

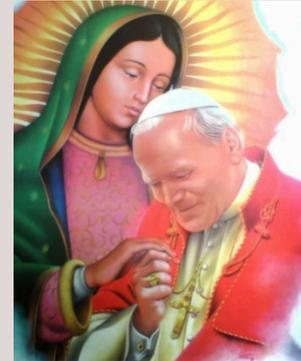
THE DYNAMISMS OF LOVE TO BUILD A NEW CIVILIZATION

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True Love

We see the love of Christ *opened up for us, in His Pierced Heart*. His heart being pierced for his Church.

And it is from *his Pierced Heart that our definition of true love must arise*. We can understand that God is love, when we contemplate the wounded side of Christ, his pierced heart. In this mystical burst of blood and water, which gushed forth, we witness the explosion of Christ's divine love. It seems as if his heart could no longer embrace the fire of love within it, that it had to explode.



*"Love is not merely an idea but an experience."*¹ We were all made for this experience. And, all of us yearn and search for love. This is the number one reason why God created us, to love. "We, humans cannot live without love." Our lives are pointless, if love is not revealed to us, if we do not find love, if we do not savor love. We discover that God is rich in mercy, when we contemplate His love for us on the cross at Calvary. And, when we see Christ giving himself perfectly to us, especially in our own misery.

To quote Christopher West, *"Christ was not "murdered". The nails did not hold him fast to the cross. He was the all-powerful Son of the Most High God."* He could have come down from the cross at any moment. But He chose not to. He could have prevented his torturers from ever touching him. But He chose to suffer. It was his decision to stay on the cross. *He chose to die*. This is *"a blameless suffering accepted purely out of love for mankind."*² *This is the definition of true love.*

The World of Today

We live in a world where man has turned his back on God. This has had horrible consequences for all mankind. Only by returning to God who is love can humanity learn to love one another in the right context. Sin has devitalized our own self-will far more than it has darkened our intellect. Clearly, love for anything or anyone, other than God is a problem. And this is the greatest problem we face in our society today. Man wanting to become like God.

The world is wounded by sin and its consequences, because evil distorts and deceives. People in the world are scrambling for power, thinking this will make them happy. But this could not be further from the truth. This is a false impression of true happiness. Furthermore, we live in a world that rejects the values of the civilization of life, of love and of truth.

It is important for us to understand what the world is going through, this way we can be more in tune with its healing process, and what it entails. We must know what we are up against. It is a fact that the human person is a limited being, not self-reliant, therefore, putting it in the most objective way, needs other human beings. The realization of the limitations and shortcomings of mankind is the starting point for an understanding of man's relationship with God. The truth is *Man needs God*, as does every other human person, in order to be. We need to convey this reality to the world.

For us, as religious women, we have to feel loved by Him who is Love, and be in love with our own vocation. This is the only way, we are going to be able to channel His love to others. "You did not choose me but I chose you."³

We have not been chosen because of our merits, but because of God's Mercy. "I have loved you with an everlasting love."⁴ This is our security, the Lord called me before I was born, while I was still in my mother's womb he called me."⁵ This awareness of having been called and chosen through love should be engraved in our hearts. This will make all the difference in the way we manifest this truth to the world. We have to have this great zeal in our hearts of making Christ known and loved by everyone. ***Our top priority should be to be totally at the service of the Gospel.*** Preaching and sharing the Word of God with all humanity. We are all God's children, therefore, we can never turn anyone away. We must be sharp enough to know how to use God's weapons, prayer being number one, then for sure, the devil will become weak. Let us ask the Lord to give us the strength and courage to proclaim Him to all people and in all circumstances.

The times we are living in are unspeakably troublesome and disturbing. Many people suffer because they are marginalized, discriminated against, and their human dignity is not respected.⁶ The Catholic Church's journey has also become extremely tough and stressful, both for the Faithful and for our own Shepherds.

We live in a culture which values autonomy and self-reliance. For the most part, man has grown to be an independent human being. And this makes it even harder for him to depend on God alone. No one can tell him what to do, not even God. We must do some serious soul-searching and realize that without Jesus we cannot do anything.

The Heart

"Love is the life of our soul, just as the soul is the life of our body. The heart is the place of love."⁷ Love has its foundation in the heart. And, since ***the heart is the dominant organ in human beings, it provides the measure for all things.***⁸ In all its actions, our heart tends towards happiness and searches out for happiness. The heart is life-giving in relation to the soul.⁹ Our hearts must have eyes with which to gaze upon God. We should ask the Lord to open the eyes of our hearts in order to be able to see Him. The heart gives rise to the spiritual life within the soul. ***Love is the first act of our spiritual life.***

A heart that has no movement and affection has no love.¹⁰ It is important for us to see the role of the heart in connection to the soul and the workings of the heart within itself. We need to know the movements of our hearts, because the heart gives rise to our actions. The kind of actions that we will have will depend on our will and will be determined by the love that is held in our hearts.

It is also essential to be aware of the conflicting movements within our hearts, which are caused by two loves, our self-love and the Love of God. These two loves within our soul are in constant opposition with each other and cause great friction within our heart. ***In order to avoid this inner conflict, our self-love shall always serve the love of God. Understanding the heart is key.*** Our heart experiences either "sweetness" or "bitterness", depending on the love contained. We need to ask ourselves: ***"Are our hearts receptive to the divine movement of God's love in inspiration, are they docile and ready to surrender to God's will?"***¹¹ As a matter of fact, if our hearts are hard and dry, they will be incapable of being penetrated by the Lord.

The fortitude and stableness of our hearts will come from feeling the joy of being in the Lord. And, the nourishment that we need for our souls will be provided for by the inward movement of God's love.

St. Francis de Sales saw fire as a symbol of love, because fire possesses two qualities - light and heat - both of which are connected with the operation of the intellect and the will respectively within the heart. Truth is the object of the intellect; goodness the object of the will. He also saw the conception of the love of God as achieved by the Holy Spirit within the womb of the heart.¹² It is amazing and overwhelming for us, to have St. Francis' perception on this matter.

It is important to become aware that our human heart cannot be fulfilled with anything less than ***"to love God above all things."*** The process which raises our heart to God's supernatural life involves the interaction of God with our own human heart. This relationship with God needs to exist, in order for the human heart to

be molded into what God wants it to be.

Our heart is the seat and source of love. Therefore, we should do everything possible to imitate the divine-human heart of our crucified Lord, and allow Him to bring His deepest movement of love into our hearts.

Our hearts have to always be constantly moving nonstop towards God. Man's heart is never so peaceful as when its movements are left free to accept God's love. To put it simply, love is the interior movement, outpouring, and growth of the heart towards the good.

St. Francis de Sales used to refer to Christ's own Heart as the "*magnet of souls.*"¹³ This is stunning. We, too, can become other magnets of souls, but we have to draw God's heart into our own.

There has to be an exchange of hearts, between ours and God's. We have to search for the perfection of our hearts, and this will only be accomplished through an intimate relationship with God. We should examine our hearts daily, and ask ourselves: "*How is our heart?*"

We have to guard and protect our hearts from the weapons and snares of the enemy. Our hearts will be the first place the enemy will attack, because he knows this is the place of love, and we must be in complete awareness of this fact.

We have to yield to God's will, because our will is spiritual. Therefore, it's capacity for expansion depends on how it surrenders itself to the movements of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴ *Whatever enters into our minds will be manifested in the outward movements of our hearts.* This is important to comprehend, and ask: *What are we feeding our minds with?*

To love is a choice but it is also a responsibility. When we choose to love freely, we are only responding to His love. *We write our own history of love.* To be true witnesses of love, we have to follow the greatest treasure we have, which is Jesus Christ, Himself. He is our real happiness. True love can only be found in His Heart. Nonetheless, there are obstacles to being true witnesses of love. Let us focus on the following:

Self-love - We have to destroy our egos. We need to come down from our own high self-estimation. We must stop flattering and pampering ourselves, because our self-love is precisely what separates us from the love of God. One of our main goals should be to detach ourselves from our own self-love, so that God's love can abide in us.

Pride - If you commit one act of pride, that is pride. If you commit these acts continually, on every opportunity that arises, that's the *habit of pride*. If you take pleasure and really enjoy these acts and seek the opportunities of committing them, that is the *spirit of pride*.¹⁵

Selfishness- Being excessively or exclusively concerned with ourselves. It is manifested in having self-preference which leads us to direct our purposes to the advancement of our own interests, power, and happiness, without regarding those of others. *Selfishness is ultimately self-destructive*, and it is at the heart of most problems between people. It is exhibited in several other ways, for example: in being lovers of ourselves, in pleasing ourselves, in seeking out only our own profit. *It is inconsistent with God's love.*

We have to measure what kind of love is in our hearts. And, this will be manifested in our actions. Our thoughts, words, and deeds all come straight from the heart. Holy love must be the only intention or motive for which all our actions are performed. *This is purity of intention.*¹⁶

We can only purify our intentions with God's divine love. Hearts cannot be seen, only by God.¹⁷ We have to live according to the Holy Spirit, which means to think, speak, and act according to the virtues which dwell in Him, and not according to the senses or feelings which dwell in our flesh.¹⁸

God has sown in our hearts seeds of all virtues, but, unfortunately, the majority of them are hidden by our

own imperfections and weaknesses.¹⁹ God sees all the realities of our human hearts. We have to ask the Lord to give us all of his virtues. And, to uncover those which have been obscured in our own frailty, so they can flourish. *We can only see Jesus with our heart.* Only love purifies us and gives us the ability to see.

Love seeks understanding. Love is exactly the opposite of indifference. To have real love for humanity means to share with them God's knowledge and truth. Pope John Paul II's vision was to exhort all the followers of Christ to work towards creating a new civilization of love. And Pope Benedict XVI, his successor has been doing exactly the same thing. In such a civilization, we first have to recognize that *every person is a child of God*,²⁰ and that we are all extremely valuable to Him. *To pinpoint this is crucial.* These two Popes have spoken against the "culture of death", but not that many of us are aware of their proposed alternative, which is "a civilization of love". By far, one of the strongest spiritual battle we are facing today is between *the culture of death and the culture of life*.²¹ The world is tired of the continuous chaos and disorder of our modern society. The world is in dire need of true love, of rebuilding what was once lost. The salvation and eternal happiness of both men and women is at stake. We have to spread a message of hope to everyone, especially to those who are worn-out of the society. It is up to us to be part of this transformation. It is up to us to answer God's call.

We must do everything possible within our power to heal our wounded culture. With God's grace, we do have the power to transform the world.

Are we up for the challenge? Are we going to step up the plate and take over the world with God's transforming power of love?

In order to reach out to the world and build a new civilization, *our hearts have to be expanded.* This is what loving to the extreme is all about. *The expansion of our hearts is crucial in this undertaking.* In the same measure that our heart expands itself, or to put it in better words, in the same measure that it permits itself to be enlarged and expanded and doesn't deny God's love, then his Divine Mercy ever pours forth and spreads out all its graces.²²

The expansion of our hearts will come by God's movement of love. There has to be an interpersonal connection between God, the Father and ourselves. *"If the expansion of our heart is centered on ourselves, then our heart will become puffed-up in pride."*²³

As true followers of Christ, it is imperative to challenge each other to take an active role in our Catholic faith, and start a movement towards this civilization which will require many sacrifices, numerous self-denials, and renunciations. It will mean dying to everything the world endorses, which goes totally against God's true role, that of a heavenly Father wanting to restore humanity. We must be able to identify with *the One whose outstretched arms on the cross embraced us all.* But in order to experience this love of God, we must learn how to die, and be able to rise again. Just like He did. By his death on the cross, Jesus connected with us.

We have to be able to be connected with Him, as well. This is the only way, we will make a major impact in our modern society. In his truth is our freedom. His light shines in darkness. And, we have to let God's light shine forth. *"Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness; rather expose them."*²⁴

We will be able to transform the world by our daily actions, our attitudes, but above all by our love. We have the power to influence this world, because we have God's love behind us all the way. *The desire within our hearts sets up for us a main goal for action.* We have to become God's role models. We must be the new springtime of the Church and shine with our witness of hope, faith, and love. We need to be a testimony of hope for humanity. The world is not restored once and for all; it is renewed every single day. We have to be aware that we cannot do anything without the fire of the Holy Spirit burning within us.

We have a great example to follow, in our beloved Pope John Paul II's untiring witness of hope which only comes from Jesus Christ, he who was the one who guided the Church into the Third Millennium. He is an excellent role-model. We have to show, just like he did, the Merciful love of God which transcends any

human logic, and is without measure.²⁵ With the strength of God's grace, we can accomplish anything we put our minds to. We have our own originality. Each one of us is unique. Therefore, we should approach the world with the gifts God has bestowed on us individually, and use them collectively for His greater glory. We must blossom. We have to be able to listen to others, be open and learn from each other, and at the same time develop in them a love for the Lord. Keeping in mind that each human being is known and loved by God.

Each one of us is willed by God. Precisely in this resides the deeper and greater solidarity of humankind - that each individual person is fully realized in God, because when He created us, He gave each one of us a specific purpose in life that was not given to anyone else. This is important to know, because this will lead us to understand the value of each human life from God's perspective. *Our lives are precious to God. We are important to Him. We matter to Him.*

We have to be brave in our initiatives. Open, and ready to give the world the best of what we have to offer, which is God's love living inside of each one of us. *"It is not the number of our works that are important, but the intensity of the love that we put into every action."*²⁶ This could not have been better said.

In order to allow God's love to flow freely within our hearts, we have to be open-hearted. We need to be aware that joy opens up the heart, while sorrow closes it. *Every word we say, every gesture we make, every attitude we show, has to be the most attractive one in our lives. We have to give our love and our smile to everyone, without exception.*²⁷ Realizing that without love, I do not possess God, and I cannot give Him to others. We have to be the cornerstones of a true "civilization of love". There is no doubt, that what we have to offer is clearly an opposition to what the world has been bombarding us with.

The Three Most Influential Dynamisms of Love

What is the dynamism, the force, the energy, the active strength within our bodies and our minds which will help us accomplish all of this in today's world? The three most influential dynamisms of love to build a new civilization are as follows:

The first strength is to *TRULY fall in love with Jesus Christ in the Eucharist*. When you fall in love in this particular case, with our beloved God, He becomes the only one in our lives who interests us. He is our exclusive attraction, our only priority. All of our focus is placed on Him alone. Our life becomes joyful and smooth. Everything else becomes secondary. We strive to please him in everything we do, because we love him. And, we have to be capable of running with that love. It has to be dynamic, energetic, full of life. We need to be able to engage with the world and reveal to humanity who is it that we truly love. *"In the case of Jesus, the more one knows him and is together with him, the more one discovers new reasons to be in love with him and is confirmed in one's choice."*²⁸ *This is so true.*

To be attractive living posters of Jesus Christ should be high up on our list. We must become God's walking billboard. We have to be approachable. When people see us, they have to be able to see Christ in us. It has to be noticeable in our lives that we love God above all things. *We have to be men and women of the people and for the people*. We should be in love with our faith and be joyful about sharing it with others. The world needs convinced and enthusiastic Catholics. Our Lord Jesus Christ is risen and He is alive, we need to cheerfully portray this truth to the world.

The second force or energy is to *be men and women in love with the Virgin Mary*, the Mother of God and our Mother. With her love, we will be able to transform the world. She wants to use us to bring others to Christ, her Son. We will not be able to build a new civilization of love without Mary's intercession. *We need to be Marian people*. The world needs Mary now more than ever. They need her to be their role-model, someone to follow, but most importantly, they need her as their heavenly Mother who comes to the rescue of all her children.

She is totally God-like. She is the most perfect, human creature ever created without sin. We need her graces flowing to us from Her motherly heart that loves us, and then transmit them to the world. We need to

consecrate the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, because we strongly believe that she leads us to Jesus. She is the safest and surest way to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Today, it is urgent to give Mary the place she needs to occupy in our hearts. *As religious sisters, we need to be other Mary's in the world.*²⁹ *And, what a high calling this is.* We must influence those in the world, those who surround us, so that their hearts may be open, so that Mary can be the Queen of each and every soul wherever they may be in the world.³⁰ And, in our lives, as religious sisters, this should be our main objective and our primary goal.

We must tell all souls, both collectively and individually, how the Virgin Mary would think, speak, and act in the concrete circumstances of our daily lives in the different states of life, so that the most perfect love, would be enkindled all over the earth.³¹ If we want to show Mary how much we love her, the best way to do so is by sharing our love for her with others. Let us imitate Saint Maximilian Maria Kolbe in his motto of the Militia of the Immaculate, which was: *"To lead all men and every individual through Mary to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus."*³²

The third dynamism or force is to *be constantly loving one another and intensely from the heart.* This world will only change if they TRULY see us loving each other, not by pretending to love like the world loves, but by being authentic witnesses of what we believe. We have to diminish ourselves and not be in competition with others like the world expects us to. *Precisely in detaching ourselves from our self-love is what sets us free, so that true love can essentially take the place of saying, "I want you to be."* We have to bring forth the other, and this cannot be done without the loss of self. We have to bring out the best of each other. *"I want you to be better than me, and I rejoice at the fact that others prefer you over me."*

We have to focus on the beautiful gifts others have, which God has blessed them with. This is of great significance. In Pope Benedict's XVI Encyclical "God is Love," we read the following phrase, which summarizes it stupendously: *"By seeing with the eyes of Christ, I can give them the look of love the world is craving for. Only my readiness to encounter my neighbor and to show him love will make me sensitive to God as well."*³³

We are One Body in Christ, we are His Church; therefore, we have to feel responsible for each other. The greater the feeling of responsibility for each individual person, the more true love there is. The world is not used to this type of love, because their definition of love has been deformed.

From true freedom comes true love and God is calling us to show the world what true love is all about. He is calling all of us to deepen our love more and more towards each other. One act of perfect love regenerates the soul. It is really not that difficult, because the essence of this act is sacrificial love.³⁴

And, all of us are called to *sacrificial love* if we are to follow the Lamb of God. How do we accomplish this? How do we begin to truly love one another, the way God loves us? *By being transparent in our thoughts, words, actions, and deeds.*

Transparency of heart means truly showing our hearts, just as they are, demonstrating what we are all about. *The love that God has placed in our hearts has to be revealed through us.* Jesus wants to use us as His instruments, He depends on us, not because He has to, but because He loves us too much to leave us the way we are. He first wants to transform us, so then we can transform the world. If we want to prove that we really love Christ, the benchmark for our spirituality is genuine love for our brothers and sisters. If we want to really love Christ the way He deserves, we must not just go up with our eyes fixed towards heaven and forget about the world around us, we must also, and it may sound like a contradiction - move downwards, and become humble, small, minuscule.³⁵ The minute we start becoming big, smallness ceases. Then God withdraws.

Therefore, in all humility, just like Christ, we have to commit all of our energies into building this civilization

of love, in complete awareness that if we want humanity to really encounter the Lord, we have to give ourselves completely to Him and detach ourselves from our own attachments. Freedom always demands renunciation of every form of attachment.

Together, we can build a new culture of life. We must overcome all divisions and barriers, which, without a doubt, are going to come our way. But with God's love, we can certainly surpass any obstacles we may encounter. Because his love automatically transforms, and it brings healing to our hearts. Wherever we find ourselves in our life's journey, we have to be concerned about what is happening in the world. We cannot detach ourselves from this reality. *It affects all of us.* We cannot continue to ignore it. Bringing a message of hope to a society which is in despair is a commitment we must fulfill. Especially, as religious sisters, we have to seriously take the Lord's command to be "the salt and light of the world."

The Lord expects nothing less from us. *Our lives have to show that Christ is going through the world in us.*³⁶ If this does not happen, all our endeavor is self-deception. Our love for Christ has to be all-embracing, it must transform us totally, so we can transform others with it. *He has to be the focal point in our lives.*³⁷

We have to "get out of ourselves," and "give of ourselves" entirely to our brothers and sisters. When we do this is liberating. Because when we truly get out of our own self-love, and our own selfishness, we automatically place ourselves last. *And, we become more aware of each other's needs.*

Furthermore, when we stop thinking about ourselves, and start thinking of others first, by renouncing to the things we like and to our own self-will, this is how the new civilization of love will begin. *Only God can take us out of ourselves.* Due to our sinful nature, we are all capable of doing what we don't like to do, this is the reason why we have to continuously ask for God's grace in our lives, to be able to truly live out what He anticipates and desires of us.

*We must always see in other human beings persons with whom one day we shall be sharing heaven with.*³⁸ Have we ever thought about the extent of what this means? Do we look at our brothers and sisters this way? We must look upon them as persons who are being called by God to His Heavenly Kingdom (even though they may not know it yet). If we can lessen their burdens, let us strive to do so. Arrogance is what makes us think we can do it ourselves, that we are self-sufficient. That we don't need to see people in the world like God sees them. The world entices us to concentrate in seeing only their shortcomings and faults. When we do this, we are debasing human dignity, we are not treating them like God expects us to. If we really desire others to follow Jesus Christ in a radical way, we have to make it attractive to them by loving them with His Love.

The reality is that man has fallen and continues to fall.³⁹ And, we are not exempt from this reality. On the contrary, we can fall and very easily. It is extremely important to cling to Jesus and Mary to give us the potency that we need in order to fulfill their mission on earth.

How can we foster an ardent love for Christ in our society? *By making the tabernacle our favorite spot where we can rest and acquire all the necessary energy to go out into the world and proclaim his Truth.*⁴⁰ We must have a great love for all the souls in the world, without exception. And, be genuinely concerned for their salvation. In laboring for souls, we must give our utmost. The loss of even one soul is a misfortune.

There are many ways we can manifest our love for each other. First and foremost, through *prayer*. By far, this is the number one way to show our brothers and sisters we truly care for them. Then, we can do acts of penance, mortifications, corporal and spiritual works of mercy. The greatest penances are the ones our own daily life has in store for us. *We can do small tasks everyday as part of reparation for the sins of the world.*

We may not see the results right away, but we can certainly see them in the long run. These are only a few acts we can do out of love for others. And, throughout our entire lifetime, God gives us plenty of

opportunities to exercise these acts of love. To quote our Mother Foundress: "*Freedom of the heart is the capacity to love, to give ourselves unconditionally and totally, without reserve.*"⁴¹

This phrase says it all. It summarizes what we ought to do. We all have the capacity to love, if we let ourselves be transformed. Yes, man is truly great precisely because he is "capable of God" because he is called to enter into this intimate relationship with God.⁴² The world is used of allowing their relationships with others define them, by going along with the crowd, even if this is immoral, and unethical. *We have to re-define them in Christ.* If there is someone who can re-define who they are is Jesus Christ, our Lord. No one else has this right. *He is the only one who can restore in them, their true identity as children of God.* We cannot expect the world to change, if we, ourselves don't change first. *It begins with us.* It begins with our personal example. We have to become the living stones in the building of this new civilization. This is the kind of people Christ is calling us to be. Totally dedicated to His message of Love and being able to transmit it with our own lives.

We have to become beacons of Christ in the world. We have been "chosen out of the world" by God. When we act out of that sense of belonging, in total awareness that we do not "belong to the world," then we can change the world. God's love is our true source of strength.⁴³

Each one of our actions has either *a positive or a negative consequence.* And, it is important that we become aware of this. He alone can give us the power that we need in order to help him win all souls. There is no time to be flattering ourselves that we have done a great job so far, the harvest is immense, and every minute counts, the Lord needs us and He needs us now. He is counting on us. Let us courageously build this civilization of love, which, by all means, is going to be our *life's work.*

We have a great advantage and a special honor given to us by God. Out of love, He chose us. We didn't choose him. Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.⁴⁴ It seems the world is screaming for this kind of love, which is patient, kind, meek and humble. Humanity has been shown that love is the total opposite of this. God is a mystery and He seeks humanity as a whole. Nonetheless, out of pure love, this most amazing God took on a human body, as Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is the Word made flesh. And, he humbled himself by becoming one of us. But God does not force humanity to come to Him, for then this would not be true love. Some will accept him, some will reject him. And God respects their decision (even though it hurts Him), because He loves them.

To quote Pope Benedict XVI's words, as he was addressing on the occasion of his visit to Washington, D.C., and New York, this past April 15th to the 20th, of the current year: "*I am convinced that without the power of prayer, without that intimate union with the Lord, our human endeavours would achieve very little. Indeed this is what our faith teaches us. It is God who saves us, he saves the world, and all of history. He is the Shepherd of his people. I am coming, sent by Jesus Christ, to bring you his word of life.*"⁴⁵

Together with our Bishops, he chose as the theme of his journey three simple but essential words: "*Christ our hope.*"⁴⁶ Following in the footsteps of his predecessors, Paul VI and John Paul II, He came to United States of America as Pope for the first time, to proclaim this great truth: "Jesus Christ is hope for men and women of every language, race, culture and social condition."

Absolutely, Christ is the face of God present among us. "Through him, our lives reach fullness, and together, both as individuals and peoples, we can become a family united by fraternal love, according to the eternal plan of God the Father."⁴⁷ Just as the Vicar of Christ, all of us are also sent by Christ to reach out to the world and proclaim His Truth to all humanity to build this new civilization of love, what an undeserved privilege, indeed.

Conclusion

To build or promote a new civilization of love and life, implies a personal decision, on our part. We have to embrace humanity at the level that it's in. We have to convince the world that Jesus Christ gave His life for

them, so they can decide to give up their lives for Him.

We have to have a zealous and active love for His Body, the Church. And, to put into action, everything we know, everything the Lord and His Church have taught us over these past years, specifically during the Pontificate of Pope John Paul II. Then, and only then, I believe the whole world would be changed. Convictions have to be built up. They don't happen overnight, they take time, let us not despair. Let us persevere until the end. Knowing the movements of our hearts is crucial in this undertaking, because our hearts have to be on fire for Christ. We must be eager to communicate His truth to the world. We have to be willing to suffer for the souls of the world who don't know Christ yet, and we have to do it lovingly and joyfully following the footsteps of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

We can transform the world by being people "in love" with Love itself. This is the only way we are going to be able to touch their hearts. The past is gone. We don't know what the future holds. Therefore, we have to live the present moment, and embark on this adventure of love, which perhaps might be our only opportunity to really live out God's love to its full potential. With that said, if we really want to be authentic witnesses of love to the world, *we have to love, and we have to love now.* We must not only love Christ, we must portray it lovable and accessible to everyone...In other words, *make loving Jesus Christ extremely attractive.*

Our love for our God has to be so radical, so bountiful that it overflows and allows others to become a part of it. Our relationship with Jesus and Mary needs to be extremely solid, because the energy, the strength, and the force behind everything we do will come from our intimate relationship with these Two Hearts.

Pope Benedict XVI has given us a beautiful gift, his Encyclical *God is Love, (Deus Caritas Est.)* Let us treasure it in our hearts, and apply it in our daily lives. In this encyclical, he invited all of us to find the meaning of our lives by discovering and experiencing authentic love, which can only be found in Jesus Christ, our Lord. And, all of us are called to share this love with all humanity.

We will never go wrong if we follow the Vicar of Christ. If we are obedient to the Magisterium of the Church, we can rest assured where the Holy Spirit is leading us. Pope Benedict XVI has set up the ground for us, He has prepared the way for us, and He is showing us how to do it in His Pontificate. Let us be true, faithful daughters of the Church, willing to love her no matter the cost, and be authentic witnesses of Love. Let us not be afraid to be witnesses of hope, in this journey of love. To proclaim to all the earth that *"Christ is our hope"* is our greatest challenge. It is such an undeserved privilege to bear witness to Christ.

Life is the greatest gift God has given to humanity. *And, because there is only one life to live, and only one way of living it; let us live our life for Christ.*

¹West. *The Love that Satisfies*, 22.

² Ibid, 21.

³ John 15:16

⁴ Jeremiah 31:3

⁵ Testimony of Hope, p. 5 and Isaiah 49:1

⁶ A civilization of love - What every Catholic can do to transform the world - Webpage Article (excerpts from the book)

⁷ The Theology of Hearts in the Writings of St. Francis de Sales, p.60

⁸ Ibid, 58

⁹ Ibid, 59

¹⁰ Ibid, 86

¹¹ Ibid, 65

¹² The Theology of Hearts in the Writings of St. Francis de Sales, p.67

¹³ Ibid, 68

¹⁴ The Theology of Hearts in the Writings of St. Francis de Sales, p.94

¹⁵ Ibid, 71

¹⁶ The Theology of Hearts in the Writings of St. Francis de Sales, p.76

¹⁷ Ibid, 48

¹⁸ Ibid, 74

¹⁹ Ibid, 77

²⁰ A Civilization of Love - What Every Catholic can do to transform the world - Webpage Article (taken from excerpts from the book)

²¹ A Civilization of Love - What Every Catholic can do to transform the world - Webpage Article (taken from excerpts from the book).

²² The Theology of the Hearts in the Writings of St. Francis de Sales, p.94

²³ Ibid, 95

²⁴ Ephesians 5:11

²⁵ Testimony of Hope - The Spiritual Exercises of John Paul II, p.75

²⁶ Mother Teresa of Calcutta's quotes online - Thinkexist.com

²⁷ Testimony of Hope - The Spiritual Exercises of John Paul II, p. 92

²⁸ Article - Falling in Love with Christ - Gospel Commentary for 2nd. Sunday of Lent - Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap, Pontifical Household Preacher. February 17, 2008

²⁹ Mother Adela's personal exhortations with our religious community

³⁰ Aim Higher, p. 35

³¹ Aim Higher, p.49

³² Ibid, 62

³³ Benedict XVI - Encyclical Letter - Deus Caritas Est - God is Love - Online Version - Vatican Webpage

³⁴ The Theology of the Hearts in the Writings of St. Francis de Sales - p.78

³⁵ Christ My Life, p. 46

³⁶ Christ My Life, p.45

³⁷ Ibid, 42

³⁸ Let God's Shine Forth, p.106

³⁹ Ibid, 107

⁴⁰ Christ My Life, p.46

⁴¹ Mother Adela's writings, quotes and sayings - taken from Webpage - www.piercedhearts.org

⁴² Let God's Light Shine Forth, p.105

⁴³ Testimony of Hope - The Spiritual Exercises of John Paul II - p.102

⁴⁴ Colossians 3:12

⁴⁵ Pope Benedict XVI Address on his recent visit to the United States of America - Vatican Webpage - http://www.vatican.va/phome_en.htm

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Pope Benedict XVI Address on his recent visit to the United States of America - Vatican Webpage - http://www.vatican.va/phome_en.htm

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