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Will You Save Souls?

The Apostleship of Prayer
Offers You a Way

A QUEEN'S WORK
PAMPHLET

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SAVE SOULS?**

**The Apostleship of Prayer
Offers You a Way**

by

Ferdinand Schoberg, S.J.

THE QUEEN'S WORK
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THE QUEEN'S WORK

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Will You Save Souls?

By Ferdinand Schoberg, S.J.

FOUR out of every five persons in the world (about 2 billion) are not in the true Church in this 20th century of Christianity. Approximately four out of every five persons in the United States do not have the true Faith. Though on the increase, conversions to the Catholic Church in our country take place at the rate of less than one in a thousand in a year. There is leakage from the Church, the extent of which is hard to calculate. Cockle grows in the midst of good wheat. So many millions of souls live in the darkness of error and confusion. Although God gives, in ways mysterious to us, sufficient grace to all to be saved, so many seem in imminent peril of eternal loss. Almost every second someone somewhere in the world dies and faces God's judgment. Most of those who die do so without the consolation of Christ's sacraments.

Who will save so many souls? God wishes their salvation. He gives sufficient grace to all. The God-man, Jesus Christ, "gave Himself a redemption for all." Yet salvation depends on the free acceptance of God's redemption. It depends, too, in God's wisdom, on the free co-operation of other human beings. That is why Christ established a Church. There would be no need of it if souls were not to be saved through the help of human beings empowered by God to teach, forgive, sanctify, and offer sacrifice in His name. Through Christ and His Church comes abundant grace to win—almost overpower—the wayward, weak, and rebellious will of modern man. But the Church, under Christ, operates through human beings, with all their shortcomings. Many priests and missionaries generously preach Christ's truth and dispense His sacraments. But there are far too few of them. "The laborers are too few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He send forth laborers into His harvest."

All Walks of Life

The need of more laborers in the vineyard is patent. Not too obvious, and perhaps greater, is the need of *apostolic-minded* Catholics in all walks of life. In 1948, Pope Pius XII said: "Baptism grafts a man into the Mystical Body of Christ. No one worthy of the name of Christian can sanctify himself and yet ignore the eternal salvation of others forgetting 'that the Lord gave to everyone a commandment concerning his neighbor'."

How many Catholics realize that they have an obligation, in charity, to do something toward the salvation of their neighbors? The command to love others as ourselves, and even to love one another as Christ loved us, cannot be fulfilled without concern for the salvation of others. There is need for both Catholic Action and apostolic prayer. Souls can be saved through Catholic Action but not without apostolic *prayer* and *sacrifice* offered to win the grace needed for conversion. There is no one who cannot help to save souls at least by apostolic prayer and sacrifice united in spirit with Christ's sacrifice

perpetuated on our altars. With good reason did St. Paul write to Timothy: "I desire therefore first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all men. . . . For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and men, the Man, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a redemption for all . . ." (1 Tim. 2:16).

Almost 2 billion persons in the world (130 million in the United States) are not in the true Church! Nearly four out of every five! Why? Too few vocations to the priesthood and religious and missionary life is one reason. Ignorance is another. Obstinate rejection of God's grace is still another. But, could an important reason be that *four out of five Catholics* do not even think about these souls? Or how to help them? There is an easy, efficient way for *everyone* to help save souls, a way taught by the Heart of Christ: the *Apostleship of Prayer*.

The Apostleship of Prayer

The Apostleship of Prayer began at Vals, France, in the year 1844. Father Francis Xavier Gautrelet, S.J., inspired young Jesuit students who were preparing for the priesthood and possible missionary life, to be missionaries in spirit, at home, while still training. He suggested that they offer to God daily their prayers, duties, studies, and sacrifices to beg God's help for the missionaries in the field and the graces needed for conversions. The suggestion was accepted, was soon adopted in neighboring villages, in churches, convents, and other institutions, and also spread throughout France and to other countries.

In 1861 came the impetus which made of this Apostleship a world-wide movement. Father Henry Ramiere, S.J., who taught philosophy at Stonyhurst, England, and at Vals and Toulouse in France, and also wrote on controversial and devotional themes, issued a book which has become a classic. It was on the Apostleship of Prayer. The subtitle was most interesting: "A League of Christian Hearts united with the

Sacred Heart of Jesus to obtain the salvation of the world and the triumph of the Church." He made the Apostleship of Prayer an Apostleship of the Heart of Christ. In 1861 he also published the first *Messenger of the Sacred Heart* as an organ of the Apostleship of Prayer.

With papal approval, from the time of Pius IX until the present day, and the granting of as many as 198 plenary indulgences through the years, the Apostleship of Prayer spread through the world, multiplying local centers and members. With it grew the practice of First Friday Communion of reparation, the devotion of the Holy Hour, and other devotions to the Sacred Heart. Today it is estimated that there are nearly 40 million members of the Apostleship of Prayer in the world, including about 6 million in the United States. The membership includes bishops, priests, religious, laymen, laywomen, and children. One wonders how many of these are active. If the Popes could have their way, all Catholics would be members. Pius XI said in 1927: "There are many apostolates: the apostleship of

prayer, the apostleship of action, the apostleship of the pen, the apostleship of the spoken word, and even the apostleship of money. . . . These various apostleships, however, cannot be for all; for where there is no possibility there can be no duty. Nevertheless *all must practice the apostleship of prayer, because all can pray.* Such an apostolate is the only one which is truly possible for all, and for that reason a duty for all. . . ." [*Italics mine.*]

In 1948, His Holiness, Pius XII, wrote: "We, like Our Predecessor of happy memory, Pius XI, have made known and once more most willingly declare that it will make Us very happy if *all the faithful without exception* enlist in this sacred militia and swell the army of Associates. . . ." [*Italics mine.*]

Our Lord Appeals

In urging Catholics to become members of the Apostleship of Prayer, the Popes, vicars of Jesus Christ, are seconding His appeal.

The Son of Man spent three years in teaching, working miracles, and founding His Church, less than three

days in His passion and death. He spent a lifetime in prayer. *He lived a prayer* for 33 years in Nazareth, in a workshop, in the temple, in a desert, in the mountains, in His teaching and miracles, in a supper chamber, in a garden, and even in His passion and death. His *living prayer* was constant union with His Father through unceasing fulfillment of duty, of His Father's will.

In the cenacle Our Lord warned the Apostles not to expect success in their apostolate without union in prayer and grace with Him: "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me. . . . If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done to you. . . . Abide in my love."

He taught us to pray: "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. *Thy kingdom come. . . .*" And He assured victory through prayer: "If you ask the Father anything in my name, He will give it you. . . . Ask and you shall receive."

Revelations of the Sacred Heart

When in 1673 or 1674, and thereafter Our Lord revealed His flaming wounded heart of love to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in a Visitandine convent chapel at Paray-le-Monial, France, He appealed really for an Apostleship of Prayer. He asked for human love and reparation—reparation through sacrificial acts of love, suffering, Communions of reparation, Holy Hours in union with His agony, and a Feast of the Sacred Heart. This reparation—an intimate *prayerful union*—was to console His heart by making up for the ingratitude and contempt of other souls, and by winning hearts to His heart, *helping Him to save souls*. For, as the saint says: “He made me see that the ardent desire which He had of being loved by men, and of rescuing them from the path of perdition along which Satan drives them in crowds, had made Him form this design of manifesting His heart to men with all the treasures of love, of mercy, of grace, of sanctification, and of salvation that it contains.” The devotion to His heart

“was, as it were, a last effort of His love with which He would favor men in these latter ages . . . a loving redemption to deliver them from the empire of Satan.” And in it is all that is needed “to rescue them from the abyss of perdition.” In this Apostleship of the Heart of Jesus we can find the spiritual origin of the Apostleship of Prayer which makes of each day, and all the actions thereof, a living prayer in union with the heart of Christ for the good of souls.

Papal Praise

In the light of Our Lord’s appeal, we are not surprised to find His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, highly recommending the Apostleship of Prayer. When approving the new statutes of the Apostleship on the Feast of Christ the King, October 28, 1951, the Holy Father said:

1. “The statutes . . . show the Apostleship to be a very efficacious instrument of modern, apostolic ministry, both for the salvation of individuals and for the general pastoral good of souls.

2. "This labor for the extension of Christ's kingdom . . . promotes and puts to work those supernatural means upon which the real success of all apostolic labor depends. . . . Its energy is not dissipated in externals.
3. "The daily offering of self is the essence of the Apostleship of Prayer. . . . All the sacred practices of which the Apostleship makes use to round out and perfect this oblation taken together, contain the sum total of Christian perfection."

A Way of Life

From what our Holy Father says, and from a study of the new statutes, one can easily see that the Apostleship of Prayer suggests not merely a few simple acts of devotion, but rather a *way of life*, a road along which anyone can walk, or run swiftly, to the heart of God. He does this however, not only for his own salvation and sanctification: he is eager to make his daily life a fervent prayer for the salvation of

souls and the spreading of Christ's kingdom. He may do this through the adoption of three important practices:

1. Making daily, and trying to live, an offering of all his prayers, works, joys, and sufferings in union with the intentions of the heart of Christ and those of His vicar on earth, the Pope. Provided one registers as a member at some local center of the Apostleship of Prayer in a parish, school, or other institution, this daily offering of self is the only requirement. And this does not bind under any penalty of sin. Zeal prompts many members to adopt also other practices of the Apostleship. The daily offering may be made in any suitable formula of words, or in one's own words. Custom in the United States has established this formula:

“O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer thee my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings

of this day for all the intentions of thy Sacred Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, in reparation for my sins, for the intentions of all our Associates, and for the general intention recommended this month.”

2. Uniting this daily offering, at least in spirit, with the sacrifice of Christ perpetuated on our altars, making a Communion of reparation to the Sacred Heart at least once a month and, if possible, going to Mass even during the week, and receiving Communion in a spirit of reparation frequently.
3. Making the daily offering through the Immaculate Heart of Mary and asking her intercession by saying the Rosary, or at least a decade of the beads, daily.

Pastoral Care of Souls

Highly praising the way of life offered by the Apostleship of Prayer, His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, recommends its use in the pastoral care of souls:

1. "... the Apostleship of Prayer offers the most perfect form of Christian life and contains within itself a rule and compendium for the pastoral care of souls. . . .
2. "If the reverend pastors will introduce the flocks committed to their care to the spiritual practices of the Apostleship of Prayer, they will satisfy no small part of their pastoral obligations . . ." and will be "teaching their people to consider the unbloody sacrifice of the altar as the very center of their lives. . . .
3. "We a g a i n commend the Apostleship, thus fortified by Our approval, to the Most Reverend Ordinaries, confident that in the future they will zealously propagate it within their respective jurisdictions.

4. "We are sure that this Association will in no way infringe on the functions of other apostolic activities, but will rather assist them to greater holiness by imbuing them with the spirit of love towards God and man which inflames the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and kindles all with its own fire."

The Perfect Devotion

Too little known today is the fact that the Apostleship of Prayer is the perfect devotion to the Sacred Heart. Father Henry Ramiere, S.J., wrote long ago: "We do not see in the Apostleship of Prayer a special practice, but rather a spirit of devotedness impelling the Christian to take to his own heart the interest of the heart of Jesus, to make its intentions his own, to pray and act and suffer in union with its prayers and sacrifices. We have the right to say that the Apostleship of Prayer, thus understood, is one and the same thing with the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus."

Note how His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, emphasizes this. In 1948, welcoming to Rome the national direc-

tors of the Apostleship of Prayer, better known in the United States as the League of the Sacred Heart, our Holy Father wrote: "Rightly and deservedly can the Apostleship of Prayer be called the perfect form of the devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus; and, in turn, the devotion to the divine heart of Jesus can in no way be separated from the Apostleship of Prayer."

What a challenge to any person, family, parish, or diocese where there is a desire for true devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus!

A New Appearance?

There is reason to think that Our Lord has again revealed His Sacred Heart, in this century, and given a message to our modern world. It is reported also that He appealed for what we have been describing as an Apostleship of Prayer, showed how it could be lived, and emphasized its tremendous value for the salvation of souls. If this be true, we are dealing with something of momentous importance which deserves serious, and even detailed, consideration.

A new book, *The Way of Divine Love*, was published by the Newman Press, Westminster, Md., in 1949. The subtitle reads: "The Message of the Sacred Heart to the World and a Short Biography of His Messenger, Sister Josefa Menendez, Coadjutrix Sister of the Society of the Sacred Heart, 1890-1923." When a first small volume on this subject was published in 1938, Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli wrote a letter of approval of the publication. Now as His Holiness, Pius XII, he has explicitly permitted the publication of a facsimile of the letter of 1938 in the new larger book, *The Way of Divine Love*. His letter, in part, reads: "I have no doubt that the publication of these pages, filled as they are with the great love which His grace inspired in His very humble servant Maria Josefa Menendez will be agreeable to His Sacred Heart. May they efficaciously contribute to develop in many souls a confidence ever more complete and loving in the infinite mercy of this divine heart towards poor sinners such as we all are."

Does this book contain a new message from the heart of Christ? New

revelations in our century? Within our lifetime?

The permission to print his earlier letter does not mean that our Holy Father officially says, or implies, that *The Way of Divine Love* contains new private revelations. The Church has not officially approved message or messenger. She has permitted publication of the mystical experiences of this religious soul, without official assent as to whether they are private revelations or not, because there is nothing in them against faith or morals, and they may help private devotion. The truth of the supernatural events related must be judged solely on human authority and credibility.

The Sane Attitude

In matters of this kind, it is well to guard against two extreme attitudes. The first is that of the overskeptical person, who will have nothing to do with private revelation, forgetting that God has spoken frequently, through private revelation before the birth of His Son and after His Ascension, to arouse the Chosen People, and now those in His Church,

to believe more strongly, and live more thoroughly, the truths in His public revelation. The other extreme attitude is that of the overcredulous, who look for, and run after, "new revelations" without caution, reason, or patient waiting for Church guidance. The sane attitude is that which cautiously weighs the facts with an open mind, and awaits the guidance of the Church with an open heart.

If the events related in *The Way of Divine Love* are drawn from true, private revelations, then we have in this century, and within our lifetime, a challenging revelation of the Sacred Heart, confirming those to St. Margaret Mary, and paving the way for the reign of Christ in the world through love. And we have a clear and strong appeal from the heart of Christ for the salvation of souls through an Apostleship of Prayer. But even if the experiences described could never be proven to be *private revelations*, they are, nevertheless, a beautiful, vivid, inspiring, and compelling re-presentation of the infinitely loving and merciful Christ of the Gospel and of the revelations of St. Margaret Mary. Father H.

Monier Vinard, S.J., who wrote the valuable introduction to the book, concludes with the significant words: *Digitus Dei est hic!* ("The finger of God is here!").

The Way of Divine Love

It is not for us to relate at length what is in *The Way of Divine Love*. A few salient facts will help.

The *messenger*, supposedly chosen by Our Lord, was Maria Josefa Menendez, a native of Madrid, Spain, who was born February 4, 1890. On February 4, 1920, she left Spain to enter as a postulant the novitiate of the Society of the Sacred Heart at Poitiers, France. Her religious life lasted until December 29, 1923, when she died, fulfilling a prediction that she would die before the end of the year.

The *apparitions* were many. Scenes are related of Our Lord revealing His heart surrounded by thorns, ecstatically beautiful and extending His arms as if to embrace the world, reliving phases of His passion, dictating His message for the world and for His chosen souls, asking

Josefa to be His messenger and a victim for souls, sharing His passion, etc.

The message may be summed up this way:

1. Infinite love: "I am love. My heart can no longer contain its devouring flames."
2. An emphasis on infinite mercy: "My heart . . . stoops to poor sinners with infinite mercy. . . . if only they knew my heart. . . . Mankind is ignorant of its mercy and goodness."
3. A vivid reminder of His passion.
4. The call, especially to consecrated and chosen souls, to share His redemptive life by uniting with Him in a spirit of sacrificial, reparative love and by offering their ordinary, even their most insignificant, actions for the salvation of souls. *This is the appeal for an Apostleship of Prayer.*

Through Daily Duties

What is much to our purpose, in these supposed new revelations, is to call attention to the emphatic pleading of the heart of Christ for souls, coupled with an urgent appeal, especially to priests, religious, and chosen souls, to help Him save souls by uniting all their actions every day with the love and merits of His Sacred Heart. A few quotations will illustrate this.

September 1, 1921: "My love for souls is so great that I am consumed with desire to save them. But oh! how many are lost, and how numerous are those who are waiting for the sacrifices and sufferings that are to obtain for them the grace to forsake their evil ways. . . . However, I still have many souls who love me and belong to me. A single one of them can purchase pardon for a great many others who are cold and ungrateful."

February 26, 1922: "The world is rushing headlong to ruin. I am in search of souls who will repair the many offenses that are committed against the divine Majesty and I am consumed with desire to pardon. . . .

Yes, to pardon these dear souls for whom I shed my blood. . . . Poor souls, how many are lost. . . . how many throw themselves headlong into hell."

November 25, 1922: "Poor souls, how many are eternally lost. . . . but how many, too, will regain life. You cannot conceive how great is the reparatory value of suffering. . . ."

November 30, 1922: "The soul who constantly unites her life with mine glorifies me and does a great work for souls. Thus if engaged in work of no value in itself . . . if she bathes it in my blood or unites it to the work I did during my mortal life, it will greatly profit souls . . . more perhaps than if she had preached to the whole world . . . provided first that the act is sanctioned by obedience or duty and not done from mere caprice; secondly, that it is done in intimate union with me, with great purity of intention and covered by my blood.

"I so much want souls to understand this! It is not the action in itself that is of value; it is the intention with which it is done. When I sweated and labored in the

workshop of Nazareth I gave as much glory to my Father as when I preached during my public life.

“There are many souls who in the eyes of the world fill important posts and they give my heart great glory; that is true. But I have many hidden souls who in their humble labors are very useful workers in my vineyard, for they are moved by love, and they know how to cover their deeds with supernatural gold by bathing them in my blood. My love goes so far that my souls can draw great treasure out of mere nothing. *When as soon as they wake they unite their whole day with a burning desire that my Heart may use it for the profit of souls . . . when with love they perform their duties, hour by hour and moment by moment . . . how great is the treasure they amass in one day! . . . I will reveal my love to them more and more . . . it is inexhaustible, and how easy it is for a loving soul guided by love.*”
[Italics mine.]

December 5, 1922: “All cannot preach nor evangelize distant uncivilized peoples, but all—yes, all—can make my heart known and loved

. . . all can mutually help one another to increase the number of the saved by preventing the loss of many souls. . . . and that, through my love and mercy.”

Everyone Can Save Souls

The passages quoted above apply especially to priests, religious, and chosen souls. But they can be heeded by all. They may have been really dictated by Our Lord in private revelations; and miracles, of which there seems to be already some evidence, may lend support to them, or may not. In any event they give a vivid description of the *very method of saving souls which the Apostleship of Prayer in League with the Sacred Heart offers—an Apostleship of Prayer which the Vicar of Christ on earth, Pope Pius XII, invites “all the faithful without exception” to join.*

“When as soon as they awake they unite their whole day with a burning desire that my heart may use it for the profit of souls . . . when with love they perform their duties, hour by hour and moment by moment”—when anyone follows this suggestion

attributed to Our Lord in new revelations, and actually recommended in the Apostleship of Prayer by His vicar on earth, "it will greatly profit souls." Thus, not only the missionary in a foreign land, the priest in his parish, the priest, brother or sister in religious home or classroom, and the monk or bride of Christ in a contemplative monastery can help, in the heart of Christ, to win many souls; all can do so: the mechanic working on an automobile, the laborer in a factory or shop, the salesman on his rounds, the secretaries and typists at their books and typewriters, the doctor and nurse in a hospital, the conductor of a trolley and the driver of a taxicab, the salesgirl in a department store, the waitress in a restaurant, the wife and mother in a home, the boy and girl in grade and high school and college, the shut-ins in homes and institutions, the aged, the anguished in mind, the brokenhearted and those tortured with pain—all, all of them can save souls, especially when associated together in the heart of Christ, by uniting daily every prayer, work, joy, and suffering with the love and intentions of that

heart. Each day can be thoughtlessly wasted. Or it can be made a treasure for the good of souls. It can become an unceasing prayer which rises to heaven through the transforming heart of Christ, to bring infinite light to eyes earth-bent and the merciful caress of infinite love to hearts that are troubled, fearful, have lost their way and surrendered almost to despair.

Appeal to All

According to *The Way of Divine Love*, on Tuesday, June 12, 1923, Our Lord said: "I want to forgive. I want to reign over souls and pardon all nations. I want to rule souls, nations, the whole world. My peace must be extended over the entire universe. . . . *My appeal is addressed to all*: to those consecrated in religious and to those living in the world, to the good and to sinners, to the learned and to the illiterate, to those in authority and to those who obey. To each of them I come to say: if you seek happiness, you will find it in me. If riches, I am infinite wealth. If you desire peace, in me alone is peace to be found. I am

mercy and love! and I must be sovereign King. . . .”

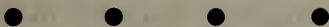
And in an apparition the night of that same day, as He renewed a gift of flame from His heart: “I come to consume you with fire and set you alight. All my longing is to set souls on fire. . . . those of the entire world. . . . Alas! they turn from the flame, but I shall triumph, they will be mine, and I shall be their King. Suffer with me, that the world may know me, and that souls may come to me. It is by suffering that love will triumph.”

New fire on earth? Fire from the Heart of Christ? Turn from the flame? Or be enlightened and inflamed by it, and carry the flame of divine love to other hearts, by an active participation in the Apostleship of Prayer in League with the Sacred Heart?

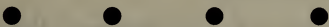
Anyone can become a member of the Apostleship of Prayer by enrolling in a local center established in a parish, school, or institution.

The National Office of the Apostleship of Prayer is at 515 East Fordham Road, New York 58, New York.

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