

# Society of the Sacred Heart



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## Choosing Eternal Love

*by Canon Glenn Gardner, Rector, Old St. Patrick's Oratory, Kansas City, MO*

As part of their choir vesture, all the canons of the Institute of Christ the King bear the cross of St. Francis de Sales. They receive this cross in a solemn ceremony upon the reception of the sacred order of the diaconate. This cross, although in a smaller form, is also worn by our oblates and members of the Society of the Sacred Heart. The cross of St. Francis de Sales calls to mind primarily the cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the cross upon which He suffered and died in atonement for our sins but also through the use of various symbols which are engraved on the cross, St. Francis de Sales helps us deepen our devotion to the Holy Cross and through it to a greater love of God and a greater love of Christ crucified.

One of those symbols is the initials “M” and “A”. These initials stand for “Mons Amoris” which translates as “the mountain of love” or what we know as Calvary, the hill upon which Our Blessed Lord was crucified. It is atop Calvary that we gaze upon the Holy Cross and upon this cross we see the ultimate manifestation of

God’s love for the human race. We see the sacrificial act which reconciled fallen man with his creator.

St. Francis de Sales ends his Treatise on the Love of God with the last chapter entitled, “Mount Calvary is the True School of love” and in this chapter, our holy patron desires that we be children of the cross and learn from it. The holy cross is only our hope but we must also see it as the standard of God’s love for us. The instrument through which Our Blessed Lord suffered and died becomes the throne from which His love reigns. If we are truly to love as God wants us to, to love as He loves, then it is devotion to the holy cross can aid us in advancing in this virtue. The more we meditate on the cross, the more we will realize just what the passion and death of Our Savior Jesus Christ really means to us, and the more we can learn how to love. The more we can learn to live out the words of Jesus when he said, “He who would be my disciple must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.”

St. Francis de Sales says in book twelve, chapter thirteen of the Treatise;” Mount Calvary is the mount of lovers. All love that does not take its origin from the Savior’s passion is foolish and perilous. Unhappy is death without the Savior’s love and unhappy is love without the Savior’s death. Love and death are so mingled in the Savior’s passion that we cannot have one in our hearts without the other. Except there, all is either eternal death or eternal love. All Christian wisdom consists in choosing rightly.”



God’s love manifests itself most perfectly in the passion and death of His only begotten Son on the Cross. This love is sacrificial in nature and we as Catholics and Christians are called imitate that love. So when we practice the virtue of charity, this must be its foundation. It was on the cross that this sacrifice was offered and it is from the cross that we learn what it is to sacrifice, what it is to truly love. It is ultimately to offer back to God, to sacrifice that which is most precious to us, our own free will, so that we can do His will. To a world which has always been bent on self-indulgence, this is folly. The cross remains a sign of contradiction but in this contradiction, in this paradox do we find consolation and how we can learn the meaning of our own suffering, our own trials and difficulties. In this contradiction, we learn to imitate the example that our master has given us.

Most of us do love and venerate the cross of Our Lord but what about our own personal cross. Do we love it? And moreover, does it teach us how to love? If we owned a sliver of the true Cross, without a doubt we would greatly honor and cherish it. But when it comes

to those trials, sufferings and difficulties which God permits us to bear, we change our tune and find them distasteful and onerous. They are, in a spiritual sense, a tiny piece of the Cross of Christ, which would be most beneficial to us, if we bear it patiently. Our Blessed Lord, called His crucifixion an exaltation, saying: “The Son of Man must be exalted; “because by it He was exalted in heaven and on earth, as He bore His sufferings and His death out of love for His heavenly Father and for the salvation of men. We too will be exalted in heaven, if, in carrying our cross, we follow the example of Christ. Many carry their crosses, like the thief on the left of Christ, with murmuring and impatience, others, like the one on His right, with patience and resignation, knowing that they deserve them. Jesus carried His Cross not only with patience, but, according to the words of the Apostle, with love, although He was innocent. With whom do we carry ours? With whom will we carry it in future? If we carry it as the first, we will not be exalted, and we will have learned nothing but if we carry it as the second, then we will have learned and chosen eternal love.

## Novena to St. Francis de Sales

O blessed Francis de Sales, who in your mortal life did excel in all virtues, especially in love of God and of neighbor, I earnestly entreat you to take me under your immediate protection, to obtain from God my perfect conversion, and that of all sinners, especially of *(the names of person for whom you wish to pray should be mentioned here)*.

Teach me, O Father, to fix my eyes on heaven, that I may generously trample under foot every obstacle that presents itself in my way, and attain that degree of glory which You in Your mercy hold out to me. Obtain also that particular favor for which I now pray. *(mention intention)*

Assist us, O Lord, we beseech You, through the merits of St. Francis de Sales. That what our endeavors cannot obtain may be given us by his intercession. Let us pray: O God, who for the salvation of souls, did will that St. Francis de Sales, Your confessor and bishop, should become all things to all men and women, mercifully grant that we, infused with the gentleness of his charity, guided by his teachings, and sharing in his merits, may obtain eternal happiness. Through Christ our Lord. Amen



### **Reflections on the Eucharist** by James Sutherland, MD Governor General of the United States



*Have in you the same attitude that is also in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Phil 2:5-8*

I have been traveling a lot recently and have not always been able to attend a Tridentine Mass on Sundays, but I still attend to fulfill my Sunday obligation. I must confess, I struggle with meditative prayer, but recently, several things occurred within a span of about twenty four hours that provided me with a glimpse into the love Christ Jesus pours out for us in the Eucharist. The circumstances have provided me with a meditation I would like to share.

Our Eucharistic Lord is frequently referred to as a “Prisoner of Love” as He waits, patiently in the tabernacle for us, His children, to visit Him there. His suffering continues, for He is so often neglected by His creatures, as He has humbled Himself to take the accidental form of bread and to be placed into the tabernacle to be forgotten about and to be ignored for another day, or another week. He longs, so much, to be with us that he has taken this simple form to “dwell among us” as St. John says.

In one of the Masses I recently attended, I cringed as I watched one of the ministers reach into the ciborium and grab handfuls of consecrated hosts to divide them between the other ciboria--and in the process, hosts were falling off to the side, here and there. The Creator of the Universe was being tossed about without a thought. I could not help but think about how carefully a priest, saying the Mass in the Extraordinary Form, keeps his fingertip and thumb together in order to protect any particles that might be on his fingertips. After communion was distributed, a ciborium was left uncovered on the altar while the priest hurried through the final blessing and introduced a lay speaker. I was struck by the fact that despite all of this, Christ endured this suffering patiently and without a word. It is a great lesson in humility, to see how Christ is still there for us despite how poorly He is treated.

Shortly after attending this Mass, I read about a Benedictine monk who attended an auction because he had heard that some ecclesiastical articles were going to be sold. When he arrived, prior to the sale, he discovered, in an out building, several articles including a monstrance, several religious statues, and a locked tabernacle with the key in the lock. He was inspired to open the tabernacle, and in it, he found two hosts, which he assumed had been consecrated, given that the tabernacle was locked, and that it looked like it had been wrenched from an altar somewhere. He was able to purchase the articles apart from the auction and took them back to his monastery to care for them properly, including placing the hosts in a pyx so that they could be carried properly and placed back in a tabernacle at the monastery.

It is striking--even unfathomable to our finite human minds--how much Christ loves us. He waits for us, silently, in the tabernacles of our churches. He longs for us to visit Him and to take Him as our food, worthily. He suffers the ignominy of mistreatment, of indifference, of being forgotten and abandoned. His Real Presence in the Eucharist is questioned or doubted by so many Catholics, yet He continues to be present.

In the hospital where I work, there is a chapel. While the hospital is not a Catholic institution, the Holy Eucharist is still reserved there to be distributed to the sick. I pass it almost every day. Sometimes I stop, to say a prayer, before continuing with my day. While it is not practical for me to stop in every time I pass the chapel, I realize I need to stop more, for I know Our Lord is waiting there.





## St. Francis de Sales on the Way of Perfection

*by Canon Aaron Huberfeld, Rector, St. Mary's Oratory, Wausau, WI*



“No matter where we are, we must aspire to a perfect life.”

The amiable St. Francis de Sales penned these words 400 years ago. St. Francis was the Catholic bishop of Geneva at a time when Calvinism had made enormous inroads in that part of Europe, so much so that he was obliged to hold his seat in the neighboring French town of Annecy. He was, nevertheless, deeply respected by Catholic and Protestant alike for his personal holiness and his ability to touch the souls of everyone he met. In his immortal Introduction to the Devout Life, translated into over a dozen languages in his lifetime, St. Francis wrote: “it is an error, a heresy even, to want to banish the devout life from the company of soldiers, the shops of artisans, the courts of princes and the homes of married people...no matter where we are, we must aspire to a perfect life.”

What is perfection? St. Francis de Sales explains that leading a devout life and aspiring to perfection does not mean going through life without the slightest fault. Nor does it mean making up for faults with additional prayers and penances. The spiritual life, whether it goes by the name of devotion, holiness or perfection, consists entirely in a great love for God. And it begins not with us, but with God’s love for us. When God’s love acts upon a human soul, it is called grace. When that Divine love gives us the strength to do good and love God and neighbor, it is called charity. And when the love of God reaches the point in us where we love not in occasional spurts or aspirations, but habitually, then it is called perfection or devotion.

Monks and nuns are said to be on the road to perfection because they take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. But the means of perfection are not closed to those who live in the world. The wealthy can cultivate the spirit of poverty by thanking God for all the good things He has given them, by joyfully accepting the trials of managing their wealth, and by generously helping those in need. They can place their hearts in heaven, even though they have treasure on earth. Soldiers, businessmen and people in all walks of life can practice obedience by serving their country or their customers, and by letting others have their way in little things throughout their busy day. Married people can practice great chastity by faithfulness to each other, remembering that they share a great Sacrament through which they must help each other to become saints. If God grants them children, they have a common mission teach them to know, love, and serve their Creator.

Above all, St. Francis de Sales teaches us that we must not think of being devout as having an unpleasant life right now so that we can earn heaven. “Life in God is inviting, happy, and altogether pleasant,” he says. If we follow the saint’s sound advice, we will find that holiness is well within our reach, and we will never settle for anything less.

## Letter from the Chaplain

Canon Matthew Talarico

Dear Members and Friends of the Society of the Sacred Heart,

Best greetings to you from the Shrine of Christ the King in Chicago!

We continue to receive very positive comments from participants at the national Retreat last June which took place at the first-time venue of the University of St Mary of the Lake Conference Center at Mundelein. I hope that those of you who could not attend were able to see on the Institute's website the photos of the magnificent chapel and beautiful campus grounds which served so well for the recollection and refreshment of both body and soul. Given so much enthusiastic feedback, we are planning to hold next year's retreat again at Mundelein.

Since June 20, we have been in contact with the USML conference center Office, trying to reserve the dates for our 2015 retreat in an effort to maintain the mid-June retreat dates, as has been our custom these last five years. In addition to the rooms of primary necessity such as dining hall and bedrooms, securing the Main Chapel is priority for the Liturgy over the weekend. Making these reservations has proved challenging because of 2015 events which had been scheduled before June 20, 2014, as well as because of certain in-house university June events such as the summer school for the USML Liturgical Institute which uses the chapel frequently in June.

Thus, after several unsuccessful attempts to work out a feasible retreat schedule in June, we were offered the weekend of May 29-31 with full range of possibilities for the Main Chapel, bedrooms, meals, etc. This weekend at the very end of May comes after the Memorial Day weekend and also ends on the feast of the Queenship of Our Lady. Furthermore, these May 29-31 dates also suit the schedule of our Prior General, Monsignor Gilles Wach.

Thus please consider this letter as official notice for saving the dates of May 29-31, 2015, for our Society's annual retreat. We hope to send you information later this autumn regarding registration and the other practical details for the retreat. We do not anticipate any significant increase in the retreat cost from last June, and we will continue to make every effort to keep the participation fee affordable.

Assuring you of my daily prayers at God's holy altar, I thank you for your prayerful participation in our spiritual family and remain,

Yours in the Most Sacred Heart of Christ our King,  
Canon Matthew Talarico  
Chaplain

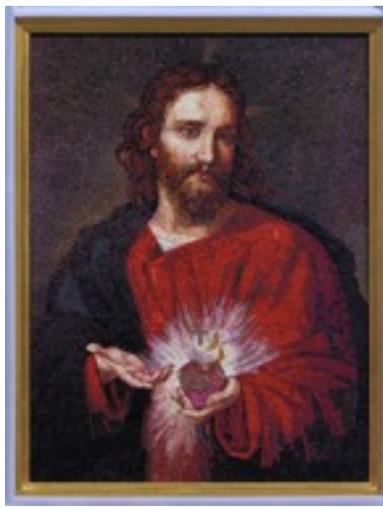
773-363-7409, ext 4



**English:** O Lord Jesus Christ, I acknowledge Thee King of the Universe. All that has been created has been made for Thee. Exercise upon me all Thy rights. I renew my baptismal promises, renouncing Satan and all his works and pomps. I promise to live a good Christian life and to do all in my power to procure the triumph of the rights of God and Thy Church. Divine Heart of Jesus, I offer Thee my poor actions in order to obtain that all hearts may acknowledge Thy sacred Royalty, and that thus the reign of Thy peace may be established throughout the universe. Amen. *Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be...*

**Latin:** Domine Jesu Christe, te confiteor Regem universalem. Omnia, quae facta sunt, pro te sunt creata. Omnia iura tua exerce in me. Renovo vota Baptismi abrenuntians satanae eiusque pompis et operibus et promitto me victurum ut bonum Christianum. Ac potissimum me obligo operari quantum in me est, ut triumphet Dei iura tuaeque Ecclesiae. Divinum Cor Jesu, offero tibi actiones meas tenues ad obtinendum, ut corda omnia agnoscant tuam sacram Regalitem et ita tuae pacis regnum stabiliatur in toto terrarum orbe. Amen. *Pater Noster... Ave Maria... Gloria Patri...*





SOCIETY OF SACRED HEART JUNE 2014 NATIONAL RETREAT CONFERENCES AND  
SERMONS

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Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest  
Society of the Sacred Heart  
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**Mark your calendars: Annual Retreat Dates have been scheduled for the weekend of May 29-31 at Mundelein Seminary, Libertyville, Illinois.**

*Monsignor R. Michael Schmitz*  
Vicar General, Provincial for the United States

*Canon Matthew Talarico*  
Chaplain, Society of the Sacred

*James P. Sutherland, Jr., MD*  
Governor General for the United States