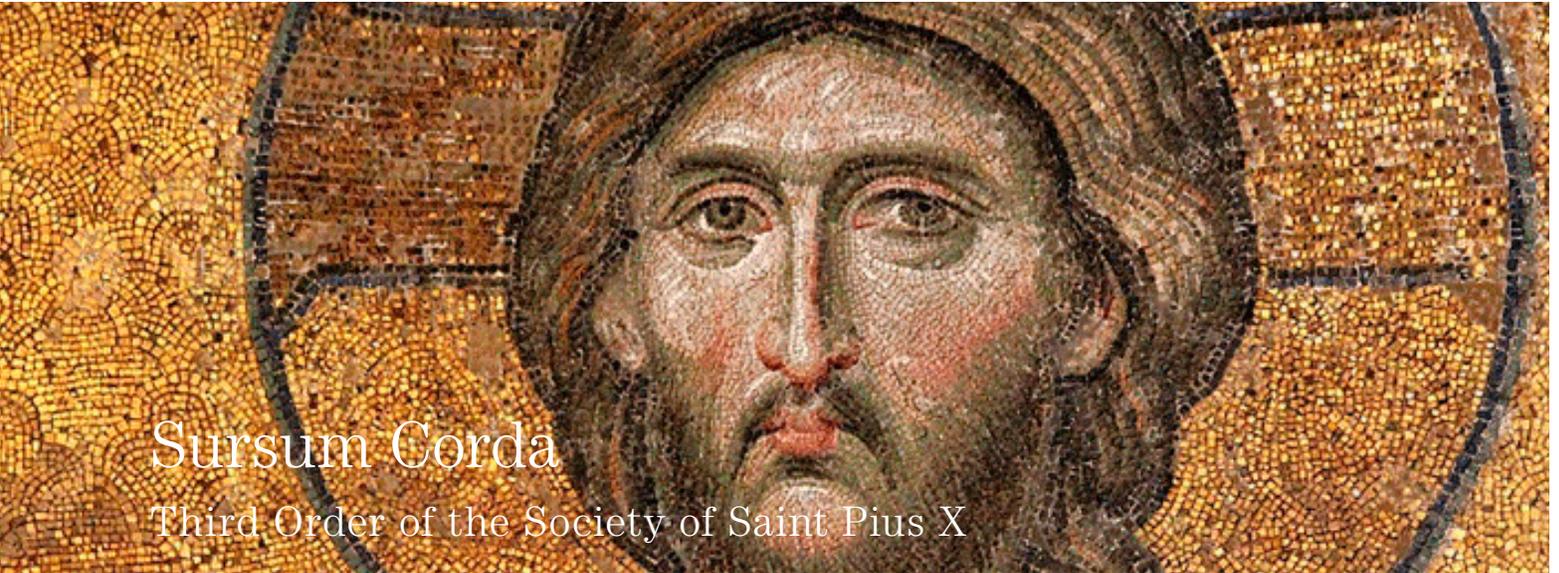




S S P X



Sursum Corda

Third Order of the Society of Saint Pius X

Number 4 - Winter 2013 ❖❖

# The Rule of the Third Order

---

## Purpose and the Establishment of the Third Order

The sanctification of the individual member and of those for whom members of the Third Order are responsible.

## Patron Saint of the Third Order: St. Pius X

Sanctity today must be attained in a world which opposes it by errors and subtle heresies, introduced into all Catholic milieu under the name of

Modernism. Pope St. Pius X was beatified for courageously denouncing Modernist errors and showing an example of sanctity in the solidity of doctrine, the purity of morality, and devotion to the Eucharistic Sacrifice. This holy pope is therefore clearly the model for souls who wish to sanctify themselves in our day.

## Relationship of the Third Order to the Priestly Society of St. Pius X

The Third Order has been established by the Society; therefore, the chaplains of the Third Order

Continued on p. 3

# Letter from the Chaplain

Dear Third Order Members,

This issue is devoted to the Rule of the Third Order of the Society of St. Pius X. It is not the intention to make an extensive commentary on the Rule, but rather to provide each member with a copy. The Rule has never been a difficult text to obtain. Saying that, I am sure many members, particularly those professed for a number of years, do not have the text at hand. As the saying goes, out of sight, out of mind – this issue is to ensure the Rule is not out of mind. This publication also accompanies our efforts of reorganization of the Third Order.

With years of experience, our Founder penned these lines. Its style is simple and short; its content is direct and complete. The program is for the sanctification of the laity by a participation in the spirituality of the Society. The Archbishop is not excessively demanding nor is he deficient in capturing the spirit of the Church. In fact, it was the wish of the Archbishop to make this program simple and easy, not creating unreasonable burdens or obstacles for the laity. He wished for the tertiaries to be sanctified by the same graces as the priests, brothers, sisters, and oblates.

If one were to make a comparison with the Rules of other religious orders, one would find the same principles in the Third Order Rule. The Rules of Religious Orders are written for those who take vows and live in the community of a monastery. These Rules have specific differences which stress the various characters of the Religious Orders yet all are built around the evangelical councils/vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. These are things that belong specifically to religious, not the laity.

The Archbishop wrote the Third Order Rule for laity - those who do not make the vows nor live in community. Nevertheless, the spirit of the vows is present in the Rule. Thus the Rule mentions 'the spirit of attachment to the Roman Church', and 'the spirit of obedience.' Moreover, when highlighting why St. Pius X is our patron, he mentions 'the purity of morality' thus indicating the spirit of chastity. Lastly, in restricting the use of television, in prescribing the fast and abstinence on certain days, and cautioning prudence in the choice of leisure activities and vacation spots, he points to the spirit of poverty which is one of detachment.

Within the various Religious Rules is observed the spirit

of prayer, particularly the prayer of the Church. The Rule of the Third Order contains the same principle. In a few different places the Archbishop stresses the importance of the Sacrifice of the Mass. It is likewise interesting how he highlights the value of the divine office, encouraging members when possible to attend the offices of prime and compline.

Most of the Religious Orders have within their Rules a program of fasting which is nothing other than a regulated/determined spirit of penance and mortification. Many are familiar with the more intense fasting of the Religious Orders. These heavier mortifications are more easily maintained by those in Religious life. Even though minimal fasting is mandated in the Third Order, the spirit of penance is still maintained.

In short, our Founder bequeathed to his Society a program of sanctification impressively saturated with the flavors of Catholicism. Understanding the measure, the depth, even why certain things were not penned, demonstrates this marvelous spirit of the Church. This spirit came out of him as easily as breath came from his mouth.

Find also within this issue a series of articles written by Archbishop Lefebvre in the early 1980s. These were written to define and describe the spirit of the Society. They can be considered an excellent accompaniment/interpretation to the Rule.

Finally, I would like to mention two practical points. First is the Angelus magazine. I recommend and encourage all tertiaries to have a subscription. Where best to obtain the Society's spirit if not from her approved publications. Secondly, some of you have received email notices to subscribe to the Third Order online. Unfortunately, I lack hundreds of email addresses. Email me at [third-order@sspx.org](mailto:third-order@sspx.org) so I can add your email to the list. Soon after you will receive an email requesting you to subscribe. In doing this you will automatically receive updates, notes, newsletters, etc. for the Third Order.

In Christ,



Fr. Adam Purdy



are designated by the District Superior and approved by the Superior General. Members of the Third Order share in the graces of the Society, gained by its Priests and the merits of its members.

## Members of the Third Order

All Catholics, priests or lay, who accept the spirit and the Rule of the Third Order, are eligible for membership. Children can be enrolled with permission of their parents, the minimum age being twelve years.

Emblems: The medal of St. Pius X and a Cross, given at the time of profession in the Third Order.

## The Spirit of the Third Order

- The spirit of the Third Order is that which animates the priestly society, i.e., the spirit of the Church, its living Faith, manifested in all of her Tradition, her infallible Magisterium, expressed and explained in the Catechism of the Council of

Trent, in the Vulgate Bible, in the teaching of the Angelic Doctor St. Thomas Aquinas, and the immemorial liturgy.

- The spirit of attachment to the Roman Church, to the popes, to the bishops, the spirit of obedience to the authorities of the Church according to their fidelity to their office, which is nothing else than to spread the Catholic Faith and the Kingdom of Our Lord.
- The spirit of vigilance in regard to anything which might corrupt the Faith.
- The spirit of tender and filial devotion toward the Virgin Mary — according to the spirit of St. Louis Mary Grignon de Montfort — to St. Joseph, and to St. Pius X.
- The desire to rediscover the capital importance of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and its mysteries, and to find there the meaning and source of Christian life, a life of sacrifice and co-redemption.

## Steps in Membership

- Enrollment: A request is sent to the priest in charge of the Third Order or to the District Superior.
- The priest in reply sends an information sheet to be filled out. Then, if the request is granted, he sends a copy of the document for enrollment.
- Postulancy: This lasts one year, in the course of which the fidelity of the postulant in keeping his obligations and his adherence to the spirit of the Third Order is tested.
- Profession: The postulant, in a ceremony, makes his profession in the presence of the designated priest. He then receives the medal and crucifix and his certificate of membership in the Third Order.

## Personal Obligations

- Daily:
  - Morning and evening prayers, such as Prime and Compline or the prayers from the Retreat Book.
  - Recitation of the Rosary.
  - Attendance at the Immemorial Mass, if possible, or fifteen minutes of meditation.
- Weekly:
  - Attendance at the Immemorial Mass (and not the *Novus Ordo Missae*, because of the danger of acquiring a Protestant spirit).



- Every two weeks (if possible or at least once a month): the Sacrament of Penance.
- Every two years: a retreat.

## Practical Notes:

- Recommended reading: The acts of St. Pius X, the Catechism of the Council of Trent, the New Testament, the Imitation of Christ, the lives of the saints. Try to spread good reading material.
- Fasting on Ember Days, on Vigils of great feasts, on Ash Wednesday, and Holy Saturday.
- Abstinence on all Fridays.
- To abstain from television and from unclean reading, and to practice sobriety.

## Obligations of the Married

- To observe, in a spirit of submission to Our Lord, the laws of marriage toward the goal of having a large family. To renounce absolutely all positive action toward the goal of not having children.
- To make of the family home a sanctuary consecrated to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary where evening prayers and, if possible, the Holy Rosary are recited in the family. Liturgical life should be paramount on Sundays and Feast days. Avoid everything that could harm the souls of children; television, unclean magazines.
- To choose truly good and traditional schools and

to contribute to their establishment.

- To be prudent in the choice of leisure activities and of vacation spots.

## Professional and Social Duties

- To follow the example of the Holy Family and to pursue the duties of justice and charity, whether one be an employer or an employee.
- To promote and defend the social reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and to combat Liberalism and Modernism, scourges of modern times which are delivering the Church to her enemies.

## Organization

The priest in charge of the Third Order in the district receives enrollments, names his assistants, and calls meeting of his council and general meetings to encourage members to remain active and vigilant in the work of their sanctification and that of others.

He will set up libraries with a librarian charged with lending books to postulants and to members.

He will publish a bulletin keeping tertiaries in touch with one another, sharing addresses, information, and the hours of meetings, religious ceremonies, days of recollection, pilgrimages, ordinations, religious professions, etc.

At meetings a collection will be taken up for the needs of the Third Order. A treasurer in charge will keep the accounts and will report them at meetings of the Council. The Council of the Third Order will decide how to use the resources at its disposal: internal expenses, help to a seminary, a school, the sick, retreat work, etc.

+Marcel Lefebvre  
November 1, 1980



# The Spirit of the Society of St. Pius X

## Article No.1

Dear Friends,

Without doubt, these words are primarily addressed to the priests of the Society, but they are intended for the Society's seminarians, brothers, sisters, novices, oblates and all who help us in our apostolate and participate in the spiritual life of the family.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Society, I would like to try to define and describe that which we call the Spirit of the Society.

At times here and there, we hear the more or less sharp criticisms of our friends, who say: "The members of the Society look upon themselves as privileged persons, they imagine for themselves to be the Church, and so they have little concern for others; they seek to possess everything, to control everything etc...."

It is possible that youth and a lack of experience in the apostolate sometimes provokes a tactlessness and causes misunderstandings. And it is certain that we must do all we can to show a charity towards those, who like ourselves, are striving to combat error and keeping the faith.

But, that apart, it is useful to see where the Society stands within the present context of the Church, so that we might also be eventually ready to live within a new context, without modifying anything of our being of the Church and in the Church.

Having been recognized by the Church as a Priestly Society of Common Life without vows, our Society has been grafted upon the trunk of the Church. It is drawing upon its sap of sanctification from the most authentic sources of the Church's Tradition and the pure, living sources of holiness, following the footsteps of so many other societies that have gained ecclesiastical recognition over the centuries, whose branches have grown and blossomed and born fruits of sanctity for the honor of the Church militant and triumphant.

The savage and unjust struggle, undertaken against

the Society by those who are trying to contaminate the Church's sources of sanctification, merely confirms the Society's authenticity. These persons are the successors of Cain, who wish anew to rid themselves of Abel, whose prayers God finds so agreeable.

In normal times, the foundation and development of our Society would have passed unnoticed among many other marvelous, fruitful and flourishing societies. Today, the dried-up, sterile, bitter fruits of most branches are a stark contrast to the vigor and life of traditionalist branches.

Thus the situation of the Society of St. Pius X in the Church puts it in a special place, something which is well understood by the faithful as a whole, who clearly manifest their desire of being evangelized and sanctified by the Society. This greatly encourages and consoles us, to see an ever increasing number of priests, who are not members of the Society, manifesting a desire of working with the Society, and thereby finding a spiritual strength, and the help and assurance of not being isolated.

The place of the Society, in relation to the Church, is one of considerable importance, since it legitimizes its continuity and the maintenance of its apostolate along the unchangeable line of its approved foundation by the Church. It would be most useful for us to define the Society, for it represents, by the grace of God, a hope for the Church and a hope for souls.

I have written these few lines intending them to be a kind of prologue for what is to appear in successive issues of the *Cor Unum*.

+Marcel Lefebvre  
February 7, 1981

## Article No. 2

The spirit of the Society, being above all that of the Church, will see to it that the members of the Society—priests, brothers, sisters, oblates and ter-

tiaries—will ever increase in their knowledge of the Mystery of Christ, such as St. Paul describes in his epistles, especially those to the Ephesians and the Hebrews.

Then we shall discover what has guided the Church for 20 centuries, we will understand the importance the Church gives to the Sacrifice of Our Lord and consequently, to the Priesthood too! We will penetrate the depths of the great mystery of our Faith, the Holy Mass, and so to have limitless devotion for this mystery, making it the center of our thoughts, our hearts and our interior life and in thus doing so, living by the spirit of the Church.

All Scripture focuses upon the Cross, with its redeeming victim, shining with glory. All the life of the Church is turned towards the altar of Sacrifice and, consequently, the Church's principal concern is for the sanctity of Her priests.

These are also the fundamental convictions of the Society. All its efforts and preoccupation with priories, schools, and above all, seminaries, are consecrated towards the formation of future priests.

The ever-increasing unveiling of the great mysteries for which they are destined, should give their lives an especial character; captivated by Our Lord and His sacrifice, they must by that very fact leave the world behind, with its vanities and futility, and show this detachment by their dress, their attitude, their love of silence and seclusion, even if, at a later date, the apostolic demands will require them to go to souls.

The spirit of the Church focuses upon the divine and the sacred. She forms the one who will give sacred things to others—*sacerdos* or *sacra dans*—the one who will perform holy and sacred acts—*Sacrum faciens*. She places, in his consecrated hands, divine and sacred gifts, *sacramenta*, the Sacraments.

The Church consecrates and gives a sacred character to the baptized, the confirmed, to kings, virgins, knights, churches, chalices and altar stones. All these consecrations are done in the splendor of the Sacrifice of Our Lord and in the person of Jesus Himself.

Today, however, one of the most painful phenomena of our age is desecration—the desecration pursued by Freemasonry through secularization, atheism, rationalism, and now, tragically, aided by the clergy themselves. With God, and all that reminds us of God, being gradually eliminated and replaced by a denatured man, Society thus becomes a hell. Living within the atmosphere of such a world, the Society of St. Pius X, in resurrecting the true spirit of the Church, seeks to show forth Our Lord Jesus Christ by restoring the

honor due to consecrated persons and sacred things.

The sacred and the divine inspire respect. One of the characteristics of the Society will be that of showing respect towards baptized souls, of treating sacred things with respect, especially concerning the sacred action *par excellence*: the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Therefore, we will avoid being drawn into the current of vulgarity and crudeness—fruits of desecration. Respect for ourselves and for others, will be an especial sign of the true spirit of the Church. Both believers and non-believers will be greatly influenced by this manifestation of the spirit of the Church and Our Lord. Therein we truly see the Christian spirit and Christian civilization—a civility of respect, founded upon faith towards the sacred and divine, that is to say, towards Our Lord, all that represents Him and all that comes from Him.

+Marcel Lefebvre  
June 2, 1981

### Article No. 3

Profoundly convinced that the source of life is found in Christ crucified, and thus in the Sacrifice of that He has bequeathed to us, the members of the Society will uncover the precious legacy, with an ever increasing joy that the Mystical Spouse of Our Lord, born of Jesus' pierced side, has wished to hand down with a splendor inspired of the Holy Ghost. Whence come the splendors of the liturgy, that sing of the crucified and risen Christ. The Church knows how to present and make us live these mysteries in a truly divine manner, in a way that our hearts are captivated and our souls uplifted. All has been thought out with the love of a faithful spouse and merciful mother. We find edification in the holy places, the ceremonies, the chant, the choice of prayers from the Missal, the Breviary, the Pontifical and the Ritual. How could a soul, that lives by faith and seeks to model its faith upon that of the Church, seek to desecrate all this?

The members of the Society, in their attachment to this spirituality of the Church written on stone and in traditional liturgical books, will not only strive to apply those spiritual principles to themselves, but will also uncover those wonders to the faithful.

The consequences of this attachment to the liturgy will be seen in the care and attention given to the beauty and cleanliness of holy places, the sacred linens and objects used in worship. It will also manifest itself in beautiful ceremonies, chants and the regular-



ity and edifying recitation of the Divine Office.

Nothing is too little, nothing insignificant in the service of such a Lord and King. Let us always remember this! It is a powerful means of apostolate. If the Liturgy is, above all, the praise of the Holy Trinity, offering and sacrifice, a source of divine life—then it is also the most vibrant and effective means of catechizing. Happy the faithful who have a priest who is in love with the liturgy of the Church!

In administering sacred things, we will inspire ourselves with the sentiments of the Church—with Her respect for Our Lord and all that is related to Him, following the example of the Virgin Mary. That means a deep respect, as well as humility and simplicity, avoiding all originality or personal improvisation. Are we so audacious as to think that our personal attitude and way of doing things is preferable to that of the Church?

Liturgical actions are public actions and not personal acts of devotion. We must, therefore, ensure that they are in accordance with the will of the Church and not our own whims, nor those of a reformer inspired by a Protestant spirit.

Let us beware of haste or excessive slowness. Neither edifies the faithful. Let us avoid accumulations of ceremonies, which is against the spirit of the Church. Let us take account of the availability of the faithful in fixing the times of the ceremonies, and also the length of the ceremony when it concerns paraliturgical ceremonies or sermons—that they always have the goal of edifying the faithful rather than satisfying our own desires.

Yet, in this time of secularization, the faithful are sorely afflicted by the need for prayer and to be able to express their faith by processions, pilgrimages, and nocturnal adoration. In these circumstances, pastoral prudence must be correctly exercised in order to arrive at the right measure.

Let us ask the Blessed Virgin to communicate to us her insight on those holy mysteries which she intimately witnessed throughout the course of her earthly life.

+Marcel Lefebvre  
September 26, 1982

## Article No. 4

In the preceding articles, we have seen that the spirit of the Society is essentially a priestly spirit, enlightened by the radiance of our Redeemer's Sacrifice

on Calvary and in the Mass, the *Mystery of Faith*.

This great mystery, the sun of our faith, is brought to us by the Church's Liturgy, where, like a mother, She unfolds to us the infinite riches of this mystery, by the actions, words, chants and liturgical vestments, all of which differ according to the remarkable liturgical cycle.

The Society, eager to live out this mystery, zealously seeks to understand the Liturgy and to bring it forth in all its beauty and splendor—*Domine dilexi decorum domus tuae*. The spirit of the Society is a liturgical spirit.

The consequence of such an approach to God though His redeeming Sacrifice, will produce in the members of the Society the very same effects, within due proportion, that those privileged souls felt who received the stigmata of Our Lord.

There is a twofold effect; wherein the first influences the second, of which it is the source; we speak of contemplative aspects.

- an ardent desire to offer oneself as a total victim in union with the Divine Victim.
- a love of God and Our Lord to the point of sacrificing oneself.
- a total abandonment of oneself to the Holy Will of God.
- a burning union with the pierced Heart of Our Lord.

The effects of the Spirit of Love, manifested upon the Cross and which continue to manifest themselves at the altar and in the Eucharist, have a tendency to distance a soul from the world, despising material, passing things in favor of eternal, spiritual ones. The soul experiences a great horror of sin, and profound contrition for its faults and a desire to expiate for itself and for others. God must be thanked for communicating to us His spirit of love and victim for the glory of His Father.

How desirable it is for all Society members to thirst after the contemplative life, that is to say, a simple yet ardent glance at the Cross of Jesus, acquiring the spirit of prayer and an interior life comparable to that of Our Lord, Who lived 30 of His 33 years apart from the world.

It is a serious concern for the superiors of Missionary Societies, such as our (which is missionary by necessity, in view of the disastrous situation in the Church today), to note that sometimes certain members, priests in particular, end up abandoning their zeal for the apostolate of prayer, which is leaven and source of the exterior apostolate. The apostolate of prayer is the essential apostolate that unites us to

Our Lord, the sole source of the graces of redemption. The exterior apostolate, with its catechism classes, meetings, conferences, etc. will quickly become sterile, if cut off from that fundamental apostolate that keeps us in constant union with our Lord.

Zeal that does not keep an equilibrium and a link between those two apostolates, is in reality a false zeal, a mere human zeal which is no longer humble, for it counts upon human gifts and qualities. Such practitioners of human zeal expose themselves to cruel deceptions, discouragement, irritation and impatience. Their apostolate no longer has a supernatural source. They become like the gardener, who is so carried away by his zeal in watering, that he eventually pulls the hose pipe off the faucet that supplies the water! They also condemn contemplative souls, because they themselves no longer regard contemplation as the foundation of their apostolate. Experience shows this, as does the disaster of renegade priests. A priest who no longer says anything more than his Mass, ends up saying it without devotion and without faith. His apostolate will be fruitless. He is soon to ready to abandon everything.

That is why the Society offers its members a structure, a rule and community life, which keeps them within a true apostolate by a happy balance between the spiritual apostolate and the exterior apostolate. That is what all founders of religious orders or apostolic congregations wanted, conformity to that which the Apostles themselves practiced: *But we will give ourselves entirely to prayer and to the ministry of the word.* (Acts 6:4)

+Marcel Lefebvre  
January 14, 1982

## Article No. 5

The spirit of the Society is the spirit of the Church, the spirit of faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ and in His redemptive work. The entire history of the Church, over the last twenty centuries, reveals the fundamental principles of the Church as inspired by the Holy Spirit, the spirit of Our Lord.

The priest is at the heart of this divine work of the renaissance of souls and their divinization in preparation for their future glory. All his thoughts, ambitions, and actions must be inspired by this spirit of faith. This spirit of faith is essentially a spirit contemplating the crucified and glorified Jesus. The faith is the seed of the beatific vision, which is an eternally

blessed contemplation.

That is why the Church has always encouraged contemplative Orders and has placed them at the head of religious societies. *Maria optimam partem elegit.* The Church also insists upon the prayer of the priest: his breviary, his daily meditation. It is obvious that if the Church officially prescribes this in Canon Law, in that the soul of the priest must belong entirely to Jesus Christ, then the priest must fulfill the four ends of prayer: adoration, thanksgiving, impetration and propitiation.

If contemplation is a glance of love towards the crucified and glorified Jesus, then it places the soul in the hands of God—*In manus tuas commendo spiritum meum*—and this cannot occur unless we completely abandon our will and place it in God's hands. In other words, a consummate obedience to His holy will; a will indicated by God and those who legitimately participate in His authority and who use that authority correctly; a will that indicates God's good pleasure in the course of events that affect the very heart of our existence; illnesses, trials... Let us meditate upon these great instructions of the Church and thereby apply their principles by putting them into practice in our own lives.

This presupposes a deep humility; something that is seen in Benedictine spirituality, which is entirely based upon a progression in the virtue of humility. If the teaching that is contained in the liturgical life is so admirable and draws us towards an ever greater sanctification of soul, then the practical directives of the Church throughout its history, as well as its approval of the many foundations destined to sanctify souls, not to mention the examples of the saints, are all equally precious guidelines for our souls. In following them, according to the grace God grants us, we can be sure of not deceiving ourselves.

Contemplation, obedience, humility, are all elements of one sole reality: the imitation of Jesus Christ and participation in His infinite love.

May we be inspired by these sentiments! Consequently, whatever apostolate we may receive, whatever be the results of our efforts, whatever our limitations or weaknesses may be, we will have the consolation of participating in the joys and sufferings of Our Lord, who will also let us participate in His peace and serenity.

This is, and always will be, the secret fruitfulness of the priestly apostolate.

+Marcel Lefebvre  
June 26, 1982