

in a voice grave and full of emotion: "He that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, he shall betray Me. It were better for him if that man had never been born!" While the Apostles, agitated and frightened, eagerly declared their fidelity, Judas affected to do the same; and the Saviour, indignant at his hypocrisy, uttered this cry of sorrow: "The Scripture sayeth: and it must be fulfilled: He that eateth bread with Me shall raise up his heel against Me!"

Jesus felt that odious and persistent treason so keenly that, by the allusion which He made to it, He opened a vent for the agony He endured in His Heart. Not being able to contain it, He showed Himself troubled, and He protested against its violence and against him who caused it: *Cum hec dixisset Jesus, turbatus est spiritu et protestatus est* (1). The grief at being thus profaned and betrayed, indignation against the blackness of the crime, persistent pity for the traitor rushing blindly to his own destruction, stirred His very soul, made His Heart shudder: *Turbatus est spiritu* — He was troubled in spirit, and brought to His lips the burning and bitter words of protest: "*Et protestatus est.*"

Then Jesus became resigned, for His love would not allow the crime of Judas to be an obstacle to His giving the Eucharist to the world: "*Quod facis, fac citius!* — That which thou dost, do quickly!" And yet He saw behind Judas all the traitors that would, under the guise of hypocritical piety, approach to receive Him at the Banquet of Holy Communion, to profane Him, and to deliver Him to the demon.

To be betrayed at the very moment in which one loves most, is sorrow supreme, mortal agony for the human heart! And as, at the Last Supper, Jesus called upon the co-disciples of Judas to repair by their fidelity and compassion, so does He now demand reparation and consolation from faithful souls.

He said to Blessed Margaret Mary: "And in return I receive for the most part only ingratitude, expressed by the contempt, irreverence, sacrilege, and coldness that they have for Me in this Sacrament of Love! But what is more hurtful to Me is that there are hearts consecrated to Me who treat Me thus. I feel that more keenly than all I endured in My Passion! Do thou, at least, give Me the consolation of seeing thee supplying as much as thou canst for their ingratitude!"

Petition.

If the first phase of the existence of the Sacred Heart is consumed in suffering, the second, a just recompense of the former, is passed in immortality, power, and glory. The Heart of the Eternal Priest, who has ascended even to the throne of God to plead uninterruptedly in our behalf, and who at the Last Supper inaugurated His priesthood. His love, and ever watchful solicitude for us, must exhibit itself in a powerful, ardent, and devoted prayer. That prayer, begun in the august sanctuary of the Cenacle,

(1) John xiii, 21.