

Eleven Addresses during a Retreat of the Companions of the Love of Jesus,  
engaged in perpetual intercession for the conversion of sinners.

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## ADDRESS VI.

*Love of Jesus for individual souls in His  
continuous High Priestly Office for us.*

O HOW little have I said of the Passion, when the whole world might be tilled with It, when all eternity will be full of It, when, in all eternity, we shall never weary of admiring, thanking, adoring It! Shall we perhaps know more and more of It throughout eternity and love It more? I cannot but think that we shall, if through Its precious merits we attain thither. Our's will be no mere reflection upon It; we shall ever see It: for we shall for ever see the prints of the nails in the glorified Body of Jesus.

Yes, this is an addition to the condescension of His Passion; this is part of the mystery of His love, that the Passion lives on there eternally. Perseverance is our highest conception of love; we are so changeable, so unpersevering! The Passion lives on in Heaven: it lives on upon earth in the Sacraments. If one must turn from the Passion, as He endured It, in order to say something of God's manifold love of souls, we can, at least, turn to It in Heaven. "He ever liveth to make Intercession for us."<sup>1</sup> Intercession for us is spoken of, as though it were the object of His Life there. "He, on account of His abiding for ever, hath His Priesthood unchangeable."<sup>2</sup> Whence also He is able to save to the uttermost,"<sup>3</sup> (wholly, entirely, completely, from every thing, from which we have to be saved,) "those who approach unto God through Him, ever living as He does to make intercession for us." And again, "He hath entered into the heaven itself,"<sup>4</sup> the visible Presence of God, "there to be manifested to the face of God for us;" there, face to face, to be, Himself, by His very Presence, our Intercessor with God. And yet again; "It is God Who justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? Christ Who died? yea rather Who is risen again, Who also is at the Right Hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us?"<sup>5</sup> That perpetual intercession for us is a matter of faith. His Presence intercedes; the Wounds, which for us He endured, intercede. He intercedes as our High Priest. How did the High Priest intercede? By presenting the blood of the sacrifice. Jesus intercedes then by presenting Himself. Yet this is again another condescension of the love of our God. He wills not, that the memory of the contumely and contempt, which He endured for us, should fade or pass away. It is part of the continual outstretched contemplation of the blessed Angels. We know that the prints of the nails, and the spear-pierced Side, are, as they were, in glory. For the Angel said to the Apostles, that "this Jesus, Who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." But He went with those prints of the nails, into which St. Thomas put his fingers, and that wound in the Side into which he was bid to thrust his hand. Well then may we think, that

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<sup>1</sup> Heb. vii. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. vii. 24.

<sup>3</sup> εἰς τὸ παντελές.

<sup>4</sup> Ib. ix. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. viii. 33, 34.

*there* are the traces of the Crown of thorns, the punctures in the Forehead through which they pierced Him, and perhaps the wales of the scourges. There they are, hut in what glory! All creation, to its utmost bounds, adores the condescension of its God. But the love of that condescension was for us.

In this Form, as “He Who was dead and is alive and liveth for evermore,”<sup>6</sup> His Presence has pleaded and pleads for us. During those sixteen millions of hours, which I spoke of, it has been one unbroken intercession for us. “All things in heaven and in earth and under the earth, bow before Him.”<sup>7</sup> “Angels bow and devils cower, in transport or dismay.”<sup>8</sup> And He, what doth He? “He upholds all things by the word of His power.”<sup>9</sup> “He delivereth the needy, when he crieth; the poor also and him that hath no helper. He spareth the poor and needy, and saveth the souls of the needy.”<sup>10</sup> This He does as King and Lord of all; but He also “intercedeth for us; first by presenting His Humanity, which He took for us; also, by expressing the longing of His All-Holy Soul, which He had for our salvation.”<sup>11</sup> For “it is more consonant to Holy Scripture and to piety, to hold that Christ, not only by a silent conveying, but by an open and express representation and manifestation of His will, prayeth for us in heaven;”<sup>12</sup> and that, individually. For He said, “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter.”<sup>13</sup> Where, when He saith, “I will ask,” He speaketh plainly of the time, when He shall be gone away, after His Resurrection. So that when He says, “In that day I say not unto you, that I will ask the Father for you, for the Father Himself loveth you,”<sup>14</sup> He as much as says, “In that day ye shall not only be heard, when ye ask in My Name, because I will ask for you, but also because the Father Himself loveth you.”<sup>15</sup> But then, since He intercedes for us, He intercedes for us individually. “No greater gift,” says St. Augustine,<sup>16</sup> “could God give to men, than that He should make His Word, through Whom He created all things, their Head, and unite them to Him as members; so that He should be Son of God and Son of Man; One God with the Father, One Man with man; so that, when we speak to God in prayer, we should not separate the Son from Him, and, when the body of the Son prayeth, it should not separate its Head from it, and that He Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, should be the One Saviour of His body, Who both prayeth for us and prayeth in us and is prayed by us. He prayeth for us, as our Priest; He prayeth in us, as our Head; He is prayed by us, as our God.” “Our Lord Jesus Christ still intercedes for us. All the martyrs who are with Him intercede for us. Their intercessions pass not away, unless our groans have passed away.”<sup>17</sup> “We pray to Him, with Him, in Him; and we speak with Him and He speaks with us.”

Yet this life of continual Intercession for us in Heaven is not enough for His Love.

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<sup>6</sup> Rev. i. 18.

<sup>7</sup> Phil. ii. 10.

<sup>8</sup> Breviary Advent Hymn. Dr. Newman’s translation.

<sup>9</sup> Heb. i. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Ps. lxxii. 12, 13.

<sup>11</sup> S. Thom. lect. 4, sup. ad Heb. vii.

<sup>12</sup> Suarez in 3 p. q. 21, disp. 44, s. 2.

<sup>13</sup> St. John xiv. 16.

<sup>14</sup> Ib. xvi. 26, 27.

<sup>15</sup> St. Cyril in St. John L. ii. c. 9.

<sup>16</sup> In Ps. lxxxv. init.

<sup>17</sup> Ib. n. 24.

More visibly individual is our Dear Lord's condescending love for us on earth. I speak not now of the marvellous hearing of prayer which, if we ask for things according to His Will, we may know of, but of those gifts which belong to us all of granted right (so to speak), if we do not place an obstacle to them by our own fault. I spoke, before, of that condescending love, with which, moment by moment, He is ever making, one by one, our human souls. Yet owing to the mode of our birth, they contract original sin through their union with our body. Yet the remedy, nay the more than remedy, is coextensive with the calamity to all of us who are Christians. At least it is our fault, if it is not. But then observe we the individuality. "The things which are done on the earth, He doeth them Himself." What is done in His Name, He is the Doer of it. Man, as we know, visibly poureth water on the child or adult, in the Name of the Holy Trinity; man placeth his hand on the person to be confirmed, or on the penitent, or on the oblations with the words of Consecration, "This is My Body," "This is My Blood;" and Jesus baptizes with the Holy Ghost; Jesus enlarges His gift of the Holy Ghost; Jesus forgiveth the sins of the penitent and washes them away in His own Blood; Jesus makes the elements of this world His Body and Blood. These are such common every-day doings of His, that, as in the workings of God in His visible creation, people forget what His individual love is. He still taketh up the children in His arms, one by one, and blesseth them. One by one, He makes them members of Himself. It is not less, it is greater, love to each of us, that what He doeth to each, He doeth to so many besides. For the good of one is the good of all, and the good of all is the good of each; the bliss of all the beatified will be an added bliss to that of each. Each will have his own joy, and each will joy in the joy of all besides, as his own joy. But though He does it to so many, He does it to each, one by one. One by one, He took us out of our state by nature, and, Himself the Baptiser, made us members of Himself, integral parts of His mystical Body, so that, without us, that mystical Body would not be what it is. If any of us (God forbid) fell away finally, there would be another purpose of His love frustrated, another star lost out of His creation; He would replace us with some other soul, as He replaces with human souls those of the rebel Angels who refused His love; but He does all which His Almightyness can to retain us, short of violating the nature which He gave us, and taking from us the blessed privilege of freely loving Him. One by one, He more than repaired to us Adam's loss; one by one, He took us up in His Arms; one by one, He made us children of God in Himself; one by one, He united us with the Father and Himself in the Holy Spirit; one by one, He made us members of Himself, of His Flesh, of His Bones; one by one, "we were bedewed with the Blood of Christ;"<sup>18</sup> "the body of the regenerated became the flesh of the Crucified." "We," they are words of God as to us, "put on Christ,"<sup>19</sup> we were clothed with Christ the Son of God, as with a robe, as our bodies are by the dress which we wear; "we co-died with Christ," were co-crucified, were co-interred, were co-implanted in His Death; God co-raised us in Christ: He co-vivified us, He co-seated us in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."<sup>20</sup>

And then again, one by one, in the Sacrament of Confirmation, He gave each one

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<sup>18</sup> St. Leo. See in Scriptural doctrine of Holy Baptism," p. 197.

<sup>19</sup> Gal. iii. 27.

<sup>20</sup> συναπεθανομεν, 2 Tim. ii. 11, συνεσταυρωθη, Rom. vi. 6, add Gal. ii. 20, συνεταφημεν, Rom. vi. 4, add Col. ii. 12, συμφοτοι γεγοναμεν, Rom. vi. 5, συνηγειρε, Eph. ii. 6, add Col. ii. 12, iii. 1, συνεζωοποιησε, Eph. ii. 5, Col. ii. 13, συνεκαθισεν, Eph. ii. 6.

of us a fuller measure of His Spirit, and sealed us anew: one by one, He fed us anew with His own Body and Blood: He gives Himself to us, one by one, to take Unseen into our hands,<sup>21</sup> before we lay Him up in our breasts.<sup>22</sup> Our senses report nothing to us, any more than they do the Presence of God, in Whom “we live and move and are.” We walk about in Almighty God, in the Ocean of Almighty Love. He is closer and more inward to us than the air which blows upon us, and sustains our animal life. Yet we discern Him not. It needs but an act of faith that we are in the Ocean of God’s Being, and we seem to be immersed in It. It is closer to us than those who throng upon us in the crowded streets. We seem almost to feel His pressure. It severs us by His presence from all besides. We are as motes, playing, moving, joying in the Sun of His love. Yet we perceive it not, except by the eyes of faith. We know that, had we power of vision, we could see Him in this Chapel, just as the Blessed Angels see Him, as the Seraphim adore Him in the Highest heavens in all the Majesty of His glory, in that Beatific Vision, for which we were created. We know it, because He has said, “In Him we live and move and are.”<sup>23</sup> But so He has said, “This is My Body,” “This is My Blood;” and by His saying He effects what He said. It is a great mystery of His Love that, being for ever, in His Natural mode of existence, in His Human Body at the Right Hand of God, He should so “delight to be among the sons of men,” that He should invent, so to speak, another mode of existence of His Body and Blood, a spiritual existence, in order to be with us, to be with each one of us, to be so wholly with each one of us, as if He were with none besides. It is a miracle, the most marvellous of miracles; but a miracle, for which we have His Word, Who is the Truth Itself. His glorious Body is in heaven, where It is to remain “until the restitution of all things.” Yet He made Himself present to St. Paul in his way to Damascus, “I am Jesus, Whom thou persecutest.” He is not present, in the same mode of existence, in the heavens and on the Altar. But “by a Divine virtue He raises His Body above the condition of a body and gives it a spiritual mode of existence,” as He Himself speaks, when speaking of that great mystery in the words which St. John has recorded; “so that it exists as if it were a spirit, invisible and indivisible;” a likeness of which we see in the soul, which exists everywhere in the body and wholly in each part of it. But then the same Body, which is locally at the Right Hand of God, is supralocally, under a different mode of existence, present with us, really, truly, substantially, though spiritually. And since His Body is there, there must His Soul be also, there also His Divinity. For they are inseparable. And all this for us, all this for each one of us, all this to unite each one of us as closely as is possible with Himself. He does not leave Heaven for us; His Presence there is necessary for us; yet, ere He left earth, He contrived a way, whereby He should be continually present on earth; present, not, as when on earth, in one single place, but throughout the whole earth, wherever Christians are, for Him to come to, wherever, according to His holy Institution, His Words consecrate the oblations to be His Body and Blood. Truly “it is expedient for us that He should go away;” for we could not every where have been present with Him in His Bodily Form, but He is every where

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<sup>21</sup> “The hand receives the Lord’s Body,” S. Cyprian Ep. 58 ad Thibar. § 10 p. 149, Oxf. Tr. “Eat, drink; having Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour, in Thy hands,” Inscip. Augustod. [2nd Cent.] in Spicil. Solesm. i. 557. See “The Presence of Christ in the Holy Euch.” (a Sermon) p. 48 sqq. and “Doctrine of the Real Presence as contained in the Fathers,” p. 337.

<sup>22</sup> S. Clem. Al. Pædag. i. 6, Real Presence, p. 329.

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present with us, to be to each one of us, what He is to all. When Jesus was on earth, He merited for His Human Soul and Body too. Every moment's suffering and humiliation and obedience was adding to the ineffable glory of His Human Body and Soul. Now He comes to be present, simply for us, to allow Himself to be sacramentally offered, in order to apply to our wants the Infinite merits of His own Sacrifice on the Cross; to come to dwell in us, to unite Himself with us, to be our Food, not changed into us, but changing us into Himself; that we, "spiritually eating the Flesh of Christ and drinking His Blood, may dwell in Christ and Christ in us, may be one with Christ and Christ with us." Such was the devout language of the early Christians. "We drink the Blood of our redemption:"<sup>24</sup> "we drink His Holy Blood, to be the propitiation for our sins: "We receive Himself, and lay Him up in our breasts."<sup>25</sup>

"Upon the Cross was fixed the Flesh I feed on, and the Blood  
Whence I drink life and cleanse my heart, 'twas from the Cross it flow'd."<sup>26</sup>

"Thou dost mingle Thy Body with our body and dost blend Thy Spirit with our spirit. In our persons is Thy living Body."<sup>27</sup> "He who loveth good, becometh also himself good, the goodness of Him Who cometh to be in him transmaking him into Himself."<sup>28</sup> "A spiritual well of fire gushes up out of this Table."<sup>29</sup> "He hath mixed up Himself with us, He has kneaded up His Body with ours."<sup>30</sup> "This Blood is the Salvation of our souls; by this the soul is washed; by this is beautified; by this is inflamed. This causeth our understanding to be more bright than fire, and our soul more beaming than gold; this Blood was poured forth, and made heaven accessible."<sup>31</sup>

But what if a soul be out of the reach of those special gifts of the Love of God? What, if, like those for whom we are combined to pray, a soul have closed itself against all, have wasted its Baptismal grace, neglected or profaned the Sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood, have forgotten God, or, by deadly sin, be in open rebellion against Him? Then too, perhaps most of all, is visible God's individual love for souls. What a work is the conversion of a soul to God! It seems as if the whole power and wisdom and love of the Holy Trinity were concentrated on each single soul. It is the Will of the Almighty Father, that none "should perish, but that all should come to repentance."<sup>32</sup> "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die?"<sup>33</sup> "God, because He can swear by no greater, sweareth by Himself,"<sup>34</sup> that He willeth not, that those souls should perish. Then there is the all-prevailing Intercession of the Son. He beholdeth each soul, for whom He shed His Precious Blood. For many of them He yet repeateth His words On the Cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not,

<sup>24</sup> S. Leo Serm 42. (de Quadr. iv.) c. 5. p. 161.

<sup>25</sup> S. Cyril. Al. in Myst. Cœna T. v. P. ii. p. 378.

<sup>26</sup> S. Paulin. Ep. 32 ad Sev. § 7. T. i. p. 125.

<sup>27</sup> S. Ephrem Can. 12 T. iii. p. 246.

<sup>28</sup> S. Greg. Nyss. in Eccl. iii. Hom. 8. T. i. p. 456.

<sup>29</sup> S. Chrys. on S. Matt. Hom. vii. § 7. p. 103.

<sup>30</sup> Id. on St. John vi. Hom. xlvi. § 1. p. 399.

<sup>31</sup> Ib. § 5. p. 407.

<sup>32</sup> 2 St. Pet. iii. 9.

<sup>33</sup> Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

<sup>34</sup> Heb. vi. 13.

what they do.”<sup>35</sup> And God the Holy Ghost, what doth He but perpetually besiege the soul? By afflictions, by miseries, by deaths of others, by hopes of heaven, by fears of Hell, by dread of being severed from God eternally, by yearning for His love, by the unsatisfactoriness and weariness of things temporal, by some glimpse or passing sweetness of things eternal, by some memory of past good, perhaps of childhood’s purity and a mother’s love, or by the weight of present evil, by disappointments or satiety, by the loathsomeness of evil or by the sight or hearing of some good, God the Holy Ghost from time to time speaks to the soul. If He is silent, it is but that He may take the soul by surprise, and speak the more effectually, because the ear has not been shutting itself vehemently against Him, and deafening itself against Him. O what millions of conversions there may not be going on in the world! What preparations there are going on for each individual conversion! And each conversion is as much the object of God’s multiplicity of contrivance, of the inventiveness of His grace and love, as if Jesus had died for that soul alone.

And when a soul is converted, what a jubilee of joy in heaven! Angels have watched over the process. They have wondered whether this soul, it may be, so black and bemired with sin, is to be a fellow-citizen with them, whether it’s lost graces can be restored, whether it’s obduracy can be softened, whether omnipotent grace can find access to it, whether it will ever yield itself, or whether it is to drop out of sight, their ministries vain, and they to wait for some other soul to join in their Halleluias for ever. And then the ice has cracked; the spellbound soul is awakened; it resists no more; it has become captive to the love of Jesus, and to His Precious Blood. And then, our Lord says, the Heavens ring with joy, “There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”<sup>36</sup> It may be that on earth there was no sign of it. Grace may have conquered on the death-bed. When souls have been out of reach of much grace before, doubtless grace is very busy then. God so loves the soul, that He will not part with it, if He can help it. It may have been, that the soul then first heard the Name of Jesus, and the sweetness of a Saviour’s love won him, and he may have breathed out his soul with the Name of Jesus, or with the cry, “Jesus, Saviour, save me;” and the lost was found! We hear but little here of the triumphs of the Precious Blood. It’s workings are mostly secret. But the contest for souls is the one history of earth. Every thing is of moment, as it bears upon it. What signifies any material prosperity, any knowledge, any power, unless it furthers the glory of God and the salvation of souls? And this, the real history of the world, this, for which alone the world exists, is carried on with individual love for every single soul. In each soul, which is won to God, Jesus “sees of the travail of His Soul, and is satisfied;”<sup>37</sup> each lost sheep which is found Jesus lays on His shoulders rejoicing, and says to His friends, the blessed Angels, “Rejoice with Me; for I have found My sheep which was lost.”<sup>38</sup> Such joy there is in Heaven over every converted Jew or Heathen, who is won to the faith. Such joy there is over every one, who has forfeited his Baptismal grace, and is restored by true repentance and entire conversion, so that he who was dead, again lives; such joy there is over every true confession, in which the soul, whose “sins

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<sup>35</sup> St. Luke xviii. 34.

<sup>36</sup> St. Luke xv. 10.

<sup>37</sup> Is. liii. 11.

<sup>38</sup> St. Luke xv. 5, 6.

were as scarlet,”<sup>39</sup> is washed “white as snow” in the Blood of Jesus, and Jesus says, “Thy sins be forgiven thee.”<sup>40</sup>

O that grand jubilee in heaven! Countless more beings than we can imagine, in their several choirs, but one in their love of Jesus and of souls. It may be one despised of men; it may be one degraded beyond the common degradation; it may be, that men would scarce believe the conversion; it may be a criminal dying by public execution, the object of common execration; it may be some poor drunkard, his intellect steeped and confused by His drink; it may be one of the outcasts whom the world loathes. It matters not. A soul is Avon by grace; it is radiant with the Blood of Jesus. The Blessed Angels see it, not as it has been, but as it is. And they sing aloud for joy; they hymn the victory of God’s long-suffering grace, the might of the Blood of Jesus, the sweet attractiveness of His Name, the enfolding of His Love. God must endow them with a portion of His own knowledge, that they should see each separate victory of His grace and love. And since these victories, throughout this our redeemed earth, are unceasing, there can be no break in that heavenly music of their jubilant praise. But each individual sinner who repenteth must swell their varied notes of triumphant thanksgiving; for they “joy over each one sinner that repenteth.”

Into their joy we cannot yet enter; but we can add to it. They do not only praise; they pray; they pity us, who have the trials of this poor material body, which they know not of; they wonder at us, that it so clogs us; but they pity us, as we should pity a weak man, borne clown by an overpowering weight too heavy for him. They pray for us, in whom they long that their Lord and King’s love should be accomplished; they long to bring us off victorious from the field; they watch its dizzy strife; they grieve, as far as blest spirits can grieve, at it’s uncertainty; how we let it go against us; how we lay aside our armour of prayer; how we walk carelessly amid the beleaguering foes whom they see around us. But we cannot pray, without praying in unison with those countless, blessed, untiring spirits. It is an Angel-like work on earth, to pray that they should be saved, who struggle weakly, who are all but overborne, who are all but sucked into the eddying whirlpool, where no strong swimmer can, of himself, fail to sink. Yet if he but cry, “Lord, save me, I perish,” a Hand will reach from Heaven and will raise him out of those awful, boiling surges, and will place him in the Ark, out of which he had cast himself. It may be that he has sinned away the last grace; it may be that his heart is seared as with a red-hot iron, and is as hard as the nether millstone: it may be that he has long ceased to pray for himself. But Jesus has delegated to us here below a part of His office. He wills that we should intercede for those who pray not for themselves; it is not we, it is His love, which saves them, but it is His love in us. If we should weary, of ourselves, how can we weary, when it is our Dear Lord Who has saved us, Who bids us help those whom also He bought with His Precious Blood? He will help us; only let us thirst, through His grace, for that for which He said on the Cross, “I thirst,” the salvation of mankind. Lord, teach us to pray, as Thou wilt hear!

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<sup>39</sup> Is. i. 18.

<sup>40</sup> St. Matt. ix. 2, 5, vii. 48, St. Mark ii. 5-9, St. Luke v. 20, 23.