

The life of our Lord was cast into the mould of sacrifice. Calvary was the tremendous act of visible homage rendered by Christ the Priest to God's majesty in the name of all mankind. That was the tremendous act whereby the Christian religion was inaugurated. The Holy Mass enshrines that self-same sacrifice that we may make it our own, and gather from it the spirit of self-sacrifice which animates it. It is the spirit of sacrifice that must prompt the religious in the making of his vows, and the love of God must be at the heart of the daily sacrifice of himself. As with every sacrifice that which is exteriorly offered is but a token of the interior spiritual sacrifice by which the soul offers itself to God. (II-II, 85, 2.) Such a life's sacrifice, deriving its meaning and its efficacy from the Christian sacrifice of the Cross, has a tremendous value and can be world-wide in its influence. It is as it were charged with a divine efficacy. And it has within it the power of every sacrifice to bring souls to God, and to bring souls together, on the two arms of charity.

The religious can only reach the perfection of his state when the fulfilment of his vows is made expressive of his love of God converted into sacrifice. For the response to his calling requires that he should be poor in spirit, that is, freed from attachment to the riches of this world and all they stand for. He must be clean of heart, for his chastity is a refinement of his charity which strives to give to God an undivided love. And his obedience implies the surrender of himself into the hands of divine providence, in following his divine Master more closely by becoming obedient unto death.

FROM ST AUGUSTINE

BY

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Ex effractore erit metallicus:¹ de opere metallici quanta opera construuntur? Illius poena damnati ornamenta sunt civitatis. Sic ergo Deus novit ubi te ponat. Noli putare quia turbas consilium Dei, si perversus esse volueris.—*Sermo CXXXV*, 5.

The felons labour in the mines,
 And from the mines great stones are sent,
 To builders of fair palaces
 For many a city's ornament.
 So felon sinners work the Will
 Of God—they may not mar his scheme:
 Fixed is their task, and all their talk
 Of liberty an idle dream.

¹ In the marble quarries.