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SCALABRINIANS
SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO PROVINCE

Symposium on Spirituality

Papers on Scalabrinian Spirituality

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The promise 147

I am about to carry out the plan for the **renewal of my PRIESTHOOD** that for so long I have held within my heart. These **days of shame, and of darkness** that have come upon my priest in so many countries are about to be changed into **days of glory and of light**. I am about to sanctify my priests, by a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them. They will be sanctified as well my apostles on the morning of Pentecost. Their hearts will be set ablaze with the divine fire of charity, and their zeal will know no bounds.

They will assemble around my Immaculate Mother, who will instruct them, and by her all-powerful intercession, obtain for them all the **necessary charisms to prepare the world** – the sleeping world – **for my return in glory**. I tell you this not to alarm you or to frighten anyone, but to give you cause for an **immense Hope and for pure spiritual Joy**.

The renewal of my priest will be the beginning of the renewal of my Church, but it must begin, as it did at Pentecost, with an **outpouring of the Holy Spirit** the men whom I have chosen to be my other selves in the world to make **present my sacrifice**, and to **apply my blood** to the souls of poor sinners in need of forgiveness and healing. They will **preach my word in the power of the Saint Peter** on the Pentecost long ago, and at the sound of their voices **hearts will be opened** and **miracles of Grace** will abound.

I ask you to undertake this work of adoration, because it is **the necessary preparation** for all that will follow. Pope Benedict XVI, my faithful and trusted servant, will see the fruits of his year for priests, and his heart will rejoice at the **rising light of a new priestly holiness** on the dark horizon.

Your part is to represent the priest of the world before my Eucharistic face, and **to allow the radiance of my Divine Countenance to purify you, to help you, and to transform you into my image for the joy of the whole Church**. But I propose to do in you is what I desire to do in **every** priest of mine.

Once priests best begin to see the **changes** wrought in the lives of their brother Priests **by exposure to my Eucharistic face** they will be obliged to admit that therein lies the **secret of a priesthood renewed and restored to its rightful place of honor and dignity**, even in the eyes of the world. The world will continue to hate and persecute my priest, but no one will be able to deny that they are **men transformed by an experience that transcends all that is purely human**. My priest must be a witness to Me by their purity, by their charity, by their zeal, and by their shining holiness.

I will that my priest shine in the darkness of this present age, so as to draw many souls out of the shadows of sin into the **radiance of my Face reflected on their faces**. This is why I call all my priest, to become **adorers of my Eucharistic face**. Let them come to me, and open their eyes to the radiance that shines from the sacrament of my love; it is the light of My Face, and they are to be reflected by lives that are Holy and Pure.

(I ASKED JESUS ABOUT MORE VOCATIONS)

Trust Me with the timing of all things. One plant must be deeply rooted before another one can be planted beside it.

I am a live in the sacrament of my love and, **at every moment, divinely active doing from my place upon the altar all that I did during my sojourn on earth.**

From the sacrament of my love, I healed the sick, I give sight to the blind, I cause the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, and the mute to speak. **I am the healer of souls and of bodies.**

Those approach me in the faith will not be sent away empty-handed.

Those who come to me trusting my Eucharistic love will experience its healing power.

Bring me all those priests of Mine who are in need of healing in body, in mind, and in soul, and I will heal them according to My perfect Will for each one. I long to restore my priests to purity of life, and to wholeness. **You then present them before me, so that through your surrender to my Eucharistic love, I may touch and heal, at least some of them.**

Every day that you adore my Eucharistic face and draw near to my heart for the sake of my beloved priest, **I promise to deliver and heal and sanctify some of them.** This is why I ask you to **be generous and faithful in the vocation that I have given you.** **Your Fidelity** means deliverance from sin, healing, and holiness for a great multitude of priests.

Trust these promises of mine. I will fulfill them for I am faithful, and even the world will be obliged to see that I love my priests, and that I am Sanctifying them.

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The attack on my priesthood that appears to be spreading, and growing, is, in fact in his final stages. It is a satanic and diabolical onslaught against My Bride, the Church, **an attempt to destroy** her by attacking the most wounded of her ministers in their carnal weakness; **but I will undo the destruction they have wrought**, and I will cause my priests and my spouse the Church to recover **a glorious holiness that will confound my enemies**, and be the **beginning of a new era of saints, of martyrs, of prophets.**

This springtime of holiness in my priest, and in my church, was **obtained by the intercession of my sweet Mother's sorrowful and immaculate Heart.** She intercedes ceaselessly for her priest sons, and intercession **has obtained a victory over the power of darkness that will confound unbelievers and bring joy to all My saints.**



First Pastoral Letter

Announcing the first pastoral visit

To understand well the reason for this pastoral visit, we need to remember the hostile environment in which the bishop found himself from the very beginning of his episcopal ministry. Immediately the critical attacks of the Milan newspaper: *L'Osservatore Cattolico* by Don Albertario; the political struggles of the transient and intransigent; the theological disputes about the Thomists and the Rosminians (liberals) and the continuous attacks by Freemasonry of the government against the Church. Later, in the Miraglia case, he had to face civil and religious judicial cases; interventions both by the Holy See and in the civil court in Piacenza. Various excommunications were issued both from Piacenza and from Rome, but nothing prevented a schism, where Miraglia, with the support of some priests and faithful from Piacenza, succeeded in establishing his independent church, with a weekly newspaper that disseminated lies against the bishop and confusion among the faithful. Great was the pain of the bishop and the confusion in the Piacenza church. "In fact, Miraglia's arrival turned into the most serious and painful pastoral and legal problem suffered by Scalabrini, with serious consequences for his health" (Zanini page 196)

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PASTORAL LETTER to the Clergy and People of the City and Diocese of Piacenza for the Pastoral Visit. – 1876

*The bishop announces the first pastoral visit to the diocese
After thanking the faithful for their warm welcome, he immediately goes on to recall the grave pastoral ministry of the bishop which is to feed his sheep.*

"We announce to you, dearly beloved, the opening of the Sacred Pastoral Visit on the Feast of the Immaculate Queen of Heaven, intimately convinced that, by fulfilling this most important duty of ours, the greatest good will come to you, and to us the most beautiful consolation of getting to know everyone up close, beloved children, and be known by you.

"**Jesus Christ**, the great shepherd of the sheep, as Saint Paul calls him: *Pastor magnum ovium*", the bishop of our souls, constituted by God the Father with an irrevocable oath. **Eternal priest** he visibly exercised his pastoral ministry when dressed in our humanity he **visited** the peoples. Every day, out of deep mercy, our Lord deigns to be our mediator, visiting us in an invisible way at every instant by the grace especially diffused in our hearts, thanks to the Holy Spirit who is communicated to us. He commanded **the apostles** and all who would succeed them to perpetuate his work on earth.

Even today Jesus continues to exercise the sublime ministry by the **episcopate** in union with Peter, the continuation down here of the Savior's mission and life. It is a divine **repetition in time and space**, as St. Augustine says, **of the supreme priesthood of Christ**. And the noble example was always followed by those who over the centuries were chosen by God to govern the Church.

We too are successors, albeit unworthy, of the apostles; sent by the supreme and infallible Hierarchy of the church to govern this vast diocese. We hear St. Paul's warning ringing loudly in our ears: "Be attentive to all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you bishops; in joy, in concord, in piety, the people He has purchased, the royal priesthood, the holy people destined for the better homeland that all together awaits us.

THE REASON FOR THE PASTORAL VISIT IS TO REAFFIRM THE CATHOLIC FAITH AND FIDELITY TO THE POPE OF ROME

"I became all to all to win all for Christ" (1 Cor. 19)

Now that the war against Jesus Christ has been openly declared, now that a blasphemous press is brazenly challenging his divinity and even his historical existence, or is subjecting his institutions, the morals and sacraments to the crooked judgments of men, who blaspheme what they ignore; now that the church is reviled in its Head, and its pastors torn with all sorts of injustices; now that an infernal organization even tries to erase from the minds every idea of God and to tear faith out of hearts, **we feel**, to tell the truth, **greatly shaken** and **terrified** from the inmost depths of our souls, and we feel a **very strong need to visit all our beloved children to strengthen them all in piety and protect them from the snares of the wicked. So, be it.**

The more the **dangers** of the souls committed to our dear cares grow, the more we grow the desire to make ourselves similar to Him who sacrificed everything up to his own blood for us and for our health, in such a way that none of you, brothers and children shall perish through our negligence.

Of course, if ever there was a time in which care, vigilance, courage, self-sacrifice, industriousness of the pastors of the church were required, this is the time in which we live, in which vice and error equally raise their foreheads proudly and seem to threaten from the extreme it ruins the whole society.

We therefore, we repeat, will come to you, brothers and sons of the most beloved, to **encourage you** to practice the Christian virtues, to piety, to harmony, to peace, to raise our voice in defense of the oppressed; to be the relief of the poor and the comforter of the afflicted, to welcome the wayward and mix the tears of consolation with those of repentance, ready to sacrifice for you, not only all that we have, comfort, peace and rest, **but life itself**, if necessary; since the good shepherd gives his own soul for his sheep.

Guardians and teachers of the truth with the order not to keep it secret, we will proclaim it without reserve and with apostolic freedom, in every time, in every place, and to everyone. With the sweet charity of the saints, not separated from that noble firmness which knows how to enforce the solemn rights of the faith, **we will exert ourselves to win over** the most reserved intellects, preaching not only all that is good, that is just, that is holy, but all that is lovable in it, shrinking from every act which could, even in the least, bring about offense to the meekness and humility of the heart of Jesus Christ and using, as the apostle wants, the same wisdom with sobriety. (Rom. 12.3).

O most beloved! If we deplore the truths that have failed among the sons of men; if in the harmony of the social order we see disorder, confusion, disorder; if all civil moral science goes down as a bundle; if we tremble at the appearance of so many woes that afflict Europe today; Finally, if we see so many minds lacerated by doubt, so many unbridled and restless wills, tell me **is it perhaps not because faith is repudiated by many, or is fought against by the majority?**

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE VISIT

However, our hopes of seeing these unfortunate people saved rest largely on you, **venerable priests, cooperators in our sacred ministry**. We don't hide it from you. You will certainly do great good to your peoples if **you too prepare yourselves to receive**, as is fitting, **the visit of your bishop** with a **life of holiness and study of charity, prayer**, self-denial, disinterest, zeal; if you let yourself be informed by that **spirit** of wisdom, intellect, counsel, fortitude, conscience, knowledge and piety, which so much honor, and make our character respectable even among unbelievers and libertines; if you show yourselves inexorable towards sin, but all goodness, compassion, tenderness towards poor sinners

Double up, we will continue to say, with **industriousness and zeal** akin to forewarning your flock from the corruption of the century and from the snares of error, whose apostles today have multiplied so much as to make their malign influence felt even in the most remote and steepest mountains.

Promote, we warmly recommend it to you, **religious instruction**, taking care of its regular progress with ardor of charity in the Catechism Schools. Ah! O venerable parish priests and priests, fervent in this work of God, we beg you, sustain the good, shake the inert, reassure the timid, comfort the intelligent.

A most holy hope sustains us and promises us, from the visit we are about to undertake, the **reawakening of Catholic sentiment**, the observance of holidays, the respect due to sacred temples, attendance at church solemnities, the most holy sacraments, the schools of the Christian doctrine, attachment to the glorious and infallible see of Peter, and to his most blessed successor, the immortal Pius IX; and finally **charity**, bond of perfection, soul of the soul, seed and foundation of every Christian virtue.

We urge you, venerable brothers and beloved sons, to pray to have others

prayed for us, so that we have nothing to fail in our duty, knowing that we are debtors to everyone.

For this and for everything to happen prosperously, **we order in the meantime and we want:**

1. That on the day **8 December**, sacred to the great Immaculate Virgin, the **hymn of the Veni Creator be sung in each parish** church of the diocese and on **the following days 9, 10 y 11 the collect of the Holy Spirit be recited by each priest in the Holy Mass.**
2. That **the visit of each parish is preceded by holy spiritual exercises**, or at least by an extraordinary sermon lasting a few days. This is to dispose all the faithful to approach the holy **sacraments** and to approach the treasure of the **plenary indulgence**, granted in this circumstance by the Supreme Pontiff
3. That **the frugality and moderation** already prescribed by the Diocesan Synods and by our venerable predecessors be observed in the treatment. We would not like, dear parish priests, that our presence should not be a burden to anyone.

We will not finish without first revealing to you a reason for particular consolation and filial confidence, and that is: having placed this salutary work of the Sacred Visit under the valid **patronage of the Immaculate Mother of God.**

And we place us and all of you, in those pitiful hands that hold the keys of the heavenly treasures and under the auspices of the same **Queen of Heaven and our Mother**; We send you, with the outpouring of the most tender affection, **the pastoral blessing**: in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. So be it.

*Piacenza from the building of our residence,
the day of San Carlo Borromeo 1876*
John Baptist, bishop

