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CONTEMPLATION AND THE APOSTOLATE

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Those who read French may be interested in a new quarterly review, "Sanctifier." Subscriptions may be sent directly to Belgium, or to the United States Office. (See inside back cover.) The price is 10 Belgian francs.

The review is the organ of an association: "Apostles of Universal Sanctification." The purpose of the association is sufficiently indicated by the title. "Universal sanctification;" that is, not only contemplatives, but every Christian is to labor for the increase in holiness in himself and in others.

This association is one of the fruits of the work of "Contemplation and the Apostolate."



I

Preaching the Gospel and Sanctification

Preaching the Gospel is a work of co-redemption. It does not have for its purpose the conferring of a limited human benefit—although it may be necessarily accompanied by such human benefits—its one and only real motive is to bring to all men the salvation to which they have been called in Christ, salvation which cannot be attained without thorough-going sanctification, according to the words of Our Lord, "Father, sanctify them in the truth." (John 17, 17).

Let us look upon Christ: we shall be His co-redeemers insofar as we resemble Him. Christ preached to us the first commandment, which is that of sanctification. By it he teaches us to prefer the love of God before all things, to seek the accomplishment of His will: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind." (Matt. 22, 37); and again, "You are my friends if you do the things I command you" (John 15, 14).

There can be no doubt that this commandment of holiness is addressed to all Christians, whoever they may be. Consider the sermon on the Beatitudes in Saint Matthew, a veritable charter of holiness, as well as of the apostolate. The disciples come to receive their commission. They are still full of

earthly thoughts. Moreover, the crowd which surrounds them is not made up exclusively of perfect men; it is an immense multitude of weak, unhappy sinners.

And yet, for all that, without any preliminaries, Christ preaches to them a doctrine of the highest perfection: "You are to be perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). He insists on their not neglecting a single jot or tittle of the Law; on refraining from voicing the least unjust or mocking word against a brother—"whoever says, 'Thou fool!', shall be liable to the fire of Gehenna." They must prefer to let their bodies be destroyed rather than indulge in a single impure glance.

They must not merely pardon their enemies but actually love them and pray for them, and "offer the other cheek" to them. They are not to be worried about drink, or food, or clothing, or the morrow. "Enter by the narrow gate," He concludes, "For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there are who enter that way. How narrow the gate and close the way that leads to life! And few there are who find it." (Matt. 7, 13-14).

But is this not asking the impossible? By no means. God, being infinite perfection, infinite love, cannot be loved except in this manner. "The measure of the love of God," says St. Catherine of Siena, "is to love Him without measure." It is at one and the same time very difficult and very simple. To grasp the nature of this love one must put himself in the place of a child who instinctively understands what ought to be his attitude of complete and confident abandon toward his father: "Amen I say to you, unless you turn and become like little children, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3).

Our Lord asks **everything** of His apostles: renunciation of earthly goods, of family, and even more so of their own will: "He who does not carry his cross and follow me, cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:27). They must renounce all personal preferences in the apostolate, they will be compelled to go where they have no desire to go. Their first care must not be to conquer the world, but, above all, to die to the world, for "what does it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, but ruin or lose himself?" (Luke 9:25). The disciples, not being above the Master, must be poor and lowly as He is, without gold or

silver. They must not fear, in speaking the truth, to be met with contradiction. They will be like sheep in the midst of wolves: "You will be hated by all for my name's sake" (Luke 21:17). They will close their career with death by violence.

The definitive words on the subject of Christian holiness and the apostolate are reported to us by Saint John in his account of the Last Supper. It is there that Jesus reveals His whole thought and speaks "plainly", and it is there also that every true apostle must look for that "science of the saints" which is indispensable to him for the comprehension and accomplishment of his mission. We see that here it is not so much a matter of obligations any more, but of a gift, the gift which Jesus makes of Himself to His disciples, and, in Himself, of the entire Holy Trinity: "Abide in me, and I in you . . . I am in the Father, and the Father is in me . . . Father, sanctify them in the truth . . . Even as thou hast sent me into the world, so I also have sent them into the world. And for them I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth" (John 15, 4; 14, 10; 17, 17.18-19).

Such are the words which will resound as a divine commandment unto the end of the world. Henceforth there will be further revelation, but only the fulfillment of the promises made at the last Supper. The Church will come into existence on the morning of Pentecost in an atmosphere of intense sanctification. To be a Christian or an apostle will henceforth be unintelligible without a participation as profound as possible in this Spirit of universal sanctification which animates the Church and will remain with her until the consummation of the world.

The missionaries of our own day must take more and more account of the fact that the problem of evangelization is also a problem of sanctification. It is with good reason that one experiences a measure of fright in the face of statistics which show us that more than four fifths of mankind is still outside the Church; that, in India for example, for four millions of Catholics there remain 396 millions of pagans or non-Catholics; that, finally, in some countries there has been up to now practically no contact with the Church. It has been estimated that the population of the world is at present growing at the rate of twenty to thirty millions a year. In the same period of time the Church grows to the extent of about four millions,

which means that each year the excess of non-Catholics over Catholics increases by from sixteen to twenty-six millions merely as a result of new births.

Such a state of affairs would seem to be hopeless, were it not, like the Church itself, in a supernatural economy, where the argument of numbers can always be contradicted. One saint can convert an entire people within a few years. A flowering of saints could "renew the face of the earth." If Christians were resolved to embark at all costs on the way of sanctification, the churches of Europe would better understand their missionary duty, the churches of mission lands would strike deeper roots in the Faith, and on both sides men would enter more fully into the Divine plan.

It is too easy to believe that the "senior" churches of Christendom have done all their duty simply because they have sent missionaries into the different parts of the world. To be sure, credit is due to the generous pioneers, to their families, to all those who have supported them by their prayers and their alms. But we must beware of deluding ourselves in this matter. The number of apostles is much smaller than it could be, so much so that workers are lacking in many fields of the apostolate.

Many vocations have not been encouraged, some have even been hindered as a result of misplaced zeal which would conserve all our resources for our own dioceses. It is only in the face of startling figures that it is possible to arrive at some appreciation of the enormity of our egoism or lack of awareness in this matter. Take the case of Japan: she is begging and beseeching us for missionaries, and does not receive them in sufficient numbers. There is such a shortage of priests that certain villages, recently converted *en masse*, have been compelled to provide themselves for their religious instruction.

When we contrast this with the situation in some of our dioceses, with their priests by the hundreds, one cannot help but conclude that the needs of our own churches, however urgent they may be, cannot be compared with those of the mission churches. In our countries, there is no one who does not possess the means to find a Catholic church and a priest to instruct him in Christian doctrine. In mission lands many would-be neophytes find it quite impossible to receive the water of Baptism. We have our sights so firmly fixed on our

own needs that we practically ignore those of the rest of the world.

How many bishops, otherwise excellent, think it their duty to retain all their resources for the good of their own dioceses? They keep jealous guard over their seminarians and shield them from any opportunity to hear about the missions. So true is this that Pope Pius XI, on more than one occasion, found it necessary to recall the fact that the evangelization of the whole world is the purpose of the Church, and that one would be remiss in his duty, and that a duty which is "most essential, in not putting forth all his energies to win for Christ and bring to His flock those who have up to now remained far from the sheepfold, strangers to the Church."

Addressing the Bishops, the Pope wrote: "It is not only to Peter, whose chair we fill, but at the same time to all the Apostles, whose successors you are, that the Master gave the command to go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. Consequently, you must, in the measure permitted by your particular mission, share our task of preaching the Gospel among all nations.

If then a young man, seminarian or even priest, in your respective dioceses, manifests the desire of consecrating himself to this sublime apostolate of the foreign missions, not only will the thought not even enter your mind to discourage them, but you will show your approval and make use of your influence and authority actively to encourage them . . . As soon as you feel sure that they are called by God, no consideration of the needs of your diocese will be able to restrain you from granting your permission or even to delay your authorization of such a step. For your own faithful have ready at hand, so to speak, the means of salvation, and their situation from this point of view is not comparable to that of the pagans, particularly barbarians and savages." (Encyclical **Rerum Ecclesiae**).

Here we have a word of reproach that is at once paternal and energetic. We do not think that it has been sufficiently heeded. Apart from some exceptions, the general mentality remains the same as it was in 1926. Even now some dioceses put obstacles in the way of missionary vocations, insisting on their own religious needs. Is this not a kind of spiritual egoism quite opposed to genuine apostolic zeal? It is only right, however, to cite the beautiful example of the diocese of

Vittoria in Spain, which has spontaneously taken it on itself to send a number of its priests for service in a Prefecture Apostolic in South America. Is this not the true **Catholic** spirit?

The missionary is the pioneer, the one who clears the land, the sower of the good word. And yet since he cannot do everything by himself, it is only right that he should be assisted, like the clergy of Europe, by the religious orders. These also, as we have pointed out in previous articles, have an equally great missionary duty.

"We ask you," wrote Pius XI, "For what purpose are missions established, if not for the setting up and the organization of the Church in these immense regions? And how will the Church be set up among the pagans of today, if it is not constituted of those elements of which it is already formed in the lands which we inhabit, that is, of the people, the clergy, and the religious of both sexes in every one of these (missionary) countries. It therefore follows that it is one of your chief duties to see to the foundation of native religious congregations, both for men and for women." (**Rerum Ecclesiae**).

And, in the thought of the Pope, this edifice ought to be crowned by the monastic and contemplative life: "It is evident that our anchorites, all the while remaining completely faithful to the law and the spirit of their founders and without devoting themselves to the active life, can make important contributions to the happy success of the missions."

Such are the vast horizons opened up to all the religious orders, contemplative or otherwise, if they respond to their vocation and take into account the entire economy of salvation. They will see that it would be contrary to the divine plan to concentrate exclusively on the older areas of Christendom. Among us vocations, which have become rarer, hesitate in the face of a multitude of convents of all sorts. In some countries, as in India, the situation is quite different. Vocations are very numerous, but they do not always find a religious house within reach that might accept them.

It can be said that many religious have not understood their missionary duty. They have let slip many opportunities to extend, in accordance with their power, the kingdom of God! This is unpardonable negligence, of which we could cite not a few examples from experience. It will suffice to cite

a paragraph or two from a letter recently received: "... a missionary still quite young, but already recognized as one of the best in the mission and a professor at the University of Calcutta, expresses bitter regret that certain religious men, belonging to a contemplative order, have refused, for some years now, to establish a house of their order in Bengal, or anywhere else in India.

"This Father was convinced of the tremendous influence which could not help being felt, especially by the pagans, by reason of the example of Christian contemplation which would be thereby evaluated by *connaisseurs*..." Let us strive, therefore, for the establishment of the religious life in all its forms in countries lately converted. It will powerfully contribute to the consolidation of the work of the pioneers.

Let us cite a particular case: that of the religious who have accepted the care of Prefectures or Vicariates Apostolic. They certainly deserve to be commended for their generosity. It must be pointed out, however, that they find themselves in an abnormal, and therefore transitory position. On the one hand, they are devoting themselves to a ministry for which they have not, for the most part, the grace of state. On the other hand, they have an obligation to pursue their proper vocation: teaching, retreats, or the contemplative life. They can no longer devote themselves to their inter-diocesan tasks, now that all their members are confined to their own mission.

It is therefore desirable that they be relieved as soon as possible by secular clergy, whether European or native. Thus has come about the establishment in India of the first completely native missionary society. If such movements continue and are multiplied, European religious will be able gradually to surrender their mission territories to these native groups and resume their own proper work. They will establish native novitiates for their orders, preach retreats, and publish reviews and spiritual works in the native languages. In short, they will devote themselves to all those works of sanctification to which they have become accustomed in our own countries, and which missionaries have not the time to undertake.

The faithful also, on their part, ought to have a share in this spirit of Pentecost, which is the soul of the Church. Quite often their missionary charity and zeal are too restricted. Their attitude may be expressed something like this: "Our

duty of charity is first of all to our immediate neighbor. As for the missions, we can only pray and contribute our mites, our missionaries will do the rest."

Even the interest which is taken in missionaries—does it not often extend more to the person of the missionary than to the conversion of the infidels? The missionary is a relative or a fellow countryman who has gone to distant lands, and on this account he is an object of sympathy or interest, but are the souls he has gone to convert loved in him? If Christian people were really holy, they would be more mission-minded, they would see that this duty of charity falls not only on specialized missionary congregations, but on the whole Church and each of its members.

Each one ought to be aware of the solidarity which unites all the churches, especially the oldest and the newest; he ought to strive to learn as thoroughly as possible the spiritual and material needs of the missions; he ought to safeguard, in and outside of himself, zeal for the salvation of ALL men, if the opportunity presents itself he ought to plant and cultivate the seed of missionary vocations, and not to put obstacles in the way of these vocations from selfish motives, even, as we have seen, for the spiritual good of our own lands.

It can be said that missionary zeal is imposed as a grave obligation on all the faithful: "That it is opposed to the charity which we must bear towards God and men not to be interested, when one is in the sheepfold, in those who wander afar from the ways of salvation is so evident that it is not necessary for us to pause here to demonstrate it. Our love for God demands that we seek out ways of increasing the number of those who adore Him and serve Him in spirit and truth . . . To share with poor pagans to the extent of one's power the most precious of all gifts, the faith and all the goods which go with it, is to show that one esteems this gift as one ought, and it is the best possible proof of gratitude for it to Him to whom we are indebted for it." (*Rerum Ecclesiae*).

As for the newer parts of Christendom, they have even more need for sanctification than the older parts, if we wish them to strike deep root in the Church. They must, in fact, stand up in the face of violent attacks, on the one side from an exaggerated nationalism, and on the other from atheistic communism. Sanctity alone will enable them to hold fast to the

idea of a supra-national and supra-human good deserving of defense even at the price of daily heroism. They will also have to guard themselves against the seductions of heresy and schism, as well as threats of all sorts against their lives and goods.

At least in general, the necessity of the method of adaption is understood. The formation of a native clergy and a native hierarchy has been expedited. Important institutions have been established everywhere: hospitals, colleges, universities, Catholic Action, etc. . . . But it is imperative that it be fully realized that all this will be neither valuable nor permanent if the attachment to the Church is not sufficiently deep-seated. It is not at all unforeseeable that all of our institutions, at least in certain countries, will one day find themselves surpassed by those of the state or of powerful philanthropic organizations. Hence the need for the conviction that the Church exists for one thing, only; and that is the sanctification of its members.

When that sanctification is an accomplished fact, the nations will have taken deep root in the Church, they will be united to Christ, they will find the strength, as in the early Church, to transcend all merely human, national, or racial issues, and thus enter into the great family of the universal Father, where they will find that charity which comes from God and goes out to all men. The problem of preaching the Gospel will never be fully solved without a profound sanctification of the nations. It is in giving them saints that their conversion will be achieved. "In the Far East," the Vicar Apostolic of Rangoon wrote us recently, "Catholics are still lost in the multitude. If they are not saints, it is to be feared that they will not be able to dam the flood which is being got ready."

Thus, whatever point of view one chooses to assume, it is clear that holiness is absolutely necessary for the apostle, first of all because it is actually the end of his apostolate, and secondly because it reveals to him effective methods of spreading the truth. It is necessary for arriving at a knowledge of God's plan and conforming one's own activity to that plan; it is necessary for obtaining the graces which alone bring about conversions. The apostle must be fully persuaded that he is only the lowly instrument of divine predestination which, in every age, calls those whom it will, and crowns those whom it has called. It is necessary, therefore, that he strive to guard

himself against following his own way; that he not be concerned with external results, but to seek always, in his apostolate, the signs of the will of God.

He will keep in mind that Our Lord, all holy as He was, converted only a very small part of the people of Israel; that Saint Francis of Assisi, despite his longing for martyrdom, could not convince the Mohammedans of the truth of the Christian faith; that Charles de Foucauld passed a great part of his life among the Berber tribes and shed his blood for them without the consolation of seeing one single permanent conversion.

The Apostle must not strive to be more than His Master, he must not go running about the world to recruit neophytes if he is not fully assured that he is on the way of obedience. Of course he must strive to get the maximum return out of his apostolate, but not after the manner of statistics—which never take account of the circumstances of divine election—rather he will force himself to seek out first of all in those about him the marks of the divine call and put forth all his effort to lead those whom the Father is truly calling to the highest degree of holiness, saying with Christ: "Father, I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou hast given me out of the world." And again, "I have glorified thee on earth; I have accomplished the work that thou hast given me to do." (John 17, 6.4).

Such an apostolate cannot remain fruitless; after apparent setbacks, it will know glorious tomorrows, results surpassing all hopes; for it draws all its strength from the Spirit of God, that Spirit which was given to the Church on Pentecost, and which by its power can in a moment renew the face of the whole world: "**Emitte Spiritum tuum et creabuntur et renova-bis faciem terrae.**"

Leon Soete

II

Missionary Monachism

The extraordinary influence exercised by the **Life of St. Anthony** on Christianity is well known. This remarkable work strikes us at the outset with its dominant idea of Anthony in the desert assaulting the kingdom of Satan. It was a hard fight. But the protagonist was well matched for the encounter, and the demons soon realized the redoubtable adversary they had to face.

"God alone ought to be feared." he would say in this connection. "As for them (the devils), they are to be despised and not feared at all. The more they do these things, the more we ought to practice our asceticism against them. The only effective weapon against them is an upright life and faith in God. They stand in fear of the ascetics' fasts, vigils, prayers, meekness, serenity, contempt for money and vain-glory, humility, love of the poor, almsgiving, goodness, and, above all, their devotion to Christ. There is nothing that they would not do to prevent their being trampled under foot. They know of the power against them given to the faithful by the Savior, when He said: 'Behold, I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy.'" (Luke 10,19) (**Life of St. Anthony, chap. 30**).

The meaning of this is that as the kingdom of Satan received a mortal blow by reason of the fact of the victorious

death of Christ. His true disciples accomplish Satan's defeat, and that by the simple fact of their holy lives. Their virtues, their detachment from passing pleasures, and above all their love of Christ—all these are quite unbearable to the demons.

Anthony was one of those heroic champions, who, in the course of the twenty centuries of Christianity, had as their mission the extension here below of the frontiers of the kingdom of heaven, and the restriction of those of the kingdom of Satan. Just as in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the days of Abraham, a handful of just men is enough to save a city, a nation, a continent, the whole world. Abraham had nothing to offer to Yahveh but his own justice, and perhaps that of Lot. But since Christ, sanctity has become a normal flowering among God's people.

And we take into account the fact that, if Yahveh would be moved by the presence of ten just men in them to spare Sodom and Gomorrah the terrible and just punishment for their abominations, God finds in the world today much more abundant living intercession, an unceasing cry of distress, an intense will for sacrifice. Today, in the new era of Christ, an imperious demand mounts up without ceasing to God, that of the faithful who, since Christ, with Him and through Him, live only to see the boundaries of the Kingdom of God extended to the ends of the earth.

It may be that our world is indebted to certain saints in that it even now escapes the rain of fire in comparison with that which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah was mere child's play . . .

Living intercession, the cry of distress, the will for sacrifice, the imperious demands of the saints: what is all this but the most precious task of monachism? And when we say monachism, we have reference to all the forms of the religious life which devote themselves especially to contemplative activities, and not exclusively those forms which have, in Europe and elsewhere, grown out of the Benedictine inspiration.

The function of monks and nuns today is the same as it was in the days of Anthony: the border warfare which pushes back the empire of Satan, and, by the same token, strengthens and establishes the kingdom of God. And the weapons of this invisible combat remain the same. In a word, holiness.

There is no need for any lengthy demonstration that these arms put no obstacle in the way of the properly evangelistic work of the missionaries. The latter may readily be compared to the infantry, to whose intervention in the campaign must, in the last analysis, be ascribed any victory. Offensive or specialized weapons can only open a breach for the infantry and pave the way for the occupation of enemy territory and thus for a more complete victory. But what we have said above clearly shows that monastic holiness is the most formidable of all specialized weapons.

The objection may perhaps be made that after all this task of intercession and of sacrifice for the salvation of the human race is by no means a monopoly of monks and nuns. Nothing is more evident than that. But it is hard to see the basis of this objection. Ought the monk to look to that which absolutely distinguishes him from every other kind of religious as his object? If he should push this radicalism too far, the monk would be quite clearly forgetting that his first duty is to be a fully developed Christian. He cannot therefore fail to take into account the things which apostolic necessity requires of Christian life as such. Have not the present-day Catholic Action movements been elevated to as lofty a level?

And if we should look for a justification of this demand in an appeal to theology, it would be sufficient to call attention to the profound meaning of the Sacrament of Confirmation. It gives us, just as it did the twelve gathered together in fear in the Upper Room at Jerusalem the courage to bear witness to Christ in the world. The monk, priest, or not, and the nun have been confirmed. And by this very fact they are guilty of self-deception if they remain content to apply themselves only to the essential objective of their life, which is evangelical perfection.

This does not mean that we ought to belittle the desire for our own perfection. But it is nonetheless true that we are not the only persons in the world. There is God, to whose greater glory the Christian, the religious, the monk cannot but devote himself. There is also the Kingdom of God, whose "coming" here below we cannot fail to desire from the very depths of our being without ceasing to be members of Christ Who "for our salvation came down from heaven" (the Creed).

When these two last objectives, which we do not hesitate to place far above our strictly personal "perfection," are realized:

God and the Kingdom of God, then will it be seen how true it is that "no religious order can excuse itself from its visible mission, which stems from that of the Church herself: to save souls and bring them to God." For this end is to be found "in the society founded by Our Lord to continue His work of redemption and sanctification, the work which impelled Him to come down from heaven."

This is to say that ALL religious orders, whatever may be the particular objectives to which their founders have directed them, have a common end: the coming of the Kingdom of God here below. **Adveniat regnum tuum!** This end is the immediate consequence of that which is in its fullness real "evangelical perfection." The members of religious orders in binding themselves to the perfection of the Christian life, pursue this end as well as others as a duty of their state. The strictly monastic orders cannot consider themselves exempt from this duty.

All this implies that the monk must be a co-redeemer, or no Christian at all. And this in spite of the particular objectives of his order, which devote him in a special way to the search for God and for personal holiness. And also in spite of the means proper to his order: solitude and the special prominence accorded to the divine office and other forms of prayer. It is true that this specifically monastic sanctity affords encouragement to very many means, the daily routine of which weighs heavily only on the tepid monk. But precisely this sanctity, like that of Anthony, gives him a special place in the co-redemptive mission of the Church.

Among the works which suggest themselves to him, a choice must be made—just as in the case of every Christian or every priest. No one can take upon himself, or pretend to do so, the whole of all the possible apostolic works open to the disciples of Christ. But the monk already has as his own that which this unavoidable choice, this unavoidable narrowing of the apostle's field of vision must lead to: personal participation through holiness in the spiritual combat "against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness on high" (Eph. 6, 12).

Must we make an appeal to Christ's example in this matter? Was His redemptive work accomplished only on the roads and in the towns of Palestine? The hidden life, the solitary nights

of prayer, the obedience to the will of His father from the moment He entered into this world, the contradictions, the passion, the cross—all this helped to effect our salvation, perhaps in a more effective manner than the missionary activity of the public preaching and the miracles. Why should we refuse to admit the monk to union with Christ precisely in these mysteries and thus to join in the great redemptive "pleading" of Christ?

Moreover, Christ bore in His human nature, in which we are all at one with Him, the germ of divine life. The ancient Fathers liked to see in the very fact of the Incarnation the dawn of victory over matter and over all that which, in the eyes of Christians, matter suggests of complicity with evil. Now, is not the sanctity of the faithful, and especially that of monks, a similar "incarnation" of divine life in human matter? It too is the dawn of a day of victory. It too extends the deified zone of humanity and rolls back the hostile frontiers of evil.

The monk is therefore associated with the redemptive life of Jesus. And his "missionary" task can be summarily defined by his union to that which is essential in the redemptive life of Christ: the Incarnation and the Cross.

The Incarnation, is the entrance of God into human flesh.

And it is that which the holiness, the prayer, the obedience, the hidden virtues of the monk seek to reproduce even in its social and cosmic effects.

And the Cross is the supreme redemptive act, since it is the sign of the love which gave all for our salvation. The Cross, that is the trials, the suffering, the penance of the monk, and also the care of the faithful who entrust themselves to him. And just as reconciliation and grace are poured out on the world from Calvary, so from the interior and meritorious sacrifice of the soul consecrated to God and conformed to the image of the Crucified, flow those "extra drops" which complete the Redemption, according to the expression of Marie-Antoinette de Geuser.

The consciousness of this redemptive task, or missionary in the sense outlined above, is apparently a phenomenon proper to modern monachism. But we ought not to be misled too much by mere appearances. The soul of an Anthony burned with the love of Christ, and this love accomplished more for

the Church than many works. Who will dare say that this role of love has finally been discovered in our own day? It has merely acquired, in modern monastic thought, a more precise formulation, a more exact theological expression, an awareness more conscious of evangelical principles and practical conclusions. But the essential fact has remained true throughout the ages, and has never been wholly lost sight of.

The recalling of these truths which are essential to the monastic institution suggests certain practical conclusions:

1. The urgency of the redemptive task of monachism is more clearly perceived today than ever before. Monks and nuns, wherever their life may be passed, realize that they stand to lose their specifically Christian character if they neglect this aspect of their vocation.

2. The deep-seated consciousness of this aspect of their vocation compels them, or at least ought to compel all of them, to extend, by their life of prayer and sacrifice, the Kingdom of God in mission lands—it matters not whether they are mission lands because they have been deChristianized or because they have always been pagan.

This aspect of their vocation ought also compel them to establish monachism in mission lands. There is a kind of conquest of an environment which cannot be accomplished except by working in that environment. And in this do monastic establishments in mission countries find the reason for their existence—at the same time that their present urgency is made clear.

And these considerations also make clear the necessary purity of their ideals. It is to be hoped that monastic establishments will not lose the sense of their proper vocation, and immerse themselves straightway in missionary activity in the usual sense of the word. The encouragements of the Holy See, as well as the example of a Saint Anthony, are quite clear on the matter of the necessity of this pure ideal in order to assist the Church in her struggle "against the spirits of darkness."

But there is another reason which summons the monks to take their place in the struggle along side the missionaries. Monachism, more than most other forms of religious life, give to Christ the witness of a Christianity flowering with life. In

the midst of pagan lands it teaches souls longing for the light what Christianity in its fulness is. What have we to oppose to the Buddhist monastic life, which is the living expression in the eyes of the southeastern half of Asia of the ideal lived by Buddha? Is it only an "activism" which is incomprehensible to these souls which tend more than ours do toward the liberation of every being in the extinction of the passions and the techniques of Nirvana?

Now our monachism represents the Christian life flowering in sanctity, set free, liberated from the hindrances of evil, and dedicated without any half-measures to the love of God and of the Kingdom of God. This witness, as we know from numberless experiences, is one of those which most forcibly strike the faithful of our countries which are already Christian. Might not the same be true of the faithful and of those who still seek the light precisely in those regions where the spontaneous religious instinct is oriented toward interior liberation? Christian monachism might teach Asia that this liberation is not only the fruit of a negative technique of abnegation. No, it is the avenue to the most splendid enriching of all, that of the disciple of the God Who is Love become man, not to preach Nirvana to us, but to give us life.

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III

Saigon The First Carmel in the Far East

"Establish Carmels in Annam because God will thereby be greatly glorified."

(St. Teresa of Avila to Msgr. Lefebvre)

The Carmel of Saigon played a very special role in the life of St. Therese of Lisieux. For her it was the living expression of the missionary vocation. If sickness had not prevented it, it is certain that she would have been sent there. Some months before her death she wrote to one of the Sisters at Saigon: "Keep on begging Jesus that I may do His will always, for which **I am ready to travel over the whole world . . . and I am also ready to die.**"

On September 2 of the same year (1897) a Sister said to her, "They are still waiting for you at the Carmel in Saigon," and Therese mysteriously replied, "I shall go, I shall go soon, and if you only knew how quickly I shall make the journey."

There is no doubt that she was referring to her death and to her intercession in heaven in behalf of her missionary Carmel. It is therefore with good reason that she was chosen in 1925 as co-patroness of the monastery, after St. Joseph.

The history of this first Carmelite shoot, in the Far East is not without interest. It is worthy of note that Providence

willed that the foundation of the first missionary Carmel should be undertaken by the community which was destined to give to the Church the Patroness of the Missions.

When, in 1849, Msgr. Lefebvre, Vicar Apostolic of western Cochinchina forwarded a request for a foundation in his vicariate to the Carmel of Lisieux, the humble Norman community had been in existence only eleven years. It had been from its very beginning the object of a very special Providence. Since a year before its foundation, prince Hohenlohe, titular bishop of Sardigine, and surnamed "the holy man of Grouwardein," had made one novena after another to beg heaven for the successful outcome of the project. He had even prophesied "the entrance of a whole family into the Carmel of Lisieux, whence will come all sorts of blessings for the Carmel."

The foundresses the sisters Gosselin, had obtained from the Carmel of Poitiers the help of two excellent religious who were to take over the offices of Prioress and Mistress of novices. They were Mother Elizabeth of Saint Louis and Mother Genevieve of Saint Teresa.

Mother Genevieve was Prioress, almost without interruption, from 1842 to 1886, and it is for this reason that she is looked on as the real foundress of Lisieux. Of a serene nature, she knew how to direct her little world into the way of a genuine holiness. She also knew, when the occasion demanded, how to make decisions which bear witness to a remarkable boldness of outlook.

This was the case with the foundation of the Carmel of Saigon. Someone has written, "It is not easy, at this late date, to realize what an act of initiative this was at that time, and what an act of faith it involved on the part of a poor unknown Carmel, without any material resources and hardly established itself."

Saigon, then, began in complete poverty and with the disapproval of most of those who ought to have encouraged it. "This work in progress," wrote Mother Genevieve in 1861, "has encountered innumerable obstacles, but it has acquired by that very fact a wonderful proof of God's will . . . His power has been shown in the overthrow of everything that sought to interfere with His designs, and when His hour arrived, He made it evident that He is God . . ."

What, then, were these providential circumstances that so clearly indicated the will of God? First of all, there was the entrance into the Carmel of a young woman who was to become Mother Philomene, the future foundress. She was of a wilful, even irascible nature, and grace had brought her to Carmel by ways that were not easy.

She pronounced her vows in 1846 and she had permission to inform her cousin, Msgr. Lefebvre, of the fact. Persecution was then raging in Cochin China and the missionary bishop received her letter while he was in prison at Hue, in the stocks awaiting the execution of the sentence of his martyrdom—to be cut into a hundred pieces. Not long before he received the letter, the prelate had been visited in prison by an apparition of Saint Teresa of Avila, to whom he had a great devotion. The Saint had asked him “to establish her order in Annam, because thereby God would be greatly served and glorified.”

Having been providentially delivered from prison, Msgr. Lefebvre informed his Carmelite cousin of his vision, and invited her to accept the heavenly invitation. At Lisieux Mother Genevieve resolved to accept without delay, and instructed Sister Philomene to write back to Msgr. Lefebvre that the project was feasible and that the community was offering three volunteers for the enterprise.

But twelve years had to pass before the departure of the Carmelites. This delay finds its explanation in the very troubled situation in Cochin China. The treaty of peace between the redoubtable emperor Tu-Duc and France was not to be signed until 1862. In 1860 he published still another edict of persecution which was especially directed against religious women. The complete pacification of the three western provinces was not accomplished until 1868: the Carmelites had arrived in the country in 1861.

The years of waiting were taken up with the gathering of the resources necessary for the foundation, for the Carmel of Lisieux was very poor. Mother Genevieve had to go begging throughout France, and soon the gifts began to arrive: gifts of money, vestments, linens, clothing, kitchen equipment, etc. . . . The Mother Prioress, in her generosity, did not hesitate to keep for her own monastery everything that was outmoded, and to give her missionary daughters the linens and clothing belonging to the Carmel of Lisieux.

At length the departure took place on July 1, 1861. Mother Philomene, who had been named Prioress, took with her three religious: Sister Emmanuel, Sister Marie-Baptiste, and Sister Xavier. The last named was an exceptional vocation. First she was Mistress of Novices, and then she succeeded Mother Philomene as Prioress. In 1872 she was recalled for the accomplishment of a project very close to her heart: the foundation of a Carmel in Jerusalem. She died June 17, 1889.

In the different Carmels where they stopped during their journey—Paris, Chalons, Avignon, Marseille—they were the objects of admiration and the recipients of generous gifts. It was the same at Toulon, but there certain well-intentioned persons repeated alarming rumors according to which the position of the French at Saigon was untenable.

“This advice,” noted Mother Philomene, “did not shake our resolution. Instructed by the experience of our previous trials, we saw in this nothing but a snare of the devil, and we replied that we intended to proceed on our way all the same. Our superior confirmed us in this resolution, telling us explicitly to go.”

The first part of the voyage was very pleasant: “The captain of the ship treated us with great consideration. He had had the thoughtfulness to have two cabins prepared for us, the one to serve as a refectory and the other as a dormitory. For their part, the Sisters of Saint Paul of Chartres were very good to us. Thus we seemed to be living in community.” But, after disembarking at Suez, they had to go aboard a ship full of soldiers: “We had on board nine hundred soldiers, plus about sixty officers; the **Japon** could not be more heavily loaded. We had only a very small space on deck to enjoy the air . . . But the poor soldiers had much more to complain about. Night as well as day they were, so to speak, piled one on top of the other. Bad as it was, the heat could be borne as long as we were close to land. It did not become intolerable until we were out in the open sea. The first night we thought that we should be asphyxiated in our cabins; we had to go outdoors. Then we began to wonder whether we should be able to survive the fifty days which remained of the crossing. Fortunately, as one grows used to the most serious inconveniences, the second night did not seem to be so hot, and so with the others.”

“It was about ten o'clock in the morning, October 9, 1861, that we finally set foot on this land of Annam, a land red with

the blood of so many martyrs, and which was to become for us a land of adoption and predilection. We were brought to the Bishop's house, where His Excellency was awaiting us with great eagerness; he received us with a joy and kindness to which had been made ready for them, which were quite rurers,' he told us, 'you have kept us waiting a long time.'

The bishop conducted them to the temporary barracks which had been made ready for them, which were quite rudimentary: "A sort of palisade, which we found in our hut, serves us as a grill. Since we have brought along a considerable quantity of bed-clothes, we use some of these to make partitions within the hut, in order, as far as possible, to have the different rooms prescribed by the Rule."

For a long time it was very difficult for the Sisters to make themselves understood. "The Annamite language, which seems quite formless, was very difficult for us to learn. But more than that, not only was there no Father who had the time to teach us, but there was not even a dictionary or list of words that we could study, with the result that we passed several months before we could understand a single word."

When the first postulant presented herself, "the poor child was alone with the Mothers for three months, not understanding a word of French, and not being able to make herself understood. But, nevertheless, she persevered, and received the name of Sister Therese of Jesus. Soon other postulants presented themselves. Most of them were the daughters of martyrs or confessors of the Faith, and some of them had themselves been in the stocks."

Two of the four French Sisters soon returned to France, one for reasons of health, and the other, Sister Marie-Baptiste, "completely disheartened by the trials of the beginning and by the opposition of so many to the establishment of the Carmel, she did not have the courage to go on with a work which she thought could not be realized."

Mother Philomene, left alone with Mother Xavier, wrote: "This blow was hard to bear for those who left as well as those who stayed. For my part, I confess, I have experienced a sense of destitution which I find it impossible to describe. Here we are, only two of us, left in a strange land, at the beginning of a work so difficult. I am overwhelmed with sadness, and despite the conviction which I have in the depths of

my soul that we shall succeed, I cannot help, nevertheless, but have some fears that we shall not, so great are the difficulties."

These difficulties arose not only from the precarious nature of the foundation, but also from the opposition of certain persons, even missionaries, otherwise well-disposed, but who thought that the presence of nuns in a district that was as yet incompletely pacified was imprudent. A typical example of this sort of opposition was that of Father Roy, M.E.P., a missionary in eastern Cochin China, who, in consequence of the persecutions, had taken refuge in Singapore.

He had been asked by Msgr. Lefebvre to come to Saigon to help his missionaries. He came "full of apprehension that he might be given charge of the Carmelites whom he had seen three months before, and two of whom had already returned to France, which made the situation look all the more discouraging." It was precisely this mission that he feared so much that the good Father was given immediately after his arrival. The meeting was quite cool on both sides. Father Roy began his work by telling Mother Philomene that she would have done better to go back to France with her sisters.

"Father," she replied, "our superiors sent me here to establish a house of our Holy Order, and I shall do all that lies in my power to accomplish that purpose, and I shall not leave until all hope of success is gone."

At the end of this conversation, Fr. Roy's sentiments were so changed that he became the strongest supporter of the new foundation: "Well, then, Mother, you have done well to remain; surely it was right for you to try it out before giving up. I promise to help you all I can, in the closest cooperation possible; you can count on me . . . how much money do you have for your foundation?" "Eighteen hundred francs, Father." "Very well, give them to me, and we shall see what we can do with them." This marked the beginning of the construction of a permanent convent. The transfer took place on June 25, 1862. The work of building, however, was not yet finished. The nuns could occupy only "fifty square meters enclosed by the wall, the rest of the area remaining open because of the lack of money to put up walls. An enclosure of bamboo was made and an Annamite was stationed to guard it."

The day of the blessing Father Roy preached a wonderful sermon in which he showed the possibility and the opportunity

of establishing a Carmel in mission territory: "You have, then, my dear Sisters," he said in closing, "two great duties to fulfill. It is for you to make fruitful the grace which God has sown in the hearts of those whom He has chosen (in this country) for His divine service . . . It is for you also to call down upon this poor country the blessing of heaven. . . ."

We have done little more than prove time and time again how arid this land is that we have been trying to cultivate; what great need we have of the dew of heaven to make it fruitful; we have only proved too well how human resources which we try to apply to religion are always harmful to it.

Would to God that in place of these devices, which succeed only in making a great deal of noise, we had been content to supplicate Our Lord and induce Him to offer supplication that His kingdom come in this poor land of Annam; would to God that the Cross has been the only weapon used in the conquest of this kingdom for Jesus Christ.

For then we may be sure than our holy religion would not have given offense to the ruling powers of this country, and the Church would have gained by her patience in suffering, by her humble prayers and tears, that peace for which we still wait, and which, even if we do obtain it, will not have all the advantages of a peace gained by the Cross alone."

Soon new postulants presented themselves and the spiritual edifice began to rise at the same time as the material. Toward the end of the year, the work of building was almost finished. The house took on a monastic aspect, which was a source of great joy to Mother Philomene, because it silenced the calumnies of those who had prophesied that the Carmel would never survive in Annam.

After three years of existence, the foundation lost its first supporter, Msgr. Lefebvre. Tired out by a long and difficult episcopate, he petitioned Rome to be relieved of his burden. Not long afterwards he died at Marseilles.

Mother Philomene remained with only Mother Xavier for a companion. The hoped-for reinforcements from France did not come. On the other hand, the Annamite postulants and novices were numerous. The Mother Prioress discharged at the same time the function of Mistress of Novices.

With an eminently practical spirit, she had been quick to see the prime necessity of making certain concessions in favor of Annamite customs; all of which "concessions" actually went beyond the rule of Carmel. Thus, since the Annamites were used to sleeping on the ground, to bare feet, and the like she had without delay given up her "shoes" and her mattress.

In spite of the fact that the need of money was constant and pressing, the religious at all times managed to satisfy their actual needs. The Bishop and his missionaries, the government, the French and the natives, both rich and poor, contributed to the support of the Carmelites and helped in the construction of their chapel. There were even poor Annamites who deprived themselves of necessities in order to come to the assistance of the Carmel.

December 9, 1876, fifteen years after the arrival of the foundresses, the blessing of the completed chapel took place. This was a victory for Mother Philomene, who had, by her perseverance, brought her work to a successful issue in spite of criticism and alleged impossibility. From that time on the life continued with its alternating trials and consolations, but marked by the continued growth of the young plant.

French nuns had finally come to help the original pair, and new candidates for the novitiate continued to come. Mother Philomene envisaged the possibility of a new foundation. Thus, when Msgr. Gendreau asked her to send some of her daughters to Hanoi, it was with eagerness that she responded. This was in 1893; the foundress was about to celebrate the golden jubilee of her religious life. She was worn out, and she had only two years more to live; but in spite of all this, the foundation at Hanoi took a place uppermost in her mind, and, with her usual abnegation, "she set aside for the new Carmel those of her daughters in whom she had put her hopes for the future of her own Carmel, reserving for herself the task of filling their places in the community by training other Sisters to replace them."

But the weakness of Mother Philomene was increasing. In July, 1895, she was close to the end. She received the last sacraments and expired on July 23. She was seventy-five years old. She had been fifty-two years in religion, thirty-four of which had been passed at the Carmel of Saigon. There can be no doubt that she had practiced all the virtues of a religious

to a heroic degree, and had given to her work the solid foundation of sanctity.

Msgr. Lefebvre, in his wonderful spirit of faith, had, even in his time, hoped to see the foundation of Carmels multiplied on the soil of Annam. Mother Philomene had shared in these longings, but, she would add in her humility, "I was far from having his spirit of faith."

And yet, when her own Carmel was in a flourishing condition, with only one vacant place, and she saw herself obliged to close the gates on FIFTEEN postulants who begged to be admitted, the Mother Prioress could not restrain herself from sighing: "O my God, if I only had twenty years more at least, and that I might see more foundations!"

We have already mentioned that she was able to see one daughter house, at any rate, the Carmel of Hanoi. But what a remarkable fertility was manifested by this new branch of the Carmelite stock after the death of the foundress. Hanoi, established in 1895, in its turn founded Hue in 1909 and Bui-Chu in 1923; while Saigon made a second foundation at Pnom-Penh, in 1919. From Hue have come Ilo-Ilo (Philippines) in 1923, and Than-Hoa in 1929. Ilo-Ilo founded the Carmel at Manila in 1926. For its part, the Carmel of Pnom-Penh sent its daughters to Siam (Bangkok, in 1925), and China (Yunnanfu, in 1936). Finally, Bangkok founded the Carmel of Singapore in 1938.

Does not all this fertility bear out in a marvelous manner the prophecy of Msgr. Lefebvre: "Found Carmels in Annam, for God will thereby be greatly glorified." It was enough for two or three religious, animated by a generous apostolic spirit, to answer their "Fiat" to this appeal to produce this new shoot of the Carmelite tree. Who would dare to set any limits to its future growth?

IV

The Function of Contemplatives in the Church

"If I had to choose between two pieces of good news," said Msgr. de Guebriant one day, "the baptism of ten thousand Christians, or the opening of a contemplative monastery, I should choose the latter, because it would give me more grounds for hope." This remark of the late Superior of the Foreign Missions of Paris is very meaningful, for the reason that it sums up, in a way, the experience of an apostolic life that was very long and very fruitful. One of the Missionaries of whom he had formerly been the confidant and father had himself written these words reflecting the same sentiment, coming as they did from the actual field of the apostolate: "Any resources apart from prayer count for practically nothing here . . . What is lacking—I see this quite clearly now—is neither gold nor silver, nor good health, nor even a thorough knowledge of the language and ways of these people, much less is it good will. If I had all these to a degree a hundred times that to which I do have them, and the gift of miracles besides, no progress could be made. No, as a matter of fact, I thought that I knew my world well enough to assure its conquest . . . I could have realized the folly of this in advance, having read of it in the Gospel, but it was only here that I began to realize it."

How eminently justified is this almost anguished appeal for the life of prayer! And the reason is that the real combats

of God take place beyond the visible world, where the powers of darkness hold sway, the spirits of evil of which Satan is at once the chief and the symbol. In the apostolate of the Church we are confronted with nothing less than a frightful struggle to rescue souls from the dominion of this evil kingdom by means of the arms proper to Christ and His Saints: faith, love, and the Cross, a life of immolation and prayer.

“A life of immolation and prayer”—this is precisely the definition of the contemplative life and the indication of the part it has to play in the Mystical Body of Christ; a part rightly compared to the function of the heart in the human body. The heart causes the blood to circulate throughout the body in order to provide for its nutrition and its constant renewal. In this we see a function of the most basic necessity, a never ending function the effects of whose action are felt throughout the whole organism, a function that is most profound and, in some measure, sacred as is everything which has to do with the very basis of life itself.

It is to be regretted that, even in environments which call themselves Christian, as among religious, this interior life cultivated for God alone has not been sufficiently understood and esteemed, and that, as a consequence, the effect it might have in the apostolate has not been fully realized. In order to understand all this fully, it would be necessary, unquestionably, for one to have lived the life oneself, at least to some extent. And in order to profess this esteem one need not be carried away, more or less unconsciously, by that which such a life involves by reason of its inner necessity. Moreover, God is not to be found in agitation and tumult, but rather in silence and recollection, “non in commotione Deus.” The activity of the heart reveals itself quite usually by pulsations which an inattentive ear cannot perceive.

The Church has always recognized, even from its earliest beginnings, the necessity of the contemplative life. So it was that Mary Magdalene saw herself defended and protected by the Master against one who was the incarnation of that so common tendency to under-estimate or to regard with a suspicion of inertia those who have chosen “the better part”. The virgins and ascetics, the “orantes”, isolated at first and later gathered into groups, laid the foundations for a living tradition. This tradition flowered with the Fathers of the Desert, who were providentially raised up at a time when the Church,

having emerged from the era of persecution, faced the danger of becoming too "comfortable".

The religious life of the Middle Ages was joined to this ancient tradition by Saint Benedict, the Patriarch of the Monks of the West, who is in the direct line from Cassian and Saint Basil. The specific role of the contemplative life therefore remained the same during this period, just as it was destined to remain in later ages of the Church, during which all manner of forms of the religious life saw the light of day. At all times it has performed the function of a vital organ profoundly contributing to the assurance of the growth of deep sanctity in the Mystical Body of Christ.

If this is the case, it should not be difficult to see the necessity of the contemplative life for mission countries. But to establish it in mission lands, there is obviously a great need for contemplatives who will be willing to take up this work and transplant the seed: a thing which might not be so easy, seeing that certainly, at least up to the present time, this effort to spread foundations has not been made, at any rate to the extent that it should have been. In this connection I can only reemphasize what **Contemplation et Apostolat** has insistently repeated so many times: that, for the most part, religious superiors have not really grasped the urgency of such foundations, confining their outlook, as it were, to the needs of their own countries or of the West. Bishops in missionary countries and Vicars Apostolic seem to have achieved a deeper understanding of this need, because, in their character of experienced missionaries, they know full well how helplessly disarmed for his apostolate a missionary can feel without these purely supernatural weapons of prayer and sacrifice. They are confronted by an evil spirit, in our own days also, who cannot be driven out except by "prayer and fasting" as Christ Himself has said. And so it is not without good reason that the Church designated as Patroness of all missions a contemplative nun, Saint Therese of Lisieux.

We might even go farther and say that the need for contemplatives is particularly urgent in the case of certain missionary countries, such as India, where there already exist certain dispositions along these lines, dispositions which have found their expression in institutions of the religious life of the pagans. Why has not the missionary effort made more use of this form of life for penetrating further and deeper into

the consciousness of these peoples? The problem of the austerity of a life of prayer does not really exist for them. With little or no difficulty they could adopt the schedule of Pere de Foucauld—which was considered excessive by his disciples—: eight hours every day devoted to prayer, eight hours for necessary occupations, and eight hours for rest. Moreover, there are possibilities among these peoples which ought to be protected against misunderstanding or wanton destruction as a result of our western prejudices. Wherefore the founders who will devote themselves to this work would do well not to try to prolong unnecessarily the exercise of a tutelage that is to much lacking in confidence. Rather they should strive to discover the special spiritual aptitudes of these peoples. They should exercise a certain measure of indulgence, not toward vices, of course, but toward thought-patterns which they might not at first understand, but which might conceal undreamed of values. We should try to adapt ourselves to them in all non-essentials, rather than try to adapt them to our ways which are so often distinctively western. We should in this essay to follow the example of Saint Benedict in his adaptation to the western temperament, of oriental monachism, of which he is one of the most glorious disciples. A re-adaptation in reverse might have to be made. What these peoples look for from us, in short, is teachers who will teach them, especially by their example, that their thirst for the absolute can be satisfied by Christ, Who brought into the world by His grace the means of attaining to the true God, Who alone is worthy of the absolute sacrifice of oneself and of total immolation. They ask for masters of prayer and of the supernatural life who will, above all, communicate to souls the light of truth brought into the world by the Incarnate Word. They ask for masters who will strive to efface themselves before the divine message in order that it may shine the more clearly through them, to disappear in order that they might permit Christ to grow in the souls of their disciples.

Faced with such a situation, one might ask oneself what that great contemplative Saint Bernard might have done. Is there any doubt that he would have thrown the doors of his novitiates wide open to young foreigners come to ask for the religious habit, and that he would have formed them with the utmost care in order to send them back to their own countries as soon as possible, accompanied by some of the best of his older monks? And for these youthful foundations, are there any sacrifices that he would not have been glad to make?

And what would a Saint Gregory the Great have done? Was he any less on fire with zeal for the conversion of already civilized peoples than he was to gain for Christ an England still barbarous? Would he not have carefully studied their religious needs and would he not have sent them an Augustine to train them for the contemplative life?

But who, better than the Holy Father, knows the actual needs of the Church, and who is in a better position to make them known to his children? His Holiness, Pope Pius XII has not hesitated to say that he looks on the foundation of contemplative communities as a "very useful work" and "a cause that is very dear to his heart", thereby reechoing the forceful words of his predecessor, Pius XI in his encyclical **Rerum Ecclesiae**, as well as in the Bull **Umbratilem**. In the same sense, Benedict XV declared in his encyclical **Maximum Illud**, the "magna charta" of the missions, that "for the faith, example is a much more powerful force than mere words": but this is the apostolate to which contemplatives are dedicated. It is an apostolate which will be, as it were, a living exemplification of the ideal set before missionaries by Pere Danielou: "a spirituality rooted in contemplation in order to safeguard the 'sense of God' in us, the 'sense of God' which looks first to the necessity of the love of God—that He be known and loved—before the needs of souls, which is, as a matter of fact, the only really true love of souls after the mind of Christ and in Christ.

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