

## CHAPTER 6

### THE THREE ACTS RELATING TO OUR LORD

- 161** However, since  
we cannot be certain  
of having made a perfect and complete act of contrition,  
it is important,  
    after striving to do so,  
to make three other acts that refer to Our Lord;  
    these are the three final acts of the first part of  
    mental prayer.
- 162** These three acts which refer to Our Lord are:  
    1. an act of application of the merits of Our Lord;  
    2. an act of union with Our Lord;  
    3. and an act of invocation of the Spirit of Our Lord.

#### #1 THE ACT OF APPLICATION

- 163** First, we make an act of application of the merits of Our Lord; for  
    since we cannot be certain that our act of contrition  
    fulfilled all the required conditions,  
we take the precaution of drawing down on ourselves  
    the merits of Our Lord's Passion  
    and the graces which He merited for us by His death,  
and by covering our sins as with a veil,  
    which will hide them from God's eyes, cf. Ps 85,3;78,38  
will be in a better condition to appear before Him in mental prayer,  
    in a manner which will be agreeable to Him. cf. Lk 18,9-14
- 164** This act of application of Our Lord's merits is made  
by begging Him to apply to us the merits of His passion,  
so as to make us  
    more agreeable to God His Father,  
    and better disposed to receive the graces and lights in  
    mental prayer,  
    for there is nothing we should fail to do  
    so that God may let Himself be moved by our  
    prayers,  
    and may, in His goodness,  
    grant us all that we ask of Him. cf. He 4,14-16  
Jn 15,16;16,24-27

**165** We may make this act of application of Our Lord's merits in this fashion:

- a. It is true, O my god, that when I am in Thy presence  
my heart should be so filled with horror for sin  
that being entirely purified,  
I may be found worthy to converse with Thee.
- b. But my heart is so strongly inclined to sin  
that I cannot know completely,  
and much less be certain,  
whether the sorrow and pain I feel for my sins is genuine,  
and whether I am ready to carry out what I have resolved.

- c. This is why I insistently beg Jesus Christ our Lord,  
to have the goodness to apply to me the merits  
which He graciously obtained for me  
by His passion and death;  
for these are in themselves most efficacious and  
most sovereign,  
So that, once covered by them,  
nothing of sin will appear in me  
and by this means I shall be to Thee  
more agreeable  
and better disposed to receive Thy graces and lights  
in mental prayer,  
for there is nothing I should fail to do in order  
to receive the fullness of Thy blessings  
and to obtain the effect of my prayers.  
So, too, there is nothing which will make me more  
capable of this  
than being clothed in Thy merits;  
for they give such purity and innocence to a soul  
that in a moment it becomes by them  
in Thy sight  
entirely different from what it was before.

cf. Ps 85,3;78,38

Ep 1,1-3

- d. This is the grace, O my Jesus, which I beg of Thee."

## **#2 ACT OF UNION WITH OUR LORD**

**166** It is true that  
if this act of application of Our Lord's merits  
is properly made  
it can render us agreeable to God,  
give Him a motive for willingly keeping us in His holy presence,  
and help us obtain the object of our prayers.

- 167** Yet, even though by this act our sins are hidden from God's sight, cf. Ps 85,3;78,38  
     and because of the efficacy of the merits of Our Lord  
     which are applied to us,  
 God no longer remembers our sinfulness, cf. Is 43,25;  
 however,  
 there remains for us the obligation of making satisfaction  
 for them,  
     for the merits of the passion and death of our Lord  
     are applied to us  
         to bring about in us the destruction of sin,  
     but only on condition  
     that we fully and entirely satisfy  
     the punishment due to them. Jr 31,34
- This is why  
 it is only right that we should not be content  
     with making an act of application of Our Lord's merits;  
 but we must also make  
 an act of union with Our Lord,  
 uniting ourselves to His interior dispositions  
     when He made mental prayer,  
 begging Him cf. He 4,14-18  
     to come and make mental prayer in us, cf. He 5,1-10  
     and to present our needs to His Father,  
     considering us as belonging to Him  
     and as His very members 1 Co 12,27  
     which have and can have  
     no interior life, movement or activity  
     but in Him, Ac 17,27  
     for these things exist in those who belong to Him  
     only in so far as He gives life to them.
- 168** And they must be convinced that if Our Lord deigns in His  
 goodness  
     to unite Himself to them in mental prayer  
     and to make mental prayer in them,  
     their mental prayer will be most agreeable to the  
     Eternal Father  
     (and will draw down on them a great many  
     graces. cf. He 10,1-18
- 169** This is how we may make this act of union with Our Lord.
- a. I unite myself, O my dear Jesus,  
 to Thy interior dispositions when Thou didst make mental  
 prayer.  
     It was then truly

- when Thou wast in Thy Father  
and Thy Father in Thee. Jn 14,11
- It was then  
that Thou didst think what He thought  
that thou didst love what He loved;  
and that Thou didst adore His divine  
will cf. Jn 8,29  
in Thy regard cf. Jn 8,55  
because all Thou didst desire cf. Jn 14,31  
was that His holy will might be fulfilled  
in Thee. cf. Jn 5,30
- b. Accomplish in me also what thou wishest  
me to do. cf. Ac 22,10
- c. Do Thou present my mental prayer  
and make all my needs known cf. He 4,14-18  
to Thy eternal Father. He 5,1-10
- d. May I not think of Him but save by Thee,  
and may I not love Him but in Thee,  
so that I may obtain, in Thee and through Thee,  
what I of myself  
(could never acquire,)  
and that nothing will be refused me  
that Thou will have the goodness  
to ask for on my behalf,  
for I know that, as Thou Thyself has said,  
Thou art always heard by the eternal  
Father. Jn 11,41-42  
May I not think of Him but by Thee;  
and may I not love Him but in Thee!
- e. Take possession of me, I beg Thee,  
as one belonging to Thee;  
and fill me with Thy life as being one of Thy  
members. 1 Co 12,27
- f. May I abide in Thee,  
and do Thou abide in me,  
for I can do no good  
except in so far as I am in Thee Jn 15,4-5  
and Thou are in me,  
for  
Thou art the author of all good. cf. 1 Co 8,6; 2 Co 1,3
- g. Finally, may my interior life

be maintained and preserved  
 by the life which Thou livest in me,  
     for  
     just as a branch can have no sap in it  
         unless it remains attached to the  
         vine, Jn 15,4  
 so too, O my loving Jesus,  
     my soul can have no life,  
     movement or interior activity Ac 17,28  
     except in so far as it remains united with  
     Thee,  
     and as I remain wholly one  
         with Thee and in Thee. Jn 15,4

### #3 ACT OF INVOCATION OF THE SPIRIT OF OUR LORD

**170** It is not enough in mental prayer  
 to have drawn Our Lord to us  
 and to have united ourselves with Him and with His holy  
 dispositions to make mental prayer and to have begged Him to  
 make mental prayer in us.

It can happen  
 that we might not remain in this disposition for very long  
     because of the distractions  
     that might fill our minds during mental prayer,  
 or because of the natural thoughts and human considerations  
     we might not draw much benefit from it.  
 So, it would seem to be appropriate for us  
 to implore Our Lord to give us His Spirit,  
     so that we may make mental prayer solely under His  
     guidance,  
 and in order to be filled by His divine Spirit  
     we need to abandon  
     our own mind and our own thoughts,  
 and to entertain within ourselves during mental prayer  
     only those which the Holy Spirit may be pleased  
     to inspire us with and to give us during this time.

Thus, may be fulfilled in us,  
     what Saint Paul says  
         that it is the Spirit of God that prays  
         in us, Ga 4,6  
         for we cannot conceive even a single good thought,  
         as coming from ourselves. 2 Co 3,5; cf. 1 Co 12,3

**171** This is how we may make this act  
which is called an act of invocation of the Spirit of Our Lord.

a. My Savior Jesus,

Thou didst pour forth Thy divine Spirit on the holy  
Apostles  
(while they prayed in the  
Cenacle)

cf. Ac 1,14;2,1-2

where they had received Thy sacred Body  
from Thy blessed hands.

b. I pray Thee, give me the grace

to receive today that same Holy Spirit,  
so that I may make mental prayer only under His  
guidance,

so that by possessing Him fully

Thou wilt remove from my mind all my own thoughts,  
and thus I shall be occupied throughout my mental prayer only with those  
which Thy divine Spirit shall be pleased  
to inspire me with  
and to impart to me.

For, as Saint Paul says,

No one can say 'Amen' in a manner worthy of God  
except in the Holy Spirit.

1 Co 12,3

c. This same Holy Spirit

will make my prayer rise up unto Thee  
like sweet smelling incense,

Ps 141,2

He too will preserve in me the spirit of mental prayer  
and keep alive the fire  
which He will have enkindled within me  
during this time,

cf. Lk 12,49

to express myself with Thine own words.

d. So I say with the Church:

Come, O Holy Spirit,  
and send down upon us  
from heaven  
a ray of Thy holy light.

**172** All the acts given as models  
in this first part of mental prayer  
have been offered merely to help  
those who are beginning to make mental prayer,  
and who cannot as yet produce their own acts.

**173** Such persons should select those which they think proper,

or which they find useful for themselves.  
If they cannot make use of these,  
they should make  
other acts based on the ones offered here as models,  
according as their minds and hearts may suggest.

**174** It is not intended  
that they simply get into the habit of using  
the acts given here,  
otherwise their prayer would  
not truly be prayed from the heart,  
but would degenerate into vocal prayer,  
which would not have the same value for them  
as it would if produced in them  
by the Holy Spirit  
(who inspires them to make mental prayer)  
from the depths of their hearts.

**175** The same can be said of all the other acts  
which are offered as models  
in the Explanation of the two other parts of mental prayer.