

men. Nothing consoled Him more than when men returned love for love, just as nothing grieved Him more than men's ingratitude. This craving for our love, together with the work of atonement for our sinfulness, was the ordinary theme of the revelations, and threw a flood of heavenly light on the relations that God evidently desired to see existing between Himself and His creatures.

Though the Church has not yet pronounced any judgment respecting the extraordinary visions of the Visitandine, the "reality and divine character of them have been tested in every way known to those conversant with such matters and have withstood the test." (1) However, even though a person thought that he had reason to believe that Margaret Mary was the victim of delusion, still this would not affect the objective reality of the devotion to the Sacred Heart; its goodness and utility would still be unimpeachable. In the declining years of the seventeenth century, and in the eighteenth, attempts were made by faithless children of the Church to undermine the theological basis of this devotion; but when Pius VI. condemned the sophistries of the Jansenists and other unloveable sectaries, he gave, at the same time, the dogmatic outlines of the worship of the Sacred Heart, and taught that "the object of the devotion is the Heart of Our Lord, a part of His Sacred Humanity as He ascended with It to heaven, and retains It forever. His Heart being an integral part of the Humanity, and inseparably united with the Divine Word, is a lawful object of *latria*, no less than the Precious Blood or the Humanity as a whole. The motive why special honor is paid to this particular part is found in the text of the

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(1) Hunter's *Outlines of Dogm. Theol.* II. n. 556.