

Editorial

HAURIETIS AQUAS, the encyclical of the late Pope Pius XII, on devotion to the Sacred Heart, leaves no doubt as to the unique and important role this devotion should play in the life of every true son of Holy Mother, the Church. The Holy Father, in this encyclical, has enriched the Church with on authoritative testimony to the scriptural, traditional, theological and liturgical foundations of this devotion. The saintly Pontiff goes so far as to assert that, "if the evidence on which devotion to the Wounded Heart of Jesus rests is rightly weighed, it is clear to all that we are dealing here, not with an ordinary form of piety which anyone may at his discretion slight in favor of other devotions, or esteem lightly, but with a duty of religion most conducive to Christian perfection." In its practice, it may be considered, "the perfect profession of the Christian religion."

This effusive praise of Pope Pius is not difficult to understand when we consider that devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a most excellent means of fulfilling that divine commandment, which is the basis of all Christian perfection: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength" (Mark, 12:30). For *love* is the center and focal point of this devotion which, in its essence, is nothing less than devotion to the human and divine love of the Incarnate Word and to the love of the Father and Holy Ghost for sinful mankind. The wounded heart of our Saviour is the living sign and symbol of that love which cannot but evoke and enliven our love for God and man in return.

The most telling and provoking manifestation of Christ's love for us is to be found in His passion and death on Calvary. "The mystery of the divine Redemption," Pius tells us, "is first and foremost a mystery of love. . . . And in fact Our Divine Redeemer was nailed to the Cross more by love than by the force

of the executioners. His voluntary holocaust is the supreme gift which He bestowed on each man according to the concise words of the Apostle: 'Who loved me, and gave Himself up for me.'"

Yet this loving sacrifice of our Divine Lord, which He offered to His Heavenly Father out of His ardent love for us, is not a thing of the past. Each day this sacrifice of love is renewed in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, on countless altars throughout the world. The priest, as an instrument of the great High-Priest, Jesus Christ, offers anew, to the heavenly Father, the infinite love of the Sacred Heart in the unbloody sacrifice of the altar. The institution of the holy Priesthood is the means Christ has chosen to perpetuate this greatest manifestation of His love for us. Little wonder, then, that the Holy Father lists the sacred priesthood among the greatest gifts which the most Sacred Heart of Jesus has bestowed on men.

On June 5th, the feast of the Sacred Heart, before the high altar of St. Dominic's Church in Washington, D. C., twenty-six young Dominicans received this sublime gift of the sacred priesthood from the priestly Heart of Christ. We dedicate this issue of *Dominicana* to these newborn priests of the great High-Priest, and pray, in the spirit of St. Paul, that throughout their priestly lives, they may be rooted and grounded in the love of the Sacred Heart; that they may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is its breadth and length and height and depth; that they may know Christ's love, which surpasses knowledge, in order that they may be filled unto all the fullness of God.



"Is there a devotion more excellent than that to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, one which is more in accord with the real nature of the Catholic faith or which better meets the needs of the Church and the human race today? What act of religion is nobler, more suitable, sweeter and more conducive to salvation, since this devotion is wholly directed to the love of God Himself?"

(POPE PIUS XII, *Haurietis Aquas*)