

THE SITIO



A LEGACY LEFT TO HER DAUGHTERS

by

MOTHER CATHERINE AURELIA OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD
FOUNDRESS

A written expression of the spirituality which
she lived, and which she wished continued in
the Church through the founding of the Institute of the

SISTERS ADORERS OF THE MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD
OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

SITIO – I THIRST

The mysterious Sitio which the Divine Crucified One made resound from the height of His cross has found an echo in my poor heart. I have meditated on it, I have relished it, I have understood it, and I, in turn, have cried out in burning ecstasy: *“I thirst.”* In the ardent zeal urging me on, I would like to be a magnet to attract all hearts in order to give them all to Jesus Christ. But since, of myself I am nothing, I turn to Him who is everything, and in the name of His Blood, of His Love, I implore Him that He Himself bring all hearts under His gentle sway to make of them so many springs of living water where He may quench His burning thirst. I ask this grace of Him especially for the timid virgins who, like myself, have heard and understood the last cry of the immolated Lamb: *“I thirst.”*

I cannot find words to express the extent of the burning desire which gushed from the heart of my Jesus into mine. Jesus is thirsting for love. I would like hearts to return to Him love for love, to make up to Him for the neglect, indifference and impiety of sinners; hearts that will unite to pray, make reparation and suffer in union with the Holy Victim who really knew how to love, obey and suffer for the happiness and salvation of souls. But those He has loved even to the folly of the Cross, on whom He lavished His gifts, whom He has treated as His friends, His sisters and brothers, leave Him after insulting Him and heaping abuse upon Him. In vain O Jesus, do You cast upon them, to win them, a long and loving gaze. The follies of the world absorb them. They see nothing, they hear nothing. Others must devote themselves in their place.

Women chosen for suffering, come; your hearts are little, but they are full of the love which they have drawn from the Saviour's wounds. Inebriate them anew with Your Blood, O Jesus; then, come, drink from their hearts, quench there the insatiable thirst for souls enkindled in You by the fire of love.

God wishes reparation to be made for the profanations of His Blood; He wants all people to be saved. He invites us, He urges us, He commands us to labour at the work of reparation; He awaits our feeble cooperation. Mistrustful of ourselves, but trusting Him who can do all, we commit ourselves with zeal to this divine vocation.

Urged on by love, we have to steal away from the cold secular atmosphere; we need solitude and seclusion, peace and silence; we need our enclosure where freed from worldly cares and solicitude we can work with all our strength for the glory of Him who worked so much for our salvation. We need the divine overshadowing of the sanctuary where we can at all times cast upon the Bosom of God our desires, our sighs, our humble prayer, imbued with sacrifice. Like Jesus, through Jesus, in Jesus, we must pray for those who do not pray, for those in anguish, for those who blaspheme, for those who risk their eternity for perishable interests, for those who are ungrateful, who ignore and forget the DIVINE CRUCIFIED ONE and who crucify Him anew each day. The Sisters of the Precious Blood will pray for the sanctification of all races of people; their prayers will draw refreshing assistance on Christ's apostles evangelizing their sisters and brothers who still sit in the shadow of death; they will obtain the grace of repentance for sinners.

Women committed to reparation will pray also for hearts torn by suffering and haunted by despair; they will pray for the just to be more just, the virgin more virginal, the priest more holy, the ardour of his zeal more living and that he be a more worthy minister of the Precious Blood. Following the example of their seraphic and gentle protectress, St. Catherine of Siena, they will work diligently in the buffeted barque of the Church, will pour the balm of prayer on her deep wounds, and burn to give their blood, their life, the very marrow of their bones to defend her holy cause. In short, by their mediation and willing penance they will draw down graces for which the earth is athirst; and if they are truly contemplative, God will give divine wings to their souls to fly like angels, wherever the interests of the Beloved call them.

Humble virgins, who have learned from the very mouth of the Saviour the excellence of the part you have chosen in contemplative life, and who thirst for pure love, for sacrifice, and for suffering, do not resist the breath of God urging you towards solitude; let yourselves be led by the sacred hand that chose you among thousands to make of you living victims whom He wishes to immolate for His Father's glory; come with joy to take shelter under the blessed tent His love has prepared for you; come and taste the divine hope of virtue; come and serve a holy apprenticeship for the life of Heaven; come and feel how intense are joys of innocence and faith, tears of repentance, fervent raptures of the Eucharistic Table; come and drink of the chalice the Lord offers you; it is full of so delicious a draught that once you have touched it to your lips you will want to drain the cup.

Come; here you will find the way that leads to true sorrow of soul, to the holy anguish of zeal which is no longer a penance but a grace.

Come, come to rest on the sacred tree of the Cross; come, under its crimsoned boughs, take your delights and feed on its fruit; come and hide from the pursuit of the enemy of salvation; come and see from experience how sweet and light is the Lord's yoke.

To sanctify the works of their hidden solitude born of longing, prayer and sacrifice, and to fulfill worthily the aims of their sublime vocation, the Religious Adorers of the Precious Blood, daughters of Mary Immaculate, will never forget that they consecrated themselves to God, in the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, as women of reparation, and that they must always be seen on the summit of the holy mountain holding in their hands the chalice of salvation and uniting their voices to that of the Precious Blood, in order to beg grace and pardon for themselves and all people. At the sight of this striking sign of the inexpressible love of His Word made flesh, the heart of our Father who is in Heaven will be touched and the waves of His mercy will flow over every point of the globe.

Let me repeat: in order to walk faithfully in the footsteps of the Divine Liberator and make perpetual holocausts of ourselves, we must be untiring in spirit, aspiring to every act of self-giving and to every sacrifice. We have to be courageous souls who do not hesitate to shed our heart's blood in the sweat poured out in the austere practice of work and penance. Here are needed souls on fire with that love which made Jesus burn with the desire to be baptized in a baptism of blood.

Love! Oh, Love! That is the divine seed which produced the fruit of the Cross. It is love that burdened Jesus with the wood of sacrifice and gave Him the strength to fly to the holy mountain. Yes, it is love that urged Him to immolate Himself for us. It is love rather than whips and cruel thorns that drew the Blood from His veins! It is love that made Him hide Himself under the lowly appearance of bread in order to give Himself wholly to us. It is love that made of Him the King of martyrs. The life of Christ was one perpetual act of love. In His Mother's womb, in the crib at Bethlehem, at Nazareth, on the bloody mountain, Jesus offered to His Father sacrifices of love. Now, on the altar, the new Calvary to which love enchains Him, He immolates Himself anew each day; He lances darts of fire on just souls to kindle in them the pure flame that consumes His heart, and on sinners to touch them, convert them, and draw them to the repentance of love.

Yes, our Jesus is all love; He is the perfect model of love. Enraptured by the charms of this Spouse of love, our souls burn with desire to resemble Him and walk in His footsteps; they choose the mountain of myrrh and the hill of incense for their dwelling in exile. The road is short, the way is all outlined. Let us tread it, my friends, my sisters, in the train of the Spouse of Blood become a victim for us, and desiring to continue *in us, with us, and for us* this life of immolation and praise to the glory of His Father and for the greater good of souls. Our Love was crucified; let us be crucified with Him. He gave us all His Blood; let us give Him all our love; let us bathe His sacred wounds with tears of love. Each day, on the altar of the new Calvary, let us offer Him a thousand victims of love; by our songs of love let us atone for the outrages He there receives.

Solitary Lover, I thirst to be with You, a victim in my turn;
I thirst to share Your sorrows, to weep over the outrages and
forgetfulness of sinners.

God is love. He will forget the depth of our misery;
He will bind us to His altar with unbreakable bonds. He will
unite our will to His adorable will, merge our feelings with
His own; He will transform in us everything opposed to the
holiness of our state and with the burning seraphim permit
us to offer perpetual homage of adoration to the chalice of
His Blood. He will let us share His life of poverty,
self-sacrifice, opprobrium and loneliness. In the humble
sanctuary of our cloister, the gentle zeal of sacrifice must
reign day and night. Spouses of the God of Calvary must
live humbly, unknown and in suffering; for nothing attracts
His love more delightfully than the fragrant virtues
His spouses hide in their hearts; and the more they wish to
hide from the eyes of the world, the closer they are to
the gentle Solitary One loving and suffering for them. The
heart of the Religious of the Precious Blood, daughter of
Mary Immaculate, should be, also, like that of her most holy
Mother, a living chalice pure and white where Jesus' Blood
flows uninterruptedly. It should be the enclosed garden of
the Spouse, spreading everywhere the good odour of
Jesus Christ. It should be like the lily of the valley that
perfumes the air as it modestly rises towards Heaven.
It needs a hedge of thorns not to be blighted by coming in
contact with strange hands. This hedge is formed of
prudence, humility and penance.

May these lines, traced in the Blood of Jesus by a
most unworthy hand, redound to the glory of God. May the

Mother of Fair Love, of Crucified Love, bless them for my daughters! May she also make my burning prayer to her for their happiness come true! May she unceasingly adorn their souls with the pure, crimson Blood of the Beloved which she herself gave Him and make of them spotless victims worthy of being offered on the mystic altar. Finally may she bear us herself, upon her maternal wings, to our true home, Heaven, there to sing with our friends: Teresa, Agnes, Catherine, etc., etc., the virgins' canticle at the banquet of the Lamb!

Sister Catherine Aurelia of the Precious Blood

