

For these aspirations one should follow the suggestions of one's heart. One should seek the thought which is most touching. These acts of love will wound the Sacred Heart and will expand the heart of the one who offered them. They will add to the value of the actions with which they are associated.

To summarize one's resolutions: care more for loving God than for discoursing on perfection. Offer actions to the Sacred Heart out of love and accomplish them conscientiously and painstakingly. To do this, renew the morning offering several times a day by means of a quick thought, a moment of recollection before principal actions. Let your particular examinations of conscience be concerned principally with the observance of these means of union with our Lord. Let your heart expand from time to time with affection for our Lord by means of ejaculatory prayer.

Words of the Savior Yes, those who generously observe these practices, with the sincere desire of giving a proof of their love to my Heart, will receive abundant and precious graces. I shall take pleasure in inflaming their hearts. This is, moreover, what I asked of my servant Margaret Mary. Those who neglect it could not claim to be truly consecrated to my Heart, to be really leading a life of love and reparation.

Resolution Yes, good Master, I wish to think of you often. I wish to live for you. I offer you my whole life, all my actions and my sufferings. I offer them from love and from a spirit of gratitude. I shall faithfully renew this offering before each of the principal actions of the day.

Scripture Verses

"I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth." [Psalm 34:1]

"I slept, but my heart was awake." [Song of Songs 5:2]

"My eyes are ever toward the Lord." [Psalm 25:15]

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and steadfast spirit within me." [Psalm 51:10]

Dehonian Associates, www.sacredheartusa.org

The Life of Oblation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

from *The Life of Love towards the Sacred Heart of Jesus*, 24th Meditation

Leo John Dehon, SCJ

Gospel Reading: Matthew 6:21-24

Words of the Disciple Speak, my good Master. What should I do to please you? To prove my love at every instant of my life?

First Consideration: *The life of oblation is a constant vigilance to prove our love for our Lord.*

Our Lord does not ask of you a profound knowledge of perfection. What he desires is that you have nothing in your soul, in your heart, in your will, but a single care—that of loving him and of proving your love to him. If this desire, this resolution absorbs you completely, you will arrive at perfection without even having the formal preoccupation of this perfection.

If you commit a fault, if you lack generosity in his service, you will not say, "This is an imperfection," but, "This displeases Jesus; in this act I have not given to Jesus the token of love which he expected of me." You are saddened. If your heart is tender you will weep and sigh for having been unfaithful to him. You will not give too much time to an uncertain evaluation of actions, the worth of which you are unable to ascertain. You have offered your life to be one of love, of the heart, not one of self-seeking. To love the Heart of Jesus and to prove this love to him is your entire life.

When there is nothing but this vigilance in the life of a soul, this soul is perfect, even though it may not have taken care of controlling the perfection of what it does.

Words of the Savior As I told you in the Bible, I regard highly the purity and the generosity of your intentions. If the glance of your soul is simple and direct, if your intention is pure, all your life is illuminated. You cannot serve two masters. Give yourself entirely to my love.

Second Consideration: *We strengthen ourselves in this life of oblation by the practice of offerings and examinations of conscience.*

Examinations of conscience should be made in such a way as to avoid the appreciation of one's own perfection as there may be danger of self-love entering in. In making the examination one should recall the numerous actions made without love, or negligently. One should then ask pardon of our Lord for the lukewarmness and promise him for the remainder of the day, with the help of his grace, a greater attention in thinking of him and thinking of him only with affection. One should conclude by renewing the resolution taken in the morning; this resolution, regardless of the subject of meditation, will always be to offer, in a spirit of love, at least the principal actions of the day. If you are truly generous, you will offer them all. Your principal daily resolution should be to renew this oblation before as many actions as possible.

The practical way of renewing this oblation can be limited to a simple and rapid offering made from the heart. Above all one should not feel so constrained by this resolution as to keep one's spirit tense with effort all day long. One must be simple with our Lord. Such strain would quickly fatigue one and lead one to abandon this excellent practice. The enemy would quickly avail himself of this difficulty in keeping one's resolution if one were constantly tense. In working for our Lord everything should be done as simply and as candidly as possible. It is even wise to follow a certain gradation to succeed in contracting, effortlessly and painlessly, the habit of a life of oblation.

Begin, for example, by offering the hours of study, the hours of regular work in the morning and afternoon. A little prayer, before the hours of work will serve to fix the attention and recall one's resolution. These hours of work will be offered to the Sacred Heart in a spirit of love. One should make an offering of one's heart. These actions, of long duration, will be continuous acts of

love. At the end of each of these exercises, a short instant should be consecrated to asking pardon of the Sacred Heart for negligence in performing these occupations.

Finally, at the noon and night examinations of conscience one should ask the following questions: "Have I been faithful in offering to the Heart of Jesus the actions which I had promised him as a mark of my love? Have I been careful to perform my duties to the best of my abilities in order to give him by such sustained attention a token of my love?"

Words of the Savior Yes, show fidelity like this and you will be truly friends of my Heart.

Third Consideration: *The greatest care should be brought to the accomplishment of these acts.*

Every oblation should be accompanied by the resolution to do as perfectly as possible those actions offered particularly to the Sacred Heart. To offer him acts badly done, or done carelessly, without a thought for one's duty, cannot touch the Sacred Heart. Nor should the desire to offer him quickly all one's actions make one fail in the wise gradation that we have just indicated. In desiring to go too quickly one risks missing one's aim by exposing oneself to laxity, to contention of spirit, and to the temptations of abandoning everything, saying that one can never attain the perfection exacted.

One should not be troubled by one's imperfections, but should be faithful in asking pardon of the Sacred Heart for negligences each time they are perceived. One thus acquires the habit of renewing the offering of every action of the day. At the same time one is careful to perform these actions as perfectly as possible.

Moreover, it would be good to insert into your actions, from time to time, a short ejaculatory prayer inspired from the heart. For example, "Jesus, I love you!" or "Jesus, I desire to love you!" Did not David, who had a loving heart, say, "I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth" [Psalm 34:1]?