



BLESSED FRANCISCO AND JACINTA MARTO

BULLETIN OF THE LITTLE SHEPHERDS – JANUARY-MARCH 2009 (47th YEAR)

MAKING REPARATION FOR THE SINS OF OTHERS IS THE SCHOOL OF HOLY LOVE

As early as 1930, Cardinal Cerejeira, Patriarch of Lisbon and well acquainted with the apparitions of our Lady of Fatima, used to say: «For me, Fatima's mission in the world is similar to that of Paray-le-Monial. What Paray-le-Monial (1673-1690) was for devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Fatima (1916-1926) will be for devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.» And he then added prophetically: «The Fatima Apparitions are opening a new age: that of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.»

It was on 27th December 1673 that Jesus appeared for the first time to St Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647-1690) in the Chapel of the Monastery of the Visitation of Mary in Paray-le-Monial. Like the beloved disciple, St Margaret Mary rested her head on his breast and Jesus revealed to her indescribable secrets of his Divine heart. «He told me: 'My Heart is filled with an impassioned love for human beings and I can no longer restrain the flames of my burning love ... It simply must be revealed to them so that I can enrich them with the treasures that I want to reveal now to you...'» Countless revelations took place in the years that followed.. The Divine Heart was shown to her on his throne of glory and his five wounds shone like five suns. Jesus showed her his Heart full of love, open to the entire world, and his love being poured out on all people. But men and women responded to it only with ingratitude and indifference. «This is what grieves me more than all that I suffered during my Passion», Jesus complained. «If they would love me only a little, I would give them so much. But my longing to do good to them is greeted with only coldness and indifference in return. You, at least, give me whatever joy you can, in order to make reparation for their ingratitude.

On another occasion, the Risen Lord appeared to her in his luminous splendour. His heart, surrounded by a crown of thorns, was placed on a kind of fiery throne as bright as the sun and emitting fiery rays on all sides. «He made me understand his burning desire to be loved by all», wrote Margaret Mary, «and to turn them back from the road to condemnation to which Satan sought to lead them...» It was in May 1689 that St Margaret Mary received the great 'First Fridays' promise. «I promise you, in my great mercy, that my all powerful Love will grant to all those who receive communion on the first Friday of nine consecutive months, the grace of final repentance. They will not fall out of grace nor die without the Sacraments and at their last moments my Divine Heart will be their refuge». In 1882, in the United States,

an ordinary business man undertook to defray the cost of making this message known in 238 languages.

For the past 350 years, devotion to the Heart of Jesus has shone like a star in the firmament. People might be inclined to ask: Does that mean that for the 1650 years before that, no-one knew that Jesus had a heart»? Did the Fathers of the Church of those times, whether Greek or Latin, not have the kind of sensitivity that would lead them to the Heart of Jesus? There is only one reply to this. It is the Holy Spirit who decides, in each age, which devotion is best suited to it.

Through the apparitions of the Mother of God in Fatima, the Holy Spirit offers the Church a Message suited to the most urgent needs which have made themselves felt since 1917. «God wants to establish in the world devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary», declared Lucia in the words of Our Lady herself. Throughout all the apparitions, beginning with those of the Angel, we find the call to prayer and sacrifice offered to God out of love and in reparation for the sins committed against God, against Jesus, against the Immaculate Heart of Mary and for the conversion of sinners. For Sister Lucia, this call is the essence of the entire Message which raised the three little shepherds to the plane of faith, hope and love. In all six apparitions, Our Lady herself also called for the recitation of the Rosary for the salvation of poor sinners and asked the little shepherds to say the following words after each Mystery: «O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, and lead all souls to heaven, especially those most in need of your mercy».

The light which illuminates the entire Message comes from the Immaculate Heart of Mary. And this «light» took a long time to appear. What was recognised first was the basic message of prayer and penance which the Blessed Virgin was bringing once more to the world. One day, however, Sister Lucia discovered the deeper aspects of the Message, all of which were centred on and given life by what is in fact the «soul» of the Message: the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It was not only a question of that which characterises Fatima in particular, and constitutes one of the charisms of the Church, but above all that which gave unity and an inner spirit to all the other aspects.

According to the best theology of our day, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, like the Sacred Heart of Jesus, represents the most formal aspect of the person, revealing a

person's love using the symbol of a heart. Thus the Virgin of Fatima came to bring us the message of her Heart. From the beginning, the Immaculate Heart of Mary is several times mentioned together with that of the Sacred Heart, as early as the first apparition of the Angel. After having taught the children the prayer «My God I believe, I adore, I hope and I love You ..» and repeated it three times, the Angel said to them: «Pray thus. The Hearts of Jesus and Mary are attentive to the voice of your supplications».

When he appeared for the second time, he surprised them in the shade of the trees round the well with the words: «What are you doing? Pray, pray very much! The most holy hearts of Jesus and Mary have designs of mercy on you. Offer prayers and sacrifices constantly to the Most High».

Francisco seems not to have understood the meaning of the words so he asked Lucia: «Who is the Most High? What is the meaning of: 'The Hearts of Jesus and Mary are attentive to the voice of your supplications'?»

During the third apparition, the Angel, with the Host suspended in the air, taught the children the prayer of reparation: «Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore You profoundly and I offer You the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges and indifference with which He himself is offended...» The little shepherds did not have to wait for the appearances of our Lady because, impelled by a supernatural force, they imitated the Angel in everything: prostrating themselves as he had done and repeating day and night the prayers the Angel had taught them, so much so that, at times, they were dropping with fatigue, and, without having perceived the profound meaning of the prayer, they began to practice the adoration of reparation for the sins of the entire world.

When Our Lady appeared to them for the first time, She asked them: «Are you willing to offer yourselves to God and bear all the sufferings He wills to send you, as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and of supplication for the conversion of sinners?» In the name of all three, Lucia replied: «Yes, we are willing».

As early as the second apparition, when Our Lady told Lucia that Francisco and Jacinta would die shortly, She spoke of Lucia's specific mission: «But you are to stay here some time longer. Jesus wants to make use of you to make me known and loved. He wants to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart». It was as Our Lady spoke these last words that She opened her hands and, for the second time, communicated to the children the rays of that same immense light. In it they saw themselves as it were immersed in God. Jacinta and Francisco seemed to be in that part of the light which rose towards heaven, and Lucia in the part which was poured out on the earth. According to Lucia: «In front of the palm of Our Lady's right hand was a heart encircled by thorns which pierced it. We understood that this was the Immaculate Heart of Mary, outraged by the sins of humanity, and seeking reparation».

After asking them for the third time to pray the Rosary every day, the Apparition on 13th July made them the following recommendation which became the rule of their lives: «Sacrifice yourselves for sinners, and say many

times: 'O Jesus, it is for love of You, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.' As She spoke these last words, she opened her hands once more, as she had done the two previous months. «The rays of light seemed to penetrate the earth, and we saw as it were a sea of fire. Plunged in this fire were demons and souls...» It was not until 31st August 1941 that Lucia recorded for the first time, in her third Memoir, the rest of the vision of hell, and so she continued: «Terrified and as if to plead for help, we looked up at Our Lady, who said to us, so kindly and so sadly: "You have seen hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace..."».

It was not Lucia alone, but her cousins too, above all Jacinta, who realised the greatness of their cousin's future mission. Lucia bears witness to this in her Third Memoir, when she revealed the first two parts of the secret of Fatima concerning the vision of hell and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. «Shortly before going to hospital, Jacinta said to me: 'It will not be long now before I go to Heaven. You will remain here to make known that God wishes to establish in the world devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. When you are to say this, don't go and hide. Tell everybody that God grants us graces through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, that people are to ask her for them; and that the Heart of Jesus wants the Immaculate Heart of Mary to be venerated at His side. Tell them also to pray to the Immaculate Heart of Mary for peace, since God has entrusted it to her...'» Lucia accounts for the mystical lives of Francisco and Jacinta by the enlightenment they received from the rays that radiated from Our Lady's hands, and from the vision of hell. Thus they were prepared to respond to Our Lady's request in the forms of prayer and sacrifices that they practised to a heroic degree. It was the life they lived and the example they gave that gave rise to a Christian spirituality in the spirit of Fatima, which consists in avoiding sin, in prayer and penance, with the specific intention of making reparation for the offences committed against God and against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Our Lady's last request, on 13th October, summarises, as it were, the entire Message: «Men must amend their lives and ask forgiveness for their sins. Do not offend the Lord our God any more, because He is already so much offended» 'What a loving complaint, how tender a request!' was the comment Lucia wrote in the Second Memoir. 'Who will grant me to make it echo throughout the whole world, so that all the children of our Mother in heaven may hear the sound of her voice!'...This request is filled through and through by the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It is not a request for a generalised reparation, but concretely for the reparation called for for the offences committed against her Immaculate Heart.

And as She rose from the holm oak tree, the reflection of her own light continued to be projected on the sun itself which then began to dance over the Cova da Iria in the sight of about 70,000 people.

So, what exactly does the Immaculate Heart of Mary ask of us? She certainly wants the same as her Son asked for in Paray-le-Monial, since what Mary thinks and wants

is what the Divine Heart of Jesus thinks and wants. And the time has come for this, we are assured by St John the Evangelist, who, in reply to the question he was asked by the mystic St Matilda, «How was it that you, who rested your head on the Sacred Heart of Jesus, did not speak of this Sacred Heart in your Gospel?» St John replied: «This was kept for a later time when hearts had grown cold and lifeless», that is for times in which, where there is sin, grace abounds (cf. Rom. 5, 20). It was when love was growing dim that the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was revealed to St Margaret Mary, in order to bring warmth back into people's hearts; look at the Sacred Heart of Jesus suffering so much on account of the ingratitude, indifference and blasphemies of men, make reparation for these crimes and practise the devotion of the nine First Fridays in order to win the grace of salvation at the hour of death through the merciful Heart of Jesus.

The essence of the Message of Fatima is the same except that it is addressed now to the Immaculate Heart of Mary who laments the ingratitude, the indifference and blasphemies of men. Mary asks for reparation and promises, with the great promise of the five first Saturdays, to assist souls at the hour of death with all the graces necessary for their salvation.

Jesus Christ is the Son of Mary and our Saviour. Mary is the Mother of Jesus and also our Mother. By their suffering, through the infinite merits of their Sacred Hearts, the world found the remedy against all the evil that can be incurred by their sins. Through his redeeming Passion, Jesus united all men in his Mystical Body which is the Church. All his members, saints and sinners alike, meet together in the Church. Whatever causes us to suffer in our individual lives, whatever the stumbling block in the world, is all combined in the human-divine feelings of the Heart of Jesus as it is also in the Immaculate Heart of Mary and our own hearts. It is sin, above all, which offends God and offends all the members of the Mystical Body of Christ.

We are members of His Mystical Body. If we are dismayed on account of our sins and pained by the sins of the world, we must make reparation for them. Indeed, the messages of Paray-le-Monial and Fatima call on us to make reparation. In this way, our regret and our repentance can be enhanced by the majestic reparation of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

For a noble soul living religiously and accompanied by God's grace, it is not difficult to love God. Nor is it difficult to love Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary, who lived our human life in all things except sin. It is not difficult to love the Immaculate Heart of Mary, knowing that Jesus gave us his mother to be our mother also. Nevertheless nothing surprises us so much as her wish that our love for Them should be a compassionate love, that we should be sorry for Them both. She complained of the suffering of her own Heart and asked to be consoled. They are waiting for us to respond to their wish. We can well understand that their most holy Hearts seek our consolation, yearn for us to make reparation, and come seeking our compassion. What can we give to Infinite Love?

The heart will never find it difficult to understand this, because it knows, by experience, that in the world everything works differently, by contradiction, conflict and am-

bition. It knows too that the Son of God and his Mother, on coming into this world, were called upon to love and also to suffer, and the more they loved, the more they suffered. Jesus Christ has his laws and they can be disregarded. There are indeed souls who feel a horror of sin, but there are others who do not respect God and think nothing of committing sin. What should God do with them? Call down lightning on them, as the apostles suggested in the Gospel? God's holy will in this world depends on us. If you wish, then you can do as I wish and I will reward you, but if you don't, then you both despise and offend me. The same happens with the Church, with the Mystical Body of Jesus. What conflict surrounds it! Is the Mystical Body treated any better than the Incarnate Word? And the Son's destiny is the same as his Mother's. What contempt, what persecution, what cold hearts surround them... The thorns, which signify sin, grow abundantly around their Sacred Hearts until it seems that there is no greater passion or suffering than in the causes of God.

One cannot live love without pain. And the greater the love, the greater also the pain. Perhaps this crown of thorns of the love of God has not yet encircled our own heart. When, however, our heart reaches its transparency, suffering too will enter our conscience, repentance and compassion too in relation to the outcome of God's interests which in many places are disregarded; a loving heart is covered with pain.

Jesus declared openly that people's neglect caused Him pain. He told St Margaret how much He suffered on account of this. He showed her his Heart infinitely happy in its glory, but at the same time a crown of thorns encircled it and the shadow of a cross covered the suffering of the wound in his side. One cannot imagine life, even in glory, which is not sensitive to all that is dear to Him, one cannot imagine a glorified heart, even the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, which does not feel the offences committed against it. To feel and to suffer offences is the same thing. It is, however, certain that this suffering is not pain and torture, like that of martyrdom on earth. His sadness is included in eternal glory, and the defeat appears like the carrier of the final victory. Thus They see, in the light of God which enlightens the plans of this world, the working out of the battles and also the sin that ran the lance through their Sacred Hearts which, even today, serves for their glorification.

We cannot co-ordinate the suffering of the glorified Hearts with their happiness, but we believe that those Hearts which love men so much receive in return much contempt and much indifference. Their request is enough for us: «Look at our Hearts. Have pity on our Hearts». This is for us the message of Paray-le-Monial and of Fatima.

For this reason we must transform our love into a consoling love. People offend the Sacred Hearts because they offend God, and we weep for the God who is offended when we weep for the offended Hearts. The carnal, savage world does not understand and commits outrages, blasphemes the Sacred Hearts, is ungrateful. We too are pained by their behaviour and we seek to make reparation to the wounded Hearts. We are convinced that this feeling of ours is perfect Love, it is the true love of God generated by Him, the most holy school of love. Whoever

er wishes to learn how to love must begin by having pity. And for a heart that wishes to love it is important to be moved to pity. God wished to capture the hearts of men. Theologians say that Jess suffered so that we could learn better the seriousness of offending God and to move the hearts of men. «O you who pass by, look and see how great is my sorrow»; and if you see, let your heart be softened. God needed only the smallest suffering, because the smallest was of infinite value, but such a small suffering was not sufficient for the school of love. For this, what was needed was torment and suffering that were capable of breaking the human heart.

Jesus suffered, therefore, so that the human heart would have compassion on Him. He sought compassionate love and longed to conquer our hearts. So let us have compassion on the Hearts of Jesus and Mary and offer to them our reparatory love. And if we truly wish to love God, we will make reparation not only for our own sins but also for those of others, as Jesus and Mary have asked, making our love disinterested. If we cry on account of the fall of others, a disinterested love will abide in our hearts. When we see that the world is frozen close to the burning love of the Most Sacred Hearts, we will be filled with a holy dismay. We will be appalled at the idea of God being outraged when we come to see sin as blasphemy against God, as Our Lord Himself is saddened, as the Blessed Francisco was saddened and wanted to console Jesus. In this way the heart can rise above itself.

It was by this way of pure repentance that the prophet Nathan led David. He did not speak of David's own sins, nor did he lecture him with angry words, but told him about the crimes, the hardness of heart, the tyranny, of a fictitious man and in this way inflamed David's anger against one of his subjects: David felt sorry for God because of whose sin? In fact on account of his own. This happens so often with ourselves. Compassionate love is our prophet, coming to us and saying to us: Christian Soul, look what the world is doing to God. Its last breath, its basest feeling is more important to it than the interests of God. If you have a noble heart, come forward and make reparation to the heart of the God who has been offended. Clean the head of humanity from the seal of Cain. Do your best. Where now there is sin, let virtue blossom. Pour out your zeal of reparation over the infamous sentiments of the world.

To make reparation to the Sacred Hearts, to be sad on account of the sins of others, to feel keenly the lowness of the world is the surest means of attaining the holy love of God. The heart making reparation shares in the passion of Jesus and rejoices to be able to make some sacrifice that pleases the Sacred Hearts. And while such people feel compassion, their souls gain in strength because the love of God never makes anyone weaker, but urges them to further sacrifices, whose passionate desire is to do and to give more and more, to offer all to

God without keeping anything back for oneself.

So let us make reparation to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary with compassionate love and become convinced that, as we do so, our own heart will come closer to theirs, we will share in their thoughts. What they want to share with us, always for our benefit, is their Passion.

BLESSED FRANCISCO, GOD'S CONSOLER

Lucia tells us that, during our Lady's third Apparition, «Francisco seemed to be the one on whom the vision of hell made the least impression, though it did indeed have quite an effect on him. What made the most powerful impression on him and what wholly absorbed him, was God, the most Holy Trinity, perceived in that light which penetrated our inmost souls. Afterwards, he said:

«We were on fire in that light which is God but we were not burnt! But what is God? ...We could never put it into words. Yes, that is something indeed which we could never express! But what a pity that He is so sad! If only I could console Him! ...»

It was at that moment that the Holy Spirit transformed Francisco into God's Consoler. He understood that sin is the cause of God's sadness. «I love God so much!» he said, over and over again. But He is so sad because of so many sins. We must never commit any». When Lucia asked him: 'Francisco, which do you like better: to console Our Lord or to convert sinners?' he replied 'I would rather console Our Lord. Didn't you notice how sad Our Lady was last month, when she said that people must not offend Our Lord any more, for He is already much offended.'» This was his ideal And his mission consisted in consoling God. «...He was a boy of few words. Whenever he prayed or offered sacrifices he preferred to go apart and hide, even from Jacinta and myself» Lucia recalls: «Quite often we surprised him hidden behind a wall or a clump of blackberry bushes where he had ingeniously hidden in order to kneel and pray, or 'think', as he said, 'of Our Lord Who is so sad on account of so many sins.» «I prefer praying by myself, so that I can think and console Our Lord who is so sad.» When he was going to school, on reaching the church in Fatima, he would say to Lucia: «Look! You go to school and I'll stay here in the church, close to the hidden Jesus. On your way home, come here and call me». After his death, Jacinta imitated his example. «While I went to school, she used to go into the Church and would stay there until I returned after school. In order to avoid being bothered by the people who were looking for her, at my suggestion she used to hide in the pulpit and would stay there all the time that I was at school. When I returned at the end of the day, I used to call her and we would return home together.

Thus not only the example of the Blessed Francisco, the centenary of whose birth is approaching, but that of the Blessed Jacinta too help us to live the reparation of the Sacred Hearts to which we have been summoned both in Paray-le-Monial and in Fatima.

BLESSED FRANCISCO AND JACINTA MARTO – Quarterly Publication. Price: 0.05 €

Director: Fr. Luis Kondor, svd / Editor and Proprietor: Secretariado dos Pastorinhos – Rua de S. Pedro, 9 – 2496-908 Fatima - Portugal
Ph. 249 539780 Fax 249 539789. E-Mail: Sec.pastorinhos@mail.telepac.pt **Visit our website: www.pastorinhos.com**

– Printed in Gráfica Almondina, Zona Industrial, Apart. 29; 2354-909 Torres Novas –

Bank account: Millennium bcp – IBAN: PT50-0033-0000-45340426373-05 Swift Code: BCOMPTPL