

On Propitiation¹

St. Peter Julian Eymard to the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament
Paris, Friday, March 7, 1862

My Sisters, let us now finish what we started the last time about reparation. Reparation has two parts: to make reparation for the injury done to our Lord. We already dealt with this. There remains the second part: namely, to ask for the grace that sinners need. This is what we properly call propitiation. To make reparation for the injury of sins committed against our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar, is one of your greatest missions on earth at the feet of the Blessed Sacrament, because it is the mission of pure love. When we love someone, we are more affected and touched by her sufferings than by our personal sufferings. That's the nature of love, its first and natural feeling. We have seen so many sacrileges; we are not talking about the saints or the angels, but of the Lord himself. The injury done to saints, relics, to the cross does not touch him personally; these are things that may have touched him, but they are not his person. However, in the Most Blessed Sacrament, it is his very self as he is in heaven.

[...]

We must make reparation through love. What kind of love? A compassionate love that has empathy for the sorrows of his heart – to return to him what has been taken away and what we have failed to give him: praise, gratitude, and love. There is much² to be done, if only each would bring his share. But no one gives him anything. Why? Out of love, our Lord remains there even without receiving homage from all his creatures. **We must see what grieves him most, so as to alleviate what is most pressing.** No doubt, the pagans grieve the heart of our Lord, but they don't know him; they have their own prejudices. But those who are showered with so many favors, who have been raised to the priesthood, to the religious state, and do not adore him, and use his gifts to raise their heel against him (cf. Ps 40:10) – these souls are the spouses of his heart, he espoused them at the altar. The one that had given itself no longer wants to love anything except other human beings; there are sacrilegious souls, giving themselves to his enemies; becoming slaves of the devil and of passions that make them enemies of our Lord. Consider those who have made a vow of virginity and who go and unite themselves with people of licentious living, attaching themselves to objects of their passion, while our Lord is rejected. You understand that if you have any reparation to make, this is the one your state, your condition require– this one is more perfect than any other.

Reparation is more expressive of love than propitiation. To save souls is very good, but before considering the servants, consider the master, consider the savior before those who are redeemed. You may ask: **How can I console his heart?** Ask him. If you place yourselves at his disposition, he will tell you. He will teach you, so that you will go in the right way.

My good Daughters, so much for others; but what about us? Don't we have something to atone for? Have we been always faithful and grateful; have we preserved the fidelity of our vows? Have we no failures to be sorry for? In our youth, in middle age, and in our more advanced years, have we not

¹ Number 398. *La propitiation. Explication de la règle, Chap. III, Art. 7. Suite.*(*On Propitiation. Explanation of the Rule, chapter III, Art. 7. Continued.*)

² From Guillot and (S7bis): Il y a bien à faire (There is much to be done); instead of S7bis: Il a bien à faire (He has much to do.)

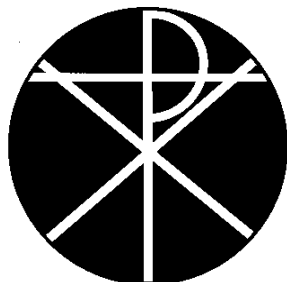
caused pain to our Lord by our infidelities? Focus preferably on love, if nothing else moves you – this is personal, and it is only right to make reparation for what we have been. Ah! My poor Daughters, we could spend our entire life – and it would be too short – since we have insulted an infinite love, and we are making reparation for a very crude love. We cannot repair this injury by our own strength. What help do we need? The mercy of God.

In your adorations, take some present situation: make reparation for continual and current failures. Make reparation for present failures, for the sins of the previous night. That's what we must do. Once in a while, focus on one special sin: make reparation for bad Communion made during the month, or during the year; make reparation for lukewarm Communion, so frequent in the world. Who thinks of them? People go to Communion to receive our Lord, to increase their piety, their own interest – this is not enough. Make reparation for careless Communion. There are some who leave immediately after Communion; they have purity of heart, but no devotion. They steal our Lord, but don't speak to him.

At other times, make reparation for sacrileges. Some people desecrate ciboria and the sacred hosts. My poor Daughters, this happens every day. Our Lord finds himself sold to the devil by all these sacrileges. Or again, consider human ingratitude, an abuse committed in a holy place, or whatever the Good Lord will suggest to you – focus on one special failure. Surely, if our heavenly Father spoke to us, he would say: *This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased, honor him.* He would not tell us *Listen to him* (Mt 17:5), but honor him, love him. If the angels spoke to us they would say: Since our Lord is there purely out of love, may his sacrifices not have been done in vain.

Do you know what happens when we start thinking about reparation? Our heart is on one side, while the sins of the human race are on the other; oftentimes, reparation is a perceptible grace – our heart is more united to God than in another meditation. Every part of us has its function, just as each also has its particular reparation – every part of us is busy doing its work (of reparation). The hours pass quickly with quiet tears. Magdalene did not notice the time when she was crying at the feet of our Lord (cf. Lk 7:38): her love was united to our Lord. Besides, our Lord has a special love for those who cry at his feet over the sorrows of his heart and over his sufferings. [...]

Because we no longer see our Lord crucified with his open heart, **we imagine he is no longer suffering.** In his state of glory, he is even more offended. He did not come here to suffer, as he did on Calvary. Then executioners were necessary. Pity on such a one. The Good Lord wanted to draw good from his death – but in the Blessed Sacrament, who thinks of this? Who tells him: Your heart is more offended here than in the Garden of Olives. This is so natural. We visit a sad and suffering friend; if we don't, this draws attention. Go then, especially on certain days, especially when your heart is drawn to our Lord. **What is the Church doing?** The Church makes reparation through the Office; the greater part of the Office is reparation rendering love and homage to our Lord. When the Church adores, it makes reparation and it prays. This is only just.



Points for reflection:

This last instruction is concerned especially about reparation of sacrileges and personal sins.

Take note of the Scripture texts. Notice the dimension of sins against our duties of state: the vows, the Eucharist. Notice also the ecclesial and liturgical reference in the last paragraph.