem to be under an obligation to say something of the symbols of the Passion: both of those which, because of their intrinsic similarity, have come into use spontaneously, and of those which enjoy associations that were at first arbitrarily assigned but later ratified by convention. A twofold explanation can be offered for the use of these symbols, viz., the natural pleasure that accompanies such a use, and the exigencies of the "disciplina arcani" that prevailed during the centuries of persecution. On the first point, St. Augustine makes the following comment: "Those things which are introduced to us under the form of symbols give us more pleasure, are more readily revered, affect us more quickly, and move us to greater love, than if they had been presented in their stark simplicity,

without any of the adjuncts of sacramental similitude."⁴⁶² The second point of our explanation is illustrated by the many symbolic representations of the Passion of Christ still to be seen in the ancient Catacombs;⁴⁶³ and a like illustration may be given to our first point by referring to the many recognized symbols of the Cross that are to be seen at every glance, whether in the artificial creations of man, such as a yoke, a scales, a ship's mast, etc., or in the diverse properties of Nature itself, such as the constellations of stars, the birds in flight, the plants and the flowers, particularly those flowers that are called "Passion Flowers."⁴⁶⁴ An English botanist, Dowling, has given us, in his *Essay upon the Flora Sacra*, an expert's description of the perfect manner in which these Passion Flowers unfold the whole story of the Passion, from Gethsemani to Calvary.⁴⁶⁵

60. *The Passion in Numismatics and Heraldry.*

Regarding the many symbolic representations of the Passion that are to be found engraven on numerous coins and medals, it is interesting to know that such ancient writers as Gretser⁴⁶⁶ and Justus Lipsius⁴⁶⁷ have left us reliable works on this subject: while Quaresmius⁴⁶⁸ and Lyraeus⁴⁶⁹ have much to say, but from the devotional rather than from the scientific standpoint, concerning the use of similar symbols of the Cross and the Passion in shield-emblazonments and other escutcheons of this kind. While recalling, too, the common use of these Passion symbols, e.g., the Cross, the Nails, the Pillar, the Crown of Thorns, and the Sacred Wounds, in heraldic insignia, about which the writers mentioned above have likewise something to say, we must not overlook the many mottos and aphorisms that have been suggested by the Sacred Passion:—"Per Crucem ad Lucem," "Per Viam Crucis Gaudens," etc.⁴⁷⁰

61. *The Passion in Onomatology and Horology.*

Onomatology is defined as: "The Science of Names and Naming"; and, thus, when we speak of the Onomatology of the Passion, we are referring both to the custom of deriving surnames from the Passion, and to the other custom of bestowing names that are likewise derived from the Passion upon "islands, cities, towns, hamlets, walls of cities, fortifications, streets, seaports and gates of cities, herbs, bulbs, coins, stars, mountains, alps,

families," etc.⁴⁷¹ As these customs have an affinity with the influence of the Passion upon history, students of the Passion should know at least something about them. The same is true of the Horology of the Passion, under which term we include the practice, carefully expounded in several books that treat formally of this subject, of honoring and meditating upon the various incidents of the Passion at the exact hours of the day and night at which they are thought to have taken place, and the further practice of using a certain type of sundial, in which both beams of a cross alternately play the parts of a style and a plane, as the position of the sun is changed from the East to the West. The inventor of this amazing device was Clavius, S. J.;⁴⁷² and Lyraeus, who gives us a description of it, in its technical as well as in its spiritual aspect,⁴⁷³ adequately proves his contention that "a most ingenious love of Christ Crucified prompted the inventing of this timepiece, which lovers of the Cross are accustomed to use, so that they may always have at hand that object around which their thoughts constantly revolve and which they ever strive to imitate."⁴⁷⁴

62. *Bibliography of the Passion.*

We conclude this section of our program by making a brief reference to the bibliography of the Passion. It frequently happens that ecclesiastics—even ecclesiastics of very high rank—consult us and seek our advice, as an aid to making a wiser selection of books that treat of the Sacred Passion. (Here in Rome, for instance, Cardinal Mercier, of holy memory, used to do this.) Now, who should be better qualified to give such advice than we Passionists? The Lectors of our Congregation, therefore, should regard it as a duty to touch upon the bibliography of the Passion in those subjects they are appointed to teach: and Lectors of Church History should draw up, and hand on to their Students, a bibliographical catalogue of the main books and publications on this subject, both in the Latin language and in the vernacular. We suggest that this catalogue might classify such works under the following categories;—historical, exegetic, ascetic, oratorical, mixed and periodic.

63. *The Passion as an Allegorical Compendium of History.*

Permit us to epitomize here, under the form of an allegory, the

duties entailed in the office of Master of History. The artist Aubert has painted a well-known picture, *The Retinue of the Virgin*, in which he portrays a long file of Patriarchs, Prophets, Martyrs, Confessors, and Virgins, advancing toward the throne of their Queen:⁴⁷⁵ so, the Lector of Church History should endeavour to paint a "word-picture," which we might well call *The Retinue of the Crucified*, in which would be portrayed the unending procession of saints, missionaries, artists and writers, which, with Calvary as its starting-point, has wended its way through the centuries, continuing, filling up, imitating, preaching and glorifying the Passion of Christ. Such an allegory was, in fact, reproduced on canvas by the skilled painter, Conti, in the execution of a commission given by us; for, in this painting, he depicts, under symbolic figures, Exegesis, Theology, Mysticism, History, Art and Eloquence, all assisting together at the Liturgy of the Cross.

64. *The Passion in Sacred Music.*

While we have treated of the Passion in its relationships to the various branches of art, we have purposely omitted the Art of Music, because we have had in mind to devote to it a special section. It is well known to us all how zealously the Supreme Pontiffs, Pius X, of happy memory, and Pius XI, still gloriously reigning, have commended, and even commanded, the learning of Sacred Music. On this point, we recall the Letter of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, of the 18th of February, 1927,⁴⁷⁶ and the Apostolic Constitution *Divini cultus sanctitatem*, of the 20th of December, 1928.⁴⁷⁷ This latter Constitution prescribes that at least a short lesson on the theory and practise of Gregorian Chant and Sacred Music is to be given frequently (every day, where possible) to all ecclesiastical students, both those who are being trained in Diocesan Seminaries and those who are aspiring to the priesthood in Religious Institutes. These lessons are to be begun in the Preparatory Schools, and to be continued through each of the grades in the Major Seminaries: so that, by the time they reach the higher curriculum of theological studies, these young men will have been well prepared to advance to the study of Gregorian Monody, as well as to the arts of polyphonic music and the playing of the organ. Since these arts, are, in the truest sense of the term, aesthetic, it is most befitting for a cleric to

have a thorough acquaintance with them; and extremely effectual aids to the cultivation of these aesthetic arts, both on the theoretical side and on the practical side, are provided by the more significant examples of Passion Music, whether Gregorian or polyphonic, in which we must include, as Sertillanges notes, some of the Masses, such as Beethoven's *Mass in D*.⁴⁷⁸ Here we should remark how surprising it is that, in a subject of such vast proportions as is this, we are able to discover but a comparatively small bibliography. A few encyclopedias do treat specifically of this subject,⁴⁷⁹ and there is a valuable little monograph written by Stanghetti,⁴⁸⁰ in which we are given bibliographical references that are, unfortunately, altogether too meager. Nevertheless, even when we confine ourselves to Passion Music, we have, besides the many liturgical chants, historical records of works composed by the following master-musicians:—St. Alphonsus, Aresti, Bach, Beethoven, Caldara, Capocci, Dubois, Gounod, Habets, Haller, Handel, Hartman, Haydn, Jomelli, Liszt, Mattei, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Paisiello, Palestrina, Perosi, Perti, Planchet, Rossini, Rubinstein, Schubert, Schutz, Telemann, and Verdi. Under the titles of the individual names here listed, several of our encyclopedias give at least brief notice to the Passion Music of these composers; and further information on the same point is available in the works of Choron and Fayolle,⁴⁸¹ Lacal,⁴⁸² Marcillac,⁴⁸³ Bedeschi,⁴⁸⁴ etc.

65. *The Passion and Sacred Eloquence.*

You will have noticed long since that "The Passion and Sacred Eloquence" is the last section of the program we have drawn up. Having reached this last section we are to speak now of the office of the Lector in Sacred Eloquence, whose task it is to teach our newly-ordained priests how to make profitable use, in the ministry of preaching, of the extensive knowledge of the Sacred Passion they will have acquired in their study of the various subjects assigned to their course. In this way, a practical application will be made of the oft-quoted axiomatic admonition of Bacon;⁴⁸⁵ for knowledge will be rendered really effectual. In this way, too, those of our young priests who are destined to be missionaries will follow the much more pertinent admonition of St. Paul to Timothy: "Carefully study to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,

rightly handling the word of truth."⁴⁸⁶ In the course of an earnest recommendation to the Secular Clergy to preach the Sacred Passion, the Roman Catechism contains the following comment: "How diligent the care Pastors should exercise in frequently recalling the Sacred Passion to the minds of the faithful is plainly taught us by the Apostle, when he protested that he knew nothing else but Jesus Christ and Him Crucified. Wherefore, zeal and industry of the highest order must be expended on the preaching of this doctrine, so that it shall be most clearly expounded, and the faithful, aroused by the remembrance of so great a benefit, may be moved to devote themselves wholeheartedly to the consideration of the love and goodness God has shown towards us. For, upon this doctrine, as upon a foundation, the whole of our Christian religion and faith is built; and, when this foundation is firmly laid, the superstructure reared upon it will be solid and lasting."⁴⁸⁷ If there is reason to address such words to the parochial clergy, with how much greater reason could they be addressed to us Passionists, who bind ourselves by vow to promote devotion to the Passion, and to whom "is given this grace, to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to enlighten all men, that they may see what is the dispensation of the mystery which hath been hidden from eternity in God . . . which is the Christ, whom we preach"?⁴⁸⁸ It is the duty of the Lector in Sacred Eloquence to give our priests practical lessons in the preaching of this fundamental doctrine of the Passion, and to explain to them what our Holy Founder, St. Paul of the Cross,⁴⁸⁹ and, even more, St. Paul the Apostle,⁴⁹⁰ have taught and done in this matter. At the same time, he should spare no pains to impress upon them, by following the methods we have suggested and the counsels we have given throughout the various sections of our program, that "all the principles of sacred preaching, and all the truths which constitute the deposit of sacred doctrine, emanate from Christ Crucified."⁴⁹¹ He should point out to them the sources whence they may draw plans and subject matter for their sermons and instructions on the Passion, viz., The Fathers of the Church (reference should be made to our section: The Passion and Patrology), Mansi,⁴⁹² Houdry,⁴⁹³ Combefis,⁴⁹⁴ St. Bernardine of Siena,⁴⁹⁵ Schouppe,⁴⁹⁶ Van Steenkiste,⁴⁹⁷ Aliberch,⁴⁹⁸ Pinto,⁴⁹⁹ and

other suitable works written in the vernacular languages of the different countries. He should teach them, too, the distinctive method of preaching the Sacred Passion that is traditional in our Congregation, and animate them to an efficacious resolution of fulfilling in a holy manner the office entrusted to us by the Church of God and sanctified by our fourth vow:⁵⁰⁰ so that they may become fit and worthy preachers of "the mystery of godliness which was manifested in the flesh, was justified in the spirit, appeared unto angels, hath been preached unto the Gentiles, is believed in the world, is taken up in glory."⁵⁰¹ Finally, he must take care that they learn and comprehend the important truth that the efficacy of our apostolate is wholly dependent upon the fervor of our interior life—a truth that is well expressed in the motto of a present-day Religious Institute: "Plus ardet, plus splendet."⁵⁰²

66. *Epitome of Our Program.*

We have now set before you all that we had wished to propose and declare concerning the intellectual study of the Passion: and, as we would like to freshen your memories concerning the main points of our program, let us recapitulate them in the following concise summary:—

Introduction )—(	During the Novitiate )—(	Gospel Narratives of the Passion
Synthetic Study )—(	During the Course in Philosophy )—(	History of the Passion of Our Lord and the Compassion of Our Lady
	) (	Exegesis of the Passion
	) (	The Passion in Dogmatic Theology
	) (	The Passion in Moral Theology
Analytic Study )—(	During the Course in Theology )—(	The Passion in Spiritual Theology
	) (	The Passion in Patrology
	) (	The Passion in Liturgy
	) (	The Passion in History
	) (	The Passion in Sacred Music
During the Course in Sacred Eloquence )—(		The Passion in Oratory

67. *Ways of Promoting the Study of the Passion.*

Although we have merely sketched the broad outlines of this program of study, you will all quickly realize that these lines admit of considerable extension; and you will be no less quick to recognize the necessity of providing our schools with a Manual

that will make it possible to implement our program. However, pending the provision of such a Manual, we implore our Lectors to discharge their responsible duties in the most effective manner possible, by making assiduous use of those books to which we have drawn attention and of any other similar works that may be accessible to them. Seizing upon the present favorable opportunity, and desiring to give effect to a decree of a previous General Curia,⁵⁰³ we exhort our Lectors that, while always preserving dependence upon their immediate Superiors, they should commit to writing the lectures on the Sacred Passion that they will prepare in accordance with the principles expounded and elucidated in our program: and these lectures could be printed in one or other of our many periodicals, or, if there is good reason to presume that they will prove helpful to the Congregation at large, they could be published through the ordinary commercial channels at the Congregation's expense. If this is done, we shall gradually acquire a collection of monographs, each of which can be used as a section or chapter of a *Summa of the Passion*, that will prove to be a valuable textbook for a School of Passiology, which, God willing, we hope to see established at Monte Argentario or at Bethany in the not too distant future, and in which priests selected from each of our Provinces may be thoroughly qualified to receive the degree of Master of Passiology. May it become the cherished ambition of all our clerics to receive this degree in the most vitalizing of sciences!

As a final exhortation, we earnestly recommend obedience to the 15th Decree of the last General Chapter: "Let there be found in every house of our Congregation a special library, composed of those books written by our own Religious and of those which treat of the Passion of Christ": and, with similar earnestness, we admonish our Lectors and the editors of our journals to be enthusiastic in obtaining and carefully examining copies of any works treating of the Sacred Passion.

68. We Must Be Aflame with Zeal for the Passion.

What more is there for us to say? Have we not said everything when, repeating the words of a certain pious author already quoted, we declare that the Passion of Christ must be "our passion":⁵⁰⁴ that is, that it must be the sum and substance of all our strivings, of all our devotion, of all our love; that it must

be the inspiration of all our thoughts, the guiding influence of all our ideas, the mainspring of all our actions, and the driving force of all our lives; so that we may be able to say with truthful sincerity: "Passio Christi Urget Nos"?

An olden-time author of the Order of St. Francis has bestowed unstinted praise upon this zeal for the Passion of Christ. He begins by quoting the words of the Prophet Ezechiel: "I looked, and behold . . . a book, written within and without: and there were written in it lamentations, and canticles, and woe. And he said to me: Son of man, eat this book, and go speak to the children of Israel."⁵⁰⁵ Seeing in this book an allegory of Christ Crucified, Whom the Saints were really wont to use as their book,⁵⁰⁶ and Whom St. Ignatius the Martyr called his library,⁵⁰⁷ the author exhorts his brethren to eat this book of Christ Crucified, "so that they may thus become, in the first place, witnesses, privileged spectators, and imitators of the Sacred Passion of Christ and of His Most Holy Mother, and, in the second place, preachers, messengers, and portrayers of these doctrines": then he advances the following reasons why they should do all this:—(1) Because of the singular devotion of the Founder of their Order towards the Passion of Christ; (2) Because of the special mission entrusted to their Order of propagating this devotion throughout the Church; (3) Because of their name and the Habit with which they are clothed; (4) Because of the spiritual genealogy which so clearly distinguishes the Franciscan Order from the other Orders in the Church.⁵⁰⁸ Now, if these reasons are considered as persuasive for the sons of Saint Francis of Assisi, how much more persuasive should they be for the Sons of St. Paul of the Cross, who, because of their Founder and mission and name and habit and genealogy—nay! because of even a special vow—are completely and irrevocably consecrated to the love and the preaching of Jesus Suffering? Let us Passionists, therefore, eat this book; so that, in the words of St. Jerome, "our hearts may become the libraries of Christ."⁵⁰⁹ The injunction: "Eat this book" is given to us, no less than it was to Ezechiel:⁵¹⁰ and St. Augustine tells us⁵¹¹ that we fulfil this injunction "by eating the Crucified." Yes; let us eat this book of Christ Crucified, by applying ourselves with purposeful zeal and diligence to that threefold study of the Passion, of which we have already written.

69. Our Zeal Must Be the Distinctive Zeal of a Passionist.

What we have just said naturally leads us to a consideration and application of the fourth sense in which, as we have shown at the beginning of this letter, the word "study" may be used: for, if you revert to the section indicated, you will find that we there quoted the following definition, given by Cicero: "Study is that assiduity and enthusiasm which effects a complete absorption of mind, and a resolute determination of will, when these faculties are conjointly bent upon the accomplishment of any purpose."⁵¹² It is in this sense that the word "studium" is incorporated in the approved Latin formula for our profession of vows: "Ego... voveo et promitto... studium promovendi pro viribus in fidelium cordibus devotionem Dominicæ Passionis, juxta Regulas et Constitutiones," etc.;⁵¹³ and it is in this same sense (the sense of "diligent endeavor") that this word, and its derivatives and synonyms, are used in several passages of our Holy Rule: "The brethren... shall earnestly strive," etc.; "Let priests... study to promote this good," etc.; "Circumstances will open numerous other ways... of accomplishing their purpose," etc.⁵¹⁴ However, lest our diligent endeavor to satisfy the claims of our fourth vow should run the risk of becoming ill-regulated, we must take particular notice of those final words in our formula of profession: "according to the Rules and Constitutions of the Congregation" etc. The risk to which we have referred is insinuated and obviated in the following prescriptions of our Holy Rule: "He shall also promise... that he will promote... after the manner prescribed in the Constitutions," etc.;⁵¹⁵ "That they may carry on with increase of charity... other customary exercises of our Institute"; "They may, however,... undertake also at that time the proper duties of our Institute."⁵¹⁶ Quite patently, the repeated use of such expressions is meant to remind us that, in our "study" to promote devotion to the Sacred Passion by the ministry of preaching, we must always conform ourselves rigidly to the methods of preaching prescribed in our Constitutions, and that this "study" can be rendered fruitful only by an intense cultivation of our interior spirit of prayer, poverty and solitude, and by the fervor with which we engage in those spiritual exercises in which our Holy Founder centred whatever success attends our preaching, and of which he has written in our

Holy Rule: "We prescribe no rule for the spiritual exercises which should precede and accompany a work of so great importance, knowing well that all the Religious in Retreats of our Institute apply to this object above all and without intermission. Let them keep the same object in view with all earnestness during their ministry."⁵¹⁷ Since we are members of a "Mixed Institute" (to use the canonical term), our spirit is half-Carthusian and half-apostolic, and has been aptly expressed in the prospectus of our Australian alumniate;⁵¹⁸ in other words, our spirit is one which, as we have explained in detail in one of our previous letters to you,⁵¹⁹ is compounded from an admixture of eremitic and missionary characteristics.

70. Concluding Words, and Application of Our Program.

As our letter has now "become much longer than we intended or anticipated" (if we may use a polite form of speech that was current even in St. Augustine's day),⁵²⁰ we must bring it to an end. We do not, of course, imagine that we have exhausted our subject: rather, we are still faced with such a superabundant store of relevant matter, that we know not what to choose. In one of his sermons on the Passion of Our Saviour, St. Leo the Great remarks that this is "a subject concerning which enough can never be said;" and this learned Pope and Doctor of the Church continues in the following eloquent strain; "Among all the works of God, by which man's admiration is dazzled, what so delights and baffles our mind's gaze as the Passion of the Savior? So then, though our human weakness should sink under the glory of God, and ever find itself unequal to the task of expounding the works of His mercy, let us continue to toil in thought, fail in insight, and falter in utterance."⁵²¹

We, therefore, conclude our letter with some few precepts and some words of good will. That the program we have elaborated in this letter may be reduced to practical effect, we decree, with the concurrence of our Curia, that, from the beginning of the next scholastic year: (1) All our Students in the philosophical course shall commence the formal study of the Passion in accord with the principles we have laid down, using as a textbook some historical Manual of the Passion, that must be first submitted to, and approved by, the Provincial Curia; (2) In the courses of theology and Sacred Eloquence, the study of the Passion must

henceforth be pursued in similar accord with the directive norms we have outlined in treating of the subject matter of these two courses; (3) in the annual examinations, Passiology is to be given its rightful place as a distinct subject, in which the Lectors are to set the questions; and "marks" are to be allotted for this subject, on the same basis of judging merit as is used in the other subjects.

71. Final Words of Good Will.

If these admonitions and prescriptions of ours are fulfilled, then there will come to pass what has long been the object of our prayerful desires, viz., that our beloved Congregation shall rejoice in a greater and greater increase, not only in the number of its subjects, but also in the efficiency of each of its members; so that each and every one of us may be filled and permeated with such sentiments as moved Bernard the Divine to exclaim, when speaking of the Cross and Passion: "To meditate on these life-giving truths, I have esteemed true wisdom. These have often been on my lips, as you well know; these have ever been in my heart, as God well knows. This is for me the more sublime philosophy—to know Jesus and Him Crucified. Let this, likewise, be your food and drink, your sweetness and consolation, your delight and your desire, your reading and your meditation, your prayer and your contemplation, your life, death, and resurrection."⁵²²

In token of the sincerity of these desires, and with all the affection of our heart, we implore the choicest blessings of heaven for all our Religious, and especially for our young students and their Lectors; so that we may all "effectually contemplate at all times, with loving sentiments of devotion, the Passion of Jesus Christ, and, by our words and example, implant it in the hearts of the faithful."⁵²³

Given at Rome, on the Solemn Commemoration of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, 25th February, 1930.

Leo of the Sacred Heart of Jesus,
Superior General

Peter of the Most Precious Blood,
Secretary.

QUOTATIONS AND REFERENCES IN TEXT

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