



**CORPUS CHRISTI MOVEMENT  
FOR PRIESTS**

**(FOUNDED BY SAINT TERESA OF CALCUTTA)**

*I thirst – I satiate*

**SPIRITUAL DIRECTORY**



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## PRESENTATION

+ LDM

Dear brother priests,

I am pleased to introduce the revised edition of the Spiritual Directory of the Corpus Christi Movement (CCM). This edition contains the material found in the white booklet of 1982, the little yellow booklet of 1997, and the brown booklet of 2008. The sections concerning the identity, membership, organisation and oblation of the CCM (i.e., Part I, 1; Part III, 3-5) have been updated to reflect the Statutes that received final approval by the Congregation of the Clergy on the 3rd of December 2012. To help us grow in our charism and spirituality, this Spiritual Directory also features new material such as some of the foundational documents of the Movement, the liturgical and spiritual dates that are important for us, and a recommended bibliography.

Over these two decades, since Mother entrusted me with the CCM in June 1997, I have tried with the generous help of many bishops and priests – some of whom have already gone to the house of the Father – to promote the Movement and her

spirituality among priests. Along this journey, we have experienced several significant moments. On the 14th of October 2010, Fr. Joseph Langford, M.C., co-founder of the Movement, went home to the Lord. As stated above, in 2012, the Movement received the final approval of the Statutes, and two years ago we have witnessed with great joy the proclamation of Mother as a Saint of the Church.

The purpose of this Spiritual Directory is to provide the associates and members of the Movement with a tool to help them grow in holiness, priestly fraternity and missionary zeal. In her last words to us priests of the CCM, Mother wrote: “Jesus loves his priests very much and He wants them to grow in holiness by living the priesthood to the full”. Mother stressed the importance of fraternity among us diocesan priests, by forgetting about ourselves and reaching out to others. This is why she told us: “Let us all together with Jesus fill the world with his love through our works of love – especially may the Corpus Christi [Movement] inflame the love of Christ throughout the world”.

When we feel overwhelmed with the gift and mission that have been entrusted to us as priests, let us remember that Mother also pointed to us another of her values, simplicity: “this simple way will help very much”. That is why she encouraged



us to place our complete trust in Our Lady: “Let us pray and ask Our Lady to take care as she did of Jesus.” When Mother asked me to take care of the CCM on the 3rd of June 1997, I asked her: “How am I going to do it?” And her response was: “You are not going to do it. Our Lady will do it. You are only going to help Her”. And I believe that that response applies to each one of us in the Movement.

Let us pray for each other. God bless you.

Fr. Pascual Cervera

Calcutta, 5 September 2018

Feast of Saint Teresa of Calcutta



## **THE YELLOW BOOKLET (1997)**





Jesus said "I Thirst"  
Let us all unite  
and satiate His  
thirst for love for  
souls.

*Jesus said "I Thirst".  
Let us all unite and satiate His thirst for love for souls.*

Let <sup>Love.</sup> us all together  
with Jesus fill  
the world with His  
love through our  
works of love - espe-  
cially may the  
Corpus Christi.  
in flame the love of  
Christ through<sub>out</sub> the world

Let us pray - Mary  
Mother of Jesus be  
Mother to Corpus Christi  
help us all to be Holy  
Let God bless us all

Fr. Pascual

M. Teresa MC  
25-5-97

L.D.M.

Let us all together with Jesus fill the world with His love through our works of love - especially may the Corpus Christi inflame the love of Christ throughout the world. Let us pray - Mary Mother of Jesus be Mother to Corpus Christi, help us all to be Holy. Let God bless us all.

Fr. Pascual

M. Teresa, MC  
25-5-97

## **“I Thirst”**

### **Corpus Christi Movement for Priests**

### **Statement of Intention**

There are many priests who are showing a great interest in reviving the Corpus Christi Movement for secular priests, in order to live this spirituality in the context of their own ministry and priestly vocation, and to strive for personal holiness, and for their salvation and sanctification of all souls.

The aim is to attempt to live the Gospel more fully and faithfully in greater simplicity and poverty of spirit, by sharing spiritually in the Charism and Spirit given by God to the Universal Church through Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity family.

Jesus on the Cross said “I Thirst”. We as priests hear His Call to satiate this Thirst for love and for souls when we realize that we are thirsting for His Love. Through our priestly ministry we have the gift to satiate the Thirst of Jesus for souls, and the thirst of souls for the Love of Jesus. We do this by living our lives centred in the Eucharist, source and summit of our priestly life, and by a complete abandonment to the hands of Mary, Mother of the Church and Mother of priests.

Jesus is thirsting for our love, so let us quench His Thirst with the gift granted to each priest by working for the salvation and sanctification of souls -men, women and children-.

*On the 30<sup>th</sup> of May 1997, Mother Teresa signed a copy of this Statement during her stay in New York, U.S.A.*



## Some Points of our Rule of Life

- As members of the Corpus Christi Movement, we will be obedient to our Ordinaries and live and work under their protection, and with their blessing.
- In the daily celebration of the Holy Mass and an hour of Eucharist Adoration we will find the centre of our lives, and we will grow in the Love of Jesus, nourishing ourselves with His Love, and seeking to spread this Love to the souls entrusted to our care.
- Putting our trust in Jesus and in Divine Providence we will go “in haste” like Mary, who went to serve her cousin, Elizabeth. We will go wherever there is “the greatest need” of our priestly ministry.
- In our ministry, besides serving the people entrusted to our own pastoral care and the members of the Movement, we shall also remain very specially open to be available to assist and serve the Missionaries of Charity family and the poorest of the poor they serve, so that we can all grow in holiness.
- Some of the members will have the possibility of making a deeper consecration by making an oblation of wholehearted and free service to the

poorest of the poor, in the spirit of the Missionaries of Charity, as much as their lives as diocesan priests will permit.

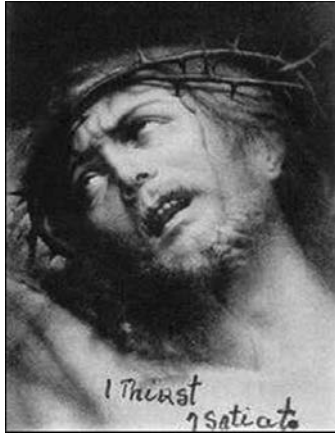
- With missionary zeal and love we will seek the spiritually and materially poorest of the poor, wherever they are and whoever they are. We will make every effort to simplify our own lifestyles, giving away with joy superfluous material things.
- As a family we will take Mary, the Mother of Jesus, as our Mother and Cause of our Joy, to guide our Movement, and St Joseph will be our Protector and Guardian.
- We, as brother priests in the Movement, will make every effort to help each other to grow in holiness and in the Love of Jesus and each other.
- We will help families to pray and we will teach children the faith and we will encourage Confession and Holy Communion, as a way to inflame the love for Christ throughout the world.
- The members of the Movement will be adopted by religious sisters, as priests were adopted by St Therese of Lisieux.

Jesus loves His priests very much  
and He wants them to grow in  
holiness by living the priesthood  
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M. Teresa, MC

Fr. Pascual



Mary, Mother of Jesus, and my Mother, you were the first one to hear Jesus cry, "I Thirst". You know how real, how deep is His longing for me and for the poor.

I am yours.

Mother Mary, teach me, bring me face to face with the Love in the Heart of Jesus Crucified. With your help, I will listen to Jesus' Thirst and it will be for me a Word of Life.

Standing near you, I will give Him my love, and I will give Him the chance to love me, and so be the Cause of Your Joy and so to satiate Jesus' Thirst for Love of souls. Amen.



*Our Lady to St. Juan Diego:  
"Am I not here,  
who are your Mother?"*



## **PREFACE TO THE WHITE BOOKLET (1982)**





[1] "It is the Holy Spirit Who has suggested to me what I must tell you". With these surprising words, so unlike her usual reticence in revealing God's workings in her soul, words which tell all the more of the urgency of the message she is about to impart, a message she openly admits springs from the heart of the Almighty, Mother Teresa of Calcutta opens her address to the 202 bishops assembled in Rome for the 1980 Synod on the Family. For forty minutes on this Monday morning, those present in the Synod Hall listen as this humble nun, this Nobel laureate who calls herself but a small "pencil in God's hand", traces for the Church and the world the lines she feels so uncommonly pressed to speak:

"I do not feel worthy to speak in the presence of the Holy Father and the Bishops, but I have accepted the invitation to come here so as to bring the request of all those who are rejected by society: the lepers, the poor, the dying, the sick, the forgotten and the abandoned [...] They have asked me to tell you that they need holy priests".

[2] All the world's poor, even the "wealthy poor", are above all hungry for God, and therefore hungry for us to be men of God, to be "holy priests". Nothing else will satisfy them; nothing else can satisfy us.

[3] *If our fundamental human poverty is a hunger for God, we too then must say that we are poor. We too feel that hunger, we too feel the emptiness only He can fill. We too feel the desire to live up to Mother Teresa's appeal, to the Holy Spirit's appeal in her and in us. As she herself remarked with profound conviction: "I think many, many priests are being called, even without their realizing it, to give themselves totally to the Lord". Our Movement, despite its human poverty, finds great hope and joy in this conviction, that the Lord is indeed calling many to live His life more deeply, to feel the stirrings of a new-found desire to live the gospel to the full. And we are gratefully seeing that conviction borne out in the response of so many priests from all parts of the world.*

[4] *Yes, the world is in need of priests, of holy priests, for the world is in need of Christ. To doubt the value of one's priesthood in today's world is to doubt the very value of Christ and His mission, for they are one. Christ's mission is ours; His person is our identity. In the words of Mother Teresa, "He has called each by name ... There are such riches in the priest, if we can only help them to realize" the gift we have received so as to realize the gift we are to "freely give", and the joy of both the receiving and the giving that constitutes our priesthood.*

[5] *It is precisely the joyful living of this gift – the priesthood of Jesus Christ, and the Jesus Christ of the*

gospels – which the world, our people, and the Holy Spirit ask of us. It is the desire to respond to this need to experience God, His love, and the beauty of His gospel in the person of the priest, this need which is felt not only by the world but by ourselves, that gave birth to the Corpus Christi Movement, founded by Mother Teresa of Calcutta. [6] In presenting this first edition of our spiritual directory, we hope to provide ample indication of the spirit of our Movement to the many friends far and near who have asked to know more of the CCM, and whom we trust will continue to bless our fledgling project with their prayer and their friendship.

[7] To those who are making our acquaintance for the first time, we pray that these pages, which make no pretensions but rather in their very poverty hope in the Lord's power to use such humble means, may, as a Mother Teresa, be an echo of the Holy Spirit who is calling us to "*give ourselves totally to the Lord*".

"If today you hear His voice..."

Fr. Joseph Langford

Rome, 6 August 1982

Feast of the Transfiguration



# **SPIRITUAL DIRECTORY**



## **Part I: Satiating God and man**

*“Jesus stood up and proclaimed: If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the Scripture says: Out of his heart shall flow springs of living water. This he said of the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive” (Jn. 7:37)*

### **1. The Gift of Priestly Holiness**

*“If you but knew the gift of God...” (Jn. 4:10)*

[8] The Corpus Christi Movement is a Private Association of Clerics, born of the desire that priests may live their priesthood more fully and faithfully, through a deeper prayer life, simplicity of life, apostolic charity and service to the poorest of the poor, by sharing in the charism given by God to the universal Church through Mother Teresa. In fact, the Movement was founded by Mother Teresa herself and Father Joseph Langford to accompany and assist the priests of the local Churches in their vocation and in their pastoral ministry, so as to help them “grow in personal holiness for their salvation and for the sanctification of souls” and learn to satiate “the infinite desire in the heart of God to love and to be loved” which is expressed through the cry of Jesus on the Cross, “I thirst”.

[9] The Movement's primary purpose is, according to the desire of Mother Teresa, to strive first of all for a renewal of priestly holiness – a renewal of holiness that alone allows Jesus to “radiate his presence” through us. This renewed pursuit of holiness is attained through growth in deeper prayer and a generous zeal in ministerial service – glorifying the Father by being channels of the Spirit, together with Jesus, to satiate His thirst in His suffering members.

[10] “You are the salt of the earth” (Mt. 5:13). The task of personal holiness demands that we keep our ministerial intimacy with the Lord from “losing its savour” by “stirring into flame the grace that is within us by the laying on of hands” (2 Tim. 1:6). We believe this desire for priestly holiness to be one of the signs of the Spirit in our time, and perhaps its most pressing need. In the service of this work, the Corpus Christi Movement seeks to promote in the priest a rediscovery of the fundamental mysteries of his priesthood in Jesus Christ, and to awaken a deepened appreciation and living of this greatest of gifts the Lord has given him. This deepening can lead to a growing sense of the priest's oneness and identification with Jesus Christ, and to a fuller understanding of what it means to be Christ's co-worker.

[11] “You know what hour it is, that it is full time



for you to wake from sleep” (Rom. 13:11). The pursuit of holiness involves first of all an awakening, an awakening from the sleep of spiritual stasis to new intimacy with the Trinity, in Jesus, through our priesthood.

[12] “Be transformed by the renewal of your mind” (Rom. 12:1), and “renewed by the power of the Spirit in your inner man” (Eph. 3:16). *Transformation* of the whole person, and of all that we do, is the ultimate fruit of priestly holiness through the power of God’s Spirit. Holiness alone makes us what we are to be: co-workers of the Living God, channels of His presence and power: “It is in fact the proper function of the minister, in the heart of the Church, to *make present the love of God in Jesus Christ for us* through word and sacrament, and to bring about the communion of men with God and among themselves. All these things require, especially in us who carry out the sacred ministry, the commitment to daily renewal according to the gospel” (Synod 1971).

[13] *The spirit of the Movement is intended neither to add nor alter in any way the characteristic spirituality of the individual diocesan priest.* It aims exclusively at encouraging and deepening, rather than adding to, the specific charism and call of the priest: encouraging a greater generosity in that which is common to all – the living of the gospel – and to

greater fidelity in that which is particular to each. *Each within the Movement is to personally answer Jesus' "Thirst for love and souls" (Mother) in his own way, where he is, with his particular gifts of grace and mission, and in the people who surround him. It is there that he is called not to do what Mother Teresa did but as she did: seeing, loving, and serving the Lord in the people entrusted to his care, for they are the hidden presence of the thirsting Christ.*

[14] By virtue of that call, *we too are messengers with Jesus of the Father's love, anointed with His Spirit to "bring glad tidings to the poor" (Lk. 4:18) – above all to the spiritually poor of our own parishes who all, regardless of want or wealth, suffer a hunger which can never be satiated with "bread alone": they hunger for God, for His word, for the Bread of Life, for the touch of His compassion. And so we, who are ordained to satisfy that hunger, cannot be content with mere administration or even with generous activity: our people hunger for us to be men of God, to be "so united to Him as to be his radiance", as Jesus asked of Mother Teresa. We are called to "be Jesus" for them.*

[15] For each of us it has been the perception of this call in the midst of our own personal poverty and weakness, the call to rise above our weakness, to give more of ourselves to God and our people through our priesthood, coupled with the desire to

carry out in our own lives and in our own small way Mother Teresa's vision of faith and work of love, that brought us initially to the Movement, and which continues to sustain us in this path we have chosen.

**[16]** *The Movement shares the conviction that Mother Teresa's charism of renewal is a universal gift for the universal Church, a message that shares in the universality of the gospel because it echoes that gospel so clearly and so well. It is a message capable of touching hearts and changing the lives of believers and non-believers alike, a message which possesses such power and attraction precisely because it is not hers, but His. To enshrine that message only within the slums of Calcutta would be to imprison it there, to reduce it to something much more comfortable, which need not challenge us in any way. To understand the universality of her message is to find that Calcutta everywhere: in our own souls, in the streets and homes of our own parishes, and in the hungry hearts of our people.*

**[17]** It is this message of gospel transformation that is for us invitation, stimulus, and challenge. If indeed we are trying to live by this stimulus and to accept this challenge, we might rightly be asked if and how we have changed. On the surface perhaps there is still little that is noticeable, for we are poor

and weak as those we serve, “bearing this great gift in vessels of clay”. But let us state from the outset that ours is by no means an elitist movement: if anything we are among our brother priests the “poorest of the poor”, those who most have felt the burden of inner poverty and need of the Lord, who have had to battle with human weakness in our life of prayer and ministry.

[18] *What then do we feel we have gained?* Much indeed: firstly, perhaps, a growing unity of life, fruit of a new sense of direction based on the conviction that *Calcutta is indeed everywhere*, present in every person and in every moment. It is this vision which gives unity and value to all: the thirsting Jesus in every place, in every person, in every event, in every hour. It is with this vision of faith that we are able to transform the scattered moments of our day into an uninterrupted encounter with the broken and mendicant Jesus, with the Jesus who is ever One and the same: in the Eucharist, in our heart, in our people.

[19] Secondly, we believe that the mere acceptance of this vision of renewal call to holiness and its challenge is in itself a great gain. Though we are doubtless still weak and poor, the great thing, the great difference, is that we are *no longer defeated or discouraged by our weakness*; we are no longer at peace with minimalism that turns our weakness

into a reason for not growing. This is the grace which, only seemingly small, has become our pearl of great price, our mustard seed. It is a grace which we constantly strive in our weakness not to reject, a seed which in that very weakness can take root and grow, even to the point where our people and our God can “find shelter in its branches” (Lk. 13:19). If in our human poverty we daily discover our own ordinariness, we still find ourselves in the company of Mother Teresa, who in those moments perhaps seems inimitable, but who herself has been described as “remarkable only in her ordinariness” – an ordinariness which points to God, not to her (or our) talent, but to His power at work in human weakness: the mediated omnipotence of God’s compassion and love, God’s tender gaze shining through human eyes.

**[20]** We may fall and we may fail, but God’s great gift to us and our great hope in our weakness is in accepting this seed, this vision, this “simple way” (as Mother Teresa called the Movement): certain that to others we may seem not to have changed, but knowing in our heart that we can never be the same. If we have wished to share this vision, it is because in attempting to live it we have found a new enthusiasm for our priesthood, a growing thirst for the Lord in prayer, a message pointing us towards all we have ever felt our priesthood could and should be, and a gift far too great to be borne alone.

[21] It is this gift we wish to share in these pages, for this is essentially the Spirit's gift, not our choice but our response to His call, a call and a gift we believe can bring ever new fruits of holiness in one's priesthood. The Movement is not meant to be a challenge but an invitation, a humble channel for the Spirit, "God as it were exhorting through us": "Stir into flame the gift that is in you" (2 Cor. 5:20; 2 Tim. 1:6).

## 2. The Divine-Human Thirst

*"After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now accomplished, said to fulfil the scriptures: I thirst" (Jn. 19:28)*

### *Renewal in Scripture: the Gift of Living Waters*

[22] Renewal means re-creation, a regained newness and vitality, a return to the source of life and growth. Throughout the Scriptures this gift of the Holy Spirit, the life and love of Father and Son poured out to restore and redeem our humanity, has been symbolized by water: from the waters over which the Spirit moved at creation, to the waters from the rock in Israel's desert wanderings, to the imagery of purification and new life fruitfulness and restoration of the prophets, to the living waters of the Spirit of Jesus, and to the invitation to drink of the river of life in the Heavenly City of the Apocalypse.

[23] From Genesis to the New Jerusalem, the gift of living waters has signified and revealed the work of humanity's renewal accomplished in the priesthood of Him who "makes all things new" (Rev. 21:5). The gift of holiness and divinization offered to mankind is the fruit of God's thirst to share the fullness of His life and love with us, the same eternal gift exchanged among the Three. Jesus' cry of thirst from the Cross, revealed in his supreme moment of priestly self-giving, *points to the Father* who is its source, and to the hidden, unsearchable *inner life of the Trinity*: specifically to what Mother Teresa called to the "infinite desire in the heart of God to love and be loved". From God's part, this thirst is fundamentally to *give*; it is a pouring out. From our part, the human experience of *thirst for God* is essentially a longing to *receive* and to be filled. It is the soul's yearning to enter more deeply into the Trinitarian life, source of the living waters; to enter into that which St Paul calls simply "*the mystery*" (Rom. 16:25) of God's recreation of mankind in Jesus. This grand plan of restoration and divinization is the font and North Star of our priestly existence.

[24] The core of this mystery of renewal, the crossing point where man's thirst and God's outpouring meet, is precisely *in the cross of Jesus*. The depths of this mystery found their great utterance in Jesus' cry of thirst (Jn. 19:28).

Beneath that thirst lies the whole of revelation:

- [25] Jesus is the supreme expression of both God's thirst for man, and of man's thirst for God: God in Jesus thirsts to satiate, Jesus in man thirsts to be satiated with the divinizing Spirit of the God who is Love.
- [26] God longs for us to long for Him in turn; God thirsts for man to thirst for Him. In that mutual thirst are seen the depth of God's desire for our love and the depth of our need for His love.
- [27] God's love and thirst for man led Him to become so completely one with us, as to become poor with our poverty so to enrich us, to take on our suffering as to heal us, to cry with our own thirst so as to satiate us.
- [28] If God's thirst has led Him to become one with man, it is so that men might be one with God and with each other. Man satisfies his own thirst only in satisfying God's and in allowing God to use him to satisfy the thirst of his brothers.

[29] Our ideal is to thirst *for* Him who thirsts for us, and to thirst ever more deeply for the living waters of our priestly anointing, to thirst *with* Him by taking upon ourselves the thirst for God in our



people, and to satiate that thirst by allowing Jesus the High Priest to relive in us His self-emptying love of communion with the Father and service to man. To say that God thirsts is perhaps the most concrete, and at the same time the most eloquent way of saying that He is Love. To say God thirsts is to have said all; to know God's thirst is to know all. It is enough to point to the thirsting Jesus, the Jesus of any Calvary. God's love *is* His thirst: His thirst for man, and His thirst in man. And so until the *parousia*, Love has but one name, but one expression: "I thirst".

***Calcutta: All find their home in you.***

[30] "You shall be like a watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail, and your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt" (Is. 58:11). The waters of restoration and sanctification in the Spirit which point to a God "rich in mercy" (Eph. 2:4) point also to the *poverty of our human condition* (Ps. 42; 143; Is. 44:3; 49:10; Ez. 36:24; 47:1). Our thirst witnesses to our desert; our need for renewal tells of the "ancient ruins" of our earthly city, our Calcutta.

[31] All the world is that Calcutta: symbol of the fallen Jerusalem of our human nature in which all, regardless of rank or riches, "find their home" (Ps. 86). The streets of Calcutta lead to everyman's door, and the very pain, the very ruins of our Calcutta of

the heart witness to a glory which once was and ought to be: "We were made for greater things" (Mother). What was once our fullness has become our great emptiness: and this is our thirst, this is our poverty. Our conception of poverty and the poor must be broadened therefore to make room for the entire human family.

[32] *The "poorest of the poor" are not solely the materially poor, but each and all of God's children who hunger and thirst for Him in so many ways, though often without knowing for what they thirst. It is in fact Jesus himself who thirsts in them. Calcutta, then, is everywhere, for wherever there is humanity there is poverty, for the two are one. One also is the Jesus who is ever poor in all humanity and in each individual, so that wherever we are, whomever we are with, it is there that Jesus continues His hidden Passion in our midst, and there that we are called to recognize and serve Him. "Today, once more, when Jesus comes amongst His own, His own do not know Him. He comes in the rotten bodies of our poor; He comes even in the rich choked by their own riches. He comes in the loneliness of their hearts, and when there is no one to love them. Jesus comes to you and me and often – very, very often – we pass Him by"* (Mother).

## *Poorest of the Poor*

[33] And so, for our Movement, the “poorest of the poor” are first of all the parish or people entrusted to our pastoral care, all brother priests who with us are but “vessels of clay”, and all those everywhere who are:

**Hungry:** not only for food, but especially for the Word of God and the God of the Word, especially in the Bread of Life of the Eucharist.

**Thirsty:** not only for drink, but for the living waters, thirsty for God, for His truth, His love, His peace.

**Naked:** not only for clothing, but for their dignity as children of God.

**Homeless:** not only for material shelter, but especially for the shelter of an understanding heart, for the “shelter of God’s wings”.

**Sick, crippled, dying:** not only physically, but especially spiritually.

[34] Our poverty is our pain; our thirst is inquietude; but that poverty and thirst point not only to our misery but also to the dignity of man’s vocation, to Him who alone can fill us, and to the importance of our priesthood in transforming that pain into seeds of resurrection, that poverty into a

foretaste of those “things which eye has not seen nor ear heard” (1 Cor. 2:9).

[35] And so the renewal of our priesthood, of our poverty, springs from our penetration of Jesus’ Thirst, so as to be penetrated by His satiating-thirsting “as a dry, weary land without water” (Ps. 62) for the living waters of restoration, becoming channels, carriers of that water for the Jesus who thirsts in our people: “for I will pour water on the thirsting land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon you, and you shall spring up like grass amid waters, like willows by flowing streams” (Is. 44:3).

### 3. The Pool of Siloam

*“To you has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom”* (Mt. 13:11)

[36] The result of the Trinity’s “thirst” for thirsting mankind, and the entire purpose of God’s saving work in Jesus, was the *establishment of the kingdom* – the new garden where God would once more walk with man in the cool of the afternoon (cf. Gen 3), and where the garden of His dwelling would no longer be outside of man, but within the heart of man himself (*“The kingdom of God is within you”*). God longs even now to rebuild our Calcutta into a

living temple of the Spirit, extending the eternal communion of the Trinity into human history, and setting in the midst of our earthly city new *Pools of Siloam*: images of the pouring out of the living waters into time and space.

[37] Israel's hope and expectation throughout its history focused on the arrival of the great day of restoration, on the ushering in of the kingdom by the Messiah. He would proclaim a great "season of grace" from Yahweh, and inaugurate that kingdom with signs and wonders symbolic of Israel's rebirth and renewal (the cancelling of debts, the liberation of prisoners, the healing of the sick, etc.). Perhaps the most beautiful of the restoration texts is Isaiah's 61st chapter, a text of supreme importance as it was the text Jesus himself chose to describe His entire mission (and ours): "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom to the captives, the opening of the prisons to those who are bound, and to proclaim the year of favour from the Lord" (Lk. 4:18).

[38] On another occasion, Jesus proclaims His messianic identity by pointing to Himself as the fulfilment of another similar prophecy (cf. Is. 29:18): "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and

the poor have the good news preached to them" (Lk. 7:22). The convincing logic of these signs of divine compassion lies in their pointing to the promised kingdom *as already present in Jesus*, and in their one underlying theme of renewing, restoring and quenching a broken and thirsting Israel. In Jesus, the compassion of the "Father of mercies" is not only revealed but enacted with power – in signs and wonders that symbolize outwardly the inner wonder of forgiveness and divine life. Now as then, *signs of compassion are signs of the kingdom*. They are evidence that the "year of favour from the Lord" is here, that the new Pool of Siloam is in our midst.

[39] The nucleus of Jesus' message and mission is the proclaiming – and the inaugurating with His pasch – of this kingdom in favour of the poor in spirit. As we have noted, Jesus proclaimed this to be His one great purpose in coming among us. All facets of human poverty are the object of the divine compassion at work in the kingdom, but the poor to whom above all the good news is addressed are those who *accept* their need and their emptiness; who *recognize* their sinfulness and all their unquenched thirst; those who come before God with empty hands in full acceptance of their spiritual poverty ("Blessed are the poor in spirit, theirs is the kingdom of Heaven" (Mt. 5:3). The first condition for receiving the benefits of the kingdom

is that of “receiving it as a child” (Mt. 18:3), humbly yet joyfully recognizing and accepting our need for the living waters. Those who enter on their own self-sufficiency or their self-made holiness – and here is the “scandal” of Jesus’ glad tidings to sinners (cf. Lk. 7:23) – will be “preceded by the prostitutes and publicans,” “cast down from their thrones” and “sent away empty”.

### *The Secrets of the Kingdom*

[40] We can identify four principles at work in the kingdom as announced in Jesus’ “glad tidings”, necessary to the understanding and channelling of its grace through our ministry:

[41] **1) Gratuitousness:** The gospel is a proclamation of God’s free and unmerited self-gift. All of creation and all of revelation proclaim God’s gratuitous love, a gratuitousness rooted in the Trinitarian mystery of unlimited giving among the Three. All we touch is gift, is steeped in this mystery of gratuitousness, a mystery in which we “live and move and have our being”. As St Paul reminds us, “what have you that you have not received?” (1 Cor. 4:7). Gratuitousness is the moving force behind the outpouring of God’s mercy; and through the communication of that mercy in Jesus, it becomes the underlying theme of the good news and the master key to understanding the kingdom

of God and the God of the kingdom (cf. parable of the prodigal son, Lk. 15:11; of the two debtors, Lk. 7:41; of the merciless servant, Mt. 18:23; of the Pharisee and the publican, Lk. 18:14). Mother Teresa's entire life and mission, and ours as members of her spiritual family, was an expression and extension in time and place of this divine gratuitousness, a reminder of the full meaning of God's love as *grace*.

[42] The opening to gratuitous love and mercy, rather than belittling man, constitutes the only path of return to our truest dignity and freedom. Our mission is to announce that freely-given love, that good news of gratuitous mercy, and to live in the marvel, the praise and the thanksgiving which was Israel's before a "mercy [that] endures forever" (Ps. 135). But how much more motive have we before so much greater a gift – the gift of God's own Son and their life giving Spirit: "*Let him who is thirsty come, let him who wishes drink the water of life without price*" (Is. 55:1; Rev. 22:17).

[43] **2) Trust:** The first response to divine gratuitousness to which the gospel invites us is an absolute, unconditional trust – an unwavering trust in God's goodness and in his power to bring that goodness about in our daily circumstances ("All things work together for good for those who love God"; and "Did you not know that even the hairs



of your head are numbered, O you of little faith"?). With St Paul, Mother Teresa insisted that "nothing and no one can separate us from the love of Christ," and so we can be at peace and rest in His providence in all things. "Even if they cut you into a thousand pieces, each piece will be His" (Mother). Based on the logic of the Beatitudes, Jesus explains the consequences of the kingdom in the Sermon on the Mount: "Do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or drink, nor about your body ... your heavenly Father *knows that you need them all*. But seek first his kingdom, and all these things shall be yours as well" (Mt. 6:25-34).

[44] Our doubts, our lack of trust, testify against us that we have neither understood the gospel nor the God we preach, that we "know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God" (Mt. 22:29). But once we do understand, we are bound to proclaim our trust in the kingdom through our ministry: "Preach as you go saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand' ... Take no gold, nor silver, nor copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor a staff" (Mt. 10:7). The trust by which we "cast our cares on the Lord who cares for us" (1 Pt. 5:7) frees us not only from human worry about our ministry, but frees us to expand and channel the compassion of the kingdom by giving: "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's desire to give you the kingdom. Sell your

possessions and give alms” (Lk. 12:32). Above all, trust is our personal witness that we are in harmony with the kingdom. It is one of the forms of love which honours God most.

**[45] 3) Ongoing conversion:** Our next response to the good news of the kingdom is in relation to ourselves, and involves accepting Jesus’ invitation to *conversion*: “If you do not change and become as little children” (in total dependence on the Father’s gratuitous love) “you shall not enter the kingdom” (Mt. 18:3). This conversion (which will be discussed in a later chapter) demands the choice of radical solutions regarding temptation and obstacles to the kingdom, and radical dedication regarding service to the kingdom – turning the other cheek, walking the second mile, giving our cloak to those who would steal our tunic, etc. (cf. Mt. 5:38ff).

**[46]** Celibacy is first among those radical options elicited by the nature of the kingdom and its demands. As Mother Teresa always insisted, wholehearted, free and eager service to the kingdom and to our people is the result of wholehearted (that is, undivided) love for the Lord in celibacy, freely embraced “for the sake of the kingdom” (Mt. 19:10). Our fidelity to celibacy (celibacy *of heart* above all) becomes fidelity to service, for only a heart that is “whole” will be able to give a service that is wholehearted and without

measure. Service and celibacy are both our fidelity to Love, and to its kingdom; and so, “charity comes from chastity and chastity from charity. We must have a clear vision, the vision of a pure heart, a heart that is completely unselfish. Chastity and charity go very closely together because if we do not see God then our charity will be naught” (Mother). As for celibacy, so for all the radical exigencies of the kingdom that are a call to ongoing conversion: “Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear” (Mt. 13:43).

**[47] 4) Loving as we are loved:** Our response to God’s gratuitous love in relation to our neighbour is a self-giving that is complete and without measure, that gives “without counting the cost”. The gratuitousness we have received is not to remain fruitless, bottled up within ourselves, but needs to overflow onto others: “Freely have you received, freely shall you give” (Mt. 10:8). This double law of gratuitousness is the underlying principle in Jesus’ “new commandment” (cf. Mt. 5:38-48). The new and greater gift present in the new covenant demands a new and more complete channeling of that gift to others: “Love one another even as I have loved you” (Jn. 13:34). Friendship with the Jesus of the kingdom depends on our fulfillment of “His” commandment – by which, and only by which, we remain in harmony with His own outpouring of the living waters on the

world. Only by satiating His thirst in others – “Whatever you do to the least of my brothers, you do to me” – do we keep His commandment and “live on in His love” as He kept His Father’s “commandment” of loving the world, and so “remained” in His love (Jn. 15:10). Jesus’ love for His Father manifested itself in carrying out His mission. He expressed His love for the Father in loving mankind to the extreme – as the Father, and in union with the Father. This dedication to mankind identified Him with the Father’s work and kept Him in His love. “Love for mankind was Jesus’ response to the love the Father had shown Him” (J. Matteos). We are to continue that same cycle – being freely loved by the Father in the Son, and in turn allowing the Son to love through us. We should be able to say before the world, “As the Son has loved us, even so have we loved you”. It is only by that love that we are citizens of the kingdom, for “he who lives in love lives in God, and God in him” (1Jn 4:16).

### *Ministering in the Kingdom*

[48] To minister in the kingdom clearly demands that we minister in conscious harmony with the spirit and principles of the kingdom. We must openly preach the beatitudes, proclaiming the consequences of the kingdom, and exhorting our people not to content themselves with false riches,

not to feed on false dreams. But our ministry of word is to serve our “ministry of the Spirit”. As St. Paul insists, “the kingdom of God does not consist in words *but in power*” (1 Cor. 4:10). Our preaching is not an end in itself but is to put people in touch with God’s renewing, transforming power – a power that works miracles still, that can change people’s life from without and within. We must proclaim the “God who is at work in you” (Phil. 2:13), the God who is close, who cares about His children not only on Sunday but every day of their lives, the God who has every hair of their head counted (Lk. 12:7).

[49] Too often we may seem to preach an absent, distant God, an inoperative salvation (especially when that God and that salvation seem abstract, or distant to us). We often hear the challenge: “What would you do for a drug addict: counsel, or pray with him? Do we have only good advice to offer, or do we believe that Jesus has the power to change that which we are not able to alter?” (Heribert Muhlen). The key is that the kingdom must first be a lived reality for us; Jesus must be Lord of my life, and I His kingdom in miniature, before the Lord of the kingdom can effectively touch, satiate, and renew others through me, before He can extend that kingdom through my ministry. So let us first rehear the good news, rediscover the powerful presence of the kingdom in our own life and then

in our ministry, drinking “without price” from the Pool of Siloam, rejoicing in our own salvation and call, and allowing the Lord to speak to us the glad tidings that “the kingdom of God is within you” (Mt. 10:7).

## Part II: Carriers of the Living Waters

*"This is not your doing, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8)*

### 4. Priest as "Co-worker of Christ"

*"As the Father has sent me, so do I send you" (Jn. 20:20)*

[50] After sealing the Kingdom in His own blood, Jesus finished the work the Father had given Him to do by revealing our resurrection and breathing forth the living waters of the Holy Spirit. The kingdom, which before was merely "at hand," was now arriving in power. But more than a conclusion to His work, His victory marked a yet greater beginning. The very evening of the Resurrection, Jesus stood among the Twelve to proclaim the gift He would make to the world, through them, by consecrating them with the same Spirit He had received of the Father. He would continue the same mission of announcing and building up the kingdom of God *through their ministry*; and because it would be a glorified Jesus working within them, they would be continuing not only the works they had seen Him do, "but greater works still" (Jn. 14:12). *"As the Father has sent me, even so do I send you. Receive the Holy Spirit"* (Jn. 20:21).

[51] In the same way, for the same purpose, and as part of the same mystery by which the Father sent Jesus, Jesus now sends us. The Father's mission to the Son becomes the model for understanding our own mission. As it was the Father acting in Jesus, it will be *Jesus acting in us*. As the Father showed us His love through the ministry of Jesus, Jesus wishes to show the world that same love through our ministry. As Jesus' ministry was above all expression of His love for the Father ("The world must know that I love the Father;" Jn. 14:31), so our ministry must find its motivation in our own love for the Lord. As Jesus' every word and work was a reflection of what He had seen and heard from the Father, so our activity is to be but a faithful reflection of Jesus' life, teaching, and ministry.

[52] In view of this great mystery of "*Him in us, and we in Him*" (Jn. 17:22), a mystery in which divine and human activity mingle (whose sins you forgive, I am forgiving), the divine depending on the human and the human on the divine; the core of our ministry can be summed up in St Paul's words: "We are Christ's co-workers" (2 Cor. 6:1). By our consecration, Christ is at work in us, and yet His work depends on ours, and works through ours. This mystery is a reflection of Jesus' own priestly relation to the Father. As Jesus could explain the unseen reality behind His ministry by affirming that "the Father works and I also work"



(Jn. 5:17), so too we can say that the secret of our ministry is that “Jesus works, and we also work”.

[53] As *His co-workers*, engaged in a ministry in which two agents are united in one purpose and activity, what we do can never depend on personal preference, nor does its fruitfulness depend as much on our talents, or external results, as on our union with Him who is our Living Vine, and we His branches. Any project not born of that union is but illusion, and a counterfeit of authentic ministry, since “every plant not planted by my heavenly Father will be rooted up” (Mt. 15:13). Whatever He has given us to do will always be His work more than ours, for “without Me you can do nothing” (Jn. 15:5). Jesus’ priesthood was fruitful, was a faithful channelling of the Father’s work, because He lived out that priesthood in two fundamental attitudes: first, one of complete and constant identification with the Father who had sent Him, in oneness of life and work; and second, of total dependence on Him in loving, obedient submission, “even unto death on a cross”. For our ministry to bear His fruit it must be rooted in the same soil of oneness with, and loving submission to, Jesus the High Priest.

### *Identification and Oneness*

[54] Because we are but “vessels of clay,” we must continue to work at developing what came

naturally to Jesus: an uninterrupted identification with the One who sent us. To live outside that constant frame of reference is to step outside the reality of priesthood. We have but one identity, and that identity is Jesus himself (cf. Jn. 20:31). Any other motivation becomes surrogate ministry, and wittingly or not, a betrayal of His purpose and ours.

[55] *“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me”* (Jn. 15:4). Our succeeding in the work the Father has given us will depend only on this: on union with His Son, a living oneness with Him who is the source of our priestly identity. But to live in Him, to “abide in Him,” demands a prior step: that of living *with Him*. This was Jesus’ first priority in calling the Twelve, and a part of their formation as important as hearing His doctrine: “Jesus called the twelve to *be with him*, and to be sent to preach” (Mk. 3:14).

[56] Throughout three years of living and working with Him, they grew into a consciousness and a way of living which centred on Jesus in their midst. *Jesus became a living presence to them at all times: in their thoughts, in their decisions, in their apostolic travels, in their work.* Having met Jesus, having responded to His call to “be with Him,” nothing in their life would ever be the same. They acquired what we often lack: a new way of thinking from the

day of their call, a new framework of consciousness in which Jesus is never absent: "I will not leave you orphans, I will come back to you" (Jn. 14:18). Even a casual perusal of the gospel shows that living with Jesus was the single most characteristic aspect of the life of the Twelve. It must be so also of us; not so much as an invitation to piety, but to reality, refusing to live in the illusion of independence or self-sufficiency, of "steering our own course" in ministry, with only occasional reference to the Lord. In Him we must constantly and consciously "live and move and have our being". In the binding of the same Spirit, our union with Jesus is to be the reflection of His union with the Father in the same Spirit. With what force must a St Paul have lived this reality to exclaim, not out of reasoning but through lived experience: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). Could this not have been the description of Mother Teresa? Are we to say, or be, any less?

### *Loving Submission*

[57] The awareness that what we do is not our own activity but His, a work that infinitely surpasses our human capabilities but that mysteriously depends on our fidelity and generosity, should give rise to a desire and an attentiveness to always follow His lead and inspiration – to "not spoil God's work" (Mother), a work which is so

precious because it is His, and so precarious because it is ours.

[58] The fact of our utter dependence on the Lord in ministry should make us aware that we and our work are part of a larger plan. Our decisions in ministry are not entirely our own to make, for we cannot work independently of Him. *We are to live in constant openness to the Lord's direction*, in prayer and through events (in Mother's words, to "Give God permission"); working under His direct, even when seemingly unperceived, guidance. This spirit of dependence on an active, present Lord at work in His kingdom through us, this idea of being part of a larger divinely-orchestrated plan, is strikingly present in the Acts of the Apostles, and was central to the practice of ministry of the early Church.

[59] But the great model of conscious and active priestly dependence in ministry will always be Jesus himself. "At the head of the scroll it is written of me: Behold, I come to do your will" (Heb. 10:7). "My doctrine is not my own, but of the One who sent me" (Jn. 7:16). Jesus' free submission to the Father (a submission which, far from being demeaning, leads to Jesus' glorification and man's re-creation in the Holy Spirit) is richly documented throughout John's Gospel (4:34; 8:29; 12:49; 14:30, etc.). "Nothing is Christianly fruitful if not that which has its origin in Christological obedience"

(Hans Urs von Balthasar). And so for us as for Jesus, there will always be an intimate connection between our life dependence on the “Father of mercies” (2 Cor. 1:3), and our ability to communicate His mercy to the world.

[60] John the Baptist’s one desire must be that of all Jesus’ priests: “*He must increase, I must decrease*” (Jn. 3:30). An authentic love for our fellow man must lead us above all to *point them to Christ*, a present, active Lord, and to “make straight the paths” that lead to Him. No matter what “greater works” we may accomplish, *we are not the saviours*. We are here to be a sign of Christ, to point to Him with our lives, to say in all we do, “Behold the Lamb of God”.

[61] Without this spirit, we may have everything – education, talent, esteem, a flourishing parish – but have nothing. But with it, no matter how little we humanly possess, we have all. Let us listen to the testimony of one who perhaps had little in the world’s eyes, but of whom the Lord could have rejoiced as in the gospel: “I thank you Father ... for having hidden these things from the wise and learned, and having revealed them to little ones,” little ones such as this poor, simple, small town pastor:

*“I ministered in my town and in other towns nearby and some far away. The Lord sent me usually to*

*small groups – struggling churches, hospitals, and prisons. Many times He would send me several miles away for just one or two people who were in need. Often working in their yard or painting a house I would hear the Spirit of the Lord speaking to me to go somewhere or help someone in need. I would try to get alone as soon as possible so I could pray, be quiet, and wait on Him for direction. Many times I had to wait for a day or two. I fasted, prayed, and read the Bible, listening for Him to tell me where He wanted me to go. Then when I knew He had spoken, I would prepare to leave...”*  
(Robert Sadler).

[62] Even if we do not feel the Spirit of Jesus guiding us with such clarity and power, we all can work towards creating a greater climate of personal contact, presence, identification, and guidance with Him who has called us to be His co-workers and who has *promised* us His active presence: “Behold, I am with you always” (Mt. 28:20).

[63] This new (or *renewed*) vision of our priesthood and our purpose as co-workers with a present Jesus, carriers of the living waters, called to continue His mission of “making the Father present as love and mercy” (*Dives in Misericordia*, 3), this awareness that our ministry exists to point to a Person, to His presence and power, is not just the fruit of our effort but is above all a gift, a gift

we are to ask for from a Father who can never refuse that gift. Through that gift we will rediscover the joy of being able to proclaim with St. Paul: “What we preach is not ourselves, but *Jesus Christ* as Lord” (2 Cor. 4:5).

## 5. Consecration

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me”* (Lk. 4:18)

[64] “The Spirit of the Lord is upon us” – even as on Jesus himself – to make us sharers in His own *consecration* and *mission*. The “laying on of hands” is not only the beginning of our priestly ministry, but is first and foremost the beginning of our consecration, a consecration that is by no means something static; *it is life, Jesus’ life in us*, His own consecration planted in us as a seed. But that seed exists only to put out branches and to “bear much fruit” (Jn. 15:8), and so our interior consecration needs to be lived, nourished, and deepened, but also exteriorized. As for Jesus, our inner consecration exists to be outwardly fulfilled. Jesus himself considered this fulfilment of His inner consecration so much part of a single reality, a single mystery, that He referred to that visible paschal fulfilment with the same expression: “I *consecrate myself*” (Jn. 17:19).

[65] His outer consecration consisted in that single movement of self-emptying for love of the Father and of mankind that led from the poverty of Bethlehem to the despoilment of the cross (Phil 2:6) and glorification – and to the gift of the Eucharist, which contains in itself all the mysteries of His priestly consecration and mission.

[66] Jesus consecrated Himself that the world might in turn be consecrated with the His own “Spirit of sonship” (Rom. 8:15); but in a special way His consecration was in view of ours, since it would be through our priestly consecration that He would continue to consecrate the world in every age: “I consecrate myself that they also may be consecrated” (Jn. 17:19). His great concern was, and is, that His consecration finds fulfilment, channelling, and reflection in the faithfulness and generosity with which we live our own consecration, in Him.

[67] And so our initial consecration by the “laying on of hands” requires a daily, renewed “consecration of self,” allowing Jesus to complete our initial consecration by continuing His own completed consecration within us, drawing us ever more deeply and concretely, through prayer, service and suffering, into His paschal mystery of self-emptying love, and drinking from the living waters of His own anointing through the Eucharist.



## *Poverty of the Cross*

[68] “When Our Lord wanted sisters for His work among the poor, He expressly asked for the poverty of the cross. Our Lord on the cross possessed nothing.

[69] He chose poverty because it is the means of possessing God, of bringing His love down to this earth” (Mother).

[70] Paradoxically it is in voluntary poverty, a chosen poverty, that the involuntary poverty of our human condition finds its only true enrichment and lasting wealth, being filled by Him who emptied Himself, that in emptying ourselves with Him we might possess all in “possessing God,” and so be enabled to share with others the gift, the *inner wealth* our joyfully chosen outer poverty points to, able to “bring His love down to this earth” (Mother).

[71] Jesus’ self-emptying and ours finds its basis, motivation, and strength only in love. Love alone led Jesus to empty Himself; His poverty was not a value in itself but an expression, though a necessary expression, of love: “He being rich, made himself poor for love of us” (2 Cor. 8:9). Poverty is first of all and above all *charity*, totality of gift; and so charity inevitably leads to the desire, the need

for a greater gospel poverty; “love and poverty go together, hand in hand” (Mother).

[72] A spirit, a desire, for certain poverty is a requisite to loving as Jesus loved us; not only because Jesus loved us through poverty, but because concrete expressions of self-emptying are basic to the inner dynamics of love, of compassion. Love leads to the desire to share, but sharing requires a despoiling of self, both to give of what is ours, and to take on the needs and suffering of the other.

[73] Mother Teresa reminds us that before love leads to service, it requires an inner emptying, an inner poverty that *disposes* one to serve and an outer poverty that *frees* one to serve. Even though we are not religious with vows, it must not be overlooked that to love, to live His priestly gift to the full, Jesus made Himself poor. To love we must likewise be poor: poor to share and poor to serve, free enough to give witness to the gospel we preach, if only before our “Father who sees in secret,” by returning to the gospel practice of fasting from every excess and superfluity, and giving away what is saved in alms for the poor. Those of us the Lord has blessed materially must remember that our abundance is not for ourselves, but is to pass through our hands to those in need: “Your abundance shall supply their want” (2 Cor.

8:13). "For Christ's sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in Him" (Phil. 3:8).

[74] Jesus' external poverty cannot be disregarded as merely incidental to His life and mission. An attentive look at His life reveals a chosen poverty as the constant outer manifestation of His inner poverty, the poverty of His loving *yes* to the Father (unto the poverty of death on a cross) and His loving *yes* to mankind and to our condition (as He "appeared in human form ... took the likeness of a slave"). Since His was not an accidental poverty, the fact of that poverty cannot be dismissed or underestimated. He Himself sought out that poverty; He "made Himself poor". From Bethlehem to burial He was poorest among the poor: voluntarily stripped of His dignity as Son, born in a stable, thirty years son of a lowly carpenter, with "nowhere to lay His head" during His public ministry, humbly nailed to the wood He had humbly worked, thirsting, betrayed and abandoned, and finally laid to rest in a borrowed tomb. "From the very first day of His human existence, Jesus was brought up in poverty, the depth of which no human being will ever be able to experience, because being rich He made Himself poor. As I am His co-worker, *alter Christus*, I must be 'brought up' and nourished by that poverty which Our Lord asks of me" (Mother).

[75] If Jesus was poor – how then not we, we who are to be a sign of Christ, another Christ? Achieving that degree of *inner poverty and outer simplicity* the Lord asks of each one of us involves a gradual process of inner and outer self-emptying and dispossession.

### *Divine Providence*

[76] *Interiorly we will feel the need to live Jesus' humility, to find the inner freedom of detachment from ambition and possessions, seeking the last place, the littleness of a child that alone shall gain us entrance into the kingdom, knowing that "it is our emptiness and lowliness God wants, not our plenitude" (Mother). Inner poverty is our openness, our yes to Providence, in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount. "We must be poor like Jesus: His way of poverty was simple, He trusted His Father completely" (Mother).*

[77] *Exteriorly, we will gradually feel the need to simplify our life, to live a gospel poverty more generously, to incarnate our spirit of inner poverty, choosing not to have or use certain luxuries. "Jesus could have had everything. He chose to have nothing. Our Lord had nowhere to lay His head, and what a shame it would be for His co-workers to live in a richly furnished house with every comfort and beauty and without any want"*

(Mother). Exterior poverty not only expresses but reinforces our *yes* to God: “Voluntary acts of conscious poverty also serve to remind us that we are in the presence of God” (Mother). Even though at present we may feel unable to respond fully to His invitation, let us not “go away sad” as the rich young man; let us not dismiss the idea but preserve the ideal, certain that “the Lord who has begun this good work in you will see it to completion” for His glory (Phil. 1:6).

[78] Jesus’ self-emptying found its culmination in the poverty of the cross, the maximum consequence of the incarnation and the supreme revelation of the divine and human thirst. The cross was not an isolated reality, but the final and fullest consequence of His inward and outward poverty: that double crucifixion of spirit and flesh, both expressed in His one great cry of thirst. In calling Mother Teresa, Jesus asked for the “poverty of the cross” – whose whole life showed us that the cross is a living of poverty, and poverty is a living of the cross.

[79] Poverty is a living of the cross not so much because it requires sacrifice, but as an expression of love. Love finds its expression in a poverty of “incarnation” and oneness, to both sharing and bearing one another’s burdens, one another’s cross, heeding the cry of thirst from each one’s hidden Calvary.

[80] In this spirit and with this conviction we will gradually feel the desire to take on the sufferings of our people in our own voluntary acts of abnegation (fasting from excess and the unnecessary), and in the joyful acceptance of the crosses and trials sent us by the Lord in our daily life and ministry.

[81] If the awareness of our subjective oneness with our people should lead us to share their cross, how much more the awareness of our *objective oneness with Christ* should bring us to share, even desire, His cross – to carry with love for Him at least some part of the cross He carried out of love for us. Though He has made the cross of our people one with His, in motivation our ascent with Him to Calvary, “stretching out our hands to go where we would not go,” must always be, as for Peter, our response to His continual query: “Do you love me more than these?” (Jn. 21:15).

[82] “If we are really united to Jesus, really in prayer, if we come really very close to the Passion of Christ then we need that sharing of His Passion, we need that mortification, we need that cross ... Bring this across, this living of the Mass, sharing the Passion of Christ in His suffering people...” (Mother).

[83] Like the disciples of Emmaus, we too are often

“slow to understand” the value and necessity of poverty and the cross. As with poverty, so too *the cross must come to have the same place in our life and mission as it had in Jesus’*. And as we attempt to live it, as did Mother Teresa, we see that poverty becomes our ability to enrich, and the cross our ability to give life. Once we have understood and accepted this truth, then we too must begin to *live* and not merely to preach the Beatitudes, to “love until it hurts, without counting the cost” (Mother), together with Jesus “setting our faces towards Jerusalem”.

[84] *“Without suffering, our work would be just social work, very good and helpful, but it would not be part of the work of Jesus Christ, not part of the Redemption. Jesus wanted to help us by sharing our life, our loneliness, our agony and death. All that He has taken on Himself ... only by being one with us has He redeemed us. We are allowed to do the same: all the desolation of our people, not only their material poverty, but their spiritual destitution must be redeemed, and we must share in it ... for only by being one with them can we redeem them, that is, bring God into their lives and bring them to God”* (Mother).

### ***The Bread of Life***

[85] For the Christian, the Eucharist is the centre of the universe. The Eucharist is everything, truly

everything, because the Eucharist is Jesus. It is the living, acting Jesus, “the true bread come down from heaven” (Jn. 6:32), in which the Father gives to every man of every place and time the personal gift of His Son – the gift of all Jesus is and all He has done, poured into the poverty of our “distressing disguise” (Mother) through the utter poverty of the appearance of bread, satiating His hunger in ours with the Bread of Life, transforming us into Him whom we consume and allowing us to live with His life, doing what He has done “and greater works still”.

[86] Through the Eucharist we not only receive all that Jesus is and has done, we are not only in touch with His incarnation, in touch with His passion and death, in touch with His resurrection, ascension, and sending of His Spirit; even more importantly, we *become* all that Jesus is, and we *begin to do what He has done*: His works enter time not only in the Eucharist, but through us as we are nourished by that Eucharist.

[87] We become not only daily witnesses of the paschal mystery; we ourselves enter into that mystery. We enter into Jesus’ own Eucharist. We “who have eaten the flesh of the Son of Man” (Jn. 6:53) become, as it were, a living extension of His Eucharist and His mysteries. The mysteries of Jesus take flesh in the mystery of each one’s life, a life in



which we reproduce every aspect of the life of the Son through a living communion nourished by the Eucharist. We continue above all His works of charity which reveal and communicate the Father, and whose supreme expression was His passion and death – a passion that is but one thing with the Eucharist as it daily feeds our charity with that same paschal mystery.

[88] In our works of charity it is truly Jesus himself who acts, since through the Bread of Life “it is no longer we who live” (Gal. 2:20). By entering His charity in the Eucharist, and His charity entering us, then entering the world through our acts of love, we become one Eucharist with Jesus. In those works of love, works which are the continuation of His mystery of love on Calvary, His Eucharist and His work of divinization of man and praise of the Father are continued and consummated. For through that charity we take on the likeness of Christ, and so the Father continues to be glorified in the Son in us.

[89] “Each time we partake of this Bread” we proclaim and live His death; we proclaim and live His love for man and His obedience to the Father, His poverty which fills us still, His oneness with us, and His thirst for souls, “until He comes in glory” (1 Cor. 11:27).

[90] Before the immensity and smallness of the Eucharist, before the magnitude and poverty of God, one can only be silent: silent before this silent gift that speaks all that can ever be said, silent before an infinite greatness wrapped in an equally boundless humility. God has become small that in fidelity to our smallness we might “become God”. In harmony with the poverty and power of the Eucharist, our seemingly small works of love, the poverty of our humble gifts, can contain even the immensity of the love of Calvary, can hide beneath them, as the Eucharistic Bread, the heart of the Most High. Because of the very smallness of the Eucharist, its greatness can be reflected in our smallest acts, and in our most insignificant moments. The Eucharist can be at one and the same time the centre of the world and the centre of our lives, the centre of our smallest acts.

[91] *But the Eucharist will be the centre of our life only if we make it so; only if our heart is humble enough to receive His humility, pure enough to receive His unspoiled gift, rooted enough in faith so as to see beyond the bread and to hunger for what we have believed. The greater our faith, the greater will be our hunger; and the more we hunger for the Lord beneath these humble appearances, the more we ourselves can contain that same Lord beneath the humble appearances of our daily life. Through this hungering, this living and giving of the Eucharist,*

our lives become “woven with the Eucharist, so as to give only Jesus” (Mother).

[92] This weaving is in two directions: not only does Jesus enter us, we enter Him; we begin to actually and consciously enter into His paschal mystery, into His undivided love, His poverty, humility and obedience, His wholehearted service to Father and mankind. In a word, we enter *into His Eucharist*. It is our life that gives glory to God, not merely our words: “It is not those who say ‘Lord, Lord’ who will enter the kingdom, but those who do the will of my Father who is heaven”. The Eucharist is liturgy because it contains *Jesus’ life*, and His act of offering that life, a life that was itself perfect praise of the Father. And so by entering His Eucharist in fervent celebration and generous living, we become what we celebrate: with Jesus, our lives become a living liturgy, a living “sacrifice of praise” to the Father, and a living Eucharist to be broken for others.

[93] “In each of our lives Jesus comes as Bread of Life to be eaten, to be consumed by us. This is how He loves us, and then Jesus comes into our human life as the Hungry One, the Other, hoping to be fed with the bread of our life, with our hearts by loving, with our hands by serving” (Mother). Jesus becomes our Eucharist *that we might become that same total gift in poverty and weakness for others*. With

this Bread we must be broken; with the Cup our own lives must be poured out.

[94] In contemplating Jesus in the utter poverty of the Eucharist, we begin to see Him more clearly in the poverty of those around us, to understand with the disciples of Emmaus the connection, the oneness of the broken Bread of the Eucharist with the broken Body of Calvary. In those moments of intimate contemplation our hearts, too, “burn within us,” so that we exclaim, “Stay with us, Lord!” Jesus grants that prayer in a beautiful and boundless way, disappearing so as to remain under the twin signs that continue to make His thirst and passion present: the Eucharist, and the poor and suffering. The two are mysteriously one, united in a bond Jesus himself has forged, and which we must penetrate if truly we are to continue His Eucharist.

[95] The poor and suffering live the passion of Jesus which we celebrate; and if Jesus continues His passion in them, in them He continues also His Eucharist. In bringing together in our own lives these two realities that Jesus has already joined, *the priesthood* and *the poor* can complement and complete each other – and so we become together one Eucharist, one Jesus. If Jesus can say “This is My Body” of the Eucharist, and of every manifestation of human poverty, we must say the

same; we must create within ourselves the same unity, that same identification with His Eucharist and with His poor suffering members. To live the Eucharist, the priest needs Jesus' poor, Jesus' lonely and helpless, Jesus' broken ones. To live the Passion grace-fully, the poor and suffering need Jesus' priest. Living the mystery we contemplate, and contemplating the mystery we celebrate, we discover anew that the Eucharist is truly the centre, the Eucharist is truly everything, for the Eucharist is Jesus in our midst: giver of the Spirit, the quencher of our thirst who thirsts for us, and the living font of our priestly anointing and our conversion and renewal.

### *Continuing the Eucharist: Prayer and Adoration*

[96] The absolute primacy and centrality of the Eucharist in no way diminishes the importance of personal prayer or of ministerial service, but rather lends to both a new and deeper significance. The centrality of the Eucharist is not in contrast with that of prayer or service, for the Eucharist embraces and contains them both. Prayer and service *share* in the centrality of the Eucharist as they become the *two poles of Eucharistic living*, through which we become a living offering for God and man in Jesus. *Conscious interior continuation of the Eucharist is prayer. Conscious exterior continuation of the Eucharist is service.* In practice, the two become again one;

prayer becomes service by intercession on man's behalf, and service becomes prayer by our seeing and touching God in man. But our service will not be an expression of the Eucharist if it is not first a true expression of prayer, if not performed in an atmosphere of prayer. Hence the primacy and priority Mother Teresa has taught our Movement to give to personal prayer – as a living of the Eucharist, and as preparation and condition for extending that Eucharist in service.

[97] Prayer is not something we do, it is something we enter. From the moment of our baptism, the Spirit of Jesus cries out silently within us: "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15). Here is the great mystery of prayer: Jesus himself ever prays in us, praising and interceding before the Father on our behalf and on behalf of our people. "In reality there is but one prayer, only one substantial prayer, Jesus himself" (Mother). We have not so much to forge our own prayer as to enter His, to enter Him who continues His Eucharist on the altar of our heart. We are the house of God; we are His house of Prayer. Prayer is as a well which, from the day of our baptism, is ever springing up within us. We have only to "roll away the stone" covering, muffling the Spirit's prayer within us to allow it to rise with the Risen One, to "let prayer pray in us" (Jean LaFrance).

[98] Desirous of entering the mystery of Jesus who

prays day and night in the Eucharist, and who continues His Eucharistic prayer in us, the Movement heartily encourages a *period of daily adoration* in the physical presence of this mystery, as a means of indispensable contact with that reality which is the source of our priesthood, our prayer, our personal renewal, and our service. In our estimation, it is an unparalleled opportunity of entering into Jesus' prayer, of interceding with Him for our people, and of growing in all that we are to be for Jesus and for others as His co-workers in priesthood.

[99] Fidelity to this daily hour of oneness brings a growing hunger for God and for His will. The more we hunger, the more we are satisfied, and the more we are satisfied, the more we hunger still. This hunger of the heart heightens our sense of awareness of God and His presence deep within us, and constitutes an ongoing invitation to meet Him at that deeper level in prayer. We need deep prayer; we need the courage to descend beneath our distractions to the "place of the heart", as the Greek Fathers exhort, refusing to content ourselves with a superficial prayer which can neither satisfy nor ever change us. Deep prayer is a contact with eternity, which "brings with it, sooner or later, the awareness of longing for a fulfilment not achievable here below. Such prayer brings an immediate yearning for eternity, for it is the

mysterious beginning of eternal life. We must put all that we are in our prayer, a complete self-giving in the present moment, so that in that moment at least we can say that we prefer Jesus absolutely to anything else in the world. Living thus is the only disposition to contemplative prayer. Only the poor of heart can prefer Jesus to all else" (René Voillaume).

[100] Poverty of heart in prayer is *silence*, silence of desire and silence of word, a total silence and emptiness so as to hear, to be filled, and to reverberate with the Word within. "The priest is to proclaim Christ. But he cannot proclaim Him unless his heart is full of God. That is why he needs in the silence of his heart to hear the words of God, for only then, from the fullness of his heart, can he speak the Word of God. Souls of prayer are souls of great silence" (Mother).

[101] In the silence of prayer we come to identify consciously with Jesus, who through that prayer transforms us into Himself, both in our awareness and in our very being, so that in fact, "it is no longer I, but Christ who lives in me". This conscious identification with Jesus is expressed, but also fed and sustained by the way we live out our prayer, especially in little things. "Nothing can make us holy except the presence of God, and to me the presence of God is in fidelity to small things"



(Mother). Despite the demands and distractions of daily ministry, this sense of identification with Jesus and continuance of His Eucharist, gained in prayer, can gradually bring us to “pray the work” (Mother), to consciously do all “for, with, and to Jesus” (Mother), to bring ministry and prayer back into harmony, back into the oneness of the Eucharist from which they both spring.

[102] We are not only to share with our people our service, but also the prayer it expresses, the prayer which can give Jesus’ peace and presence to their lives as well. We must *teach our people to pray*, even to pray deeply. We must teach them to taste in prayer the Word they have believed through our preaching, and received through our celebration of the Eucharist. And, of course, to teach the experience of prayer, we must know the experience of prayer.

[103] The people must be able to see and feel that we are men of prayer, to feel drawn, as the disciples, to say, “Teach us to pray” (Lk. 11:1). As Jesus, who Himself felt the need of entire nights spent in silent communion with the Father, we must *seek the time to pray*. And, as Jesus, we must be faithful to that prayer, seeing it not as a duty but as a gift: “Love to pray. Feel often the need for prayer, and take the trouble to pray. If you want to pray better you must pray more” (Mother). Once we

have answered His call to “pray more”, to “come and see where He dwells”, in the Eucharist and in the poverty of our heart, then no mask, no disguise, no other poverty shall ever again hide His face. Prayer is everything because the Eucharist is everything. Prayer binds us to the Eucharist, and is likewise the bond between the Eucharist and our work, between the Eucharist and all that we do. Prayer guarantees the centrality of the Eucharist in our life: if prayer is our all the Eucharist will remain our all, and if the Eucharist is our all, we will enact that Eucharist in service. But the first step is to pray: to pray better, to pray more.

### *Radiating Christ*

[104] The result of our renewal, the result of drawing deeply from the sources of our consecration, is that we become ever more efficacious and intelligible signs of Jesus and His gospel. If there is anything that Mother Teresa’s example has shown us, it is that *communion with Jesus produces communication of Jesus*. As Jesus was so united to the Father as to be His splendour and His image (“He who has seen me has seen the Father”), so by our union with Jesus *we become His radiance* – a transparency of Christ, so that those who see us have in some way seen Him. “This is what it means to love Christ, and this is what priesthood is meant to be: that complete oneness

with Christ" (Mother). The people seek not our talents, but God in us. As the Greeks in John's gospel asked of the disciples, so the world asks of us: "We want to see Jesus" (Jn. 12:21). In "wanting to see Jesus" in us, our people are merely asking that we be who we are, that we deepen our conscious identification and oneness with Christ. Only in this way will we be able to "give only Jesus" rather than self.

[105] "Draw them to God, but never, never to self. If you are not drawing them to God, then you are seeking yourself, and people will love you only for yourself, not because you remind them of Christ" (Mother). People expect, and rightfully so, to find something of Christ in us, to discover in us that sense of God whom we are to render nearer and more tangible, not only through our ministry but in our very person. Father Léonce de Grandmaison wrote: "Certainly I desire to preach the Word of God to the best of my ability, but it is not that sentiment which has brought me here. When I was in the world, I never approached a priest without the ardent hope of finding something of God in him ... the feeling of the living presence of Christ. Yet when I was seeking God in this way and found only a man, I experienced a bitter and painful disappointment. My whole ambition, when I am ordained, is never to cause this disappointment to a single soul".

[106] Being one with Jesus, giving only Him and letting the people see only Him in us – this is what it means to “radiate Christ”. “As a co-worker, what is expected of me? Let Christ radiate and live His life in you and through you ... What is our work for? To give Christ. Your fragrance, Lord, not mine – let them look up and see only Jesus. He wants to live His life in you, to look through your eyes, walk with your feet, love with your heart...” (Mother).

[107] Jesus prayed to be glorified *in the apostles* (Jn. 17:10), in us, his ministers. Our mission, then, is to be the “glory”, the radiance of Christ, the shining of the Risen One. We are charged with continuing Christ’s mission on earth, a mission of showing forth the Father and His love: “He who sees Me has seen the Father”. Just as Christ is the “image of the unseen God” (Col. 1:15), so too must the priest be the image of the unseen Christ, the living image of the One who sent Him.

[108] God’s thirst to satiate us and unite us to Himself, witnessed to by all the prophets, accomplished in Jesus, and at work in His kingdom through the Holy Spirit, is carried on through the living of our priestly consecration. The satiating Spirit is indeed upon us; in Him we have each been “clothed with power from on high” (Lk. 24:49), so that Jesus, still longing to bring the good news to the poor, to give sight to the blind of heart, and to

bind the wounds of His wandering people, as Isaiah prophesied, may have the joy of being able to say to the world throughout the centuries, because of and through our sharing in His priesthood: "Today this prophecy is being fulfilled, even in your hearing" (Lk. 4:21), in each one of us.

## 6. Mission

*"He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor"*  
(Lk. 4:18)

[109] *"The Spirit of the Lord has anointed" us* – so as to send us, filled with His power and presence, to pour out the living waters onto the world. *Consecration exists for mission.* As our consecration is a sharing in Jesus' one priestly anointing, so our mission is a partaking, an extension, of His mission from the Father. As Jesus and in Jesus, we too are the ones "the Father has consecrated and sent into the world" (Jn. 10:36). That mission not only constitutes what we do so much as what we are, as Jesus, "whose entire existence was a complete identification with the mission entrusted him by the Father" (Hans Urs von Balthasar). We not only have a mission; we *are* our mission.

[110] The gospels describe Jesus' ministry as made up of two characteristic activities: "He went about

*preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing the sick*" (Mt. 4:23) – announcing the compassion and restorative power of God's kingdom, and putting that compassion and power into effect, demonstrating the presence of the proclaimed kingdom, by healing our sin and its consequences. His ministry of healing not only revealed a God who is love, but prefigured (cf. Mk. 2:10) the ultimate healing to be won by His death, the ultimate satiating of mankind to be won by His thirst on the Cross. Jesus shared that same mission, as well as the power of the kingdom they were to announce, with the Twelve (cf. Mt. 10:7); charging them to proclaim the forgiving, healing, and satiating power of God, and to channel that power in compassionate service, bringing a healed and satiated mankind into the peace of the Father's kingdom, and into the unity of the Trinity.

[111] As Jesus' co-workers, we are called to live His same zeal and commitment to the mission entrusted Him by the Father, to continue His proclamation and channeling of the living waters, and to mirror the life of the Trinity by our ministry of charity within the communion of the Church.

### *Serving in the Kingdom*

[112] Jesus emptied Himself not only to share our human condition, but to "be among us *as one who*

*serves*" (Lk. 22:27), "emptying himself to take the form of a servant" (Phil. 2:8). So too, our spirit of self-emptying oneness with God and people finds expression in service. As Mother Teresa insists, "faith leads to love, and love leads to service". We are not only to perform that service, but to *be* servants in mind and heart, serving not out of condescension that requires gratitude or recompense, but in a spirit of solidarity with those we serve. We are to serve with a deep sense of respect for their dignity as children of God, not keeping ourselves above those we serve by means of our very service, but in unfeigned respect placing ourselves *beneath them*. We are to live as true servants in a perennial "state of service", assuming not only the task but the "form of a servant", in such a way that priestly service constitutes our reason for being, and in a certain sense, our very being itself. Greatest among us will not be those who have made of their service a career, but rather those who have made their career true service: "the greatest among you will be the one who makes himself least of all and servant of all" (Lk. 22:26). Jesus, who "came to serve rather than be served" (Mt. 20:28), washed the disciples' feet – a task reserved to the lowliest of servants – to "leave you an example, that you might go and do the same" (Jn. 13:16).

**[113]** Our service in ministry does not exist for its

own sake; it is not an end in itself but exists for building up the presence and life of Jesus in others. And so our work must not be done merely for the sake of the work, but consciously and intentionally *for Him*. Our fundamental value is the Lord, an absolute value to which our work is secondary and relative. For our vocation is not so much a call to doing the work of our ministry as it is a call to *belong to Jesus* whose ministers we are. Our work will be the result of that belonging, not our belonging the result of our work.

[114] In this light, human success and failure lose their importance. The Lord does not ask that we are successful, but that we are faithful. "However beautiful the work is, be detached from it – even ready to give it up and be in peace. The work is not yours; you are working for Jesus. Remember that the work is His" (Mother).

[115] It is this inner freedom, this spirit of service, this joy of serving which alone gives vitality to our ministry. Rather than being a burden we carry, our ministry becomes a force which carries us, which gives energy rather than depleting it, communicating a sense of enthusiasm and even a divine urgency, for "*caritas Christi urget nos*".

[116] This spirit of service is not to be associated exclusively to the duties of the ministry, but



become an overall attitude of life, *a responsiveness which others encounter in encountering us* (as they did in meeting Mother Teresa) – an awareness beyond the limits of duty or geography that we are pastors to all, priests for all, called not only to proclaim but to demonstrate our universal brotherhood under a common Father.

[117] The spirit of universal service is born of a conscious and universal respect for each person, regardless of belief or behaviour, as a child of God and tabernacle of the suffering Christ, one whom He redeemed “at so great a price”. We must be filled with wonder at *God’s own respect and love for man*: “How precious must man be in the eyes of the Creator, if he gained ‘so great a Redeemer,’ and if God ‘gave His only Son’ in order that man ‘should not perish but have eternal life.’ In reality, the name for that deep amazement at man’s worth and dignity is the Gospel, that is to say: the Good News” (*Redemptor Hominis*, 10), a good news we proclaim by reflecting God’s own respect for man by the way we serve.

### *Proclaiming the Living Waters*

[118] Our first ministerial service is *evangelization*, the sowing of the Word. The task of evangelization “sums up the whole mission of Jesus: ‘*This is what I was sent to do.*’ These words take on their full

significance if linked to the previous verses in which Christ has just applied to Himself the words of the prophet Isaiah: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me, he has sent me to bring the good news to the poor.' Going from town to town, preaching to the poorest the joyful news of the fulfilment of the promises of the Covenant offered by God is the mission for which Jesus declares that he is sent by the Father" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 6).

[119] And for this we too are sent, to satiate that deepest hunger that is beneath all human poverty with "every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Dt. 8:3); to offer not just our words of comfort but *His* Word, to console our people with *His* consolation, to truly preach the gospel in all its purity and simplicity, in its beauty and force. We are servants of our people only as servants of the Word, unashamed and untiring bearers of the gospel "in season and out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2), for "the Spirit of the Lord is upon us".

[120] "He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor". The sower must *go out* in order to sow; we are "fishers of men" (Mt. 4:19), missionaries wherever we are: "We have the missions even in our own house; this is what we must stress even more, love for one another in parish and community" (Mother). Let us indeed stress this

missionary spirit *ad intra*, finding the missions in our own parish and people, not needing to traverse foreign lands to fulfil our desire to evangelize, but realizing that “this is the beautiful part, that we can remain where we are” (Mother), for Calcutta is indeed everywhere.

[121] Our ministry is to reflect the great themes of the kingdom. Ours is first of all then a ministry of *presence*. As God did not love us from afar, neither can we be channels of His love locked away in our superiority or professional distance. We are to serve among our people, and as one of them, in humility and respect. As the Good Shepherd who knows His sheep, calling each by name, so are we to know our people – to know their needs, their sufferings, their joys, being able to “rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep” (Rom. 12:15). We empty self by taking to heart *their* problems and needs above our own, and it is this willing self-emptying that leads us to oneness with our people. Jesus was able to be one with us because He knew us; He knew our weakness, our hopes, our needs. Only to the degree that we know our people can we render ourselves one with them in their situation, vulnerable to their sufferings and responsive to their needs.

[122] As Jesus, we are to identify entirely with our people, becoming one with them “in all things but

sin" (Phil. 2:7). Our great challenge is to remain faithful to the spirit and consequences of the Incarnation, faithful to a conscious, sought-after oneness of heart and life with our people no matter what the cost to ourselves – faithful as Mother Teresa who, not content with merely serving the people of Calcutta, made herself one with them and one of them. To live Jesus' ministry is to continue in ourselves that process of incarnation, "assuming" not the humanity of our people which we already share, but their condition, their poverty, their suffering, their need and thirst for God. Only by the effort to grow in solidarity, in immersion, presence, and identification, shall we acquire the closeness and sensitivity necessary to truly "carry one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). As long as those burdens are distant, unknown, foreign, seen as belonging to someone else – in ignorance of the fact that, as members of Christ, we are also "members one of another" (Rom. 12:5) – those burdens will never be lifted, shall never touch our shoulders, and the law of Christ will have yet to find its fulfilment in us. So a conscious living of the *consequences* of the Incarnation, that first phase of Jesus' mission lived out over thirty long years in Bethlehem and Nazareth, must be our starting point also, as we "come in the name of the Lord" (Mt. 12:9).

[123] The faith conviction, the missionary zeal, the

coherence of life, and the charity that “urges us on” in the work of evangelization become themselves a vital part of that evangelization. “Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses” (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 41). Our evangelization is truly service if done in this spirit, with the eyes and heart of servants “turned towards their master” (Ps. 123) in the Lord and in His people; in so doing that service becomes true evangelization.

[124] As Jesus then, we are called to proclaim the good news of the kingdom, and to announce to all the gift of living waters; we are called to preach the gospel with our life and to live to preach the gospel. “For this we come and are sent...” (Lk. 4:43).

### *Channeling the Saviour’s Fountains*

[125] If our primary service is evangelization, proclaiming the kingdom, it is so only to bring people *into* that kingdom, to lead them to the living waters. *What we proclaim in word we are to communicate in sacrament.* All our ministry, as Jesus’ own incarnation and mission, consists in *bridging the gap between God and people*, helping bring them to Him and Him to them, serving His presence, activity, and growth within them.

[126] Our first task in “stirring the waters of Bethesda” (Jn. 5:4) is to awaken in our people the desire to *take their baptism seriously*, “stirring up” the living waters that too often lie dormant, “choked by the worries of life and the love for riches” (Mt. 13:22). We need to remind them each Sunday of the dignity of their calling as sons and daughters of God, that they have died and risen with Christ and have become “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, set apart to declare His wonderful deeds” (1 Pt. 2:9). Our ministerial priesthood exists only to serve their baptismal priesthood – but “how are they to believe in what they have not heard?” (Rom. 10:14), unless we never tire of retelling the good news of the gift that is within them: “If you but knew the gift of God...” (Jn. 4:10).

[127] Their Baptism and sealing with the Holy Spirit in Confirmation must be seen not as a past event, a static reality, but as a living spring within them (Jn. 7:37). We need to remind them of this inner source of the Holy Spirit within them, in which they have only to believe in and call on in order to experience His comfort and aid. But only *our* faith can inspire *their* faith; only our own experience of prayer can keep our teaching on prayer from seeming shallow and contrived. If we are praying, we will not feel embarrassed to speak on prayer, to teach our people to draw from the

living waters in prayer, and to find God not just on Sundays but throughout the week.

[128] We must remind them that the gospel is not only a set of beliefs but a way of life, that the values of the kingdom go counter to those of the world, and stressing above all trust and confidence in the living God – a God who is real, ever present, and who cares for them. Only if they have learned to turn their troubles over to Him will they be able to turn over to Him their lives as well. But they can trust God only if they know Him, and know Him only if they have met Him: in prayer and in His Word. We need to encourage them to take God’s Word in hand, to come to know and love the Scriptures.

[129] The two great fonts of the living waters are found in the healing of Reconciliation and the satiating of the Eucharist. The fundamental poverty and the unseen wounds of our people require a healing only the Lord can impart, given through our generous availability and our zeal in encouraging and aiding them to approach the Saviour in the sacrament of Reconciliation. This essential ministry – allowing the Lamb of God to continue to “take away the sins of the world” – is one too often neglected by pastor and people alike, though it represents *the* characteristic power and victory of the kingdom: the breaking of the

shackles of sin and death, God's announced salvation and healing come true.

[130] In Jesus' own mind this appears as the Spirit's primary function in our ministry: "Receive the Holy Spirit: *whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven*" (Jn. 20:23). How senseless it would be to spend effort and energy in preaching the good news of God's healing, but then to neglect the wounded; to speak of the living waters while leaving people to thirst; to insist on God's mercy and yet to view the ministry of reconciliation as marginal, optional, even unwelcome in our too busy lives. We need return to perceiving this divine privilege which so scandalized the Pharisees (Mt. 9:3) as the wondrous application of the good news we proclaim, the first great font of the healing waters we bring.

[131] Our wounded people are also a people who hunger: they need not only be forgiven but *fed* by God, not only washed in the living waters but quenched by them. The Eucharist is that living Bread once broken, that living Rock that was struck to save and satiate. In this mystery, our priesthood and that of our people converge in harmony – therein converge the Holy Spirit's consecration of Jesus, of ourselves, of the Eucharistic gifts, and of our people (Gregory of Nyssa). Ours is the great privilege of making present Jesus' one infinite act



of praise of the Father and of love for man, so that our people “as a holy priesthood may offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Pt. 2:5).

[132] “The laity, dedicated to Christ and anointed by the Holy Spirit, are marvelously called and equipped to produce in themselves ever more abundant fruits of the Spirit. All their works, all their daily labour, become spiritual sacrifices in Jesus Christ. During the celebration of the Eucharist, these sacrifices are lovingly offered to the Father along with the Lord’s body. Thus as worshipers whose every deed is holy, the laity consecrate the world itself to God” (*Lumen Gentium*, 34).

[133] “The Priest, by ministry of word and prayer in bringing men to the Eucharist and consecrated living, is the permanent sign and instrument, the sacrament of Christ the Consecrator of the world. Jesus the Christ, consecrated of and to the Father, continues through his ministerial priests to consecrate bread and wine as his body and blood, in order through them to give himself to the ‘saints’ (Rom. 1:7) so as to consecrate the world through their secular activities. Christ consecrates the bread and wine only in order to consecrate hearts, and thus to transfigure the secular world of men” (Bertrand de Margerie).

[134] In all of our ministries our goal is to awaken, stimulate, and satiate our people's inborn thirst for the divine, making God no longer distant and abstract for them, but real and alive, present in the Saviour's fountains entrusted to our care.

### *Compassion: the Continuing Thirst*

[135] "Jesus went around visiting all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues and healing every kind of disease and illness. As he saw the crowds, his heart was filled with compassion for them, for they were anxious and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Mt. 9:35). In this context, we can understand the passage that follows: "Jesus then called his twelve disciples together and gave them power to cast out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness" (Mt. 10:1). Our ministry was *born of the compassion of Christ*, and so must in all its aspects reflect the power and mystery of that divine compassion. This great mystery, begun with the Incarnation and fulfilled on Calvary, revealed a God who, in Jesus, so thirsted for man as to take on all our sin, our poverty, our abandonment, our suffering, slavery, even our death. All the abyss of misery symbolized in our human hunger and thirst He took unto Himself – to the point that our thirst truly found voice in His: His thirst truly expressed ours as well as the Father's. He had become so one with us on

the Cross that our poverty cried out in His cry of thirst. At the tree of Eden, God's love for man became a Father's longing, became thirst; on the tree of Calvary that thirst became compassion, "suffering with", thirsting not only for but with a thirsting humanity.

[136] The beautiful thing, the unfathomable thing, is that Jesus' compassion continues. Jesus still thirsts. "Unlike the philosophers, Jesus not only taught but lived, to the point of suffering and dying with and for man. He does not limit Himself to see human misery, or even to come to its aid, but He himself penetrates this misery, taking it upon Himself. Jesus lives and suffers in others, for others. This is the mystery of the Incarnation ... Jesus feels the hunger of the poor, their thirst, their exhaustion, their tears, their infirmity, their bleeding, their death" (B. Matteucci).

[137] He not only feels their thirst, *He thirsts within them*, having made them one with Him: "you in Me and I in you" (Jn. 17:22). As Mother Teresa affirms, "He has made Himself the Hungry One, the Lonely One, the Needy One". Jesus *remains our Emmanuel in the poor and suffering*; He is still our God-with-us by his presence in our people. It is precisely in our poverty, there where we feel most the need and absence of God, that He mysteriously dwells among us. He has become so small, so near to us,

so one with us that He can hide beneath the very veil of our pain and thirst.

[138] There He awaits us; under the “distressing disguise” of our people He continues to ask, “Give me to drink” from the Jacob’s well of our heart. If in those moments “we knew who it is that is asking of us to drink”, and if we “only knew the gift of God” we receive in giving ourselves to Him in our ministry.

[139] In seeing the poverty of our people we are in some real way seeing the very poverty of Jesus. In revealing Himself in the “distressing disguise”, we who have seen Jesus have also seen the Father; we who have understood Jesus’ thirst find ourselves in the presence of the love and thirst of the “One who sent Him”. Jesus longing to be present in the poor and suffering reveals the thirst and longing of the Father. In realizing this gift we can say with Philip: “It is enough for us, Lord” (Jn. 14:9), for we have seen the Father’s face.

[140] How much would change, how many ramifications in our life if we but took Jesus at His word when He says, “I was hungry, I was thirsty, alone, sick, in prison ... and you did it to Me” (Mt. 25:40). “Have we gone to visit Him in His tabernacles of flesh? Do they even exist for us in our comfortable homes” (Mother), or do they exist

only for a silent and suffering Lord – a Lord, though, who “has no hands on earth but ours, no words but our words?” Jesus Crucified. How many handicapped people, mentally retarded, young people fill the hospitals. How many there are in our own neighbourhoods. Do we ever visit them? Do we ever go to share with them that Crucifixion? And Jesus said, if you want to be my disciples take up the cross and follow me. And He meant that we take up the cross and we feed Him in the hungry and we clothe Him in the naked and we take Him in” (Mother). But once, as Mother Teresa invites us, we begin to “give our hearts to love and our hands to serve”, then we become “true contemplatives in the heart of the world, touching Christ twenty-four hours a day” (Mother). And so our *seeing* Jesus in the suffering of our people leads us to *reach out* to Him, to touch Him, by loving them as He has loved them, by dying to self and ego and to our personal plans and goals, sacrificed on the daily altar of the cross of our people, of the pain of our people – from which, thanks to our ministry of compassion in Jesus’ name, not only their resurrection but our own begins to spring.

[141] Compassion is the cornerstone of our ministry, not only because it is Jesus himself who suffers and thirsts in the pain of our Calcutta, but because *compassion for physical poverty and suffering expresses, makes authentic, completes, and increases our*

*compassion for spiritual poverty and suffering.* We are to minister to the whole person, as Jesus did, respecting the sacramental nature of man and of salvation, whereby spiritual realities are expressed and communicated through outward gestures. To possess a deep compassion for man's inner poverty, we must develop a deepening compassion for man's outer poverty. This is why Jesus "went about preaching the good news *and* healing the sick": outer compassion is an integral part and necessary expression of inner compassion.

[142] Through the exercise of that outer compassion, we begin to embrace the distressing disguise. We learn to love the unlovable; far more than whatever cross may make someone "unlovable" and marginalized before the world, it is that very refusal of love that is the most crushing of crosses: "Be kind, very kind to the suffering and poor. We little realize what they go through ... treat them as temples of God" (Mother). In treating them so, as God's special temples, the poor and rejected experience what it is to be wanted, they rediscover their human dignity; for in contemplating and serving Christ in them we are pointing to a Presence within them, a Presence neither they nor the world can see, allowing them to see themselves as God sees them, reflected in our gaze and in our touch. Our charity reveals the Christ in them both to themselves and to the world.

[143] Compassion finds expression also in generosity, the ability to “walk the second mile”, to take the time to listen to people, to give more than we are asked, and even before we are asked – giving a “prevenient” love as God himself does, and as Jesus, having no other measure to our charity than that of loving without measure. As Jesus who loved us “unto death”, loving within the kingdom means to love “without counting account of the cost”, loving “until it hurts” (Mother) and beyond.

[144] This refusal to measure or to count the cost can inspire every facet of our ministry. First of all, by refusing to confine our charity to predetermined limits of time, expense, inconvenience, or labour. Jesus did none of this; His self-giving was “free” in the fullest sense: liberal, prodigal and abundant. “Freely have you received, freely shall you give”. This is the sense of the fourth vow Mother Teresa has enjoined upon herself and her sisters: to give a *wholehearted* and *wholly free* gift of service to the poor. This liberality, this *refusal to measure*, applies to that which is the basic element of every ministry: to our labour, effort, and fatigue. “You are to labour at the conversion and sanctification of the poor ... to labour, that is, hard ceaseless toiling, without results, without counting the cost” (Mother). The fatigue due to our ministry is not merely its undesired by-product, but an integral part of our

work, since our labour is grafted onto the redemptive work of Christ. "In bearing the fatigue of labour in union with Christ crucified, we collaborate with the Son of God in the redemption of humanity" (*Laborem Exercens*, 27). Therefore, not only our ministry in itself, but in a special way its very fatigue, the sleepless nights and ceaseless frustrations of which St Paul speaks, are salvific, are *Com-Passion* in the truest sense, and are as much part of our mission as they were of his.

[145] That tireless effort, which gives substance to our compassion, must lead first to "*going in search of the lost sheep*": not only visiting those who invite us, but *seeking out those who do not*, bringing to the contemporary Zacchaeus that invitation, that mercy that not only forgives, but that elicits conversion. With Jesus we are to be "friend of sinners and publicans" (Lk. 5:30), even to the "scandal" of seeking their company as Jesus did; for neither have we come for the virtuous but for sinners, the truly "poorest" of the poor. We too must "go and learn what it means: Mercy I want rather than sacrifice" (Mt. 9:13), that in understanding we might live it, and in living it, "the world might believe" that He sent us.

[146] To be genuine, our compassion, as all charity, must begin at home, within our own rectory or community, and among our brother priests. There



our compassion and solidarity find their deepest roots and potential. “Bring prayer and love for each other back into parishes and communities. The loneliness of the priest is so great, here [you who are members of Corpus Christi] must come in, to help bring that love, that fraternity among priests” (Mother). If Jesus calls us “friends”, must we not consider each other the same; shouldn’t His friendship bind us together among ourselves? “May they be one, Father, even as much as You and I are one” (Jn. 17:22).

[147] The model for our loving “as He loved us” will always be the gospel, a gospel upon which we must not be afraid to examine ourselves. It is a gospel whose radicality, if unattainable in our here-and-now, must not be rejected but striven for, held always as ideal and goal. Being a member of our Movement must make some real difference in our life, must provide some concrete stimulus to mind, heart, and way of life – so that in some real way we are not the same as we were before, and not yet that which we will be in the future. That difference should be summed up in one thing, measured with one barometer: in a *renewed and more faithful living of the gospel*, even there where it embarrasses or challenges us most. “If a man takes you to court and would have your tunic, give him your cloak as well” (Mt. 5:40). “Give to anyone who asks. If anyone asks to borrow, do not turn away, lend

without any hope of return" (Mt. 9:42). "If you wish to be perfect, go sell what you own and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven" (Lk. 18:22). "When you give a dinner, do not invite your friends, brothers, relatives or rich neighbours, for they will repay you by inviting you in return. No, when you give a meal, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind. They cannot pay you back, and you will have your reward at the resurrection of the just" (Lk. 14:12). "Lord when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or naked, sick or in prison, and did not help you? I tell you solemnly, in neglecting to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to Me" (Mt. 25:44).

[148] To love our people is to be ready to die for them, and not merely for the masses, but for each one. Each one is God's temple, and the existence of the many does not dilute or diminish the supreme value of each. As Mother Teresa insists: "Jesus would have died even for one". No sacrifice is too great to be worthy of each person's dignity, for each is Jesus. As in the Eucharist, so in the poor, Jesus is equally present in the one as in the many. Perhaps the best way of showing that no sacrifice or service is too great is precisely in showing that *none is too small*, in our readiness to do the small things for the few with love: "We are so small we look at things in a small way. But God, being almighty, sees

everything great" (Mother). Performing these little services will show us and the world the value of small things, the great efficacy of *poverty of means* in the apostolate. In this way it can be "He and not us" (Mother), as we reject with Jesus those "temptations in the desert" which we also feel – temptations to seek immediate and facile results amid hosannas, rather than choosing the Father's path of poverty, humility and patient trust, a path that leads straight to Calvary, but also (and it is the *only* path that leads there) to resurrection. Our trust is in Him, in the power of His Word spoken with our voice, spoken even silently in what we are and what we do, in the small things which leave room for God more than do some of our complicated methods and ready-made projects which often touch minds and pocketbooks, but few hearts.

[149] Before the immensity of the needs and the impossibility of meeting them, we must never doubt the value of the little we can do. Rather, we are to be always ready to give the Lord our "five loaves and two fishes", confident that *it will be He* to bless and multiply them. It is only God's love acting through us, not our elaborate programs (which often tend to impersonalise a personal God) that can satiate the thirst of our people and our God.

[150] It is *only the heart that can touch hearts*. We can

influence souls only in proportion to our love for them. This is the explanation of the astonishing fact that one sometimes meets priests who are scrupulous in carrying out their religious exercises, but whose ministry remains more or less fruitless. If one turns to them in moments of distress, one finds a mind and a way of life which are conscientious, but no greatness, no openness of heart. All souls, but especially those who are overwhelmed by suffering, have a right to expect in their priest an echo of their own grief. He must have in his priestly heart, therefore, this fire, this love which brings souls to Christ (Blessed Columba Marmion).

### *The Unity of the Kingdom*

[151] In calling us as disciples, Jesus has invited us to a life of communion with Himself, but also to a life of *communion with one another*. The one cannot be genuine without the other. Together they form the two obvious characteristics of the life of the Twelve: a life lived in the company of Jesus and in companionship with each other. Jesus' great desire is that we be one in Him as He is one with the Father:

[152] "May they be one, Father, even as you and I are one, may they be one in us" (Jn. 17:21). The Trinity wishes to extend *ad extra* not only their love,

but to share also the divine communion which is the fruit of that love. The Trinity becomes the source and goal of our own unity and communion. In fact, the very word *communion* speaks of the full unity towards which the Holy Spirit invites us who “possess the same Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:4). While we may feel that we work enough, we can never say that our unity is enough, for it will ever be a distant shadow of the unity of the Three. And if we are never satisfied with the degree of our unity, then we will want to work at deepening it, at becoming channels of His peace, healing divisions through forgiveness and reconciliation, and sharing with our brother priests those many joys and sorrows we too often bear alone.

[153] Communion implies more than just being together, more than superficial benevolence; it demands a true sharing of life, as among the Twelve, a sharing at all levels of our oneness with God and each other in Jesus. For our charity to *become communion*, it must reflect the mutual opening, the presence, the deep listening and giving, that is the communion of the Trinity.

[154] As Jesus’ priesthood and ours are one and the same, all of us brother priests together form but one priesthood, one body in Him who makes us one. After the Ascension, the Spirit of Jesus continued (and continues) to unite the apostles

through the gift of Peter, “upon this Rock”, in whom it is Jesus Himself who is the Rock. To refuse the unity to which we are called and of which Peter is the servant, or to “preach a gospel other than the one we have received” (Gal. 1:7), is to witness against the unity of Jesus’ one priesthood. The Spirit of Jesus continues to call us to communion, and it is in the *gift of Peter* that the same Spirit makes that communion possible, practicable, and real.

[155] Our invisible communion in the Holy Spirit is to find its visible expression in community, in a deliberate living of all the outer consequences of our inner unity. *Community gives form to our unity*, and provides the concrete means of experiencing and deepening our communion. As the Church, built on the foundation of the apostles, the unity of our priesthood is lived in that community formed around the person and ministry of the bishop. Together with the Church, our Movement heartily encourages those priests who propose to live together in the simplicity and fraternity of the early Church, sustaining each other in prayer and ministry through the bond of charity, and rendering more visible the unity of the presbyterate. It is our fervent hope that the presence of the Movement within any diocese will be first and foremost a constant force towards unity, that we will ever be servants of unity and

builders of community, encouraging above all a concrete love for the priests of one's own diocese. In this spirit, the Movement proposes to sponsor days of fraternity and prayer so as to foster this sense of communion in community.

[156] But perhaps the place where our living and extending of the communion of the Trinity is most vital and visible is *within our own parish*, the people of God confided to us as microcosm of the diocese and the Church. In making ourselves one with them as Jesus, we are to make them *one in Jesus*. Their unity will depend on us, on our oneness with Jesus and with them, on our desire, our prayer, our working for that unity. The parish is to be the expression of the presence and activity of Jesus in people and place, a presence whose visibility and efficacy *depends* on unity: "See how they love one another". "Where two or three are united in My name, I am there in the midst of them" (Mt. 18:20).

[157] In imitation of the Trinity and in union with Jesus, our charity must lead to service, our service to communion, and our communion to community. Here is our vocation: to reflect the Trinity through *charity in communion*, "that the world might believe".

### *Ministerial Charity: the Sixth Way*

[158] Works of compassion are signs of the kingdom, signs of the presence of the God who first revealed Himself, in word and deed, as Love: “*Deus caritas est*”. We communicate Christ, and we reveal God, by *radiating what He is* – charity – in what we are and do, in words and works of charity. Charity is truly revelation, a “taking flesh” of the gospel. A Moslem mullah, after silently observing this incarnate “love in action” in the Home for the Dying in Calcutta, declared to Mother Teresa: “All my life I have known that Jesus was a prophet. But today *I know that He is God* ... for only a God could give that kind of joy in serving one’s fellow man”.

[159] “Today I know that He is God” through works that silently speak Jesus’ words of charity. This radical and joyous charity is perhaps the single most cogent proof of God’s existence in a materialistic and pluralistic world, in which reasoned arguments alone are no longer capable of touching hearts or changing minds. “Today people all over the world want to see” (Mother). “Above all the gospel must be preached by witness [...] It is therefore primarily by her conduct and by her life that the Church will evangelize the world” (*Evangelium Nuntiandi*, 21, 41). St Thomas’ *five ways* of showing the existence of God no longer suffice for a world starving in its wealth as in its poverty.



There needs to be also a “sixth way”, the way of charity – an irrefutable argument, a vision, an experiencing through acts of charity of the Eternal God who is Charity. This “sixth way” is in actuality the first way, God’s own way of revealing Himself, by “having loved us first” (1 Jn. 4:19).

[160] As well as revealing God and His love, charity also *communicates* God’s love. It not only speaks of God, but in a certain sense mediates the presence of the God of whom it speaks. Christ not only receives our charity, but the great mystery of charity is that it is Christ himself who, through us, performs and is present in that charity, “for love is of God” (1 Jn. 4:7). Works of charity are the works of God, not only because they become His instruments, but because they are privileged with His special presence, precisely because God is charity. “Every work of love brings a person face to face with God” (Mother). Charity is in a sense “sacramental”: it communicates God even while it reveals Him. It is both sign and seed, both testimony and gift. Works of love allow us to discover the God of Love, who in that charity not only reveals Himself as lover of mankind and filler of our poverty, but in those same acts of revelatory charity is in fact loving mankind and filling our poverty.

[161] Precisely because it is beauty, because it attracts, charity *elicits a response in kind* on the part of the beholder. Charity invites, encourages, stimulates, and becomes “contagious”. Ideals attract only when they are lived, made incarnate, exemplified. Beauty finds its power only when given *form*, and so, “to learn charity, we need to see it lived” (Mother). Michael Gomes, who in the beginning took Mother Teresa under his roof when she was still unknown and living in the street with no help but God, once remarked concerning the contagious quality of her works of love: “Every work has had a simple and humble beginning. Her slum schools: she finds the need for one in an area, a spot is selected, a man is asked to clear the grass, the ground is the blackboard, a stick is used as chalk, the number of children increases, a passer-by is struck and he gives a table, and another gives a blackboard and so on”. Charity radiates itself, and is fruitful and self-propagating with the very freshness and vitality of God. Only those who have received charity can believe in charity. Only those who have seen charity can believe in a God of charity whom they cannot see. But once perceived, this charity leads not only to belief, but back again to charity, a new-found charity which in turn initiates that same cycle of belief-attraction-response in others, in an ever-widening circle of grace.

**[162]** This is our vocation, to reveal God. And this is revealing God, this is proclaiming His presence: to radiate Christ in words and works of ministerial charity that, however small, mirror the beauty of the Trinity. Is Christianity truly the answer to the world's thirst? Or are we to expect another? May our lives and our answer be able to reflect Jesus' own: "Go and tell John what you have seen" (Lk. 7:20).

## Part III: Thirsting for the Lord

*"You are anxious and troubled about many things, but one alone is necessary" (Lk. 10:41)*

### 7. Conversion of the Heart

[163] *"I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance ... that you are bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. But I have this against you: you have fallen from your early love" (Rev. 2:2-5).*

#### *The Key to Holiness*

[164] It is conversion, the desire and decision to change, that begins the exodus of heart that can bring us to renew and relive our "early love". Jesus warns especially us, the professionally religious, that only the effort to emerge from our complacent mediocrity, only the desire for conversion, will gain us entry into the kingdom we open to others. The very nature of the kingdom demands conversion: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt. 4:17). Our over-busy and unexamined life is our single most dangerous foe, for "if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves" (1 Jn. 1:8), and so "our sin remains" (Jn. 9:41).

[165] Throughout the gospels, Jesus' harshest words were for the clergy of His time, and His greatest sorrow the lack of faith in His own apostles. Would it be any different were He to return today? Would He be forced to accuse us of having become "blind guides" (Mt. 15:16) who "honour me with their lips, but whose heart is far from me" (Is. 29:13)? Or would His one complaint be that we have "fallen from our early love", that we could be better than we are if we but stopped making peace with our mediocrity and asked Him to change us – that He who could not have loved each of us more, expects more from each of us. We must each arrive at saying that Jesus has come to call *me* to conversion, has "come to bring a sword" into my daily life (Mt. 10:34). Our renewal, our conversion, will ever be but a response to God's own "conversion," His own "turning towards" each one of us in love, a conversion that won our first "renewal" in His blood. May our conversion to Him be as total as His to us.

### *Faith*

[166] The first step in our journey towards holiness is a revitalizing of faith. We cannot be satisfied with a textbook faith, a faith that is disincarnate, one that is anything less than a real and daily contact with a real God. Faith puts us in God's presence, is a meeting, a direct touching of God. Mere intellectual

consent to Truth is as inferior to lived faith as reading the description of a person would be to actually meeting that person. For St. John, faith is already a type of vision, of direct personal contact. We need ask ourselves in what category is our own expression of faith. "But we need not wander in the desert all our life long; living faith is a gift that is there for the asking" (Muhlen).

[167] "Examine yourselves to see whether you are holding to your faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize that *Jesus Christ is in you?*" (2 Cor. 13:5). The Jesus who lives in our hearts by faith releases His transforming, renewing power also by faith. "Do you believe I can do this for you? Let it be done according to your faith" (Mt. 9:28). A superficial faith can never be a channel for Jesus' power, as the superficial contact of the crowds who jostled Jesus produced no effect, no healing. Only the Canaanite woman, who touched what all others the touched but did so with deep faith, felt the "power that went out from him" (Lk. 8:46). Faith is the interiorizing of the gospel and its realities, the soul's contact with the renewing power of Jesus. "This is the victory that overcomes the world: your faith" (1 Jn. 5:4).

### *Blessed are the pure of heart*

[168] The radicality that is the common

denominator of the demands of the kingdom finds expression first of all in *purity of heart*, an undivided love that refuses to serve two masters, a wholeness of heart that places no obstacle, no “false god” between itself and the transforming love of Christ. “If your eye is sound, your whole body will be filled with light” (Mt. 6:22). Purity of heart is that “narrow door” (Mt. 7:13) that leads to true freedom, the freedom to love wholly as God has loved us. “Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and of spirit, and make holiness perfect” (2 Cor. 7:1). “How pure the heart must be to be able to listen as God speaks in the silence of the heart, because that is the beginning of prayer. How pure the hands must be to say *This is My Body, This is My Blood*. How pure the lips must be to absolve in His name” (Mother).

### *Humility*

[169] Perhaps the virtue most easily lost to us as professional religious is that of humility, the sincere and peaceful realization that we are but “useless servants”, dependent not on talent or position but on Him alone. Mother Teresa insisted that Jesus could have taught us many things, but what was closest to His heart was that we learn His humility: “Learn from Me, for I am meek and humble of heart”. The kingdom opens only to the humble.

“Receive the kingdom of God like a child” (Lk. 18:18). Humility is the hallmark of the kingdom, so we will be well to not take lightly the Lord’s warning that only the childlike shall enter. Faith itself seems to depend on humility: “How can you believe, you who seek glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?” (Jn. 5:44). What is not Him is nothing, and without Him we are and can do nothing. How much time and energy are lost, how much work futile, fruitless in time and in eternity, for not having humility as its foundation. How many houses shall fall on the Last Day for not having the Lord as their builder (Ps. 126). “The Lord has more need of our humility than of our successes” (Gaston Courtois).

### *Seek the Lord*

[170] The “one thing necessary” to the process of conversion and renewal is *desire for God*, to consciously seek Him in all we do, “with all one’s heart and all one’s mind” (Mt. 22:37). This was perhaps the most characteristic of Mother Teresa’s virtues – her deep and abiding thirst for Jesus, her yearning for God in all and above all. This longing for God, preferring Him to all else and seeking Him above all else, should likewise mark the lives of her spiritual family, of whom we gratefully count ourselves members. Only to the degree that we *seek*



Him shall we find Him; only as much as we thirst for Him shall we partake and be satiated. Solely to the extent that we are seeking each day anew to make Him the centre of our life, the centre of our waking moments, can He fill us and our people through us.

“If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, at God’s right hand” (Col. 3:1). Our search for God, our answer to God’s call, must not be associated only with the moment of leaving home. If we see that search as ended, then indeed it has – and this is the danger in neglecting something so seemingly obvious, yet so easily lost. *The moment we cease to seek the Lord we cease to find Him.* But we need only begin that search again to once more experience the joy of finding, knowing that our desire for Him will never be without fruit, “for he who seeks *always* finds” (Mt. 7:8).

### ***Our Lady: Jacob’s Well***

[171] “In our ministerial priesthood there is the wonderful and penetrating dimension of nearness to the Mother of Christ” (John Paul II, *Letter to Priests on Holy Thursday, 1979*) We believe that her example and guidance in our life holds the key to the renewal of our priesthood, even as it did for the Eleven, and in a most particular way for the Apostle John. They, as we, were full of sincerity and

good intentions. They had grown in knowledge and intimacy with the Lord through three years of ministry at His side. They had become active, fruitful, energetic preachers of the good news He had taught them. They were mature disciples convinced of their ability to remain faithful to the Master: until that Night. Each left Him then, even as He predicted – each betrayed Him in his own way, even “the disciple Jesus loved”. But of them all it was John who, recognizing his weakness, went to Mary. John found in her strength, serenity, a love that surpassed his own; a love to strengthen his own, a light to guide him and a support to sustain him. Mary brought John to fidelity, to stand as lone witness among the apostles to Jesus’ priestly self-sacrifice.

[172] If we in our weakness, in our failing, yet in our desire to grow, turn to her who is Mother to every “disciple” (Jn. 19:27); if she becomes increasingly someone real in our life, she will lead us, as John, to a fidelity and generosity beyond what we had known before. She can become for us a living “well of Jacob”, drawing for us the living waters, reminding her Son that “we have no wine” and reminding, guiding, and strengthening us in “doing all He tells us” (Jn. 2:5).

[173] We have only to learn John’s lesson, that of “taking Mary unto our own” – a lesson the Eleven

would all have learned by Pentecost – consecrating and entrusting our lives, our ministry, and our renewal to her guidance. As we live this gift, we will come to appreciate and rejoice in it, humbly and gratefully acknowledging what we have received, and marvelling in the same Holy Spirit that inspired Elizabeth: “Who am I that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?” (Lk. 1:42).

[174] She is our Mother not merely in imagery, nor by “will of man but of God himself” (Jn. 1:13). From the cross of His hidden and continued Compassion under the distressing disguise, Jesus continues to give the solemn gift of His Mother to those who, like John, seek to accompany Him along the paths that lead to the countless Calvaries from which He still thirsts: “Disciple, behold your Mother”.

[175] “From that moment, the disciple took her unto his own” (Jn. 19:27). We who continue this tender mystery must do so fully, taking Mary “unto our own”, being the “cause of her joy as Jesus was, keeping close to her as He did” (Mother), taking to ourselves “her whom we can never separate from any of our joys, to whom we confide all our sorrows, and through whom we pass all our affections. Let us not think that we are working with her if we only say a few prayers in her honour. We must live habitually with her, have recourse to

her with childlike confidence in all our joys and sorrows, imitating her virtues and abandoning ourselves completely into her hands” (Mother).

[176] By praying as she prayed, and praying with her, entering into her experience of the mysteries of Jesus’ life in the contemplative praying of the rosary, her soul becomes as a living filter through which we ourselves experience the mystery of the Living God. Her emptying made her one with the emptied Jesus, and with all mankind whose emptiness He assumed. “She is absolutely empty: empty of pride, envy, jealousy, bitterness, malice and all that sort of thing. That is why she can be full of God. And we, in seeking that kind of emptiness, practice true devotion to her. ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord’, lowly, hidden, absolutely empty of self” (Mother).

[177] In her emptiness she was full, being able to give only Jesus because she was “so full of Jesus as to bring Him to others ... The most beautiful part of Our Lady was that when Jesus came into her life, immediately, in haste, she went to Elizabeth to give Jesus to her and to her son. As we read in the Gospel, the child leapt with joy at this first contact with Christ (Mother).

[178] The mystery of her Heart is one of perfect oblation: oblation both as self-emptying and as

totality of gift, a double “pouring out” in harmony with Him who accomplished His sacrificial oblation in and through hers. Because her Heart was so completely emptied so as to be completely filled, and to so completely give, she is both Virgin of the Poor and Mother of Charity. If poverty and charity go together, then she whose poverty of spirit knew such depths must possess a heart carved out by that poverty, whose depth of love remains unsoundable to us. In her poverty she is also Mother of Charity, as that abyss of poverty becomes an abyss and font of Trinitarian love. This is the double mystery of her Heart, the mystery of her poverty and her charity, that our Movement wishes to proclaim, imitate, and hold dear. For this double mystery made her what we are to be: Christ-bearers.

[179] The Corpus Christi Movement wishes to ever find its inspiration, guidance and protection in the patronage of Mary, Mother of the Church and Mother of priests. In consecrating the Movement to her Immaculate Heart, the “Cause of our joy”, we ask her to share with us her poverty of spirit, her humility, her purity of heart, her prayerfulness and intimacy with the Lord, her desire to give Jesus rather than self, and a share in the undivided love with which she herself loved Him. Our Movement intends to remain grafted and rooted in Mary, in her experience of the mystery of God’s love

revealed in her Son, in the hope of placing our Movement within her own “movement” of loving response to the Trinity’s mercy and love.

[180] Let us never cease to ask of her this grace, to ask the gift of *conversion* and *renewal*, the gift of her poverty of spirit and her charity: “Mary our dearest Mother, give us your Heart, so beautiful, so pure, so immaculate, so full of love and humility, that we may be able to receive Jesus in the Bread of Life, love Him as you loved Him, and serve Him in the distressing disguise” (Mother).

## 8. Program of Life

*“New wine belongs in new wine skins”* (Mt 5:36)

[181] Our interior conversion of the heart needs to find concrete expression in “newness of life” (Rm 6:4), providing “new wine skins” for the new wine of renewal, becoming “doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (Jam. 1:22). Belonging to the Movement should more and more involve some real change in the way we live. As St Paul invites us, “I exhort you to live a life worthy of the gospel” (Phil. 1:27), “a life worthy of your calling” (Eph. 4:1).

[182] As we have stated, conversion and renewal

are fundamentally a process of new beginnings, but those beginnings need to be concrete; they must become “new wine skins”: planned changes or initiatives capable of containing and channeling the desire for conversion and renewal. The process of renewal, therefore, requires not only conversion of heart but a *program of life*, a program simple enough to be lived yet challenging enough to effect real change in us.

[183] The formulation of a program of life will embrace universal principles and suit them to specific personal areas of need. We need ask ourselves not only, for example, if we are seeking the Father’s will, but even more importantly, if what we are doing *now* is or is not His will, is or is not being done solely for His glory, etc.

[184] The first step in constructing a program of life is to “examine ourselves” (2 Cor. 13:5), with great honesty and specificity, asking above all that the Lord himself enlighten us as to what He would have us change or improve: “All these I have observed from my youth; what do I still lack?” (Mt. 19:20).

[185] The Lord will indeed speak, He will infallibly answer our questions, if we but have the courage to ask them. Let us offer a few “starting points”, trusting the Lord to supply the rest:

1. It is necessary that others meet in us one who really knows the Jesus of whom he speaks. Are we aware of our spiritual poverty in often contenting ourselves to preach what others have written?
2. Are we speaking from experience when we pronounce the words, God, Jesus, Holy Spirit?
3. Often an immense pride is at the root of our difficulties in coming closer to Christ. Do we trust ourselves, our theology, our psychology, our pastoral plans more than prayer and the guidance of the Holy Spirit"? (Heribert Muhlen).
4. Have we become entrapped in a lifestyle that little reflects the spirit of the gospel or the lifestyle of Jesus?
5. Have we lost a spirit of zeal, falling into the law of minimum expenditure of effort and maximum ease and leisure? "Are we attached to our priesthood only as honest functionaries, not as ones entrusted with the mission of bringing fire to this earth?" (René Coste).
6. Have we allowed our ministry to become a career, a channel for ambition, success, and advancement?
7. Have we gradually lost sight of the essentially spiritual dimension of our ministry, forgetting that Jesus' kingdom will never be of this world?



8. Are we striving to maintain purity of heart? Generous enough to make whatever sacrifices necessary to achieve it (Mt 5:29)?
9. In the desire to be popular, to be applauded, have we betrayed the gospel and the Lord, as Peter warming himself at the fire? Do we avoid proclaiming unpopular truths or taking unpopular positions?
10. Has prayer become a chore for us? Do we make the effort to grow from a superficial prayer that can never change us to deep prayer that is a face-to-face meeting with the Lord?
11. Do we ourselves take advantage of the Lord's gift of forgiveness in the sacrament of Reconciliation?
12. Do we take the time to pray before Mass, so as to truly *pray* and not just say the Mass?

[186] The process of renewal is an ongoing one. If we are even occasionally faithful to it the Lord will take us ever closer, show us ever more how much He has loved us and how much love He expects from us. The Movement sees St. Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises* as a particularly effective tool in preserving and deepening the renewal process, not only as an isolated experience but as a program in itself for day-to-day interiorizing of the realities of the gospel.

[187] As stated above, we believe that a simple, concrete challenge is the foundation for any effective program of life. To this end we suggest three basic elements that can provide the framework for constructing a personal program (these three points can also provide the material for routine progress evaluation):

1. **Prayer:** Ask yourself how you are praying now, and how you would like to pray. Above all, set aside a daily period for deep prayer, at a time and place where you will not be disturbed. Be absolutely faithful (begin again!). This prayer can be most fruitful in the presence of the Sacrament that is the source of our prayer and priesthood.
2. **Lifestyle:** Do you recognize the gospel in your present lifestyle? Ask for the grace, and begin to eliminate what is not of or for the Lord, and to simplify in what is superfluous. This will bring a great sense of inner liberation and joy. "If you wish to be perfect..."
3. **Charity:** Am I living, as did Mother Teresa, to satiate Christ's thirst in my people? Is that my first goal in ministry and life? Do I consciously strive to radiate Christ's charity and compassion in the various aspects of my ministry, in word and in deed: "By this we know love, that He laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers" (1 Jn. 3:16).

[188] While each of these three elements are vital to our renewal, *prayer* is by far the most important, the key to living all three. While we may formulate many points in drawing up our personal program, let there be but one inviolable resolution, to be kept at any cost: *a daily period of deep prayer in the presence of the Eucharist*. This one practice will ensure and vitalize all the rest, for it is a coming in touch with the living waters at their source, a drawing from the living font of our priesthood and our renewal.

[189] While recognizing the primacy of prayer, we need also to recognize the interconnection of these three basic areas, as a tripod which needs all three legs to stand. Not one of the three are optional, but are each an integrating part of the whole. Without poverty of spirit, for example, it is impossible to truly or deeply pray, for our heart is divided from the outset. Prayer will remain superficial, and any attempt at deep prayer uncomfortable, as long as we are still attempting to serve two masters. As Mother Teresa observes, we must be poor enough to pray, and we must pray enough to be able to love.

[190] A common denominator in all our failings (in poverty, in prayer and in charity) is but one: having allowed in our heart and our life some desire *other than the Lord and His cross*. As long as our heart is a willing host to multiple desires, to even one desire

outside of Him, we will not only never be what the Lord expects us to be, but we will never be happy. Paradoxically, desire for Jesus and His cross is our only source of happiness and peace. This is blessedness of poverty of spirit – to desire but one thing, to desire the Lord alone.

[191] Without that desire we may seem to have everything, but in reality we have nothing; we are empty. Without that singleness of desire, our priesthood, for all its accomplishments, will have been wasted at many levels. Without that desire we will speak perhaps of conversion, but never change. Yet with that desire, despite our failings and weaknesses, despite our inner poverty, we have everything – for that desire itself will slowly yet inexorably change us. As the saints tell us, even if we see that our lives are full of other desires, full of false gods, we have only to begin *desiring to desire only Him*. If we faithfully plant that desire in our hearts, it will be as a seed that grows and spreads its roots, uprooting all the rest.

[192] But that desire is not something merely natural; it is a gift, and a gift the Lord can never refuse. He himself wants us to want it; He asks us to ask. As that desire grows, He will grow in us, for the very measure of our desire will be the measure of receiving Him. *We have only to ask this one gift, the gift of desiring Jesus alone and His cross in our life, and*

*to ask that that desire always grow.* And the fruits of that asking, the fruits of that desire will be immediate: an increase of His peace, His joy, and His presence, especially there where we have been unable to find Him before. And perhaps for the first time, as that desire begins to grow, will we come to understand the magnitude of the love He wishes to give and receive, to taste the depth, the beauty, and the fruitfulness of our call.

[193] And no matter how weak, how unfaithful we have been, the Lord wants us to know that He loves each of us more than we can imagine. He wishes to tell us each personally, directly: “You are precious to me; I have carved you on the palm of my hand; you are mine” (Is 49:16). If we but answer His invitation, if we but begin to desire Him more actively and deeply, we can be sure that He will do the rest, that “He who has begun this good work in you will see it through to completion” (Phil. 1:6).

## **9. Organisation of the CCM**

[194] The Movement constitutes a worldwide fraternity of brother priests bound together in a common goal as “one heart and one mind”. We propose that the vision and goal we share must remain the one and only bond that unites us to the Movement and to one another. In order to remain

faithful to the “incarnational” nature of the Movement we wish to reaffirm the “Nazareth message” of the Movement, refusing the temptation to distract the priest in any way from the people and duties the Lord has already entrusted to him. No matter how large the Movement may one day become, we firmly desire that it remain small in spirit, untrammelled by organization, poor enough of human means to leave room for the Spirit of Jesus.

[195] The Movement does not exist for itself, but for the presbyterate of the local church. So it seeks to remain hidden and transparent, not calling attention to itself but to Jesus living within the priesthood. We wish not to appear as a definable body, but rather as that leaven lost entirely within the dough. What must appear is not an organization but a message, a vision, a call to gospel renewal within ourselves and within our parishes. The Movement must appear within the Church only as a transparency, as a small voice for the Word, as something moving the priest to give of himself not to some new reality, but to the Lord – “Peter, do you love Me more than these?” – and to his own people – “Feed My lambs, feed My sheep” (Jn 21).

[196] Each one of us must feel responsible for spreading the Movement and its message among his brother priests, not as an invitation to an

organisation, but as an appeal to a way of life. Each is to feel above all the call to pray for the brothers of his diocese and to engage as individuals and as a movement in an apostolate of intercession for all those who sow and harvest the seed and the fruit of the Word. The more the Movement remains something small yet universal, simple yet challenging, hidden yet concrete, the more it is like the mustard seed of the measure of yeast, and the more it will be faithful to its charism and fruitful for the spreading of the kingdom.

## **10. Membership**

[197] Today, the Corpus Christ Movement is made up of “members” and “associates”.

Bishops who live their participation in the Movement in accordance with the exercise of their episcopal ministry, diocesan priests, and religious priests (with the permission of their superior) may be members of the CCM. Those who are interested to become members are called to contact the Regional Coordinators. In the meantime, they become associates and are called to familiarise themselves with the spirituality of the Movement by reading the recommended bibliography, participating in local, regional or international activities of the Movement, and sharing in the

apostolate of the MC family through contact with the Sisters, Brothers, Fathers and Missionaries of Charity lay movements and co-workers. Following an adequate time of formation, as indicated in the Formation Manual of the Movement, they are called to make a formal request by presenting a written application to the General Council. Following an approval of the General Council, they will be invited to commit themselves by a formal promise (CCM Oblation) to live the spirit of the Movement.

[198] Bishops, diocesan priests, religious priests (with the permission of their superior), deacons and seminarians (with the permission of their rector) who wish to participate to the spirit and activities of the Movement, including the ability to be spiritually adopted by a religious sister, can be associate members of the Movement. Those who wish to be associates are admitted without any formality, since their participation does not involve the establishment of any juridical bonds. In fact, associate members may participate freely in the spiritual activities and they may take advantage of the benefits in a spirit of service to the priests, for whom Mother Teresa wished to found the CCM.

## **11. Oblation**

[199] Those who have been associated for a time



and who feel invited by the Lord to make a fuller commitment to Him within the Movement may do so by means of a personal act of “oblation”, after the acceptance by the General Council.

[200] Oblation is a further step in the commitment to live the three basic elements the Movement: prayer, simplified lifestyle, and ministerial charity.

[201] As the entire priesthood of Jesus in all its phases was an “oblation”, a pouring out, a self-emptying in loving service to God and man; so by means of this free act of self-giving the priest intends to enter more deeply into Jesus’ own priestly oblation.

[202] Jesus’ oblation contained and expressed the three fundamental elements of the oblation made within the Movement. His oblation 1) was above all prayer, praise, and glorification of the Father 2) carried out by “despoiling himself of glory” and “making himself poor” from birth to burial so as to proclaim the riches of another kingdom not of this world and 3) showed in all His life and ministry the love of the Father, even unto death.

[203] Hence, oblation is first of all a personal response to the Lord who calls us to give more of ourselves, to be more fully His, to allow Him to act more freely in our ministry. It is a renewal of our

consecration within His own, within His consecratory oblation as lived from Nazareth to Calvary.

[204] Oblation is secondly a new and deeper commitment to the people we already serve; a new and free choosing of those the Lord has already chosen to give us; an “adoption” by a new title; beginning to see and treat our people as true family within the family of the Trinity. As the self-emptying oblation of Jesus made of us His adoptive family, so too our oblation binds us to our adoptive parish family and to those under our pastoral care, making us truly one in the Lord, with all the resultant consequences of that unity and binding.

[205] Oblation is basically an act of the heart, a silent gift of self to the Lord and the people, a perduring inner disposition of offering within and an extension of Jesus’ own offering. As such, this act is to be made and renewed at our daily Eucharistic offertory, offering ourselves with and for Jesus, with and for our people. It is a wordless giving repeated daily so as to be lived daily as an act of renewal. As Jesus assumed our nature by oblation, we in a sense “assume” our people at the moment of the Offertory so as to be consecrated for them and with them as one living temple for the Spirit at the moment of Eucharistic consecration.

[206] Even though it is a wordless gift and a disposition of heart, it needs to find specific formulation so as to be incarnated in daily life. Herein lies its close connection with one's personal program of life. As that program, it is intended to respond to the needs and working of grace in each individual priest, and thus its formulation and terms are left to the promptings of the Spirit of Jesus in each one.

[207] In its specific terms, as a type of "covenant" with God and our people, the oblation will vary from priest to priest, and find fuller expression and development through the succeeding phases and experiences of our life in the Lord. But always and in all, the substance, the seed will remain the same: a spirit and concrete desire of self-offering response to Jesus and to His thirsting brothers and sisters – as Isaiah answering God's call "Whom shall we send?" with our "Send me" (Is. 6:8). With Jesus we realise that our worship is not only to offer the sacrifice of someone else, but to make of ourselves a living oblation, a "sacrifice of praise" together with Christ: "Sacrifice and holocaust you desired not ... Behold, I come". Indeed, we wish to make of ourselves that self-emptying holocaust, that sacrifice of charity. "Be imitators of Christ by loving one another as he has loved you ... giving himself up in our place as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Eph. 5:2).

**[208]** In its specific terms, the act of oblation is to be renewed solemnly each year on the feast day of Corpus Christi. Since this great feast of the Church gives us occasion to reflect on the gift of our priesthood and the way we are living that gift, it is an opportune time to make a process of revision and renewal in the terms the Holy Spirit may suggest.

**[209]** This process of revision and renewal of the act of oblation is to reflect, and in turn be reflected in, a parallel revision of our program of living our oblation. That which begins as a simple desire or attraction of spirit must undergo a process of incarnation, of concretization. It will thus initiate real and concrete changes in our daily life, so that as the result of our oblation there be a gradually more marked difference between the way we lived and thought before and the way we live now as committed members of the Movement. The fruit of fidelity to our act of oblation must be a genuine process of “conversion and belief in the Gospel” (Mk. 1:15).

**[210]** The official text of the CCM Oblation is:  
“I ... offer myself in oblation, wholly and forever, to satiate and proclaim the infinite Thirst of Father, Son and Holy Spirit for love and souls, revealed in Jesus’ great cry of Thirst from the Cross. Henceforth, I take this as the sole purpose of my

life and the sole intention of all my acts, abandoning all else into Your hands, O Lord, and giving You the most complete freedom over me and all that concerns me, that I may quench Your thirst in whatever You may choose in Your providence. I make this Oblation through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cause of Our Joy, and in her hands I entrust my desire to satiate her Son in humility, faithfulness and generosity”.

## **12. Spiritual Adoption**

[211] The members and associates of the CCM may be spiritually adopted by the Missionaries of Charity Sisters, in the same way priests were adopted by St Therese of Lisieux. Mother Teresa explained to the Sisters the meaning of “spiritual adoption” in these four points:

1. Priests will be adopted by the Sisters one by one.
2. There will be no correspondence between the Sisters and their adopted priests.
3. The Sisters will offer real prayer and penance for their adopted priests that the latter may be holy. Mother Teresa asked the Sisters to really pray for their priest, just like St Therese of Lisieux prayed for priests, to concentrate on

him, to remember him and put him in the Chalice during Holy Mass.

4. The priests will pray for their adoptive Sisters as St Therese of Lisieux writes: "I wanted only one priest as a brother to remember me each day at the holy altar".

## **Conclusion**

[212] As Peter told the cripple at the Temple's gate, our gift is "neither silver nor gold, but what we have we will give". The compassion and power of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, His love for the last, the least, and the lost, and His desire to "bring all things into one in Him" that as the final fruit of His and our priesthood, of His and our self-emptying love in service, "God may be all in all."

[213] It is our hope then, that the Corpus Christi Movement – this desire Mother Teresa has left us as gift to live the poverty of spirit, the zeal and joyful loving service of the gospel; this desire for priestly renewal, though something small and silent and seen only by the Lord – may with His blessing and Our Lady's continued guidance and protection, truly become "something beautiful for God" (Mother).

## **APPENDIX 1: IMPORTANT TEXTS**





## Mother's Letter to a Priest

[214] Dear Co-worker of Christ, Father,

You have said 'yes' to Jesus and He has taken you at your word. The Word of God became Jesus, the poor one. And so this terrible emptiness you experience. God cannot fill what is full—He can fill only emptiness—deep poverty—and your 'yes' is the beginning of being or becoming empty. It is not how much we really 'have' to give—but how empty we are—so that we can receive fully in our life and let Him live His life in us. In you today—He wants to relive His complete submission to His Father—allow Him to do so. It does not matter what you feel but what He feels in you. Take away your eyes from yourself and rejoice that you have nothing—that you are nothing—that you can do nothing.

[215] Give Jesus a big smile—each time your nothingness frightens you. This is the poverty of Jesus. You and I must let Him live in us and through us in the world. Cling to Our Lady for she too—before she could become full of grace—full of Jesus—had to go through that darkness. "How could this be done..." but the moment she said 'yes' she had need to go in haste and give Jesus to John and his family. Keep giving Jesus to your people not by words—but by your example, by your being

in love with Jesus—by radiating His holiness and spreading His fragrance of love everywhere you go. Just keep the joy of Jesus as your strength—be happy and at peace, accept whatever He gives—and give whatever He takes with a big smile. You belong to Him—tell Him—I am yours—and if you cut me to pieces every single piece will be only all yours. Let Jesus be the victim and the priest in you. I have started going to visit our houses in India—so I have a beautiful time alone with Jesus in the train.

Pray for me as I do for you.

Yours in Jesus,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mother Teresa". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name "Yours in Jesus,".

## Mother speaks on the Priesthood

**[216] *What is the relation of a priest in his daily life, in his ministry with the three persons of the Trinity?***

*Mother Teresa:* We read in the scriptures that God loved the world so much that He uttered the Word and the Word became Flesh; and He comes and dwells within us and with us. And so the priest today is the one that has been sent also, to be that living love, that God's love for the world today. The priest is that sign, he is the living flame, he is the sunshine of God's love for the world, he is the burning flame, he is the hope of eternal happiness. So for the priest to be completely at the disposal of the Father he must be completely one with the Son, and utter and bring the love of the Father and the Son and the Spirit, in his life, in his attitudes, in his actions, because today God loves the world through each priest who takes the place of Christ Himself. He is another Christ) and to his own people ("Feed My lambs, feed My sheep").

**[217] *What should the Eucharist be for a priest?***

*Mother Teresa:* Christ made Himself Bread of Life to satisfy our hunger for His Love, and then He makes Himself the Hungry One so that we may satisfy His hunger for our love; and therefore, how

clean the heart must be of a priest to be able to speak (through the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks), to be able to say the words: "This is My Body" and make the bread into the Living Christ. How pure must be the hand of the priest, how completely the hand of Jesus must be the hand of the priest, if in it, when the priest raises that hand, is the Precious Blood. A sinner comes to confession covered with sin, he leaves the confessional a sinner without sin. How completely the priest must be one with Jesus to allow Jesus to use him in His place, in His name, to utter His words, do His action, take away the sins, and make ordinary bread into the Living Bread of His own Body and Blood. Only in the silence of his heart can he hear God's word and from the fullness of his heart he can utter these words: "I absolve you" and "This is My Body".

**[218] *What should prayer be for a priest?***

*Mother Teresa:* To have fidelity to prayer, to be able to pray a priest must know silence, for in the silence of the heart God speaks. Prayer is a listening also, and it is very important for the priest to learn how to pray, that is one of the things that Jesus tried to teach His disciples, how to pray. And the prayer of a priest is to allow Jesus to pray in him and through him. Therefore, he must be so pure, so completely at His disposal that Christ can really be

one with His Father in his heart, and use it to proclaim the glory of His Father through him. Prayer is the food of life for the priest. A priest who does not pray cannot stay close to Christ, he cannot allow Christ to use him as He wants to use him. The fruit of prayer is always deepening of faith, and unless the priest has that deep faith, it is very difficult for him to pray. And the fruit of faith is always love. And if a priest does not love, how will he help others to love? And the fruit of love is service—service as Jesus said: “I have come amongst you as One to serve”. And the priest is meant to be that one, to come amongst his own and be the servant of all.

**[219] *How is Jesus present in the poor when He says: “Amen I say to you, as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me?”***

*Mother Teresa:* When St Paul was going to destroy the Christians in Damascus, he was thrown down and he heard the voice: “Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute Me”? And Paul asked Him: “Who art thou Lord”? And He gave him a very clear answer: “I am Jesus Christ whom you persecuted”. Christ didn’t mention the Christians of Damascus, (it is the same thing)—“Whatever you do to the least of My brethren, you do to Me”. If in My name you give a glass of water, you give it to Me. If in My

name you receive a child, you receive Me. And He has made that as a condition also, that at the hour of death we are going to be judged on what we have been and what we have done. He makes Himself the hungry one, the naked one, the homeless one, the sick one, the lonely one, the unwanted one, the rejected one, and He says: "I was hungry and you gave Me to eat". Not only for bread, I was hungry for love. I was naked, not only for a piece of cloth, but I was naked for that human dignity of a child of God. I was homeless, not only for a homemade of bricks, but I was homeless, rejected, unwanted, unloved, a throw-away of society, and you did it to Me. Jesus in the Eucharist made Himself Bread of Life to satisfy our hunger for God, for we have all been created to love and to be loved. And it is very clear what Jesus meant, because how do we love God? If we have been created to love, we all want to love God, but how? Where is God? God is everywhere. How do we love God? And therefore, He gives us the opportunity to do to others what we would like to do to Him. To put our love for Him in a living action. So, therefore, every priestly vocation is not just to do this or to do that, a priest has been created to belong totally, body, soul, mind, heart, every fibre of his body, every fibre of his soul, to God because He has called him by his name. A priest is very precious to Him, a priest is very tenderly loved by God, by Jesus who has chosen

him to be His “second self”. And the work that the priest has been entrusted to do is only a means to put his tender love for God in living action. And, therefore, the work that he does is sacred. And the work must always lead not only himself to God, but must be able to lead souls to God. That’s why Jesus said: “Let them see your good work and glorify the Father”.

**[220] *Could you define poverty, chastity and obedience for a priest?***

*Mother Teresa:* To love Christ is undivided love in chastity. Chastity is not just not getting married, not to have a family. Chastity is that undivided love, “no one and nothing”. And for that we need the freedom of poverty, and we must all be able to experience the joy of that freedom, having nothing, having no one, we can then love Christ with undivided love. And if we really understand that we belong to Jesus, that He has called us by our name, then obedience is natural. A total surrender: He can do with us what He wants, when He wants, whatever He wants. He can cut us to pieces, yet every single piece is only His. We belong so totally to Him that He can use us without consulting us, and so, to be able to love Christ with undivided love in chastity, we need that total surrender. And now service, our whole-hearted service, whatever work has been entrusted to us by obedience, is the

fruit of that chastity, the fruit of that undivided love for Christ.

That is why, for a priest who has made that total surrender to God, who is completely free, completely free to love Christ with undivided love in chastity, the work that he does is his love for Christ in action. The Precious Blood is in his hand, the Living Bread he can break and give to all who are hungry for God. Therefore, his chastity, how chaste it must be; his purity, how pure it must be; his virginity, how virgin it must be, to be able to love Christ with undivided love through freedom of poverty in total surrender, in obedience and in wholehearted service.

**[221] *In general, what is holiness? How should a priest be holy?***

*Mother Teresa:* Holiness is the simple duty for each one of us, for we have been created for greater things, to love and to be loved. Holiness is not the luxury of the few. That's why Jesus said: "Be holy as the Father is holy". And holiness is nothing special for a priest, it's a duty for a priest to be holy because he comes in such close contact with Jesus. How holy his words must be, how holy his life must be, how holy his touch must be, if he has to be that living sacrifice on the altar. Especially that holiness, a living holiness that will be able to allow Christ to live His life in him. Holiness for the priest



is that complete oneness with Christ so that He can live His life in him, praying in him, working in him, being one with the Father in him, that's the holiness that is his. There's no comparison; the only comparison, the only competition a priest can have in holiness is Jesus Himself because he has to be so completely one with Him that Christ can really count on him and live His life totally in him, and that His Father can love the world through him.

**[222] *Who is Our Lady for a priest?***

*Mother Teresa:* Our Lady is the Mother. She was, she is, and she will always remain the Mother of Jesus; and Jesus said: "Who is My Mother? My Mother is the person who does My will, who does the things that are pleasing to the Father". And no one can please the Father more than a priest. Therefore, she is the closest to a priest. And no one could have been a better priest than Our Lady. Because she really can, without difficulty, say "This is My Body", because it was really her body that she gave to Jesus. And yet she remained only the handmaid of the Lord so that you and I may always turn to her as our Mother. And she is one of our own so that we can always claim her, turn to her and be one with her. And, of course, that is why she was left behind, to establish the Church, to strengthen the priesthood of the apostles, to be a Mother to them, until the Church, the young Church was

formed. She was there. For just as she helped Jesus to grow, so she also helped the Church to grow in the beginning. She was left behind for so many years after Jesus ascended to heaven, so that she was the one who formed the Church. She is the one who forms every priest. And no one can have a greater claim on Our Lady than a priest. And I can imagine she must have had, she still has, a very tender love, a special protection also, for every priest, if he only turns to her. But to be able to really be a priest according to the Heart of Jesus you need much prayer and penance.

A priest needs to unite his own sacrifice with the sacrifice of Christ, if he really wants to be completely one with Jesus on the altar. And then his life of sacrifice, his life of penance, must complete Jesus' because as St. Paul had said, we must complete the things that are missing in the sufferings of Christ.

**[223] *What would you say to seminarian drawing near to ordination?***

*Mother Teresa:* Put your hand in Mary's hand and ask her to lead you to Jesus. When Jesus came into her life, she went in haste to give Him to others. And you too when you become His priest, with her go in haste to give Jesus to others. But remember, you cannot give what you do not have. And to be

able to give, you need to live that oneness with Christ, and He is there in the Tabernacle. Make it a point that first thing in the morning that Jesus be the centre of your life. During the day, learn to pray the work; work with Jesus, work for Jesus. Always keep close to Mary. Ask her to give you her heart, so beautiful, so pure, so immaculate, her heart so full of love and humility, that you may be able to receive Jesus and give Jesus in the Bread of Life to others. Love Jesus as she loved Him, and serve Him in the distressing disguise of the poor.

My prayer for you is that you grow in that likeness of Christ through purity of life and humility of heart. Pray for us also that we may grow in that holiness. So that people, when they look up, see only Jesus in you and in me”.

God bless you.

Mother Teresa, MC

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mother Teresa MC". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.

## Mother's Letter from Varanasi

25 March 1993

Varanasi, India

[224] My Dearest Children, Sisters, Brothers and Fathers,

This letter being very personal, I wanted to write in my own hand—but there are so many things to say. Even if not in Mother's hand, still it comes from Mother's heart.

[225] Jesus wants me to tell you again, especially in this Holy Week, how much love He has for each one of you—beyond all you can imagine. I worry some of you still have not really met Jesus—one to one—you and Jesus alone. We may spend time in chapel—but have you seen with the eyes of your soul how He looks at you with love? Do you really know the living Jesus—not from books but from being with Him in your heart? Have you heard the loving words He speaks to you? Ask for the grace, He is longing to give it. Until you can hear Jesus in the silence of your own heart, you will not be able to hear Him saying, "I thirst" in the hearts of the poor. Never give up this daily intimate contact with Jesus as the real living person—not just the idea. How can we last even one day without hearing Jesus say, "I love you"—impossible. Our soul needs

that as much as the body needs to breathe the air. If not, prayer is dead—meditation only thinking. Jesus wants you each to hear Him—speaking in the silence of your heart.

**[226]** Be careful of all that can block that personal contact with the living Jesus. Devil may try to use the hurts of life, and sometimes our own mistakes—to make you feel it is impossible that Jesus really loves you, is really cleaving to you. This is danger for all of us. And so sad, because it is completely opposite of what Jesus is really wanting, waiting to tell you. Not only that He loves you, but even more—He longs for you. He misses you when you don't come close. He thirsts for you. He loves you always, even when you don't feel worthy. When not accepted by others, even by yourself sometimes—He is the one who always accepts you. My children, you don't have to be different for Jesus to love you. Only believe—you are precious to Him. Bring all you are suffering to His feet—only open your heart to be loved by Him as you are. He will do the rest.

**[227]** You all know in your mind that Jesus loves you—but in this letter Mother wants to touch your heart instead. Jesus wants to stir up our hearts, so not to lose our early love, especially in the future after Mother leaves you. That is why I ask you to read this letter before the Blessed Sacrament, the

same place it was written, so Jesus himself can speak to you each one.

[228] Why is Mother saying these things? After reading Holy Father's letter on "I thirst", I was struck so much—I cannot tell you what I felt. His letter made me realize more than ever how beautiful is our vocation. How great God's love for us in choosing our Society to satiate that thirst of Jesus, for love, for souls—giving us our special place in the Church. At the same time we are reminding the world of His thirst, something that was being forgotten. I wrote Holy Father to thank him. Holy Father's letter is a sign for our whole society—to go more into this great thirst of Jesus for each one. It is also a sign for Mother, that the time has come for me to speak openly of the gift God gave September 10—to explain fully as I can what means for me the thirst of Jesus.

[229] For me Jesus' thirst is something so intimate—so I have felt shy until now to speak to you of September 10—I wanted to do as Our Lady who "kept all these things in her heart". That is why Mother hasn't spoken so much of I Thirst, especially outside. But still, Mother's letters and instructions always point to it—showing the means to satiate His thirst through prayer, intimacy with Jesus, living our vows—especially our fourth vow. For me it is so clear—everything in MC exists only

to satiate Jesus. His words on the wall of every MC chapel, they are not from the past only, but alive here and now, spoken to you. Do you believe it? If so, you will hear, you will feel His presence. Let it become as intimate for each of you, just as for Mother—this is the greatest joy you could give me. Mother will try to help you understand—but Jesus himself must be the one to say to you “I Thirst”. Hear your own name. Not just once. Every day. If you listen with your heart, you will hear, you will understand.

[230] Why does Jesus say “I Thirst”? What does it mean? Something so hard to explain in words—if you remember anything from Mother’s letter, remember this—“I thirst” is something much deeper than Jesus just saying “I love you”. Until you know deep inside that Jesus thirsts for you—you can’t begin to know who He wants to be for you. Or who He wants you to be for Him.

[231] The heart and soul of MC is only this—the thirst of Jesus’ Heart, hidden in the poor. This is the source of every part of MC life. It gives us our Aim, our fourth vow, the Spirit of our Society. Satiating the living Jesus in our midst is the Society’s only purpose for existing. Can we each say the same for ourselves—that it is our only reason for living? Ask yourself—would it make any difference in my vocation, in my relation to Jesus, in my work, if

Jesus' thirst were no longer our aim—no longer on the chapel wall? Would anything change in my life? Would I feel any loss? Ask yourself honestly, and let this be a test for each to see if His thirst is a reality, something alive—not just an idea.

[232] “I Thirst” and “You did it to me”—Remember always to connect the two, the means with the Aim. What God has joined together let no one split apart. Do not underestimate our practical means—the work for the poor, no matter how small or humble—that make our life something beautiful for God. They are the most precious gifts of God to our Society—Jesus' hidden presence so near, so able to touch. Without the work for the poor the Aim dies—Jesus' thirst is only words with no meaning, no answer. Uniting the two, our MC vocation will remain alive and real, what Our Lady asked.

[233] The thirst of Jesus is the focus of all that is MC. The Church has confirmed it again and again—“Our charism is to satiate the thirst of Jesus for love and souls—by working at the salvation and sanctification of the poorest of the poor”. Nothing different. Nothing else. Let us do all we can to protect this gift of God to our Society.

[234] Believe me, my dear children—pay close attention to what Mother is saying now—only the thirst of Jesus, hearing it, feeling it, answering it



with all your heart, will keep the Society alive after Mother leaves you. If this is your life, you will be all right. Even when Mother leaves you, Jesus' thirst will never leave you. Jesus thirsting in the poor you will have with you always.

[235] That is why I want the Active Sisters and Brothers, the Contemplative Sisters and Brothers, and the Fathers to each one aid the other in satiating Jesus with their own special gift—supporting, completing each other and this precious Grace as one Family, with one Aim and purpose. Do not exclude the Co-workers and Lay MCs from this—this is their call as well, help them to know it.

[236] Because the first duty of a priest is the ministry to preach, some years back I asked our Fathers to begin speaking about I Thirst, to go more deeply into what God gave the Society September 10. I feel Jesus wants this of them, also in the future—so pray Our Lady keeps them in this special part of their fourth vow. Our Lady will help all of us in this, since she was the first person to hear Jesus' cry I Thirst with St. John, and I am sure Mary Magdalene. Because she was there on Calvary, she knows how real, how deep His longing for you and for the poor. Do we know? Do we feel as she? Ask her to teach—you and the whole Society are hers. Her role is to bring you face

to face, as John and Magdalen, with the love in the Heart of Jesus crucified. Before it was Our Lady pleading with Mother, now it is Mother, in her name pleading with you—"listen to Jesus' thirst". Let it be for each what Holy Father said in his letter—a Word of Life.

[237] How do you approach the thirst of Jesus? Only one secret—the closer you come to Jesus, the better you will know His thirst. "Repent and believe", Jesus tells us. What are we to repent? Our indifference, our hardness of heart. What are we to believe? Jesus thirsts even now, in your heart and in the poor—He knows your weakness, He wants only your love, wants only the chance to love you. He is not bound by time. Whenever we come close to Him—we become partners of Our Lady, St. John, Magdalene. Hear Him. Hear your own name. Make my joy and yours complete.

Let us pray.

God bless you

*Luce Teresa*

## Mother's Vision of 1947

[238] "My little one—come—come—carry me into the holes of the poor—Come be My light—I cannot go alone—They don't know Me—so they don't want me. You come—go against them—carry Me with you into them—how I long to enter their holes—their dark unhappy homes. Come be their victim—In your immolation—in your love for Me—they will see Me, know Me, want Me. Offer more Sacrifices—Smile more tenderly, pray more fervently and all the difficulties will disappear".

[239] "You are afraid, how your fear hurts me—Fear not. It is I who am asking You to do this for me. Fear not. Even if the whole world is against you, laughs at you, your companions and Superiors look down on you, fear not—it is I in you, with you, for you".

[240] "You will suffer—suffer very much—but remember I am with you—even if the whole world rejects you—remember you are My own—and I am yours only. Fear not. It is I. Only obey—obey very cheerfully and promptly and without any questions—Just only obey. I shall never leave you—if you obey".

1. [241] I saw a very big crowd—all kinds of people—very poor and children were there also. They all had their hands lifted towards me standing in their midst. They called out, “Come, come, save us – bring us to Jesus”.
2. [242] Again that great crowd—I could see great sorrow and suffering in their faces—I was kneeling near Our Lady, who was facing them—I did not see her face but I heard Her say, “Take care of them—they are mine—bring them to Jesus—Carry Jesus to them—Fear not. Teach them to say the Rosary—and all will be well—Fear not—Jesus and I will be with you and your children”.
3. [243] The same great crowd—they were covered in darkness, yet I could see them. Our Lord on the Cross. Our Lady at a little distance from the Cross—and myself as a little child in front of Her. Her left hand was on my left shoulder—and her right hand was holding my right arm. We were both facing the Cross. Our Lord said, “I have asked you. They have asked you and she, My Mother, has asked you. Will you refuse to do this for me—to take care of them, to bring them to me”?

I answered—You know Jesus I am ready to go at a moment’s notice.

## **The shared patrimony of the MC Family and the CCM (Fr. Joseph and Fr. Pascual)**

Rome, January 2008

[244] Together with the Missionaries of Charity Family, the Corpus Christi Movement shares fully in the spiritual legacy given the Church by Mother Teresa of Calcutta. However, unlike her religious family whose identity is corporate and visible, the *identity of CCM and its members is entirely interior and individual.*

[245] In common with the MC Family, the Movement's finds its source and entire reason for existence in Jesus' original call to Mother Teresa – begun September 10, 1946, and continued through the following months, as recorded in her "Founding Grace". All that is contained in those early dialogues, regarding Jesus' intentions for MC, also applies to CCM (though in its own way, respecting the nature of CCM as an association of diocesan priests).

[246] While remaining in its own context of diocesan and parish life, CCM exists for the *same purpose* as MC (i.e., satiating the divine thirst for love and souls, by working at the salvation and sanctification of those most in need), and is

committed to living by the *same principles and values* (the primacy of personal holiness, the role of Our Lady, devotion to the Eucharist and the Heart of Jesus, personal practice of the *Spirit of the Society*, special love for the least, the lost, and the last, etc.).

[247] Mother Teresa was imbued with a profound sense of the mutuality within the mystical Body (“*What you can do I cannot and what I can do you cannot; but together we can do something beautiful for God*”), and so sought to extend the grace of her charism to all in the Church who felt called to share in it. In a certain sense, all who share that charism form a kind of spiritual body – so that, as we the members of CCM spiritually “lend” our priesthood to Mother Teresa and her charism, she is able to continue her mission in a unique way through us as priests.

[248] It is important to recall that this spiritual *lending* of one’s priesthood to Mother Teresa and her charism, by means of an interior personal bond and commitment, was the *seed idea from which the CCM was to spring*. Just as the “Sick and Suffering Co-workers” lent Mother Teresa the redemptive value of their suffering and prayer, so the *Priest Co-workers* (the original name of CCM) would lend Mother the power of their priesthood – offering not so much their own prayer and suffering as the infinite value of Jesus’ own pasch, offered daily on

the altar. While externally the individual priest would attempt to live Mother Teresa's spirit of generosity, compassion, and zeal in the "Calcutta" of his own parish, at the same time he would be interiorly united to the entire MC Family and their mission by the *inner bond of the Eucharist*. They would be united in the one Passion of Jesus, lived out in both his sacramental and his mystical Body – in the Eucharist offered by the priest, and in the poor served by the MCs.

## Points for Reflection

### **"Take Me, I cannot go alone"**

[249] Together with those in MC, we as members of CCM are called to bring Jesus first and foremost to those farthest away, those in darkness, those who suffer, those in despair, the lonely and forgotten, etc, in our own parishes and diocese. As Jesus complained to Mother Teresa, he laments also to us: *"They don't know Me, so they don't want Me ... You go among them in My name ... Take Me, I cannot go alone"*. Just as Mother Teresa's charism is missionary, so too, *the CCM is missionary* – living the same MC missionary spirit and outreach there where we are, finding the missions among the suffering and abandoned of our own parish, first, and then beyond "even to the ends of the earth".

## Fourth Vow

[250] This brings us to Mother Teresa's response – and ours – to Jesus' appeal, contained in the MC "fourth vow" of *Wholehearted and free service to the poorest of the poor*. While remaining diocesan, and bound only by our own free inner commitment and the pull of grace, we too are called within the Movement to live *the spirit* of the fourth vow – to use our time and energies as shepherds of the flock to *go in search of souls*, especially the neediest and most abandoned; to not wait for our people to seek us out, nor go only to those disposed to receive us, but to "seek out and save that which was lost".

[251] A particular point of emphasis in living the spirit of the fourth vow is in *encouraging and making available the sacrament of confession*. Nowhere more than at this sacramental "mercy seat" is the thirst of Jesus for souls quenched in mercy and power. Nor should we shy from explicitly inviting our people, even one by one, to come to the sacrament – after all, we are *fishers of men*; and the fisherman does not wait for the fish to jump in the boat of themselves. Mother Teresa asked us to be indefatigable in this ministry, and to take care as well in how we celebrate this sacrament, making sure we are communicating the tenderness, mercy, and healing of the heart of the Saviour, and making use of this sacred forum to exercise the *ars artis* of guiding souls to union with their Lord through spiritual direction.



## Spirit of Welcoming

[252] Besides focusing our energies on *going in search* of those farthest away, we are to give the same kind of eager welcome to those who approach us for whatever reason. Mother Teresa insisted that no one ever left our presence without having in some way met the goodness of Jesus through us: in our words, our gaze, our attitude, our patience in listening. She herself left us the example of never allowing anyone to go away from meeting her without being blessed and consoled. No one left Mother Teresa's presence without having felt they were the most important person in the world for her in those moments when her gaze was upon them. The earnest attentiveness of the Father towards the prodigal son is to inspire all our dealing with our people.

## Carriers of Christ's Love

[253] It is not *our own* love, no matter how sincere, that we are to bring to our people, but *the love of God himself*. We are not the saviours; *we* are not the ones our people need – they need Jesus. That is why too much reliance on human activity and initiative, neglecting the primacy of personal union with God as the foundation for all apostolate, leaves our people bereft of the fullness of God's presence and gifts through us. The *holiness of the individual minister* becomes our greatest, most

efficacious pastoral tool – as Satan remarked of the Curé of Ars: “If there were any more of him in France, my kingdom would be finished”.

[254] Jesus’ plan for Mother Teresa, and for all who share her charism, was simple yet demanding: “to be so united to Me as to be My radiance”. Those who have suffered great physical or emotional pain need more than platitudes, more than homilies – they need an *experience of God and his closeness*. They need someone to *mediate* God’s presence for them in some more palpable way, capable of touching the heart and well as the mind. This is the role of the saints, like Mother Teresa; for it is the encounter with holiness that provides the closest thing to a personal *theophany* that most people, especially those alienated from God, will ever have. God’s graces of conversion and consolation through Mother Teresa were *experiential* – and as members of her family, we are to continue that ministry of allowing people to *touch and be touched* by God, *through us*. We are to be as empty vessels, empty of self and filled to overflowing with God – so that wherever we go and whatever we do we can say, “it is no longer I but Christ who lives in me,” so that in meeting us “people can look up and see only Jesus” (Newman).

[255] People expect, and rightfully so, to find something of Christ in us, to discover in us a sense

of the God whom we are to render nearer and more tangible, not only through our ministry but in our very person. The great French Dominican, Père Grandmaison, wrote: "Certainly I desire to preach the Word of God to the best of my ability, but it is not that sentiment which has brought me here. When I was in the world, I never approached a priest without the ardent hope of finding something of God in him [...] the feeling of the living presence of Christ. Yet when I was seeking God in this way and found only a man, I experienced a bitter and painful disappointment. My whole ambition, when I am ordained, is never to cause this disappointment to a single soul".

### **Victims of Love**

[256] In Mother Teresa's great vision of 1947, where God showed her a representation of her new mission, she saw herself with Jesus and Our Lady *in the midst of the poor* – sharing their poverty, their pain, their darkness. Jesus' priestly *kenosis* (Phil. 2:6) was shared radically in the self-emptying of Mother Teresa, who embraced the lot of the poor in "all things but sin", and made herself *one with them* in a solidarity of both heart and deed.

[257] At the outset of her mission, Jesus specifically asked that Mother Teresa and her followers become

*“victims of love”* for the sake of the poor and those in darkness. This is the other essential component of the fourth vow, and one that touches us as well – *the call to be victims, in and as Jesus, for the sake of our people.* The call to bear willingly with the crosses of our people in as much as we are able, to help not only by our pastoral care but by *willing participation in their pain* – in the form of illness and humiliations accepted gladly, and renunciations undertaken generously – to yoke them to the Saviour, to help turn their sufferings into seeds of resurrection. There is no salvation, and no priesthood, without *victimhood.* Just as inconceivable and senseless as Jesus’ own priesthood would have been without the Cross, so too is our own priesthood unthinkable and ineffectual without “taking up our cross daily” to follow the Lamb to Calvary, carrying together with Him the sins and sufferings of our people.

### **“Our battle is not with flesh and blood”**

[258] By being sent specifically to *those in darkness* – those of whom Jesus said “they don’t know Me, so they do not want Me”, those blinded to His presence by excessive poverty or wealth – Mother Teresa was to focus her efforts on territory already claimed by the Evil one. It is not sufficient to naively go out to those far from God armed only with our puny human compassion and good intention. *We are engaged in a battle, not with*

economic conditions or social structures, but with “principalities and powers”, as St. Paul reminds us.

[259] Because the nature of our endeavour is supernatural (not just the consolation of the poor, but their *salvation and sanctification*), so too our methods and approach must be of spirit more than of flesh. Only *supernatural means* can accomplish a supernatural end.

[260] Besides the ministry of intercession and sacramental confession, another tool in the spiritual combat is the power of our *priestly blessing*. We must not minimize its importance due to our own human poverty, for it is the very blessing of Jesus himself, communicating all the power of the Trinity into time and place. If we but had the faith of the woman with the hemorrhage in the gospel, or the faith of a Mother Teresa who always asked a priest for his blessing, Jesus we too would witness Jesus’ “power going out of us” to heal and sanctify our people.

[261] The pastoral efficacy of holiness, the power of God living in man, this was Mother Teresa’s great apostolic plan – and the one reason for her unparalleled impact in the world. Mother Teresa did not win the hearts of millions simply because of her work, since similar work has been done by thousands of other missionaries before her, who

still remain unknown. It is not the work itself that won Mother Teresa the Nobel Prize and the esteem of all, but – whether we recognize it or not – it is *the fruit of her holiness*. This is why the “whole world was running after” her, just as it did with Francis of Assisi a thousand years before. As bearers of her charism our lives focus on the twin poles of her charism:

1. *Exteriorly*: Growing in ministerial generosity and zealous outreach to the needy and forgotten, being true fishers of men to “sinners and publicans” and all those far from God;
2. *Interiorly*: Accepting the call to personal holiness and intimate union with God in prayer and self-sacrifice. Being faithful to the Liturgy of the Hours and to *Lectio Divina* in order to draw from the source of Light we are to radiate into the darkness of today’s world.

### **Something Beautiful for God**

[262] Though many have questioned the meaning of Mother Teresa’s darkness, there is a limitless light hidden there, for all those “who have eyes to see”. She who was sent not only to bring but to *be* God’s light, cannot have been anything less than that – as she herself promised, “*a lamp to light our darkness*”. Besides the unequivocal light of her holiness and works of charity, there is a deeper,

greater light still. It is a share in the very light that issues from God himself, a light that blinds our human senses and logic: it is the *light of self-emptying love*, a love that, without counting the cost, wraps itself in the pain and darkness of our humanity, not because it must but simply because it can. Such is the reach of divine love that “He who knew no sin” not only paid its price, but “was *made to be sin* for our sake”.

[263] If Jesus was sent to save us from sin by himself offering to become sin, by bursting the bonds of death and evil from within, then Mother Teresa would do the same. She who was sent to be light, who knew no darkness from childhood, was “*made to be darkness*” as it were – wrapped in darkness for the sake of those lost in its grip. She would show us the one true light, the glory of the “God who is love”, by *embracing the darkness in her own soul*, by flooding with love the lack of love, and drowning the darkness in light. Hers, and God’s, is a light that does not run away from the darkness but towards it, to rescue it. “*And the light shone in the darkness, and the darkness could not overcome it*”. Her light shone from within that darkness – not from outside it or alongside it; a light that could not reveal its fullness *except* by going so far as to wrap itself in darkness for our sake.

[264] How does her light in darkness, her love despite and beyond pain, illumine our lives as

priests and as CCM? First of all, hers was not a crisis but a *triumph* of faith. She shows us – and invites us to show our people – how *far our faith can go*, even in the night; just as Jesus showed the disciples how strong faith can be in the example of the Canaanite woman (who refused to believe that God did not hear her, for “*Even the dogs eat the scraps from the master’s table*”).

[265] Secondly, Mother Teresa’s darkness shows us *how far love can go*. She shows us to what heroic extent *God’s love can fill one human life*, even here below. Satan seeks to use our suffering as proof that God does not hear or provide for us, pushing us to close in on ourselves, to live only to sooth our own pain and to provide for our ego. God, on the other hand, wishes to use the pain and losses of life as gentle reminders that we are not to attach to the things of this world, since they cannot fill us and are passing away. God uses suffering to nudge us out of our self-satisfied settled lives, dependent on material things, into a life *lived for others*, for love. And here is the importance of Mother Teresa’s example: in the midst of her own pain, she shows us that no matter what we suffer we *always have a choice* – the choice to love or not to love. We are always free, always able to step beyond our own pain to assuage the pain of others, free to make of our pain not a prison but a bridge into the pain of others.



[266] We each have a personal “Calcutta” to live, made up of our own pain and the pain of those around us. And we are each sent to minister to that Calcutta in miniature, just as Mother Teresa was. If she could face the worst of human suffering and on such a grand scale, and do so alone and filled with her own pain – then, through her, God is showing us that *we can do our part in the lesser Calcutta that is ours*. And despite the pain that may be ours. We must invite and encourage our people to believe how important their lives are in the plan of God, and of how much good they can do despite their circumstances. In fact, the good they can do *even a Mother Teresa could never do*; and the people they can touch not even a Mother Teresa could reach. No one else in history has the same combination of gifts and talents, the same network of family and friends and contacts, as each and every one of our people. *That* is the importance of their irreplaceable lives in God’s plan. There is no need for them, or for us, to traverse far-off lands to contribute to Mother Teresa’s mission: wherever we are, with whatever gifts and relationships God has placed in our hands, we each called not to do *what* Mother Teresa did but to do *as* she did, to love as she loved, in the Calcutta of our own life. We too are called to be a light that pierces the darkness, and to make our own life *Something Beautiful for God*.

## Conclusion

[267] We have sought here to show the connection and continuity between Mother Teresa, M.C., and the Corpus Christi Movement. Our Movement and each of its members, like Mother Teresa, is sent into the darkness of this world to bring and to be light – the light of love of the God who is love – not just to the materially poor but to poverty and suffering of every kind and in every place, from slums to palaces. CCM is to be as a net in the hands of the Lord, as Fisher of men, cast over the whole world, drawing all to the Saviour's fountains.

## **The Thirst of Jesus (Fr. Joseph)**

*“Behold, I stand at the door and knock” (Rev. 3:20).*

**[268]** It is true. I stand at the door of your heart, day and night. Even when you are not listening, even when you doubt it could be Me, I am there. I await even the smallest sign of your response, even the least whispered invitation that will allow Me to enter.

**[269]** And I want you to know that whenever you invite Me, I do come – always, without fail. Silent and unseen I come, but with infinite power and love, and bringing the many gifts of My Spirit. I come with My mercy, with My desire to forgive and heal you, and with a love for you beyond your comprehension – a love every bit as great as the love I have received from the Father (“As much as the Father has loved me, I have loved you” (Jn 15:10) I come – longing to console you and give you strength, to lift you up and bind all your wounds. I bring you My light, to dispel your darkness and all your doubts. I come with My power, that I might carry you and all your burdens; with My grace, to touch your heart and transform your life; and My peace I give to still your soul.

**[270]** I know you through and through. I know everything about you. The very hairs of your

head I have numbered. Nothing in your life is unimportant to Me. I have followed you through the years, and I have always loved you – even in your wanderings. I know every one of your problems. I know your needs and your worries. And yes, I know all your sins. But I tell you again that I love you – not for what you have or haven't done – I love you for you, for the beauty and dignity My Father gave you by creating you in His own image. It is a dignity you have often forgotten, a beauty you have tarnished by sin. But I love you as you are, and I have shed My Blood to win you back. If you only ask Me with faith, My grace will touch all that needs changing in your life, and I will give you the strength to free yourself from sin and all its destructive power.

[271] I know what is in your heart – I know your loneliness and all your hurts – the rejections, the judgments, the humiliations, I carried it all before you. And I carried it all for you, so you might share My strength and victory. I know especially your need for love – how you are thirsting to be loved and cherished. But how often have you thirsted in vain, by seeking that love selfishly, striving to fill the emptiness inside you with passing pleasures – with the even greater emptiness of sin. Do you thirst for love? “Come to Me all you who thirst” (Jn. 7:37). I will satisfy you and fill you. Do you thirst to be cherished? I cherish

you more than you can imagine – to the point of dying on a cross for you.

[272] I Thirst for You. Yes, that is the only way to even begin to describe My love for you. I THIRST FOR YOU. I thirst to love you and to be loved by you – that is how precious you are to Me. I THIRST FOR YOU. Come to Me, and I will fill your heart and heal your wounds. I will make you a new creation, and give you peace, even in all your trials I THIRST FOR YOU. You must never doubt My mercy, My acceptance of you, My desire to forgive, My longing to bless you and live My life in you. I THIRST FOR YOU. If you feel unimportant in the eyes of the world, that matters not at all. For Me, there is no one any more important in the entire world than you. I THIRST FOR YOU. Open to Me, come to Me, thirst for Me, give me your life – and I will prove to you how important you are to My Heart.

[273] Don't you realize that My Father already had a perfect plan to transform your life, beginning from this moment? Trust in Me. Ask Me every day to enter and take charge of your life. – and I will. I promise you before My Father in heaven that I will work miracles in your life. Why would I do this? Because I THIRST FOR YOU. All I ask of you is that you entrust yourself to Me completely. I will do all the rest.

[274] Even now I behold the place My Father has prepared for you in My Kingdom. Remember that you are a pilgrim in this life, on a journey home. Sin can never satisfy you, or bring the peace you seek. All that you have sought outside of Me has only left you more empty, so do not cling to the things of this life. Above all, do not run from Me when you fall. Come to Me without delay. When you give Me your sins, you gave Me the joy of being your Savior. There is nothing I cannot forgive and heal; so come now, and unburden your soul.

[275] No matter how far you may wander, no matter how often you forget Me, no matter how many crosses you may bear in this life; there is one thing I want you to always remember, one thing that will never change. I THIRST FOR YOU – just as you are. You don't need to change to believe in My love, for it will be your belief in My love that will change you. You forget Me, and yet I am seeking you every moment of the day – standing at the door of your heart and knocking. Do you find this hard to believe? Then look at the cross, look at My Heart that was pierced for you. Have you not understood My cross? Then listen again to the words I spoke there – for they tell you clearly why I endured all this for you: “I THIRST” (Jn. 19:28). Yes, I thirst for you – as the rest of the psalm – verse I was praying says of Me: “I looked for love, and I found none” (Ps. 69:20). All your life I have

been looking for your love – I have never stopped seeking to love you and be loved by you. You have tried many other things in your search for happiness; why not try opening your heart to Me, right now, more than you ever have before.

[276] Whenever you do open the door of your heart, whenever you come close enough, you will hear Me say to you again and again, not in mere human words but in spirit: “No matter what you have done, I love you for your own sake Come to Me with your misery and your sins, with your troubles and needs, and with all your longing to be loved. I stand at the door of your heart and knock. Open to Me, for I THIRST FOR YOU...”



[277] *Jesus is God, therefore His love, His Thirst, is infinite. He the creator of the universe, asked for the love of His creatures. He thirsts for our love. These words: “I Thirst” - Do they echo in our souls?” (Mother Teresa)*





## **APPENDIX 2: CCM HISTORY**



## **First Stage – Foundation**

**June 1979:** The idea of an international association of priests (called the Priest Co-Workers of Mother Teresa) is suggested to Mother Teresa by Fr. Joseph Langford, OMV, in New York, U.S.A.

**June 26, 1981:** In a letter addressed to Mother Teresa, the Holy See acknowledges the first draft of the Statutes of an international association called the Priest Co-Workers of Mother Teresa.

**November 1, 1981:** In the presence of Mother Teresa and Fr Joseph Langford, Saint John Paul II blesses the new Association at the Vatican, which Mother Teresa renames the “Corpus Christi Movement”.

**August 6, 1982:** The white CCM Booklet is completed and sent to the Holy See for approval.

**October 1982:** Encouraged and helped by Mother Teresa, Pascual Cervera, a seminarian from Spain, goes to Rome to join the CCM.

**November 1982:** The first CCM Office is established in the basement of the MC Sisters’ house in San Gregorio, Rome, and blessed in the presence of Mother Teresa.

**May 25, 1983:** During a public audience in St Peter's Square, Mother Teresa presents a copy of the white CCM booklet to Saint John Paul II (see photo on the right).



May 25, 1983  
Saint John Paul II  
holding a copy of the  
new CCM booklet.

**July 16, 1983:** Mother Teresa gives her support to Fr. Joseph Langford to form a fraternity to be entrusted with the direction and the development of the CCM.

**August 17, 1983:** During a private audience in Castelgandolfo, Saint John Paul II gives his blessing for the establishment of the Corpus Christi Fraternity (CCF).

**August 22, 1983:** Cardinal Terence Cooke, Archbishop of New York, approves and grants permission that the CCF begins as a Pious Union in his archdiocese.

**August 25, 1983:** Cardinal Cooke receives the CCF in New York and gives the Convent of the Sacred Heart in the Bronx to the Fraternity. Fr. Joseph Langford and two seminarians, Brian Kolodiejchuck and Pascual Cervera, form the first community.

**October 13, 1984:** At the invitation of Mother Teresa, Fr. Joseph Langford and other members of the CCF begin the religious branch of the Missionaries of Charity Fathers, while other members remain attached to the CCM, wishing to retain their Diocesan vocation.

**June 25, 1988:** The MC Fathers leave New York to establish their main house in Tijuana, Mexico.

**1988 to 1997:** The CCM is directed by the Fr. Joseph Langford, MC, with many members around the world living its charism.

## **Second Stage Reorganization and Development**

**June 3, 1997:** Responding to the need of diocesan priests and recognising that a diocesan movement should be directed by diocesan priests, Mother Teresa entrusts the worldwide responsibility for the CCM to Fr. Pascual Cervera.

**June 1997:** At Mother Teresa's request, Cardinal O'Connor of New York gives his blessing to have the work of CCM revived.

**July 7, 1997:** Mother Teresa visits Saint John Paul II, with Sr. Nirmala (as the new general superior of the MC Sisters) and Fr. Pascual Cervera (as the Responsible of the Movement) for the blessing of the reorganised CCM. This was the last time that she would meet the Holy Father.

**September 5, 1997:** Mother Teresa enters eternal life.

### **Third Stage Growth and Official Approval**

**March 26-April 1, 2000:** First CCM retreat in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, USA, directed by Fr. Joseph Langford, MC.

**October 9-13, 2000:** International Meeting of the CCM in Rome, Italy.

**April 30 – May 2, 2001:** Regional Retreat for Priests in Einsiedeln, Switzerland.

**July 16-21, 2001:** Regional Retreat for Priests in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

**October 15-19, 2001:** International Pilgrimage and Retreat for Priests in Fatima, Portugal.

**April 14-17, 2002:** Regional Retreat for Priests in Mariastein, Switzerland.

**April 28, 2002:** Following a visit by Fr. Joseph Langford, MC, Fr. Pascual Cervera, Fr. Leo Maasburg and Fr. Luis Manuel Cuña Ramos to the Congregation for the Clergy, the CCM sends its first petition to the Congregation requesting the approval of its Statutes. Another petition is sent to Cardinal Ruini, Vicar for Rome, for the establishment of the legal headquarters of the CCM in Tor Fiscale, Rome.

**January 15-16, 2003:** Regional Retreat for Priests, in Neulengbach, Austria.

**July 21, 2003:** Cardinal Ruini grants permission (*nihil obstat*) for the establishment of the CCM in Rome and the beginning of the process for the approval of the Statutes.

**October 19, 2003:** Mother Teresa of Calcutta is declared Blessed by Saint John Paul II in St Peter's Square, Vatican.

**February 13-19, 2004:** International Pilgrimage and Retreat for Priests in Calcutta, India.

**August 6, 2004:** On the Feast of the Transfiguration, the CCM is approved by the Congregation of the

Clergy for a five year period as a Private Association of Priests, founded by Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

**December 31, 2004 – January 10, 2005:** International Pilgrimage and Retreat for Priests in Prague, Czech Republic. During this event, the First Assembly of the CCM is celebrated and the first CCM General Council is composed of Fr. Joseph Langford, MC (Co-founder), Fr. Pascual Cervera (International Coordinator), Fr. Leo Maasburg (Vice Coordinator), Fr. Luis Manuel Cuña Ramos (Secretary), Fr. Andreas Gschwind (Treasurer) and Fr. Juan Pablo Contepomi (Councillor).

**January 2-10, 2006:** International Pilgrimage and Retreat for Priests at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, in Mexico City, Mexico.

**February 1, 2007:** Fr. Pascual Cervera receives the mandate from Cardinal Cañizares of Toledo, Spain, to dedicate himself completely to the leadership and coordination of the CCM.

**August 6-13, 2007:** International Pilgrimage and Retreat for Priests in Ars, France.

**November 10-15, 2008:** International Pilgrimage and Retreat for Priests in Rome, Italy.



**June 24, 2009:** The CCM sends a letter to the Congregation for the Clergy containing a final draft of the Statutes for approval, a report on the activity of the Movement and an expression of gratitude for the Year for Priests.

**2010:** International Pilgrimage and Retreat for Priests in Calcutta, India.

**October 14, 2010:** Fr. Joseph Langford, MC, goes to the House of the Father.

**June 30, 2012:** International Pilgrimage and Retreat for Priests in Czestochowa, Poland. During this event, the Second Assembly of CCM is celebrated and the second CCM General Council is composed of Fr. Pascual Cervera (International Coordinator), Fr. Leo Maasburg (Vice Coordinator), Fr. Luis Manuel Cuña Ramos (Secretary), Fr. Jaroslav Brož (Treasurer) and Fr. Joseph Illo (Councillor). The first five priests make their oblation.

**December 3, 2012:** The CCM is approved (definitively) as a Private Association of Priest by the Congregation for the Clergy.

**December 20, 2013:** The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments grants to the members of the CCM the possibility to celebrate the 5th of September as a feast day of

Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, according to the same calendar as the Congregation of the Missionaries of Charity.

**November 2014:** International Pilgrimage and Retreat for Priests in Fatima, Portugal.

**September 4, 2016:** Blessed Teresa of Calcutta is declared Saint of the Church by Pope Francis in St. Peter's Square, Vatican, during the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy.

**September 3-10, 2018:** International pilgrimage for priests to Calcutta. During the pilgrimage the Third Assembly of the CCM is celebrated at which all the Council is confirmed: Fr. Pascual Cervera (International Coordinator, Fr. Joseph Illo (Vice Coordinator), Fr. Luis Manuel Cuña Ramos (Secretary), Fr. Jaroslav Brož (Treasurer) and Fr. Leo Maasburg (Councillor).

**APPENDIX 3:  
CCM FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS**



## **Letter from the Congregation for the Clergy (26 June 1981)**

SACRA CONGREGAZIONE PER IL CLERO

Prot. 165777/1

Rome, June 26, 1981

Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Dear Mother Teresa:

This Sacred Congregation wishes to acknowledge receipt of a “protect” of statutes for an international movement called “Priests Co-Workers of Mother Teresa”.

Having carefully examined the above mentioned document and, most of all, after your personal oral explanation given to us during one of your recent visits to Rome, this Sacred Dicastery hereby wishes to encourage whole-heartedly the movement “Priests Co-Workers of Mother Teresa” which, even though without definite juridical structure (since each priest or religious remains within the context of his own ministry and priestly vocation), is certainly a worthy initiative of great value for the spiritual formation of priests who wish to join it. It is to be praised the purpose of the Movement.

This Sacred Congregation wishes to acknowledge receipt of a “project” of statutes for an international movement, namely to “attempt to live the gospel more fully and faithfully, in greater simplicity and poverty of spirit, within the context of their own ministry and priestly vocation, by sharing spiritually in the charism and spirit given by God to the universal Church through Mother Teresa”.

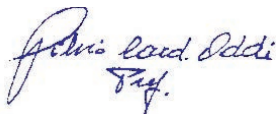
In a special way, we find in the document a missionary spirit which impels the priest to care for the poorest among the poor who need his priestly ministry; all of this being permeated by a profound devotion for the Eucharist, “source and summit of priestly life”, and marked by a complete abandonment in the hands of Mary, Mother of the Church and Mother of priests.

This Sacred Congregation cherishes the hope that many priests all over the world may find in the ideals of Mother Teresa as they are expressed in the above mentioned document, a further stimulus to their spiritual life, so that the private act of oblation to be renewed each year on Holy Thursday, may be an incentive not only for them personally, but also, through them, for all the souls that will benefit from their sacerdotal ministry.

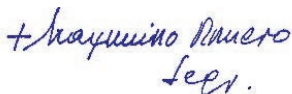
Invoking the blessings of the Almighty upon the work of Mother Teresa and, in a special way, on this

“project” for priests, and with sentiments of cordial esteem, I remain,

Faithfully in Christ,

Handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Silvio Card. Oddi" with "Pref." written below it.

(Silvio Cardinal Oddi, Prefect)

Handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maximino Romero" with "Secr." written below it.

(Archbishop Maximino Romero, Secretary)

---

Rev. Mother Teresa, MC  
54A Lower Circular Road  
Calcutta 700 016  
India

## Blessing of Pope John Paul II on the Corpus Christi Fraternity (17 August 1983)

This page was prepared by Father Joseph Langford and presented by Mother Teresa to Pope John Paul II, who, on his part, imparted his blessing on the CCF on the 17th of August 1983.

*with my blessing*  
*John Paul II*  
*17.8.1983.*

CORPUS CHRISTI FRATERNITY

Reason:  
Corpus Christi Movement has grown to 40 countries with more than 3,000 priests. Holy See has recommended that a small secular institute be created within the movement to guide and direct it in a stable way.

Charism:  
To satiate Jesus' thirst by:  
- working towards sanctification of priesthood in the spirit of Mother Teresa  
- by adapting and communicating this same spirit to all sectors of secular sphere, by our ministry of word and witness of life.

Consecration:  
profession of evangelical counsels, plus fourth vow of service to priesthood and poor (connecting Jesus' passion in exultant and poor).

Specific Mission:  
- service to Jesus' growth in the priesthood by:  
a) prayer, penance, intercession for brother priests  
b) service to Corpus Christi Movement  
c) houses of prayer and fraternity for priests  
- Penetration of secular sphere with Mother Teresa's message by:  
a) study, adaptation, preaching of this message  
b) living first ourselves what we preach by engaging in direct priestly service to all forms of material and spiritual poverty  
c) provide spiritual assistance to MC family and their coworkers



# Letter from Cardinal Terence Cooke (22 August 1983)

CARDINAL'S RESIDENCE  
452 MADISON AVENUE  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

August 22, 1983  
Feast of the Queenship of Our Lady

Dear Mother Teresa:

Welcome home to New York. I join with all our Missionaries of Charity and your many friends in greeting you and thanking God for your recovery of good health.

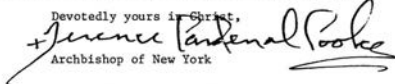
I know I have already written to you, Mother, approving your plan to establish a Corpus Christi Fraternity as a Pious Union here in the Archdiocese of New York. I know that this new effort which you are encouraging is of the Holy Spirit and it will bear much fruit in the years to come.

I also wish to assure you that arrangements are being made so that a special beginning can take place at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Highbridge.

I was pleased to learn that Father William Smith of the Faculty of St. Joseph's Seminary is willing and able to act as a Spiritual Adviser in addition to his responsibilities at Dunwoodie.

Looking forward to seeing you soon and praying that the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church and Queen of Heaven and Earth will ever watch over and guide you and your associates, I am

Devotedly yours in Christ,

  
Archbishop of New York

Mother M. Teresa, M.C.  
Missionaries of Charity  
54A Lower Circular Road  
Calcutta 16, India

## Letter from Mother to Fr. Pascual (3 June 1997)

Dom.

New York, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 97

Dear Father Pascual,

With God's blessing and Mary's love and protection may you be the joy of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to help the Priests to grow in holiness through being responsible for the Corpus Christi Fraternity and help the Priests who join to grow in holiness and love for Our Mother Mary.

Let us pray and be one heart full of love and humility in helping the Fraternity of Jesus and Mary.

Let us pray and let us be one full joy and unity when we serve the Fraternity.

One heart full of love in the Heart of Jesus and Mary.  
Let us bless the Lord with one heart full of love and humility.

M. Teresa m.

# Letter from Mother to Pope John Paul II (8 July 1997)

*John*



Via Casilina, 222  
00178 Rome

"As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, You did it to Me"

Rome, 8th July 1997

His  
Holiness John Paul II  
Vatican City

Your Holiness,

It was a great blessing and honor to be able to have our Audience with you yesterday at the Vatican and to have the opportunity to present to you the papers regarding the CORPUS CHRISTI MOVEMENT for Priests.

We thank you with all our hearts for your kindness and for giving us your full support and blessing to the CORPUS CHRISTI MOVEMENT for Priests.

You will be glad to know that we have put the whole Movement in the hands of Our Lady. We are sure that She will guide us and bless the Movement.

Please kindly pray for us that we will continue God's work with love and humility; we ask for your blessing.

*Pray for us that we may do  
this work for the glory of God  
and good of Souls.*

Sr.M.Nirmala MC

*M. Nirmala M.C.*

Mother M.Teresa MC

*M. Teresa M.C.*

*FR. PASCUAL CERVERA.*  
Fr. Pascual Cervera

**Letter from Mother to the Sisters  
(9 July 1997)**

LSM

Rome - 9-7-97

Let us spiritually join the  
Corpus Christi movement for  
the sanctification of Priests and  
the good of souls with our  
prayers and sacrifices.

God bless you  
M. Teresa me

# Letter from the Secretariat of State (14 July 1997)



SECRETARIAT OF STATE

FIRST SECTION - GENERAL AFFAIRS

From the Vatican, July 14, 1997

Dear Mother Teresa,

The Holy Father has directed me to acknowledge the letter and accompanying documentation concerning the Corpus Christi Movement for Priests which you, Sister M. Nirmala and Father Pascual Cervera presented to him on July 7, 1997.

His Holiness prays that this initiative will bear abundant fruit for the fostering of priestly holiness and the spiritual renewal of the Church. As a pledge of joy and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ he cordially imparts his Apostolic Blessing.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

  
+ G. B. Re  
Substitute

Mother M. Teresa, M.C.  
Missionaries of Charity  
Via Casilina, 223  
00178 Roma

## **Letter from Fr. Pascual to CCM priests (November 1997)**

L.D.M.

New York, November 1997

Dear Brother Priest,

In 1982, after several years of association with Mother Teresa of Calcutta and the Missionaries of Charity as a layman, I went to Rome to study for the priesthood. At that time I learned of the Corpus Christi Movement for Priests started by Mother Teresa and Father Joseph Langford, who later founded the Missionaries of Charity Fathers.

The purpose of the Corpus Christi Movement is to enable priests to share in the Charism and Spirit given by God to the Church through Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity family.

Since learning about it I have felt the call to apply that Charism to my priestly life. Mother Teresa brought me to New York where I finished my seminary studies, was ordained, and where I have served as a priest these last years in close association with Mother, and the Sisters and Fathers.

This past May, when Mother Teresa was here in New York, she expressed her enthusiasm for reviving the Corpus Christi Movement, especially for diocesan priests. Mother and I presented the project to His Eminence, John Cardinal O'Connor, and he gave his blessing. In July, I went with Mother to Rome and we presented the project to Vatican officials. In a private audience with His Holiness Pope John Paul II, we received his Apostolic Blessing for the Movement. A little more than a month and a half later Mother left this world for eternity.

One of Mother's last wishes was the promotion of the Corpus Christi Movement for Priests, and in Mother's words *"this comes directly from the Heart of Jesus"*. She spoke of it as a *"little way of holiness for priests"*, no matter what their priestly assignments might be.

The following pages contain some explanation of the Corpus Christi Movement that Mother and I prepared together. If you are interested in being part of this Movement, please let me know. God bless you.

Sincerely yours in Jesus and Mary,

  
Father Pascual Cervera

# Letter from Fr. Pascual and Fr. Joseph to the Congregation (28 April 2002)



## ASSOCIAZIONE SACERDOTALE "MOVIMENTO DEL CORPUS CHRISTI"

- Fondata da Madre Teresa di Calcutta ed affiliato alle Missionarie della Carità -

Roma, 28 aprile 2002

Eminenza Reverendissima,

con la presente intendo sottoporre alla Sua attenzione la possibilità di stabilire nella Diocesi di Roma la sede legale dell'Associazione Sacerdotale "Movimento del Corpus Christi", fondata dalla Serva di Dio Madre Teresa di Calcutta e da P. Joseph Langford, M.C.

Approvati in modo provvisorio dalla Congregazione per il Clero i primi statuti nel 1981 con il nome di "Sacerdoti Collaboratori di Madre Teresa" (in allegato), la Serva di Dio ebbe il desiderio di dare una nuova spinta al Movimento, nominando nel 1997 come Coordinatore Internazionale il Rev.do Pascual Cervera, sacerdote della diocesi di New York. In quello stesso anno, il 7 luglio 1997, nell'ultima Udienza privata concessagli dal Santo Padre pochi mesi prima del suo decesso, il Papa diede la Sua benedizione al progetto (in allegato lettera della Segreteria di Stato).

Da quel momento in poi, il Movimento ha sperimentato un forte sviluppo ed ha portato avanti la sua attività mediante numerosi ritiri ed incontri con sacerdoti in diverse parti del mondo. Nell'attualità il Movimento annovera tra i suoi membri sacerdoti diocesani dai cinque continenti. Sarebbe adesso arrivato il momento di dare al Movimento una più stabile struttura ed una approvazione definitiva.

Veniamo, perciò, a chiedere all'Eminenza Vostra Reverendissima, in considerazione della nascita del Movimento nella Città Eterna, del suo carattere eminentemente internazionale e del desiderio sempre manifestato da Madre Teresa che il Movimento fosse molto vicino, anche fisicamente, al Santo Padre, nonché dell'imminente fondazione a Roma del "Centro Madre Teresa" (per la ricerca, studio e divulgazione della spiritualità della Serva di Dio), la possibilità di stabilire la sede legale del Movimento presso la Casa dei Padri Missionari della Carità in Urbe (Vicolo di Torre del Fiscale, 73).

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A Sua Eminenza Reverendissima  
Il Sig. Cardinale CAMILLO RUINI  
Vicario Generale di Sua Santità  
Piazza S. Giovanni in Laterano, 4  
00184 Roma  
(Con allegati)



RingraziandoLa anticipatamente dell'attenzione che Ella vorrà concedermi, mi valgo volentieri della circostanza per confermarvi, con sensi di distinto ossequio

di Vostra Eminenza Reverendissima  
dev.mo

*Don Pascual Cervera*

Rev.do Pascual Cervera  
Coordinatore

*P. Joseph Langford M.C.*

P. Joseph Langford, M.C.  
Superiore PP. Missionari della Carità (Roma)

# Letter from the Congregation for the Clergy (3 December 2012)



CONGREGATIO  
PRO CLERICIS

Dal Vaticano, 3 dicembre 2012

Prot. N. 20123602

Reverendo Signore,

facendo seguito alla precedente corrispondenza, mi reco con piacere a premura di trasmetterLe in doppio originale il testo del Decreto, pari numero e data, con cui questo Dicastero ha approvato, con alcune clausole interpretative, gli Statuti definitivi della "Associazione privata internazionale di chierici *Movimento del Corpus Christi*", al contempo costituendola in persona giuridica privata.

Formulo in proposito l'auspicio di un rinnovato slancio dell'Associazione nell'accompagnamento dei sacerdoti in vista della santificazione personale nell'esercizio del sacro ministero per il bene della Chiesa e la salvezza delle anime, nell'unione dei sacerdoti tra loro e con il proprio vescovo, nell'assidua celebrazione ed adorazione dell'Augustissimo Sacramento dell'Eucarestia, fonte e culmine della vita della Chiesa, nell'affidamento totale alla Beata Vergine Maria, Madre della Chiesa, nella partecipazione alla spiritualità della Beata Teresa di Calcutta ed allo spirito della Famiglia dei Missionari della Carità.

Voglia la S.V. qui cortesemente rimettere, quale prova dell'avvenuta notificazione del testo, uno dei due esemplari del provvedimento, munito delle indicate sottoscrizioni.

Impetrando nella preghiera la protezione della Beata Vergine Maria sul cammino di codesta Associazione, mi valgo volentieri della grata circostanza per confermarvi con sensi di distinto ossequio

della Signoria Vostra  
dev.mo

Mauro Card. Piacenza  
Prefetto

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Al Reverendo Signore  
Sac. Pascual CERVERA  
Coordinatore Internazionale dell'Associazione Sacerdotale  
"Movimento del Corpus Christi"  
c/o Archivio storico P. F.  
00120 CITTA' DEL VATICANO

(allegato)

Congregazione per il Clero - 00120 Città del Vaticano - Tel. 06/69884151 - Fax: 06/69884845



## CONGREGATIO PRO CLERICIS

Prot. N. 20123602

### DECRETUM

*Consociatio privata internationalis clericorum "Movimentum sacerdotale Corporis Christi" –  
Probatio definitiva statutorum et constitutio personalitatis iuridicae privatae*

- Visto il Decreto n. N. 20041164, del 6 agosto 2004, con cui questo Dicastero approvava *ad quinquennium* gli Statuti del "Movimento sacerdotale del *Corpus Christi*", come associazione privata di chierici a norma del can. 278, § 1-2, CIC;

- Viste le relazioni presentate circa le attività e la gestione economica dell'Associazione per gli anni 2005-2006 e 2007-2009;

- Considerato il voto favorevole circa l'esperienza dell'Associazione formulato dall'Em.mo Cardinale Vicario di Sua Santità per la Diocesi di Roma, sui cui territorio insiste la sede centrale dell'Associazione;

- Vista la deliberazione dell'Assemblea Generale dell'Associazione in data 30 giugno 2012, con cui si adottava la bozza degli Statuti definitivi da proporre a questa Congregazione per l'approvazione;

Tutto ciò premesso e considerato questa Congregazione, a norma dei cc. 278, § 1-2, 305, 321, 322, 323, 324, §1, 325, 326, CIC, con il presente

### DECRETO

dispone:

- è definitivamente approvato lo Statuto dell'Associazione privata internazionale di chierici denominata "Movimento sacerdotale del *Corpus Christi*", secondo il testo trasmesso a questo Dicastero ed allegato al presente Decreto, in quanto: *a)* le maggioranze di cui agli artt. 18 (*decisioni dell'Assemblea generale*) e 34 (*modifiche agli statuti*) si intendano *degli aventi diritto al voto* (non dei soli presenti); *b)* il rapporto da inviare ogni due anni a questo Dicastero, di cui all'art. 30, "che include la presentazione finanziaria dell'Associazione", sia da redigersi a cura del Coordinatore Internazionale e s'intenda come *relativo allo stato complessivo dell'Associazione e alla situazione economica documentata mediante i bilanci annuali regolarmente approvati dal Consiglio direttivo*;

- è conferita personalità giuridica privata dell'Associazione privata internazionale di chierici denominata "Movimento sacerdotale del *Corpus Christi*", con effetto dal momento dell'intimazione del presente decreto;

Si notifici agli interessati.

*Datum Romae, die III mensis decembris 2012, Memoria S. Francisci Xaverii, sacerdos*



*Maurus Card. Piacenza*  
Maurus Card. Piacenza  
Praefectus

*+ Celsus Morgia*  
\* Celsus Morgia Iruzubieta  
Archiepiscopus tit. Alban maritimus  
A Secretis

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*dies intimationis*

*Subsignatio Coordinatoris Internationalis*

*Subsignatio et sigillum Secretarii*

# Letter from the Congregation for Divine Worship (20 December 2013)



CONGREGATIO DE CULTU DIVINO  
ET DISCIPLINA SACRAMENTORUM

Prot. N. 370/13/L

Ciudad del Vaticano, 20 de diciembre de 2013

Reverendo Padre,

la Congregación para el Culto Divino y la Disciplina de los Sacramentos ha recibido su atenta carta, de fecha 26 de mayo del presente año, en la que solicita para la *Associazione Sacerdotale "Movimiento del Corpus Christi"* tener como calendario propio el de la Congregación de las Misioneras de la Caridad, aprobado por esta Congregación, con fecha de 29 de enero de 2004 (Prot. 1562/03/L).

El Dicasterio, dando respuesta a su petición, otorga a los miembros y centros de dicha Asociación la posibilidad de celebrar el 5 de septiembre, con el grado de *fiesta*, a la Beata Teresa de Calcuta. Con respecto a la Solemnidad del Corazón Inmaculado de María el 22 de agosto, hemos de hacerle saber que para ser celebrada con el grado de *solemnidad*, como es el caso de las Misioneras de la Caridad, han de solicitar el patronazgo del Corazón Inmaculado de María sobre la Asociación Sacerdotal. Una vez solicitado el patronazgo, se procederá a conceder dicha celebración.

La Congregación queda a la espera de su respuesta y a su disposición, por si fueran necesarias ulteriores aclaraciones.

Me sirvo de la ocasión para manifestarle mi mayor aprecio y estima en el Señor.

(Antonio Card. Cañizares Llovera)  
Prefecto

Rvdo. Sr. D.  
Pascual CERVERA  
**Coordinador Internacional**  
Associazione Sacerdotale "Movimiento del Corpus Christi"  
c/o Archivio Storico P.F.  
00120 CITTÀ DEL VATICANO



**APPENDIX 4:  
CCM LITURGICAL AND SPIRITUAL DAYS**





## **CCM special days**

Solemnity of Corpus Christi (Renewal of CCM Oblation)

Solemnity of the Sacred Heart

Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Feast of Saint Teresa of Calcutta 5 September

Anniversary of death

of Co-Founder, Fr Joseph Langford, MC 14 October (2010)

Anniversary of final approval

of statutes by Holy See 3 December (2012)

## **Other MC Family Special Days**

Society Feast Day 22 August

Inspiration Day 10 September

Thanksgiving Day 7 October



**APPENDIX 5:  
ESSENTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY**



## BOOKS

*Mother Teresa: Jesus is My All in All: Praying with the "Saint of Calcutta"* [Novena], 2008. Edited and with commentary by BRIAN KOLODIEJCHUK, M.C.

*Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light: The Private Writings of the Saint of Calcutta*, 2007. Edited and with commentary by BRIAN KOLODIEJCHUK, M.C.

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*Such a Vision of the Street. Mother Teresa - The Spirit and the Work*, 1985. EILEEN EGAN,

*Mother Teresa. In the Shadow of Our Lady*, 2007. JOSEPH LANGFORD, M.C.

*Mother Teresa's Secret Fire. The Encounter That Changed Her Life and How It Can Transform Your Own*, 2008. JOSEPH LANGFORD, M.C.

*We Do It For Jesus*, 1977. EDWARD LE JOLY

*Mother Teresa of Calcutta. A Personal Portrait*, 2011.  
LEO MAASBURG

*Something Beautiful for God*, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, 1971. MALCOM MUGGERIDGE

*Life With Mother Teresa. My Thirty-Year Friendship with the Mother of the Poor*, 2004. SEBASTIAN VAZHAKALA, M.C.C.

\* Please note that some of these books are available in Hardcover, Paperback and Kindle Edition. They are also available in other languages.

## **FILMS**

*Something Beautiful for God* (1969) – Peter Chafer and Malcolm Muggeridge (BBC)

*Mother Teresa* (1986) – by Ann and Jeanette Petrie  
DVD

*Mother Teresa: The Legacy* (2004) – by Ann and Jeanette Petrie  
DVD



**Corpus Christi Movement**  
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