

devotion to the august mother of God and of our souls spread more and more. All owe their existence to the generous impulse of men commendable no less for their holiness than for their knowledge and most of them have been born and developed under divine inspiration.

But whatever may be said of the dignity of their authors, it is none the less true that all these devotions have but a human and earthly origin since all are but the effusions of the heart of man.

There is one however which has nothing human : its origin but which enjoys the glorious privilege of having descended straight from heaven and of being brought down on earth by Jesus-Christ himself. Yes, the incomprehensible love which one day caused the only Son of God to descend from his eternal home into the chaste womb of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, also caused Him in after ages to leave His home of eternal glory to come down on earth and, as it were, renew the mysteries of the Incarnation.

It was about the end of the seventeenth century. In France, in a monastery of the Visitation, was one of those pure and holy souls such as the cloister alone is worthy of possessing. Her name was Sister Margaret Mary. She lived there in this enclosed garden of Religion, hidden and unknown to the world but in the most ineffable union and the closest communication with her God.

One day during the Octave of the feast of the Blessed Sacrament, the well beloved of her soul, the divine Savior Jesus, deigned to appear to her. To her eyes He bared His thrice holy breast and showed her His divine heart as on a throne of burning flames, surrounded by a crown of thorns, surmounted by a cross and bearing the deep wound inflicted by the spear on Calvary. The amiable Savior allowed His servant to contemplate it for some moments, then He broke silence to pronounce these words full of love and affliction.

« Here is this heart which has so loved mankind that it spared nothing, even to exhausting and consuming itself to manifest its love for them. And as a reward, I receive from most men naught but ingratitude through their irreverence and sacrileges,