



THAT THEY
MAY HAVE
LIFE

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A STUDY OF THE SPIRIT-CHARISM
OF FATHER JEAN GAILHAC, FOUNDER

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ABBREVIATIONS USED

In Archives of Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary Generalate, Rome

- Arch. Hist.* — Archives historiques des Religieuses du Sacré-Coeur de Marie. Seventeen volumes of original documents: volumes 1-A, -B, -C; II-A, -B¹, -B², -C, -D, -E, -F; III; IV-A, -B¹, -B²; V; VI; VII.
- Cop. Pub.* — *Copia Publica*: Transumpti Processus apostolica auctoritate [constructi] in Curia Montispessulani, vol. I-X. Rome, 1956. Handwritten and official transcript of original acts of the apostolic process.
- Ecrits* — *Ecrits du Père Jean Gailhac*, vol. 1-11, verified copies of original texts; vol. 12 and 13, taken from copies of original texts; vol. 14, writings discovered during the apostolic process.
- Pos. s. v.* — *Positio super virtutibus*, vol. I and II. Rome, 1966.
- Pos. Hist.* — *Beatificationis et canonizationis servi Dei Joannis Gailhac, sacerdotis saecularis, fundatoris Instituti a Sacro Corde Mariae Virginis Immaculatae: Inquisitio circa valorem historicum vitae Servi Dei a sacerdote V. Maynard concinnatae*, Sacra Rituum Congregatio, Sectio Historica, Sect. Hist. n. 118. Rome, 1962.
- RL* — *The Religious Life*. New York, 1934. English translation of *La Vie Religieuse*.
- Summ.* — *Summarium*: Ex processu apostolico Montispessulano, 1953-1955, 24 volumes. Montpellier, n.d. Extracts from the *Copia Publica*.
- VR* — *La Vie Religieuse* (second edition). Lille, 1937.

In Documents of Vatican II

- AA* — *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity.
- AG* — *Ad Gentes*, Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity.
- DV* — *Dei Verbum*, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation.
- GS* — *Gaudium et Spes*, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.

- LG — *Lumen Gentium*, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church.
 PC — *Perfectae Caritatis*, Decree on the Appropriate Renewal
 of the Religious Life.
 SC — *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, Constitution on the Sacred
 Liturgy.

Other works

- BVC — *Bible et Vie Chrétienne*
 CC — *Cross Currents*
 Chr — *Christus*
 DB — *Dictionary of the Bible* (second edition). Originally edit-
 ed by J. Hastings; revised by F. C. Grant and H. H. Row-
 ley, Edinburgh, 1963.
 DBSupp — *Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible*. Edited by Pinot,
 Robert, Cazelles, Paris, 1928.
 DS — *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, Paris, 1937-.
 DTC — *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*. Edited by Va-
 cant et al.
 EgVII — *L'Eglise de Vatican II*. Collection Unam Sanctam.
 LThK — *Lexicon für Theologie und Kirche*. Freiburg, 1957.
 NCEncy — *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York, 1967.
 NRT — *Nouvelle Revue Théologique*
 RAM — *Revue d'Ascétique et Mystique*
 RR — *Review for Religious*
 SuppWay — *Supplement to the Way*
 SuppDL — *Doctrine and Life Supplement*
 TWNT — *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*. Stutt-
 gart, 1933.
 VC — *Vie Consacrée*
 VS — *Vie Spirituelle*
 VSSupp — *Le Supplément* (formerly to *Vie Spirituelle*)

INTRODUCTION

There is a certain analogy between the Church's use of Scripture and a congregation's use of the legacy of their founder.¹ The "definitive" commentary on Sacred Scripture has never been written — nor will it ever be written. Neither has the definitive life of Jesus Christ ever been published. Not only could no one work contain the richness of the Person of Jesus Christ — "There are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written" (Jn. 21:25) — but the perspective of one generation would not be that of another. What a difference we find among the four normative and inspired "memories" of the Lord which the Spirit has left to the Church! How different John's gospel is from those of the synoptics written only thirty years earlier!

The contemporary quest for the *ipsissima verba* represents a desire to return to the sources: What did Jesus really say? While this search for the "facts" is worthy of praise, it must not diminish or obscure the search for the truth contained not only in Jesus' words and deeds but also in the memory of those words and deeds recorded by the first generation of Christians. Certainly the words and actions of Jesus Christ are and have always been normative for the Christian life. The gospels witness to the manner in which these words and deeds threw light on contemporary situations. When, in the early Church, situations of difficulty or doubt arose, it was to the life and teaching of Jesus that the Church turned for guidance. But they did not find there "pat answers" to situations which Jesus never experienced. Rather they were called so to contemplate, to assimilate the words and example of the Lord, so to be identified

¹ We are indebted to the late John Diamond, S.J., for this analogy.

with Him in spirit, so to be "in Christ Jesus" that their choices, their solutions would be truly Christian, would be truly in the Spirit of the Lord.

The second and third generations looked back to Jesus' words and deeds as they were recorded for them and passed on by those who had experienced what "was from the beginning," what had been heard, seen, looked upon and touched of the Word of life (cf. 1 Jn. 1:1). And the perspective, the existential situation of those second and third generation Christians was not that of the apostles who had accompanied the Lord Jesus from His baptism until the day He was taken up from them.

The twentieth century man, living in a world which Jesus and His disciples never knew — a world of nuclear power, of rapid communication and transportation, of even more rapid change — looks to the sources of Christianity with a different perspective again. The same Lord Jesus is the norm of his life. In contemplating the Lord, the contemporary Christian has not only the privileged memories of the first generation to guide him but has as well the witness of Christians throughout the centuries who have lived and acted in conformity to the same Lord, who have sought to be so identified with Christ that their choices would be His. The words and acts of Jesus of Nazareth remain for the Christian of the twentieth century the inspiration and norm of his attitudes, his actions.

The Holy Spirit is wont to work through an original experience or inspiration which can only be understood in the light of subsequent history, and then only through faith, contemplation, reflection, "pondering". Through this continuing insight, past events give direction and inspiration to the present and to the future. The activity of the Spirit in founders of religious congregations is no exception. In the founders we have an original experience, an evangelical inspiration which is normative for future generations. This experience is not normative in the sense that actions in the twentieth century — in a historical context quite different from that of the founder — are to be measured concretely against the actions of a founder. Rather, the spirit of a founder — of a man or woman who strove to be totally identified with Jesus Christ and who attempted to incarnate His life and mission in a particular historical setting — is to

be the guiding and motivating force of those who claim to be his or her "followers".

Each age must look back to its original inspiration, each age will see that inspiration in its own perspective. Each age must attempt to capture what is essential in the original motivation of the founder, must try to determine what was particular to his own times. Every generation must look with discernment at the beginnings which represent at one and the same time "the place where the essential and the out-dated, the most necessary and the most removed from the present are to be found".² In its task, each generation benefits by the efforts of preceding ages and therefore looks back to the sources through a tradition which becomes richer with each attempt to articulate the fundamental, normative experience. "Each age has its *Imago primi saeculi* and captures from the past an image adapted to itself which had previously remained hidden".³ The various images present an ever fuller picture of the past and a challenge for the future.

The present work is not a "definitive study" of the charism of Father Jean Gailhac. Nor is it the crystallization once and for all of the spirit of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary. Rather it aspires to contribute to the ongoing "dialogue with the sources" which is necessary so that the Lord's word spoken to the congregation through Gailhac may be heard more clearly. Hopefully it will be succeeded by other studies, by other articulations of the original gift given to the Church through Jean Gailhac. If this present work throws some light on that gift, it will have achieved its purpose.

Jean Gailhac's written works comprise fourteen volumes. These volumes include spiritual notes and resolutions from his seminary days; sermons and retreats — sometimes only in outline form; treatises destined for the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary; correspondence principally with the sisters but also with bishops, priests and other individuals. The sermons, conferences and notes are undated for the most part. Not only do we not know when they were written, but in the majority

² M. de Certeau, "L'épreuve du temps," *Chr*, vol. 13, July 1966, p. 316.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

of cases neither do we know to whom they were addressed. They reflect Gailhac's great care in the preaching of the word and his concern for sound doctrine.

We have based this work solely on those treatises and letters specifically addressed to the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary. We have done this because it is our belief that those documents reveal most clearly Gailhac's intention for the congregation. The communication of his own "spirit-charism" to the congregation was his constant concern and he specifically states this several times in his correspondence. It is obvious, then, that his letters to the sisters themselves are most revelatory of his own faith-vision.

We justify the limitation of our research to these documents because of the unity and continuity which is manifest in Gailhac's life and spirituality. The faith-vision we encounter in the young seminarian Gailhac is basically the same as that of the octogenarian. Had we used additional sources, the conclusions of our study would have been essentially the same. The central axes so marked in Gailhac's correspondence with the sisters are the same as those found in his sermons and conferences. He does, however, choose themes appropriate to his audience. Some subjects, very much a part of his own spirituality, never appear in his writings to the congregation. Had the object of our study been Gailhac's spirituality unrelated to the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, for example, we might have studied the theme of priesthood to which Gailhac addresses himself frequently, especially in his conferences to priests. To the congregation, however, he addresses all that he feels is necessary to manifest his intention, to communicate his faith-vision.

Among the various biographies of Father Gailhac, the most valuable is that of Father V. Maynard, a contemporary of Gailhac. The other biographies and studies which exist — of Couderc, Leray, Guizard and Magaret — are based directly or indirectly on that of Maynard. Maynard's own sources are Gailhac himself (Maynard entered the congregation of the Good Shepherd in 1874 and lived with Gailhac until the latter's death in 1890), Gailhac's colleagues and relatives (his sister died in 1898), and the third superior general, Mother Saint-Félix who was Maynard's own sister. Mother Saint-Félix had entered the congrega-

tion in September 1849 and was superior general at the time of Gailhac's death. She had, therefore, known Gailhac and been closely associated with him and with the first community during Gailhac's entire life as founder. Maynard's biography is especially valuable because it has been controlled and verified in view of the apostolic process of beatification of Father Gailhac. It contains a wealth of footnotes based on accurate and extensive research done by A. P. Frutaz and Michel de Lattre in 1960-62, correcting or affirming Maynard's statements.

The apostolic process of beatification itself has been a source of the present work, gathering as it does the testimonies of several eye-witnesses and of a number of sisters of the "second generation" who themselves had contact with the "primitive community". This "oral tradition" is a valuable source of information for the congregation and certainly has played a part in transmitting the spirit of the founder.

The thesis we are presenting here consists of seven chapters. Part One treats of the faith-vision itself. After a general introduction to the notion of charism, the first chapter speaks specifically of the "charism of foundation" and attempts to clarify as well the terms "theological vision", "spirit" and "spirituality". After this initial definition of terms, the second chapter introduces us to the man Jean Gailhac. We recognize a life which embodied that apostolic *élan* so common in the nineteenth century — a life concerned with the needs of his times, with the great Christian search for identification with Christ. In this same chapter, the unity of Gailhac's faith-vision and the conscious efforts made by him to communicate his spirit to the congregation are studied.

Chapters III and IV give us the heart of Gailhac's faith-vision. In the third chapter we examine Gailhac's "theology" as such, that is, the way he perceived the Father, Son and Spirit. The life of the Trinity as participated in by the Christian is the subject of the fourth chapter, where the central role of "imitation of Christ" in Gailhac's spirituality is so evident.

In chapter V we see how certain elements of Gailhac's theological vision were embodied in the structures of the congregation, how the institution was devised to protect and communicate the original charism.

In Part Two we have situated Gailhac's faith-vision in the context of his own times and in the light of contemporary theology of religious life.⁴ Chapter VI evaluates already existing studies of Gailhac's spirit and then gives an overview of the main currents of the nineteenth century. Finally, in the last chapter we have evaluated the contemporaneity of Gailhac's faith-vision of religious life against the doctrine of Vatican II.

In a note to his article "Discovering the Founder's Charism", John Futrell speaks of an on-going dialogue among researchers. He claims that each interpretation "must stand on its own merits and each must be questioned in the dialogue of research, always in reference to the historical documents through which we approach the founder".⁵ It is the hope of the author that this present work will be an element not only in the "dialogue with the sources" and in the "dialogue of continuing research" but in the congregation's "dialogue with the future" as well.

Note regarding English translations

In translating Father Gailhac's writings, we have tried to be as faithful to the original French text as possible, often at the expense of literary style. There are in the founder's writings many repetitions of both words and ideas. For the most part, we have not edited these because these repetitions do show the centrality of certain ideas in his consciousness.

Citations from *La Vie Religieuse* which appear in the English version of that work (*The Religious Life*) have in all cases been verified against the French in the published work. In many cases we have re-translated passages because the editing of the English version has at times deleted significant passages or ideas. When we have used the translation already existing in *The Religious Life*, the French version does not appear in the footnotes. Only when our own translation is used have we reproduced the French as a verification.

We likewise have not reproduced the original French when only an expression, phrase or part of a sentence has been quoted. We have done this to avoid an excessive referral to footnotes.

⁴ Part Two has not been published in the present work.

⁵ *Supp Way*, Autumn 1971, p. 66.

PART ONE: THE FAITH-VISION

CHAPTER I

THE GIFT WITHIN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH: A DEFINITION OF TERMS

That the Church has a new consciousness of her own nature since the second Vatican Council is beyond question. One of the dimensions which her concentration on biblical, patristic and liturgical sources has underscored is her "pneumatic", spiritual nature. This in turn has renewed an awareness of the charismatic aspect of the Church. It is in the light of this "pneumatic ecclesiology" that we address ourselves here to the specific question of the charism of founders of religious congregations within the Church.

In order to situate this particular charism within the wide range of charismatic gifts given to the Christian community, we will briefly survey the contemporary theological literature on the subject of "charism" as such, hoping to indicate the variety of opinions advanced by theologians today. We do not intend to study extensively the nature of charismatic gifts but merely to give a sort of background against which the particular charism of foundation of a religious congregation or order can be seen.

A. CHARISM

1. *Survey of recent literature*

Most treatments of charism in recent theological literature analyze first and foremost the Pauline notion of charism.¹ Not

¹ See, for example, A. Bittlinger, *Gifts and Graces*, London, 1967; J. Cantinet, "Charismes et le bien commun de l'Eglise," *BVC*, vol. 65, May-June 1965, pp. 16-25; X. Ducros, "Charismes," *DS*, col. 503-507; C. W. Emmet and H. Riesenfeld, "Spiritual Gifts," *DB*, pp. 934-935; G. Hasenhüttl, *Carisma: Principio fondamentale per l'ordinamento della Chiesa*, Bologna,

only does this fact reflect a contemporary concern with a return to the apostolic sources, but it reflects as well the reality that it is Paul who first brings the word "charism" into the Christian vocabulary² and who reflects extensively on the reality of the presence and action of the Spirit in the early Christian communities. This is not to say that the apostle gives us an organized and orderly theology of the charismatic gifts. Rather he attempts to express in a sometimes imprecise vocabulary the rich experience of the Spirit of which he was aware in the early Church. Not only does he use four different terms to express this reality, but he freely intermingles what later tradition distinguished as ordinary and extraordinary gifts, gifts of office and non-official gifts, transitory and "stable" gifts. The terms "spiritual gifts" (χαρίσματα and πνευματικά), "ministries" or "services" (διακονίαι) and "workings" or "operations" (ἐνεργήματα) cover a wide spectrum of manifestations of the Spirit — from wisdom and leadership to healing and speaking in tongues.

Perhaps the best analysis of the Pauline notion of charism is that of H. Schürmann³ who sees Saint Paul circumscribing in different terms a total spiritual experience. This phenomenon of the presence of the Spirit manifested itself in a variety of ways: healing, preaching, administering, exhorting. Only in the post-apostolic age did the Church begin to distinguish between external ministry and services on the one hand and interior graces and gifts of spiritual assistance on the other. While using necessary logical distinctions (ministry: functional or free; hierarchical and charismatic gifts; charisms and fruits of the Spirit), *Lumen Gentium* has the same Pauline concern to show the harmonious synthesis of the spiritual gifts and their necessary coor-

1973 (Original German: *Charisma: Ordnungsprinzip der Kirche*, Freiburg, 1969); E. Kasemann, "Amt und Gemeinde im Neuen Testament," *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen*, vol. I, Göttingen, 1960, pp. 109-134 (English translation: "Ministry and Community in the New Testament," *Essay on New Testament Themes*, London, 1964, pp. 64 ff); H. Küng, "The Charismatic Structure of the Church," *Concilium*, vol. 4, pp. 41-61; A. Lemmonyer, "Charismes," *DBSupp*, col. 1233-1243; P.-H. Menoud, *L'Eglise et les ministères*, Cahiers Théologiques de l'Actualité Protestante, Paris, 1949; H. Schürmann, "Les charismes spirituels," *EgVII*, vol. 51b, Paris, 1966, pp. 541-573.

² Kasemann, *art. cit.*, p. 109.

³ Cf. *art. cit.*

duction.⁴ Schürmann underlines the fact that the experience of the primitive Church is the "essential archetype" for the development of the life of the Church and that there is in the apostolic community a total structure which is marked by an integration, still fontal, of all its elements.⁵ Founded on the four terms used by Paul, he sees four elements common to all the spiritual phenomena described as charisms: 1) they are "spiritual" in their origin and their manifestation (πνευματικά); 2) they evidence the powerful "working" of God (ἐνεργήματα); 3) they "serve" to edify the community (διακονίαι); 4) they are "gifts of divine grace", that is, totally gratuitous (χαρίσματα).⁶

In his study of the charismatic structure of the Church, H. Küng favors a broad definition of the term "charism".⁷ He holds that charisms are granted communally and individually, since it is the whole people who are filled by the Spirit and moved by Him. The characteristic note of the genuine charism is service, service which is a response to God's call.⁸

Like Küng, E. Käsemann would place charismatic gifts into three main categories: preaching, practical aid and leadership, each being a different service rendered to the Christian community. Service is the hallmark of any charism and all the literature on the subject is in agreement on this point. Käsemann stresses that "service is not merely the consequence but the outward form and the realization" of the charismatic grace.⁹

A rich and valuable treatment of the charismatic element in the Church appears in K. Rahner's study of the same name.¹⁰ Writing before Vatican II and standing within the tradition of the Church's teaching regarding charisms, Rahner uses *Mystici Corporis* as a basis for his conclusions that persons outside the sacred ministry are endowed with charismatic gifts,¹¹ and that

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 546-7, especially note 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 571.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 547.

⁷ "Every spiritual gift of whatever kind, every call is a charisma." *Art. cit.*, p. 54. See also p. 59.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 65.

¹⁰ "The Charismatic Element in the Church," *The Dynamic Element in the Church*, London, 1964, pp. 42-83.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

"spiritual gifts need not necessarily and in every case occur in a miraculously extraordinary form,"¹² and that "the charismatic element has always existed in the Church."¹³ Rahner would include among those having spiritual gifts of the charismatic order thinkers, writers, artists and "all in the Church who had a special, unique historical mission of great import for the Church and through her for the world."¹⁴ The specific purpose of Rahner's treatment is the possibility of institutional regulation of a gift of the Spirit. Because the charismatic element belongs to the Church, she has a duty to regulate it in terms of the unity of the whole, always mindful of the fact that charity and, indeed, the very nature of the Church, dictate that "each in the Church may follow his spirit as long as it is not established that he is yielding to what is contrary to the Spirit; that, therefore, orthodoxy, freedom and goodwill are to be taken for granted and not the opposite."¹⁵ A basic presupposition in the relationship of the charismatic element to the institutional element is that the Spirit is given to the whole Church, that the same Spirit of unity Who assists the hierarchy also acts in ever new and surprising ways in stirring up the charismatic element within the Church.

An aspect which is underlined by some authors is that of the duration of the charisms. Are they permanent or transitory? We refer to this aspect here because it is significant in terms of the charism of foundation of religious congregations.

In his study of the first epistle to the Corinthians, E. B. Allo sees that in his various lists of charisms (Rm. 12: 6-9; Eph. 4: 11; 1 Cor. 12: 8-10 and 28-30), Saint Paul juxtaposes extraordinary and transitory gifts (*gratiae gratis datae*) with others which seem more ordinary and permanent and which Allo identifies with "graces of state."¹⁶ In his treatment on the subject, A. Lemonnyer likewise considers that alongside of the "extraordinary," spectacular charisms there are those which suppose in their

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

¹⁶ *Première épître aux Corinthiens*, Paris, 1934, pp. 335-6.

beneficiaries the permanence of certain supernatural attitudes.¹⁷ Gifts of a miraculous order and permanent functions necessary to the Church are also distinguished by F. Amiot.¹⁸ F. Prat on the other hand is hesitant to admit "permanent functions" as charismatic and speaks rather of a "certain stability" inherent in particular gifts. He states as well that the charismata might "some day disappear without depriving the Church of an indispensable organ,"¹⁹ thus stressing the transitory nature of the charismatic gifts. This latter opinion has been strongly contested by S. Lyonnet²⁰ and seems doomed in a post-conciliar understanding of the Church.

In his book *L'exigence de Dieu*, P. R. Régamey has interesting comments on charism which we mention here primarily because they are made in the context of theological reflection on religious life. Régamey describes charism as "experiences of the action of the Spirit, transitory and particularly gratuitous."²¹ He would distinguish them clearly from "gifts" and would call any reference to a permanent charism improper and dangerous.²² He criticizes Schillebeeckx's reference to "crystallized charisms" since Régamey considers a charism to be present only at the origin of situations and not in the situations themselves.²³ Régamey seems to deny the possibility of permanent charisms in his legitimate and praiseworthy insistence on their gratuity.

Our own opinion is that it is necessary to distinguish between charism and the institutionalization of a charism. We would agree with Lyonnet that charisms as such are indispensable to the Church and will never be wanting to her. The Spirit has assured His continued presence within the Church and is faithful to His promise. However, to label a particular charism as permanent is another matter. No one can lay claim *by right* to a particular charism or to its continued possession.

¹⁷ *Art. cit.*, col. 1235.

¹⁸ *L'enseignement de Saint Paul*, Paris, 1968, p. 341, note 2.

¹⁹ *The Theology of Saint Paul*, Westminster, 1958, vol. I, p. 129.

²⁰ "Deux nouvelles biographies de S. Paul," *Biblica*, vol. 29, 1948, p. 133, note 1.

²¹ *L'exigence de Dieu*, Paris, 1969, p. 98.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 99.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

The Spirit is free to act where He will and can give His gifts in a transitory or in a permanent way. Much depends on the specific nature of the gift. What does seem necessary in most cases to assure "permanence," however, is a certain institutionalization designed to protect and preserve the charism. Perhaps a brief look at the phenomenon of prophecy in the Old Testament would help to illustrate our argument here.

We know that most often the prophets stood against the institution of the monarchy; their role was to pass God's judgment on the monarchical institution in terms of its fidelity to the covenant God had made with His people. And yet the phenomenon of prophecy itself was institutionalized. The prophets of Israel were respected (or despised) as a class, and this respect allowed them great freedom in their expressions of wrath toward the monarchy. The words of Nathan to David, of Amos to Jeroboam II or even of Isaias to Achaz might have merited instant death had they come from someone not associated with the prophetic class. These prophets' situation within the class gave them a right to be heard, and thus it protected their gift. This protection, however, did not always preserve them from persecution.

While finding a certain protection of their gift within the prophetic institution, the true prophets realized the power of any institution to crush the gift as well as to preserve it. Amos, therefore, refuses to be identified as a *nabi*; the other writing prophets as well resist association with prophetic bands. What we are trying to underline here is the institution's possibility and duty to preserve the gift, to protect it, to insure its freedom of exercise. Institutionalization can therefore render "permanent" certain gifts within the community.

We use the term "permanent" here in a relative sense. We do not mean "permanent" in the sense that the Spirit's assistance to the magisterium of the Church is permanent, that is, that it will last until the end of time. We mean rather "permanent" as opposed to a charism which lasts for only part or all of the lifetime of the person to whom it is given. Institutionalization of the dynamism of the original gift can effect a duration even after the death of the person to whom the gift was originally

given. We will see this specifically in regard to the charism of foundation.

2. *Toward a definition*

For the purpose of clarifying the reality we are addressing ourselves to here, we would describe charism as an evident gift given by the Spirit to an individual for the good of the Church. In elaborating this definition, we have conserved those elements attested to in the New Testament and in tradition, accepted unanimously by contemporary theologians, namely, a charism is *a gift, given by the Spirit, for the good of the Church*. Because of the personal nature of the action of the Spirit, we would hold that a charism is always given to individuals. These individuals may belong to a particular group or may form a community in view of protecting and fostering their gift, but no one receives a charism by the mere fact that he belongs to a particular group. A charism is a gift of the Spirit to individuals and not the gift of a group to an individual. To hold that a group can have a claim on a charism in such a way as to bestow it on others is to say that the Spirit can be contained, bridled or grasped.

The word "evident" which we have added to the traditional definition of charism seems to avoid the "ordinary or extraordinary" dilemma. We add the term also to avoid too broad a definition and to give a more specific content to the word "charism." It is true that, in some sense, every gift of grace given to a Christian is for the good of the whole community, but to apply the word "charism" to every supernatural gift seems to drain content from the term.

By an "evident" gift, we mean a gift that is recognized within the Christian community. This recognition must exist on two levels: within the local church and at least potentially within the universal Church. In regard to recognition by the local church, we mean that if the nature of a charism is to be for the good of others, there must be persons at hand to respond to the gift. Although the gift might not be recognized as a charism as such, its existence at least must be perceived by others. Perhaps an example would help to clarify the necessity

of this local response. We believe that virginity or celibacy is a gift to an individual and to the Church. This gift is in some cases given primarily for the individual and is lived out anonymously. The gift, however, can also be termed a charism when it somehow assumes a public nature, that is, is lived out in the Christian community as a witness to the totality and exclusivity of God's "grasp" of a person, or when it frees a person for total and joyful availability for Christ's mission. Although virginity lived privately and anonymously can have a strong redemptive value for the Church as a whole, it is not an "evident" gift within the Christian community and therefore does not fall into the category of the charismatic as we choose to define it.

To say that a gift is evident, that is, recognized by the local community, is not to say that it is always favorably received by that same community. How often are prophets not received by their own! However, the fact that these same prophets are persecuted and rejected implies at least a recognition of their real or presumed gift.

A local Christian community can be mistaken in its response to what appears to be a charismatic gift. History has given and continues to give witness to this fact. Because the gift is given to an individual for the good of the Church, it must be ruled in its exercise by that good. The building up of the Body of Christ is the ultimate norm for the exercise of any charism, and therefore the ultimate test of its authenticity is the right and duty of the universal Church, always acting in fidelity to her Lord and His gospel. This is not to say that the charismatic gifts cannot exist without the "approval" of the universal Church. It is rather to underline the note of potential universality of the charismatic gifts, to emphasize the fact that at least potentially they exist for the good of the whole Church. It is ultimately to the whole Church that such gifts are given and so it remains her responsibility to test them against the faith which she holds. An analysis of the relationship between the hierarchical and charismatic elements in the Church, however, is outside the scope of this work and so we will refer to it again only insofar as it touches the specific charism which is of interest here — that of the founder of a religious congregation.

Unlike some authors,²⁴ we are excluding from the category "charismatic" the unfailing and often evident assistance which the Spirit has promised to the hierarchical Church and on which the Church can always rely. We do this because this assistance seems to us of another order. While it certainly is a gift of the Spirit given for the good of the Church, it is essentially associated with an office, with the hierarchical structure of the Church. One has the assurance that the Spirit will always guide and assist those who bear the ultimate responsibility for the magisterial function of the Church. While one can also be sure that there will always be charisms in the Church, their precise form and "location" will depend on the initiative of the Spirit. In the case of the hierarchical Church, the grace is guaranteed to the whole body. In the charismatic order, however, the personal grace — unpredictable and totally gratuitous²⁵ — precedes the "body" which owes its existence to that personal grace. In thus restricting and limiting the term "charismatic", we intend to underline the freedom of the Spirit to act when, where and how He will, as well as the personal, gratuitous nature of His action.

A. *Charism of foundation*

In addressing the question of the specific charism of founders of religious congregations, it seems wise to follow the methodology evidenced in Saint Paul's epistles and in *Lumen Gentium*, that is, to recognize the existence of a very rich experience of the Spirit within the Church and attempt to describe it, to circumscribe it in various ways. It would be vain and of little value to try to pinpoint which of the charisms in the Pauline lists characterizes that of religious founders. Such an anachronistic

²⁴ In his article on "The Charismatic Structure of the Church," Küng writes: "The charisma does not fall under the heading 'ecclesial office' but the ecclesial office does fall under the heading 'charisma.'" (p.57) No doubt this affirmation is related to his statement that the charisms are granted communally and individually. We would hold, however, to the essentially personal nature of the charismatic gift, as stated above.

²⁵ The assistance of the Spirit to the Church is likewise totally gratuitous in its origins. But its durability has been promised by that Spirit and can be counted on.

procedure would be invalid. What does seem important, however, is to recognize that specific individuals within the Church have throughout the centuries received spiritual gifts which have flowered and been prolonged in "institutions" which in turn foster holiness and service within the Church.

Although more abundant in very recent years, the literature dealing with the charism of religious foundation or of the founder of a religious congregation is limited²⁶ and the term is used in a variety of ways. J. Comblin speaks of the religious life itself as a charism, while Soeur Jeanne d'Arc distinguishes the charism of a founder of a certain spirituality from that of the founder of a religious institution and again from that of a spiritual author. J. Futrell and P. R. Régamey refer to the founder's charism and apply the same term to the congregation issued from the original

²⁶ Reference will be consistently made here to a founder of a religious congregation. The term refers to the person or persons, man or woman, whose original insight and action is responsible for the existence of a particular religious group within the Church.

Among the articles on the charism or spirit of religious founders, the following are noteworthy: M. de Certeau, "L'épreuve du temps," *Chr*, vol. 13, July 1966, pp. 311-331; L. Cognet, three mimeographed conferences "Qu'est-ce que l'esprit d'une congrégation?" "L'esprit d'une congrégation et sa spiritualité," "L'esprit d'une congrégation et la vie de l'Eglise," *Sessions des Supérieures Générales*, Mont Ste Odile (France), May 21-24, 1966, pp. 1-44; J. Comblin, "A Vida Religiosa como Carisma," *Grande Sinal*, vol. 24, October 1970, pp. 585-592; J. C. Futrell, "The Founder's Charism," *SuppWay*, Autumn 1971, pp. 62-70; J. F. Gilmont, "Paternité et médiation du fondateur d'ordre," *RAM*, vol. 40, 1964, pp. 393-426; H. Holstein, "Conseils et charisme," *Chr*, vol. 16, 1969, pp. 172-185; Soeur Jeanne d'Arc, "Les congrégations à la recherche de leur esprit," *VSSupp*, vol. 20, September 1967, pp. 502-534; G. Lafont, "L'Esprit-saint et le droit dans l'institution religieuse," *VSSupp*, vol. 20, September 1967, pp. 473-501 and November 1967, pp. 594-639; P. Molinari, "La sequela di Cristo nella vita consacrata," *II Cursus internationalis Exercitiorum spiritualium in hodierna luce ecclesiae*, vol. II, Rome, 1969, pp. 241.163-1 to 241.163-35; M. Olphe-Galliard, "Charisme des fondateurs religieux," *VC*, vol. 39, November-December 1967, pp. 338-352; P. R. Régamey, *L'exigence de Dieu*, Paris, 1969 (specifically on charism, pp. 14-21 and 97-106); J. M. R. Tillard, "Les grandes lois de la rénovation de la vie religieuse," *EgVII*, vol. 62, pp. 77-158.

We might also add G. Ganss' introduction to his translation of the *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, "The Life-giving Spirit within St. Ignatius' Constitutions," Institute of Jesuit Sources, St. Louis, 1970, pp. 1-33.

charism. In his article on the relationship between the charismatic and hierarchical elements as they regard religious life, G. Lafont speaks of the "permanent charisms of a religious institute" as well as of the charism of foundation.²⁷ The decree *Ad Gentes* (§ 23) likewise implies a charism proper to institutions (*instituta*) within the Church. M. Olphe-Galliard writes about the charism of the founder, describing it as a "grace pregnant with lasting effects, since it is the source of a spiritual animation destined to last."²⁸

We hope to show that the charism of foundation is given to a person who gathers a group of "disciples" desirous of rendering service to the Church in a particular way, through a particular style of life. This grace has a human substructure — the theological vision of the founder — which can be communicated to and shared by others. The founder's vision, informed by the dynamism of charity (holiness), exercises a power of attraction and motivation which, protected and fostered by an institution, endures after the death of the founder. Others, living by the same dynamism of charity and sharing basically the same theological vision, participate in the charism of the founder and transmit a spirit and a tradition which is life.

That the founders of religious congregations were "charismatic" seems clear. In its effects, the fruits of charity, their gift was certainly evident in the Christian community — to those who associated themselves with the founder to form the nucleus of a religious congregation and eventually to Church authorities who, having "tested" the charism, "approved" it. History also gives ample evidence of the service rendered to the Christian community by religious congregations — service which has consisted in assuring certain works of mercy within the Church, and service of holiness and witness.

In an attempt to circumscribe the particular charism of religious founders within the Church, we will use as our point of departure the reality of the existence of such a phenomenon. Even a superficial glance at the history of the Church in the nineteenth century reveals an unprecedented flourishing of nas-

²⁷ *Art. cit.*, p. 474.

²⁸ *Art. cit.*, p. 343-4.

cent religious congregations, especially in France and northern Italy. A phenomenon as yet insufficiently documented and studied, it nevertheless makes evident that throughout the European Christian world the Spirit was prodigal with His gifts, "even if many such later foundations appear to have sprung more from shrewd, almost secular, aims and from a need for organization, than from an original impulse of the Spirit."²⁹ Rather than attribute the origin of certain religious congregations to "shrewd, secular aims and a need for organization" or to an impulse of the Spirit, we would prefer to believe that the Spirit often worked through this same shrewdness and through circumstances which we would hardly describe as "spiritual". The study of the origins of some congregations uncovers a variety of interesting historical factors: the immediate material cause of one congregation, for example, seems to have been the authoritarian attitude of a certain bishop; of another the affective frustration of a particular male religious; of still another the opposition of a sister within an already existing congregation to the established authority.³⁰ In these three cases, however, the resultant congregations have weathered the test of time and are still in existence today. Even where unusual and questionable circumstances seem to have given rise to a congregation, the objective of these same groups was to render a true service to the Church.

It seems, though, that there are three common elements in all foundations of religious congregations: a particular grasp of revelation, real needs to be met, and a dynamic and attractive charity. First of all, we remark that a clear perception of the evils of a particular society and a compelling, compassionate desire to remedy them are coupled in the same person with a grasp of revelation which provides the theological basis for a concrete response. We detect in the founders a *particular theological vision* which underpins a concrete expression of charity through service to the Church. A Christian, usually possessing certain gifts of leadership, perceives the world — his own world

²⁹ Rahner, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

³⁰ These examples are taken from Soeur Jeanne d'Arc's article "Les congrégations à la recherche de leur esprit," *VSSupp*, pp. 520-521.

In particular — in the light of his personal understanding of the Word of God.

This personal understanding of the gospel is the prism through which the founder sees the specific, concrete needs around him. He perceives these needs as a locus calling for Christ's own salvation, and he responds to them in his own characteristic way. The needs become, then, the object toward which the charism is directed. Religious congregations have come into existence to respond to such misery and need, physical, spiritual and/or moral. The fact that Christian education, especially of the poor, was a crying need in France and northern Italy after the French revolution, for example, is certainly one factor accounting for the great number of new religious congregations in the nineteenth century. Working the land, contemplation, the care of orphans, healing the sick and assisting the dying, educating the ignorant: all these and many more are the responses given by certain founders to the needs around them. Perception of and *sensitivity to specific, concrete needs*, then, is a second element in the charism of foundation.

Thirdly, there is the *dynamism of charity*. Because by its very nature religious life tends toward the perfection of charity (holiness), this charity is given to the founder in an eminent way. In his life and person, it exercises a power of attraction which seems to be essential to the charism of foundation. In many cases the Church has publicly recognized and proclaimed this holiness through the process of beatification or canonization. What the Church declares in such an act is the existence and power of charity in a life lived in a particular historical context, in a particular human personality. She proclaims the exemplary nature of this charity — not only for members of the founder's own congregation but for the universal Church as well.

There are, then, three essential elements in the charism of foundation: 1) the theological vision or faith-vision of the founder; 2) perception of and sensitivity to real human need; 2) charity, that is, the supernatural dynamism which impels to action. It is the divine *charis*, the grace of the Spirit, which informs the faith-vision of a founder so that it expresses itself in concrete service related to specific needs. Indeed, it is charity which is the heart of the charism, which is the locus of union between

the founder's vision and the needs of man. A founder is a person who is graced, who is gifted with this impulse towards action which, informing his own grasp of revelation and characterized by it, urges him to respond to his own historical situation. It is his own theological vision which gives a particular form, a specific shape to his concrete response.

This "theological vision", charity and desire to serve others provoke a response in other persons who, because they share the same basic evangelical preoccupations, choose to associate themselves to the founder. The life and spiritual experience of the founder find an echo in the spiritual experience of his "followers". There is a certain very real affinity between the founder and those who devote themselves to his "project", an affinity which is spiritual in the true sense of the word, that is, from the Spirit who powerfully moves the initiator and who likewise creates the affinity in others.

This new creation of the Spirit is the object of the special solicitude of the Church's hierarchy who, with great respect for the Spirit, must 1) measure the theological vision against the deposit of revelation of which she is the servant and the transmitter; 2) determine that the service rendered is for the good of the whole; 3) look to the unity and building up of the whole Body. The decree of praise (*decretum laudis*) or approbation of religious institutes given by the Holy See should be seen in this light — the recognition by the Church of the validity of a certain founder's charism within the Church.³¹

4. *Charism of a congregation?*

A question arises at this point. In what sense is it correct to speak of the charism of a congregation? Our thesis here is that the charism is an evident gift given to the founder of a congregation. His life, words and work are privileged in the sense that

³¹ G. Lesage in his *L'accession des congrégations à l'état religieux canonique* (Ottawa, 1952) mentions that between 1800 and 1864, 198 congregations of men or women were praised and approved by the Holy See. This number does not include those groups approved only on a diocesan level. See p. 180.

they resound in other persons with a force which motivates the latter to leave all and follow Christ in this particular form of life and service. Those who join themselves to the founder "commune in a same spiritual experience and share the same evangelical sensitivity. . . . They encounter in the founder the external expression of their own personal and intimate grace."³² But the grace, the charismatic gift, is given primarily to the founder. It is his gift which is normative; it is the grace given to him which attracts others, which is eventually to blossom into a religious congregation sharing the same spirit. This is not to deny special graces, gifts and charisms to other members of the community nor to ignore the influence of his companions on his own perception of reality. But the charism of "foundation" belongs peculiarly to the founder; his followers participate in this gift. Just as he himself must be a servant of the charism, that is, faithful to the gift given to him by the Spirit for the good of the Church, so must the succeeding generations maintain his charism in the Christian community, always adapting its concrete expression in word and service to new historical situations.

A congregation as such, therefore, has a charism in a participatory sense. The members participate in the gift given to the Church through the life, spiritual experience, faith-vision and service of their founder. The charism of foundation is specified by the fact that the creation of an "institution" is the external form of the gift and not just its consequence. This institution is designed to protect and transmit the founder's charism within a living tradition. Informed by the founder's "spirit" through the dynamic memory of his life and words, it allows future generations to share in the dynamism of his theological vision and his charity while responding to the needs of their own times and their own localities. This gathering of a community based on a common faith-vision has been termed the proper object of the charism of foundation.³³

Certain persons are called to follow Christ in a way whose totality is expressed by a life of celibacy within community, by a total disponibility for the redemptive mission of Christ. The

³² Lafont, *art. cit.*, p. 486.

³³ Lafont, *art. cit.*, p. 484.

gift given to the founder lends concrete expression to their spiritual desires and experiences so that they find adequate channels to express their own desire for service, their own personal gifts within the Church. "By what he said and did, the founder liberated in them certain dynamic forces, showed them the real goal of their spiritual search."³⁴ The Spirit gives these persons a certain qualitative dynamism which harmonizes with and finds itself expressed in the spiritual force of a specific congregation. There is, as we have already mentioned, a real spiritual affinity among those who participate in the founder's charism, a real bond of "fraternity".

B. THEOLOGICAL VISION

It is because the gift of the founder is normative for those who follow him that the Church has asked religious institutes to recognize and maintain the spirit of their founder, his specific intention and the sound traditions flowing from his gift.³⁵ We have indicated three essential elements of the founder's gift: his theological vision, the needs of the times, and charity. It is impossible to grasp, define, locate or describe the "charity" which urges a founder to act. This it is which will always remain in the realm of mystery, indefinable. While it is possible to determine specific needs, these needs are historically conditioned and different in each age, in each location. It should be added, however, that most often the needs to be met by a particular congregation will be greatly determined by the founder's faith-vision. If, for example, Christ the healer is the central axis of that vision, it is highly likely that some form of medical and health service will be undertaken and continued by the congregation. The need for healing is constant in the Church; the forms in which this service is exercised may vary greatly. The same might be said of those congregations founded specifically to share in the mission of Christ the Teacher. Again, the evan-

³⁴ Lafont, *art. cit.*, p. 486.

³⁵ *Perfectae Caritatis*, § 2.

gelical vision of the founder will be the prism through which a congregation faithful to his spirit will see the needs to be met.

It is therefore to the theological vision of the founder — to that vision which motivated and supported his specific intention to found a congregation — that we turn in order to determine just what that intention might have been. How did the founder perceive the Christian mystery so that this perception urged him to involve himself totally in the service of others? This question seems vital for religious congregations today who, without necessarily imitating the historically conditioned works of their founder, must be faithful to the Spirit's gift to the Church through him. The service asked of them today is to be given in historical circumstances very different from those in which the founder lived, but it should have the same basic vision as its motivation. This fact makes a return to the sources not only desirable but essential.

By the term "theological vision" or "faith-vision", we mean the way in which the founder perceived the totality of the Christian mystery, his own personal grasp of revelation. A man living at a particular historical juncture, he will necessarily be influenced by the theological thinking of his time, by the theological vocabulary and concepts available to him at a particular period. He will nourish his faith-vision at various sources — Scripture, prayer, reading — and his own education and formation will play a role in the elaboration of this vision. It is especially his own spiritual experience which is formative of this vision.

Though his insight might have an affinity with one of the great schools of spirituality in the Church, yet, as with every Christian, all the elements will be put together in a personal way; this personal synthesis of revelation will have certain accents, certain emphases. There may be a particular axis in his grasp of revelation which tends to order all other elements of the Christian mystery. Certain theological presuppositions — explicit or implicit — serve as factors of integration in his grasp of Christian reality. A theological synthesis in which God as Father is the factor of integration, for example, will not have the same accents as one in which the Person of the Holy Spirit is central.

It is this theological vision which determines the way a

founder sees all of reality — man, the world, and the way humanity is best served. It gives his personal world a particular color” and gives birth to what Régamey calls his “*souci primordial*”.³⁶ If, for example, the basic theological insight of a founder is the goodness of God, all reality will be seen as manifesting that goodness; or if man's sinfulness is the radical experience of a founder, all other elements of Christian revelation will be seen in that light and the total vision might express itself in a spirituality of reparation or asceticism or humility.

It is important to articulate the relationship of the theological vision of a founder to his charism. The two realities are related but not identical; they are interdependent but not co-extensive. A preliminary remark is necessary before addressing ourselves to this question: the theological vision of a founder is expressed and communicated in his life and works as well as in his words, spoken or written. We will refer to this again when reflecting on the meaning of spirit and spirituality.

The theological vision of a founder is the human reality “informed with power” by the Spirit in such a way that it becomes a force of action and attraction. It is the substructure which gives coherence to the “evident gift given for the service of the Church.” It is the ideal focussed by the founder in assembling a community.³⁷ The man or woman to whom the gift is given has an evangelical insight which gives a specific coloration to his charism within the Church. The quality of the service rendered within the Church depends to some extent on the clarity of that insight and the fidelity with which it is lived not only by him and the first community but by succeeding generations as well. The faith-vision of the founder is the sub-structure of the charism insofar as that vision is a vehicle for the action of the Spirit, insofar as it actuates the founder's own life and that of his “disciples”.

³⁶ *L'exigence de Dieu*, p. 115.

³⁷ Cf. Lafont, *art. cit.*, p. 484.

C. SPIRIT AND SPIRITUALITY

The terms "spirituality" and "spirit" used in the context of religious congregations focus the same reality but under different aspects. What is at issue is the subjective assimilation and living out of the faith-vision of the founder by himself and by those sharing the same vision. Both terms imply an experience of and a response to revelation as grasped personally.

When describing the term "spirit", it seems necessary to distinguish between the "spirit" of the founder and the "spirit" of a congregation since in both contexts the term indicates a slightly different reality. The spirit of a person is that reality very difficult to describe which gives that person a particular sensitivity and capacity to perceive reality and to act in accord with his perception. Louis Cognet has called it "one's interior attitude in regard to God, to the Church and to other members of the congregation."³⁸ We would add to this definition the adjective "fundamental", as "spirit" seems to us to be situated at a level much deeper than the word "attitude" is usually understood as implying.

The spirit of a founder is communicated to others not only through his writings — these transmit chiefly the ideal behind the spirit, that is, his theological vision intimately related to his spirit — but also through his life, his person. Each individual is called to share this spirit, that is, this interior attitude. This sharing in the same spirit creates what Cognet again calls a "collective mentality"³⁹ which presents a unity and a continuity in both space and time. This collective attitude, a reality in itself, is what we would call the spirit of a congregation. It has a direct relationship to the spirit of the founder, and in some sense is identified with it. It is fundamentally a way of perceiving reality and responding to it, and it expresses itself in relationships within the congregation itself and with those outside it. These relationships have a certain quality which can be recognized, perceived and felt rather than defined. An analogy

³⁸ *Sessions des Supérieures Générales*, p. 6.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

might help to clarify the reality we are referring to. Take two families consisting of father, mother and three children. Exteriously, they appear to be the same. One would only have to be with each of them a short time, however, to discover the "spirit" of each family. Sensitivity to the interaction among persons would soon reveal the "quality of life" in each group. It is the "quality of life" which we term "spirit".

The word "spirituality" has been used in a variety of senses in recent years. It refers not only to the theological vision described above but to the realization of that Christian ideal in life; to a particular way not only of conceiving the Christian life but of realizing it as well. "Spirituality" refers to the coherent living out of one's personal grasp of revelation. It is true that in a strict sense there is only one spirituality within the Church — Christian spirituality — because the deposit of revelation is one. But if we recognize that each person assimilates that body of revelation in a unique, personal way, we might say that there are as many spiritualities as persons.

Again it is helpful to distinguish between the "spirituality" of a person and that of a group. While holding that a spirituality is the living out of one's personal theological vision, we recognize that certain common emphases have been given to revelation throughout the course of history. Certain persons understand the spiritual itinerary in the same way and so create a certain style of life which reflects and encourages that understanding. This style of life includes means which help to attain the spiritual goal envisioned. The word "spirituality" then includes the ideal conceived of and accepted in principle as well as the style of life created to sustain and achieve it. Certain elements of this style of life may change as times and needs change, and yet it always retains a direct relationship to the ideal to be achieved.

In the context of religious congregations, for example, we recognize a Carmelite spirituality, an Ignatian spirituality, a Benedictine spirituality among others. All of these are one in the sense that they are Christian, but each one is unique in the sense that its "founder" emphasized different aspects of the one Christian mystery and created a style of life reflecting those essential aspects. The theological vision underlying many religious congregations — especially smaller ones — is located

within one of these great schools of spirituality, the axis of the vision being the same as that of a particular school. The faith-vision of some founders is strongly similar to that of the founder of a school of spirituality; each founder of a congregation, however, keeps at the same time the coherence and totality of his own personal synthesis of the various elements. Saint Ignatius, for instance, may be called the founder of Ignatian spirituality, but he is certainly not the founder of every religious congregation claiming to be "Ignatian".

When we speak of the spirituality of a founder, therefore, we are referring to a reality which may or may not be subsumed under the heading of one of the great schools of spirituality, or which may take elements from various schools. In some cases — rare, in our opinion — the founder of a religious congregation may also be the founder of a school of spirituality.

"Spirituality", then, would highlight the theological vision, the founder's personal synthesis of revelation and those means existing within the congregation to foster that vision; "spirit", on the other hand, underlines more particularly the fundamental, collective attitude of the group where this synthesis is concretized. "Spirit" is reflected in a certain quality of relationships within a group embracing the same spirituality. While logically distinct, "spirit" and "spirituality" are essentially interrelated. In the concrete, one might say that one's "spirituality" gives birth to a "spirit" — that is, one's theological vision lived out in certain practices and activities is formative of a spirit, of a quality of life. On the other hand, "spirit" influences "spirituality", that is, the quality of life, the fundamental attitude toward God and others lived out in a group contributes to a deepening of the ideal itself and to a constant care regarding the forms which protect and foster it.

The spirit of a congregation originates in a sharing of the fundamental theological vision of a founder and is therefore essentially related to his charism. It can be described as a real participation in the charism of the founder. "The founder's charism gives birth to a 'spirit' whose original richness the Church is careful to protect and whose supernatural dynamism

she seeks to maintain".⁴⁰ "The founders of religious orders, true charismatics, had as formal objective the transmission of a spirit and they inscribed the demands of this spirit in institutions which are a continuing motivation to discover new expressions of this spirit in every age".⁴¹

To recapitulate and synthesize what we have said in this introduction, we find at the origin of religious congregations in the Church an evident gift given to an individual for the good of the Church. This gift or charism is related to and in some sense dependent on the theological vision of the founder, a vision which is a gift of nature or of grace having an exemplary value,⁴² having repercussions in the spiritual experience and desires of other members of the Christian community, and expressing itself in service to that community. Those sharing the same basic faith-vision and responding to a personal call of the Spirit form a religious congregation. The expressions of community life and service flowing from this faith-vision incarnate a spirit, a quality of life rooted in their shared faith-vision.

⁴⁰ Olphe-Galliard, *art. cit.*, p. 344.

⁴¹ Régamey, *L'exigence de Dieu*, p. 101.

⁴² Régamey, *Paul VI donne aux religieux leur charte*, Paris, 1971, p. 72.

CHAPTER II

THE LIFE OF THE MAN, GAILHAC

The theological vision which it is a question of studying here, namely that of Father Jean Gailhac, as indeed the theological or faith-vision of any Christian, is one aspect of a whole life. Influenced and shaped by the social, religious and spiritual context in which it was lived, it bears the mark of Gailhac's temperament, education and the spiritual graces he received. Never was his faith-vision an abstract, intellectual synthesis but rather it expressed itself in his life — in action, in exhortation, in emphases in his various writings. It was to this particular man, with all his human qualities and failings, his strong points and weaknesses, that the charism of foundation was given.

Because there is no dichotomy between what Gailhac taught and what he did, between the spiritual doctrine which he preached and that which he lived, we propose to sketch briefly in this chapter the life of the man. We will then see how much importance he himself put on inculcating a particular spirit within the congregation and examine the various means he envisaged to do this. It seems important to determine whether he himself recognized his writings to the sisters as having to do with the building up of a spirit within the congregation, whether he saw his own faith-vision as expressed in his writings as formative of a spirit within the congregation. If he did, did he see his letters and treatises as the sole means of fostering the spirit of the congregation or did he envision others as well?

A. GAILHAC THE MAN

1. 1802-1849

The world into which Antoine Pierre Jean Gailhac was born on November 13, 1802 was one of political, social and religious upheaval. Post-revolution France was still filled with the sounds of war and Jean Gailhac must have seen many weary and broken soldiers returning to his native city of Béziers which was a garrison town. From the pastor of St. Aphrodise parish in Béziers, he received a religious formation which influenced the course of his life, and through him also he must have become aware of the suffering, persecution and exile which the clergy and religious had undergone in revolutionary days. Although Gailhac was born in a France where, according to the recently made concordat of Napoleon, the Catholic religion was the religion of the majority of Frenchmen and therefore was allowed, theoretically at least, free exercise, he was aware of the religious and moral poverty of his people. Years later he looks back nostalgically to the time when "the Christian spirit held sway in our dear country; the peasants and workmen never left home in the morning without having said their prayers; they invariably made the sign of the Cross before beginning work . . . In their conversation there were never lacking indications of lively faith. Religion had its share in their daily lives. But the Revolution destroyed all this. How beautiful France must have been before heretics, philosophers, ambitious and impious men poisoned the faith of the people!"¹

Having received his schooling at Collège Henri IV in Beziers, Gailhac presented himself at the seminary in Montpellier at the age of sixteen to begin his preparation for the priesthood. His decision to become a priest came only after an initial resistance prompted by his understanding of the holiness required of such a vocation and prompted as well by the conviction of his own human weakness. "I have always felt within me the obligation and the need to make God loved. He called me, quite young,

¹ *VR*, pp. 191-192, *RL*, pp. 114-115.

to the priesthood. The holiness necessary for so divine a vocation frightened me. I resisted. I consented to be a priest only on condition that I would live solely to love Him and to make Him loved".²

Except for his vacations, Gailhac spent ten years in the seminary (1818-1828). From these years have survived three manuscript notebooks of meditations — one written in 1823 and the other two in 1824 — and two notebooks of resolutions. These notes are of interest because already they reveal the love of God, the thirst for His glory, and the zeal for others which are such dominant notes in his spirituality. It is true that they manifest as well a concern for external perfection, an extraordinary discipline of the will which makes very little concession to human nature and an almost mathematical regulation of the details of Gailhac's occupations. In a notebook dated 1822 there are seventeen different resolutions so that no aspect of his life is left unaffected by an effort to live it to perfection. It is the final resolution in this same notebook that reveals the motivation, the spirit of the others. "As a final resolution, I vow to love God with all my heart and to be as faithful to Him as I have been unfaithful, as grateful as I have been ungrateful".³ What is significant as well is the recognition, expressed in a prayer, that only with God's grace and help will he have the courage and the capacity to put the resolutions into practice.

It is from his seminary days that Gailhac took the habit of spending two or three hours a day in study: at least one hour of Scripture and another of theology and/or the Fathers of the Church. Among the masters of the spiritual life he referred to, Bourdaloue held a place of honor. Many traits of the seventeenth century Jesuit who preached so eloquently to religious communities are found as well in Gailhac.

² *Ecrits*, vol.10, p.3425: "J'ai toujours senti en moi le devoir et le besoin de faire aimer [Dieu]. Tout jeune, il m'a appelé au sacerdoce. La sainteté nécessaire à une vocation si divine m'effrayait. J'ai résisté. Je n'ai consenti à être prêtre qu'à condition que je ne vivrais que pour l'aimer et pour le faire aimer."

³ *Ecrits*, vol. 1, p. 7: "Pour dernière resolution, je fais voeu d'aimer Dieu de tout mon coeur et Lui être autant fidèle que je lui ai été infidèle, aussi reconnaissant que j'ai été ingrat envers le Dieu bon."

Several other details of his resolutions from this time are worth noting in view of a study of his spirituality: first of all, a reference to the glory of God as center of his spiritual life: "My God . . . I resolve ceaselessly to have, if not on my lips, at least in my heart and my intention the words which were St. Ignatius' motto: 'All for the greater glory of God' and those others: 'To you alone honor, power and glory; to me, however, shame and confusion' ".⁴

Secondly we find a great reverence for the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience and a resolution to practise them.⁵ Thirdly, a desire for authenticity and sincerity is very evident. His resolutions for 1823 which seem at the same time to be an account of conscience begin with the following prayer: "My God, deign to inspire me Yourself with the words which I should speak to my father so that he might truly know me. Keep far from me the spirit of lying and hypocrisy. Give me a soul which searches honestly for the way of truth".⁶

Finally, Gailhac feels a need to express his love and zeal in concrete service. And so he determines to fill the intervals of his student days by visits to the sick and to prisoners, and by helping those less fortunate than himself. His vacations were used for helping out parish priests in the Montpellier area, in accordance with his resolution to spend his holidays in a parish teaching the gospel to the poor.⁷

Gailhac's correspondance with one of his classmates who left for Madagascar shows that there was a time when he thought himself called to the missions. But he apparently saw that this was not where God was leading him and so put aside the possibility of a missionary vocation.

⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 1, p. 22: "Mon Dieu . . . je prends la résolution d'avoir sans cesse, si ce n'est dans la bouche du moins dans le coeur et dans l'intention, ces paroles qui étaient la devise de S. Ignace: *Omnia ad majorem Dei gloriam*, et ces autres: *Tibi soli honor virtus et gloria, mihi autem dedecus et confusio*."

⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 1, p. 22.

⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 1, p. 11: "Mon Dieu, daignez vous-même m'inspirer les paroles que je dois dire à mon père pour qu'il puisse me connaître. Daignez éloigner de moi l'esprit de mensonge et d'hypocrisie. Donnez-moi une âme qui cherche franchement la voie de la vérité."

⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 1, p. 36.

In 1828, two years after Gailhac's ordination, the chaplain of the Hôtel-Dieu in Béziers resigned, leaving the post vacant. Seeing the hand of Providence guiding him towards the fulfillment of his impulse to serve the poorest and most abandoned, Gailhac applied for the position, much to the consternation of his superiors and of his bishop. The post, to which he was appointed on September 12, demanded the total sacrifice of his time, his strength and what, it is to be feared, counted very highly with many of his colleagues, his chances of promotion. The Hôtel-Dieu at this time was a mixed civil and military hospital and it is there that Gailhac came into immediate contact with the misery of his own people. During the cholera epidemic of 1832 he worked untiringly, to such an extent that when the epidemic was over he himself was stricken with a pleurisy which endangered his life.

Even while holding the post of hospital chaplain, Gailhac was engaged in a variety of other pastoral activities: he acted as confessor to the Dames de Saint Maur in Béziers as well as in the parish of Saint Aphrodise; he preached sermons, homilies and novenas to diocesan priests, to religious communities and to the parishioners.

One group of persons whose needs were made very clear to him through his work in the Hôtel-Dieu were young girls who, either through ignorance or the desire for gain, had given themselves to a life of prostitution. In a letter written in 1881, Gailhac says: "While I was still young, even before becoming a priest, God inspired me to begin a work to save young women in so much danger in the world. Still young, I sent them [to a refuge], paying their room and board with my own resources".⁸

We know that the only residence in Béziers to receive such girls had been closed in 1791. By 1834 Gailhac was paying room and board for thirteen young women and yet the number of those whom he would have liked to help was far beyond that. Faced with the impossibility of sending to Montpellier

⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3653: "Tout jeune encore et même avant d'être prêtre Dieu m'avait inspiré le dessein de commencer une oeuvre pour sauver les jeunes filles si exposées dans le monde. Tout jeune encore je les ai envoyées en payant de mes propres deniers la pension que l'on exigeait."

all those who would have benefited by residence there, Gailhac conceived the idea of opening a refuge in Béziers. After prayer and advice, the idea became a determination. On November 14, 1834, the bishop of Montpellier, Monsignor Fournier, approved the refuge stating his formal intention that it remain solely under the control of ecclesiastical authority. The bishop's secretary writes to Gailhac: "If you will give his Lordship the names of the ladies who are willing to look after it, he will name them as directors of the establishment".⁹

Gailhac was to bear much criticism because of the refuge. No doubt his youth — he was only 32 at the time — prompted remarks that such an undertaking was imprudent, rash and even dangerous. Criticisms apparently grew to such an extent that in 1840 the bishop, now Monsignor Thibault, who had replaced Monsignor Fournier just a few months after the opening of the refuge, ordered Gailhac to replace the lay staff by nuns. Gailhac was asked "to put in it nuns from an already existing congregation or to propose to Monsignor rules for religious who would specialize in this work".¹⁰

It appears that the idea of founding a religious congregation took shape in Gailhac's mind at this time. He had among those he was directing at least the nucleus of a group capable of assuming the direction not only of the refuge but also of the orphanage which had now come into existence as well. And yet he judged that this nucleus was not yet sufficiently strong to take on such a venture. His hesitation provokes the following criticism from the vicar general of the diocese: "You expect too great a perfection from those who direct your establishment. I am not the only one to think this way: there are others well-informed, worthy of respect and very devoted to you who think as I do".¹¹ Gailhac, however, sensitive to events as signs of God's designs and considering a minimum of human resources to be one of those signs, felt that the proper time had not yet come.

⁹ Letter of M. Grasset, vicar general, November 14, 1834. *Pos. Hist.*, p. 329.

¹⁰ Letter of M. Valade, June 29, 1840. *Cop. Pub.*, fol. 1024 (*Summ.*, p. 1818).

¹¹ *Ibid.*

It was nine years later that circumstances clearly indicated that the time was ripe.

2. 1849-1890

Among the most generous and faithful benefactors of the works of Father Gailhac were his good friends, Monsieur and Madame Cure. It was shortly after Eugene Cure's untimely death on November 2, 1848, that his widow, Appolonie Pelissier, stated her desire to devote herself and all her possessions to Gailhac's apostolic works. Feeling that she was acting under the strain of great sorrow, the priest discouraged her and only when Madame Cure persisted did he ask the bishop's assistance regarding the discernment of her vocation. The opinion of Bishop Thibault that Madame Cure's desire was an authentic call from God was the sure sign in which Gailhac saw that the hour had come. And so on February 24, 1849, a group of six women went to the Bon Pasteur to begin their new life. In an unfinished letter of 1881 intended for Cardinal Hohenlohe, cardinal protector of the congregation at that time, Gailhac recalls these events: "It was only fourteen years after beginning the work that a great lady came to join me, to whom I joined several pious and very well-bred young women; then, with the permission of Bishop Thibault who succeeded Bishop Fournier, I began the Community of the Sacred Heart of Mary".¹²

From the time of founding of the congregation until his death in 1890, Gailhac devoted the greater part of his time and attention to the formation, direction and development of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary. Gailhac's life within these forty years can be divided into three main periods: 1) 1849-1869; 2) 1870-1879; 3) 1880-1890.

¹² *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3653: "Ce ne fut que 14 ans après avoir commencé l'oeuvre que vint se joindre à moi une grande dame à laquelle je joignis quelques demoiselles saintes et très bien élevées, qu'avec la permission de Monseigneur Thibault qui succéda Monseigneur Fournier, je commençai la communauté du Sacré Coeur de Marie."

The first period is one of intense activity, situated chiefly in his native city of Béziers. It is also a time of various external trials. In 1855 when two religious die within a period of one month, he is accused of having murdered them; in 1869 he is saddened by the death of his chief collaborator and first superior general of the congregation, Mother Saint-Jean Cure-Pelissier. These trials and others only seem to have tested him and indicated to him the validity of his work. How often he will say: "All good comes from Calvary" and remind the sisters that trials and sufferings are God's seal upon a work. In the two decades after the founding of the congregation, we find him transforming the refuge into a "Preservation", i.e. a home for girls in danger through lack of parental care; opening a boarding school; founding a third order, "Soeurs de la Vierge", who were to be auxiliaries of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary; establishing an orphanage — a sort of agricultural school — for boys; forming the Brothers of the Good Shepherd to direct this orphanage and to be associated with the Missionary Priests of the Good Shepherd.

What is remarkable in all this activity is the unity of the various works undertaken by Father Gailhac, a unity which seems to spring from the fact that all the works were responses to the real needs of all classes of people in his own entourage and from Gailhac's own conviction of the importance of unity. The boarding school, for example, was established not only to meet the educational needs of the daughters of wealthier families of Béziers, but also to assure financial resources for the orphanages and other works of assistance. The third order "Soeurs de la Vierge" likewise would enable repentant girls from the refuge or Preservation to realize their desire to live a religious life by making annual vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. This same group would provide auxiliary services to the various works of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, especially in the care of the orphanage and Preservation.

Another example of the unity which Father Gailhac sought in his works is the foundation of the Priests of the Good Shepherd. The objectives of the congregation are stated:

To glorify His heavenly Father and save souls was the whole purpose of the Incarnation and life of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd. Such also is the purpose of the Priests of the Good Shepherd. They obtain this end:

- 1) through missions and retreats in rural areas;
- 2) through "catéchismes de Persévérance";
- 3) by receiving abandoned young boys in an orphanage, to preach the gospel to them, to form them to love and practise their religion, and to prepare them for rural life.
- 4) by helping those priests who are temporarily prevented by sickness or any other cause [from exercising their ministry].¹³

This statement indicates that the principal reason for the foundation of the Congregation of the Priests of the Good Shepherd was to meet the needs of certain segments of the population of Béziers — of abandoned boys whose educational and religious formation was neglected; of those living in the country where, in post-revolution France, there was a great need for priestly ministry; of priests temporarily unable to minister to their people. In addition to these various ministries, Gailhac sees the Congregation of the Good Shepherd as providing a unity of direction for the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary. It is in the original constitutions of the feminine congregation that we discover, even before the Congregation of the Good Shepherd actually came into existence, the relationship Father Gailhac envisaged between the two groups. In these constitutions, approved in April 1850, we read:

¹³ "Constitutions des Prêtres Réguliers du Bon-Pasteur de Béziers", *Pos. Hist.*, Doc. XIII, p. 338: Glorifier son Père Céleste, sauver les âmes, fut toute la fin de l'incarnation, de la vie, de Jésus-Christ Bon Pasteur; telle est aussi la fin des Prêtres du Bon-Pasteur. Ils obtiendront cette fin 1) par les missions et les retraites dans les campagnes; 2) par les catéchismes de Persévérance; 3) en recueillant dans un orphelinat les jeunes garçons abandonnés, pour les évangéliser, les élever dans l'amour et la pratique de la Religion et les former à la vie champêtre; 4) ... en allant au secours des Prêtres momentanément empêchés ou par maladie ou par toute autre cause légitime.

For its spiritual and temporal welfare, the Institute of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary will be subject to the community of Priests of the Good Shepherd who themselves will be in a special way under the jurisdiction and at the disposition of the Bishop of Montpellier.¹⁴

One of the reasons for the multiplicity of works founded by Gailhac in this period of his life was his conviction that the great work of Redemption extended to all men and that his congregations likewise should make no distinction among persons in meeting their needs. He often insists that the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary are sent to all classes of society. In the realization of his conviction, though, Gailhac is very much a product of his time, a time when class distinctions were the "order" of society and "democratization" as Western man in the second half of the twentieth century knows it was unheard of. We find, therefore, in the works destined for all the same separation of classes which was found in society at the time. The congregation of the Sacred Heart of Mary was to be composed of lay sisters and choir sisters, although "the only difference between them will be in the form of the habit and in their employments. By their humility, the lay religious will be worthy to be the sisters of the choir nuns and the latter, by a delicate and perfect charity, will eradicate all differences and will treat the lay religious as their sisters".¹⁵ We likewise find the distinction among classes evident in the existence of Oblate Sisters (third order) and Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary; priests and brothers of the Good Shepherd; boarding school and orphanage. Each "class" of persons was distinct from the others.

¹⁴ *Arch. Hist.*, vol. 11-A, p. 6: L'Institut des Religieuses du Sacré-Coeur de Marie sera soumis pour le spirituel et le temporel à une communauté de prêtres réguliers du Bon Pasteur, laquelle communauté de prêtres sera spécialement sous l'obéissance et entre les mains de Monseigneur l'Evêque de Montpellier.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*: "toute la différence entre les unes et les autres sera dans la forme de l'habit et dans les emplois. Les converses se rendront dignes par leur humilité d'être les soeurs des dames, et les dames par une délicate et parfaite charité effaceront toute différence et traiteront les converses comme leurs soeurs."

This first phase in the life of Jean Gailhac as founder can be described as a period of beginnings and initiatives. The second phase (1870-1879) is that of expansion and solidification of existing works. It is in 1870 that the first branch house of the RSHM is established in Lisburn, Ireland. This first foundation is followed in rapid succession by others so that by the end of the decade, the thirty-year old congregation of fewer than 200 members¹⁶ is established in England, Ireland, Portugal and the United States of America.¹⁷ Father Gailhac concentrates his activity on the formation of the community and does all that he can to assure that the newly undertaken works rest on solid foundations and are animated by a common spirit. In his correspondence are preserved about 450 letters written to the congregation between 1870 and 1879.

In addition to his correspondence with the sisters and his regular pastoral ministry,¹⁸ he also travelled extensively to visit the newly-founded communities. We see him, for example, in England in July of 1871 and again in January of 1872. Almost every year finds him in England, Ireland or Portugal and sometimes in several countries within the same year. After the first

¹⁶ In 1874 the congregation had 120 professed sisters. See *Pos. Hist.*, p. 189, note 99. By 1890, it counted 181 professed members according to a *Précis Historique* presented to the Roman congregation of Bishops and Regulars on April 29, 1891.

¹⁷ The foundations established during Father Gailhac's lifetime are as follows:

- Lisburn, Ireland - November 1870
- Porto, Portugal - September 1871
- Liverpool, England - June 1872
- Braga, Portugal - March 1877
- Sag Harbor, New York, U.S.A. - March 1877
- Ferrybank, Ireland - September 1879
- Chaves, Portugal - May 1886

¹⁸ During these years, Gailhac continued his extensive ministry in the confessional. He himself writes in 1873: "For more than two months I have been in the confessional from early morning until 7, 8 or 9 o'clock at night. I leave it only to eat something and for my prayers." *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3275-6. Again in 1877: "There are days when I am kept in the confessional as in a prison cell for 13 hours without a moment's rest." *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4491. He also preached retreats and conferences to various religious communities and in the parish of S. Aphrodise.

decree of praise granted to the RSHM in 1873, Father Gailhac travels to Rome to thank the Holy Father personally for this favor. It is interesting to realize that when he undertook his first long trip in 1871, Gailhac had already entered his seventieth year.

The final decade of Father Gailhac's life might be characterized as his own personal participation in the mystery of Calvary. He begins this period with an increased effort to communicate his spiritual doctrine in various treatises destined for the RSHM. He continues to write frequently to the branch houses and does not make his last trip to England and Ireland until 1886. Already in 1880 he alludes in several letters to the suffering and trials which are threatening the congregation,¹⁹ referring to the various laws of education and taxation passed by the Third Republic and foreseeing those of 1881 which threatened the continued existence of religious congregations in France. Also about this time, mildew destroyed most of the vineyards in southern France, including those at Bayssan which were the financial support of the Mother House in Béziers.

Physical weaknesses likewise marked this final decade of the founder's life. He became increasingly hard of hearing, and his sight failed to such an extent that in 1886 he received a rescript allowing him to replace the daily office by the recitation of the rosary.

Perhaps the greatest trial of his last years was that interior desolation which God seems to have reserved for him. His correspondence with Jean de Fontfroide, a Cistercian abbot who had become his friend, confessor and guide several years previously, reveals the interior anguish of the founder. Gailhac writes: "I want to die, but in the grace of God and in His love. You alone can put my poor soul in that state. Please be good enough to lead your poor child to the home of eternal happiness."²⁰ It is in Abbot Jean's letters that the darkness exper-

¹⁹ See March 15, 1880, *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3524; November 7, 1880, *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3605-6; November 17, 1880, *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3613-4.

²⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4104: "Je veux mourir, mais dans la grâce de Dieu, et dans son amour; vous seul pouvez mettre dans cet état ma pauvre âme. Vous serez assez bon pour conduire votre pauvre enfant dans la maison de l'heureuse éternité."

enced by Gailhac is even more vividly evident. In two undated letters we read:

Pax Christi. It is the divine Master who sends you peace through the instrument to whom He has entrusted the care of your soul. I assure you of the divine Master's friendship. If He allows the enemy to trouble the surface of your soul, it is to give you the chance to make acts of confidence and abandonment which are very pleasing to Him. The suffering you are experiencing is a purgatory... I know your soul as well and better than you do, and that is why I have the right to say to you once again: Pax Christi.²¹

...It is the divine Master who has entrusted your soul to me. It is therefore with all His authority that I say: remain in peace. You are His friend. He watches over you and the works He has entrusted to you. Do not be troubled by the enemy. Remain in trust and abandonment.²²

Perhaps the most revealing and touching lines of Jean de Fontfroide are those addressed to Gailhac just twenty-four days before the latter's death:

Your whole life has been consecrated to His service. When you gave yourself to God, it was understood that you gave yourself totally, on condition that He would make you a saint and would allow you to work to form saints. You have kept your promise; God will keep His.

Remain at peace. I know all the accidents along the road; all that might have been faulty is pardoned, erased, leaving no trace. I have often told you this in the name of Jesus Christ. So then, peace, trust and love.²³

On January 25, 1890, Jean Gailhac's long, active and fruitful life comes to an end.

²¹ *Cop. Pub.*, fol. 1612 (*Summ.*, p. 2774).

²² *Cop. Pub.*, fol. 1613-4 (*Summ.*, p. 2776).

²³ *Cop. Pub.*, fol. 1616 (*Summ.*, p. 2781).

B. ELABORATION OF THE VISION

1. *Unified, Tested*

Looking back over his life, one can see that the theological vision which motivated him and which he expressed in his writings to the RSHM is essentially the same as it was in his seminary days. There seem to be no major crossroads from which he departed toward a completely new synthesis or at which his basic vision was altered through a radical conversion experience or other spiritual grace. What we find in his letters to the congregation is a vision which has deepened and matured but which remains essentially the same. By the time he wrote his letters to the branch houses, he had passed through a variety of difficulties and disappointments, not the least of which were the transformation of the work of the refuge and the death of several of his original collaborators. What he wrote, therefore, did not spring from an untested ardor or a facile enthusiasm. Rather, he expressed a faith which had been unceasingly tried and tested and which had been sustained and nourished by intensive hours of prayer, reading, reflection and pastoral ministry of various forms.~

We have seen that from his youth this vision inspired him to action, to a service of others, especially of the poor and the suffering. The constancy of this service was underlined during the apostolic process of beatification: "The priestly life of the servant of God is characterized by the constancy with which he continually strove to attain his ideal to relieve human suffering, both physical and moral".²⁴ Father Gailhac himself realized the continuity of his life and thanked God for it: "From my youth God has filled me with His sacred fire... I have always felt in me the obligation and the need to make Him loved. From childhood, God has given me a great love for souls. This is the source of the works which He urged me to undertake".²⁵ So

²⁴ A. Frutaz, "Informatio," *Pos. Hist.*, p. ix.

²⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3425: "Dès ma plus tendre jeunesse il m'a rempli de son feu sacré. ... j'ai toujours senti en moi le devoir et le besoin de le faire aimer. Depuis mon enfance Dieu a mis en moi un grand amour

constant and integrated was his view of the Christian mystery and of his own participation in it that he speaks of all his undertakings for the good of others as the *one* work of the Lord.²⁶

To study the elements which played a role in the constitution of the theological vision of Father Gailhac — as of any Christian — it would be necessary to analyze thoroughly the historical milieu in which he was born and lived, the various personal influences which came to bear upon him, the theological sources at which his faith-vision was nourished. And even if it were possible to grasp the complex sociological and interpersonal network formative of the person, the mysterious elements of grace and personal freedom ultimately responsible for the “faith-synthesis” would escape us. There is, however, a value in reflecting on the “knowable” sources of the vision, at the same time recognizing the impossibility of totally grasping the mystery. The totality is certainly far more than the sum of its “knowable” parts.

Gailhac's treatises on the religious and spiritual life follow an approach common to the nineteenth century, treating primarily the vows, certain virtues and the means of sanctification. As he himself recognized, there was nothing new or creative in his doctrine. An extensive analysis of all the writings of Father Gailhac made during the apostolic process led to the same conclusion: “Basically these writings bring no new assertions with regard to faith. For the most part one finds in them the ideas current at the time and expounded by the preachers of the period in the style of the period”.²⁷

2. *Use of Scripture*

The strongest influence on the spirituality of Father Gailhac is Scripture — a source which nourished him daily throughout his life. From several personal notes found among his writings and from the testimony of several witnesses in the course of the

pour les âmes. C'est là le principe des oeuvres qu'il m'a fait entreprendre.” See also vol. 11, p. 3653.

²⁶ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 12, pp. 4360 and 4613.

²⁷ “Summarium Ex Officio. Super Scriptis,” *Pos. s.v.*, vol. II, n.p.

apostolic process, we know that the hours he devoted to the reading, reflection and study of Scripture were most often the first hours of the day. Scriptural quotations abound in his letters to the congregation, and it is evident from these that his preferred writers were John and Paul. Both the Pauline epistles and the fourth gospel are cited more than two-hundred times.²⁸ The persons of John and Paul likewise stand as models — Paul as a model of the zeal of an apostle; John as the disciple whose “virginal heart was more suited to receive the love of a God, and to love Him”.²⁹ John is also presented as the one who learned the secrets of the heart of Jesus by his proximity and attachment to the Lord.

Within the Pauline corpus, those passages which stress identification with Christ, conformity to Him are most frequently cited. These same passages often stress the double aspect of this conformity — putting off the old man in order to put on the new. Thus Col. 3:3 “You have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God”; Rom. 13:14 “Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh...”; Gal. 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” recur frequently in his letters. Likewise in the fourth gospel, 8:24 “I always do what is pleasing to him” and 13:15 “I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you” are often cited. The manner in which these passages express Father Gailhac’s faith-vision will be mentioned in later chapters.

Gailhac’s manner of referring to Scripture is that of a man thoroughly penetrated with the Word of God so that biblical phrases and expressions flow spontaneously from his pen. He does not write with Bible in hand, checking the exactness of the passages to which he is referring. Examples could be multiplied to illustrate this point but one only will suffice here. In a letter of July 9, 1880, he refers to Jn. 8:12 in a passage describing Jesus as the truth. Having used the image of light and dark — “only he who confesses Jesus Christ as the true Son of the living God

²⁸ This in contrast to 130 quotations from the synoptics. Of these 130 quotations, 44 refer to Mt. 11:29 and 22 to Lk. 9:23.

²⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3527.

enters into the light; there is no darkness in him" — he then cites Jn. 8:12 as follows: "He who follows me is no longer in darkness; even more, he has life".³⁰ If he had had the New Testament open, he would surely have quoted "he who follows me will have the *light* of life" which would have underscored the theme of light. Rather it seems from this letter and many others that he has so absorbed both Johannine symbolism and theology that light and life are interchangeable in his vocabulary.

At times Gailhac elaborates on a Scripture passage giving no indication that he is doing so. In referring to the prologue of John's gospel, he writes:

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God as His eternal and consubstantial Son, His image, His word. All was made by Him; in Him is life and the life that is in Him is the light of men, and the Word was made flesh.³¹

A passage from a letter written in 1876 gives a typical example of the spontaneity with which Gailhac expressed himself in biblical terms. In presenting the grandeur of the apostolic vocation, he pictures the group of apostles seated on the first thrones in the heavenly court, gathered around Jesus Christ who is seated at the right hand of the Father. He recalls Jesus' words to his disciples while on earth:

Henceforth, I will no longer call you servants, but my friends; the servant does not know his master's secrets, but the master keeps nothing hidden from his friends, his closest friends. I have told you all that I have heard from the Father; as the Father has sent me, I also send you. I give you all nations; teach them to know God the Father and the One whom He has sent, Jesus Christ, His Son in whom He is well-pleased, who is the perfect

³⁰ Unclassified in archives.

³¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3527: "Au commencement était le Verbe et le Verbe était en Dieu et le Verbe était Dieu comme son Fils co-éternel et consubstantiel, son image, sa parole; tout a été fait par lui, en lui est la vie et la vie qui est en lui est la lumière des hommes et le Verbe s'est fait chair."

image of His infinite essence. Teach them that eternal life consists in this knowledge — if their life is in harmony with this knowledge.³²

With no indication that he is doing so, Gailhac quotes freely not only from different evangelists but from Paul's epistles as well. We recognize the following sources for this passage: "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you" (Jn. 15:15); "as thou didst send me into the world, so I have sent them into the world" (Jn. 17:18). Then he apparently begins quoting Mt. 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" but he expresses the mission of the apostles in Johannine terms of knowledge of Jesus Christ rather than in terms of baptism. In doing this, he freely cites Jn. 17:3 "And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent", passing to one of the synoptic accounts of Jesus' baptism or transfiguration to complete: "Thou art my beloved son; with thee I am well pleased" (Mk. 1:11 or Mk. 9:7 or parallel passages; possibly directly from Is. 42:1). The final phrase of the sentence, "who is the perfect image of His infinite essence", reflects the Pauline terminology of either Col. 1:15 "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation" or Heb. 1:3 "He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power". The last sentence refers to Jn. 17:3 again and the addition "if their life is in harmony with this knowledge" seems to be Gailhac's own. It is evident from this analysis that Gailhac is not concerned with

³² *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3330: Désormais je ne vous appellerai plus serviteurs, mais mes amis, le serviteur ne connaît pas les secrets de son maître, mais le maître n'a rien de caché pour ses amis, ses intimes. Je vous ai révélé tout ce que j'ai appris de mon Père, comme mon Père m'a envoyé, je vous envoie. Je vous donne toutes les nations, enseignez-leur à connaître Dieu le Père et Celui qu'il a envoyé, Jésus Christ, son Fils, en qui il a mis toutes ses complaisances, qui est l'image parfaite de son essence infinie. Apprenez-leur que dans cette connaissance consiste la vie éternelle — si leur vie est en rapport avec cette connaissance.

exegetical — or even textual — exactness but rather with using the word of God as a source of spiritual power and growth.

In spite of the fact that his theological and spiritual doctrine is far from novel, there is great richness in Father Gailhac's personal synthesis. The Christian mystery has been grasped by him in such a way that there is remarkable unity and coherence in his doctrine as, indeed, in his life. Later chapters will elaborate on this unified spirituality.

C. SHARING THE VISION

Father Gailhac was deeply convinced of the importance of communicating his theological vision, his spirit, to the congregation so that the service rendered to the Christian community would be effective. He had had the experience of working with religious who shared neither his own spirit nor a common spirit among themselves. In his biography of Father Gailhac, Maynard expresses what he had no doubt heard from the founder himself: that the religious who originally worked in the refuge, having a spirit different from that of Father Gailhac, "paralyzed his efforts... Not having received from God the mission of caring for young girls and women leading bad lives, they failed in the formation of the refuge".³³ From the first days of the congregation, the founder gives all his energies to the formation of a common spirit, to inspiring a spirit within the sisters. It is only with the founding in 1849 that he gives up the chaplaincy of the Hôtel-Dieu which he had held since 1828 so that he can give himself more fully to the task of forming the religious.

The means chosen by Father Gailhac for the communication of his theological vision were many. From the first days of the congregation and through many long years, he assisted at the morning meditation of the religious, presenting the "points" himself; he gave them frequent conferences and preached their annual and occasional retreats.³⁴ In the first constitutions he refers to the congregation of the priests of the Good Shepherd, as we have already seen, and assigns them the task of assuring

³³ *Pos. Hist.*, p. 149.

³⁴ *Pos. Hist.*, p. 175.

unity of direction. His travels to the different branch houses to visit the religious and preach their annual retreat must also be seen in the light of the importance he placed on unity of spirit.

Another means used to create one spirit within the congregation was a central novitiate. The founder insisted that all novices be formed at the Mother House, and that the sisters themselves return frequently to France for renewal and retreats. In a notebook which contains the legal records of the important events of the congregation, we read the following note in the margin of the account of a profession which took place in 1872 in Lisburn: "This profession, made outside the Mother House, is an almost unique exception, since the will of our revered founders is that all receptions and professions be made at the Mother House. In the future, this express wish should be held as a sacred law".³⁵

The Mother House in Béziers was to be the model of the other houses, the source of their light and life, the guardian of the primitive spirit.³⁶ The emphasis put on personal contact with the Mother House shows clearly that for Father Gailhac, the "spirit" of the congregation was incarnated in a community. It consisted in the network of relationships consequent on sharing the same faith-vision. The presence of the founder himself in Béziers, the concern he had for forming the community there and penetrating it with his own faith-vision resulted in the priority of the Mother House as regards the living of the spirit

³⁵ Unclassified in archives. Notebook brought to the attention of the present General Council of the congregation in September 1973. It was apparently discovered in Lisburn, Northern Ireland, when the congregation moved out of the convent there in 1970 and was retained in England until September 1973.

³⁶ *Ecrits*, vol.10, p.3279. See also p.3388: "Only in the Mother House can the spirit of the congregation be communicated and communicated in such a way that it is never forgotten. . . . As good as a candidate might be, it is almost impossible that she understand the religious spirit, and especially the spirit of our order, if she does not spend a considerable period of time in the Mother House. Everything would soon be ruined if all the subjects did not draw at a single source in order fully to enter into the objective of our community" Other references to the central place of the Mother House in communicating the spirit of congregation: Vol. 11, pp.3690, 3775, 3818, 3933; vol. 12, p.4261; *VR*, p.288ff, *RL* p.150ff.

of the congregation. Indeed, he does not hesitate to give the name "foundresses" to those sisters of the first generation who collaborated actively with him, especially to superiors who had a special role in the communication of the spirit of the institute.³⁷

The strong insistence on the capital role and central place of the Mother House expresses the importance Gailhac placed on unity of spirit. In 1879 he writes:

All the communities forming the Institute of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary ought to live and communicate in a complete and thoroughly devoted union with the community of the Mother House, with the other individual communities; and each member of the Institute ought to be united with all the other members of her community. In a word, each religious ought to become one with the members of the community, and each community ought in everything to be united with the Mother House, which, after God, is the center and the life of the individual communities.³⁸

Certainly at the time in which he lived, union and unity were often confused with uniformity so that all the external practices of the Mother House were to be imitated exactly in the branch houses. Uniformity of external practice was seen as an expression and source of unity of spirit. In this regard, Father Gailhac is a product of his time — a time in which the Church herself insisted on the uniformization and centralization

³⁷ The acts of the last session of the first general chapter held in August 1876 end as follows: "All the superiors present, participating in the government of the community, are properly considered foundresses and must consequently be models for all those who will come after them." *Cop. Pub.*, fol. 1589 (*Summ.*, p. 2736).

³⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3488: Toutes les communautés formant l'Institut des Religieuses du Sacré-Coeur de Marie doivent vivre et correspondre dans une union entière et pleinement dévouée avec la Communauté Mère, avec les communautés particulières, et chaque membre de l'Institut doit être dans l'unité de tous les autres membres de sa communauté; en un mot, chaque religieuse doit faire un avec les membres de la communauté particulière, et toutes les communautés particulières en tout et pour tout doivent être dans l'unité de la Maison-Mère, qui, après Dieu, est le centre et la vie des communautés particulières.

of practices and rules within religious congregations, no doubt in an effort to preserve what was good but certainly with unfortunate consequences for the originality of congregations and their expression of the "novelty of the Spirit".

It is noteworthy in the letters of Father Gailhac that alongside his insistence that each house be the image of the Mother House, he likewise stresses the importance of local adaptation to apostolic needs: "Since the Institute was created by God for the works of zeal, it is an obligation to adapt oneself to the demands of these works".³⁹ In another context he states: "You must study the customs of the country and adapt yourself to all that is good".⁴⁰

In addition to the spiritual inspiration which he gave to the RSHM through personal contact, Father Gailhac wrote his letters and treatises to the congregation with the same end in view. Near the end of his life, he states specifically that he has written his treatises for the good of the sisters and to help them enter into the spirit of their vocation. "I say nothing new, to be sure, but because they are written specifically for you and for the purpose of your entering into the designs of God who has created this little Institute, you will read and study them with greater consolation".⁴¹ "It seems to me that what is written expressly for you can be very useful for you, because it specifically includes all that is best suited for the Institute to which you belong".⁴²

To reinforce his own conviction of the importance of penetrating the congregation with a particular spirit, Father Gailhac received from several other sources the encouragement to do

³⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3355: "Votre Institut étant créé de Dieu pour les oeuvres de zèle, c'est un devoir de s'accomoder à leurs exigences."

⁴⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4703: "Il faut étudier les usages du pays et s'y conformer à tout ce qu'il y a de bon."

⁴¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 14, p. 49: "Je ne dis rien de nouveau, certes, mais parce qu'ils sont composés exprès pour vous et pour vous initier aux intentions de Dieu qui a créé ce petit Institut, vous les lirez et étudierez avec plus de consolation."

⁴² *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3840: "Il me semble que ce qui est écrit pour vous expressément peut vous être très utile, parce que cela renferme d'une manière particulière tout ce qui convient le mieux à l'Institut dont vous êtes les membres."

so. As seen above, around the year 1876 he came into contact with the abbot Jean de Fontfroide, vicar general of the Congregation of Sénanque, order of Citeaux. This meeting marked the beginning of a deep relationship between the two holy men and it was Jean de Fontfroide who urged Father Gailhac to write extensively to his congregation. We read in a letter of April 7, 1880, which Gailhac addresses to a superior:

Write to me in such a way that the direction given in my replies might be useful both for you and for your religious, so that my letters might support and strengthen the spirit of the Institute in your community. Do more: urge your sisters to write to me also. Father Jean (you know him) insisted again this morning that this is necessary. He added: "There is only one founder and it is only he who can give his institute the spirit which God has given him. You will not be replaced. After you, there will be more or less dedicated priests, but the founder cannot be replaced." Profit, then, of your poor old father as long as God leaves him with you.⁴³

In a letter written after the death of the founder, Jean de Fontfroide praises the intention of Mother Saint Félix, third superior general, to publish the writings of Father Gailhac. He states that nothing is better able to maintain the spirit of the founder within the congregation than such a publication. Through "these writings, the venerable founder remains present and living among you; in them he has left you his heart, his soul."⁴⁴

⁴³ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4684: Ecrivez-moi de telle sorte que mes instructions, données dans mes réponses, puissent être utiles et pour vous et pour vos enfants: afin que mes lettres puissent entretenir et accroître l'esprit de l'Institut dans votre chère maison, faites plus: engagez vos chères enfants à en faire de même. Le révérend Père Jean (vous le connaissez) me disait encore ce matin que c'était une chose nécessaire; il a ajouté: "Il n'y a jamais qu'un Père fondateur pour donner à son Institut l'esprit que Dieu lui a donné; vous ne serez pas remplacé. Après vous il y aura des prêtres plus ou moins dévoués; mais le fondateur ne se remplace pas." Donc profitez de votre pauvre vieux Père tant que Dieu vous le laisse.

⁴⁴ *VR*, p. 8, *RL* unpaginated.

Another encouragement to strengthen the spirit of the congregation was given by Pope Leo XIII. Father Gailhac refers to this encouragement: "Diligently renew yourselves in the spirit of your vocation so that, according to the express wish of the Holy Father, a wish that he reiterated twice to me, I might impress it so strongly on you that it will never be erased or weakened."⁴⁵

In terminating this section in which we have tried to show Father Gailhac's efforts to form a common spirit within the Institute, we might note that not only did he give himself to the formation of the sisters but he likewise indefatigably preached retreats to those to whom the sisters devoted themselves. In 1872 he writes: "I have just finished the orphans' retreat; I am told that they are in a better frame of mind; Sunday I begin one for the Oblates, then comes one for the boarders. I would like to give the community retreat only when you return."⁴⁶

Finally, it is not only his conviction of the importance of unity which motivated Father Gailhac to communicate a common spirit to his works, but also his consciousness of his responsibility as founder prompted him to give himself totally to the formation of the congregation. He was conscious of the gift given him and of his responsibility to make it fruitful within the Church. He himself describes the charism of foundation in a letter of 1881: "God ... chooses a number of persons to form the body. He then gives His own spirit to the one whom He wishes to represent Him, so that he might communicate it to all those who are or who will be called."⁴⁷ From this passage,

⁴⁵ *Ecrits*, vol.11, p.3820: "Appliquez-vous ... à vous renouveler dans l'esprit de votre vocation afin que, selon l'ordre du souverain Pontife, ordre qu'il me répéta deux fois, je puisse l'imprimer si fortement qu'il ne puisse ni s'effacer jamais, ni s'affaiblir dans vos âmes."

⁴⁶ Letter written to the superior general, Mother Sainte-Croix, during her visit to the newly established communities in England. See *Ecrits*, vol.10, p.3263: "Je viens de terminer la retraite des orphelines, on me dit qu'elles sont dans les meilleures dispositions; dimanche je commence celle des oblates, puis viendra celle des pensionnaires. Je voudrais ne faire celle de la communauté qu'à votre retour."

⁴⁷ *Ecrits*, vol.10, p.3627: "Dieu ... choisit un nombre de personnes pour former le corps. Puis Il donne à l'individu, dont Il veut faire son

it is evident that he sees the charism as a gift he has received from God and religious life as the work of the Spirit. It is the divine initiative which is at the origin of the personal call of each one who forms the congregation and which has likewise bestowed a special gift and responsibility on the founder. That the life of the Institute in future generations depends on this same divine initiative is obvious further on in the same letter. Made up of persons predestined by God for the new creation, the Institute expands and "continues for the length of time determined by God."

Father Gailhac's consciousness of the role of the founder in the birth of a congregation is beautifully expressed in a letter written in 1881 where he elaborates on the dynamism of charity which is at its origins. The congregation is a work of the divine *charis*:

When God calls a priest to make him a founder, He communicates His own love to him so that his heart overflows. This love of God is great because it includes all the work He confides to the founder. When this work has for its sole objective to make God known and loved, God multiplies a hundredfold the communication of His love in the founder's heart, for only love can bring love to birth in other hearts. Now, it is in the plan of God that this love include, from the very beginning and in the first place, those whom God sends the founder to assist in this work which should procure the glory of God by making Him known and loved. The founder is obliged to act in such a way because he must first of all form them and make them suitable for the work to which the Institute is called.⁴⁸

représentant, son Esprit afin qu'il le communique à toutes les âmes qui y sont ou seront appelées."

⁴⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3718: Or, lorsque Dieu appelle un prêtre pour en faire un fondateur, il lui communique son amour, il en inonde son cœur. Cet amour en lui est grand car il embrasse l'oeuvre tout entière dont Il le charge, et lorsque son oeuvre n'a pour but que de faire connaître et aimer Dieu, Dieu centuple la communication de son amour dans son cœur, car seul l'amour peut faire naître l'amour dans les cœurs. Or, il est dans

This chapter has attempted to present various elements which seem to be a necessary background and complement to an analysis of Gailhac's faith vision. We have seen first of all the life of the man himself — the unity of that life and of the various works for which Gailhac was responsible. Then we looked at his faith-vision "from the outside", so to speak, noting its coherence, its basic unity throughout his life. Finally, we saw that it was his conviction of the importance of unity and his consciousness of his responsibility as founder which urged him to communicate his faith-vision through various means. The following chapter proposes to articulate his fundamental theological vision through an internal analysis of his writings to the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary.

l'ordre de Dieu que cet amour embrasse tout d'abord et en premier lieu les âmes que Dieu lui donne pour l'aider dans cette oeuvre qui doit procurer la gloire de Dieu en le faisant connaître et aimer. Il est obligé d'en agir ainsi parce qu'il doit d'abord les former et les rendre propres à faire l'oeuvre à laquelle l'Institut est appelé.

CHAPTER III

TRINITARIAN LIFE

If there is one word that can be used to describe the theological vision of Father Gailhac, it is the word "life". Certainly the parable of the Good Shepherd, come "that they may have life", was very meaningful to him, and the fact that he engraved on the cross to be worn by all the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary the phrase from that parable *Ego veni ut vitam habeant* (Jn. 10:10) is significant. Life underlies many of the letters of Gailhac, even those which at first glance seem to be rather negative. In analyzing his theological vision, we can begin from Gailhac's understanding of life within the Trinity, the life of God Himself. While the Person of Jesus Christ is central to his vision, Gailhac saw Jesus as the One sent to reveal the Father, to bring the life of the Father to all men. The religious were to share in this life-giving mission of Jesus; they were to have no other mission than Christ's own. Just how did Father Gailhac see the life of the Trinity? How did he envisage that personal communication of life among Father, Son and Spirit?

A. METHODOLOGY

As our methodology in answering this question, we have chosen to study Gailhac's theology and Christology according to the titles he gives to Father, Son and Spirit. These titles, most especially those given to the Son, reveal the way he saw these Persons. We have chosen this methodology because in his writings to the congregation, even in his treatises, he does not give an elaborated theology. There is, for example, no one letter on the Person of Christ. The first nine volumes of

Gailhac's writings do include sermons which develop certain aspects of the Person of Christ — for example Jesus Christ the Priest or Jesus the Way — but these sermons are generally undated and we do not know for whom they were destined. As previously stated, we will limit our study to those letters specifically addressed to the congregation.

The disadvantage of using this method, as D. Mollat has pointed out,¹ is that the titles are isolated from the context in which they appear. Awareness of this danger, though, can offset it to some extent. The frequency with which certain titles recur is significant and can reveal the particular emphases Gailhac put on certain aspects of revelation.

In spite of the fact that he gives no elaborated theology, there is hardly a letter where Gailhac does not refer to Father, Son or Holy Spirit. Generally, when he refers to Jesus, he uses certain titles such as Savior, Model, Spouse, Author and Achiever of our faith. Likewise when he speaks of the Father, the titles or qualities he attributes to Him are indicative of the way he sees the Father. We hope in the following pages to show that it is primarily as the Father of Jesus Christ and the Father of all men that Gailhac sees Him.

B. GOD THE FATHER

There are a limited number of texts in which Gailhac uses philosophical categories to designate God as He is in Himself. He speaks of Him in two instances as "necessary being"² and further on in one of these letters as "infinite Order". God as "infinite Order" is again evoked in an exhortation on order.³ The majesty and eternity of God are likewise mentioned only rarely.⁴

¹ See D. Mollat, *Introduction à la christologie de Saint Jean*, ad usum privatum auditorum, Rome, 1970.

² *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4682; *VR*, p. 113, *RL*, p. 144.

³ *VR*, p. 234, *RL*, p. 223.

⁴ For majesty, see *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3413 and *VR*, p. 97, *RL*, p. 103; for eternity, see *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4585; *VR*, pp. 54, 113, 198, *RL*, pp. 161, 144, 42.

The immutability of God is a more frequent refrain in his doctrine. "God is pure act, without succession of time. His existence is one infinite moment and this moment contains eternity".⁵ His expressions referring to the immutability of God might have been inspired by Thomas Aquinas or by the epistle of James who speaks of God "in whom there is neither change nor shadow of change". (1:17) We know that this passage of James was familiar to him since he freely cites the first part of the same verse more than twenty-five times.

But whatever the vehicle of expression — philosophical or biblical — his reflections on immutability and his references to it were inspired by concrete experiences and events. At times he refers to the unchangeableness of God in order to exhort a religious to evenness of disposition, to peace of soul.⁶ At other times, external events provoke his remarks. In 1878, for example, it is the death of Mother Sainte-Croix, second superior general, which he contrasts with the immutability of God.⁷ In 1879 he refers to "the great events which shake the world" and consoles the recipient of his letter reminding her that though "everything changes in and around us . . . God is always the same".⁸ Man is unstable, variable and mobile; God, on the contrary, is eternal, immutable and unchanging.⁹

Another attribute of God in Himself mentioned by Father Gailhac is holiness. The "God of all holiness and perfection" is placed before the sisters as a model and source of their own sanctity, and most often the reference to the holy God is phrased as a prayer that He might dwell in the hearts of those to whom Gailhac is writing.¹⁰ Because God is holy, He communicates His holiness, His life to men who are called "to live His own life".¹¹ "God is holy, my child. He is holiness itself. He wishes us to be holy and we will only be able to be so in Him and by Him".¹²

⁵ *VR*, p. 110, *RL*, p. 128.

⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3564; vol. 12, pp. 4163 and 4497; vol. 13, p. 4650.

⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4585. See also vol. 13, p. 4680.

⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3478.

⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3503; *VR*, pp. 159 and 307, *RL*, pp. 276 and 287-8.

¹⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3239, 3290, 3304, 3347, 3386; vol. 12, pp. 4161 and 4248.

¹¹ *VR*, p. 87, *RL*, p. 94.

¹² *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4161: "Dieu est saint, mon enfant, il est la sainteté même; il nous veut saints et nous ne pouvons l'être qu'en lui et par lui."

In one passage only does Gailhac remind the sisters that because God is holy “He has a horror of even the smallest sin . . . and when we appear before His tribunal, He will judge us with all the rigor of His justice”.¹³ This passage is one of the few where God’s vengeance is mentioned, and it is interesting that in two of the six references to God’s anger or judgment,¹⁴ the context is that of Gailhac’s own sinfulness. Even where he reminds the sisters that God is a judge, he does so as an exhortation to conversion and underlines the fact that their judgment will depend on their openness to God’s mercy, their receptiveness to His love. “The Kingdom of God is within you; it is not in external things or outside of you . . . You bear God within you, either as a Father, a Friend, a Spouse or as a Judge, an Avenger. On you depends the manner in which He is sent”.¹⁵

By far the major part of Gailhac’s references to God are not to the divinity *in se* but to the God who is eternally covenanted with man, to the God who created, watches over and guides all men. In this regard, it is unquestionably the fatherhood, the goodness and the mercy of God which are predominant in his thought and experience. God is the Father of lights from whom flow all good things and every perfect gift, and man has nothing that he has not received from God. Often Gailhac refers to Him as the unique source of good.¹⁶ He sees all things as signs of the goodness and love of God for man and often exhorts the sisters to thank God for His gifts. His ability to see God’s loving providence in all things extends to persons, events and talents. To one sister he writes: “You are only a composite of His gifts; you have nothing which you have not received from

¹³ *VR*, p. 169, *RL*, p. 135-6.

¹⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3296, 3555; vol. 11, p. 3971; vol. 12, p. 4266, 4668; *VR*, p. 169, *RL*, p. 135-6. Pages 3555 and 3971 refer to Gailhac himself.

¹⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3296: “Le royaume de Dieu est en vous-même, il n’est pas dans les choses extérieures et en dehors de vous. . . vous portez Dieu en vous, ou comme un Père, un ami, un époux; ou comme un juge, un vengeur. De vous dépend la manière dont il est envoyé.”

¹⁶ Among other references, see *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3211, 3403, 3406, 3452, 3462; vol. 14, pp. 51, 60; *VR*, pp. 9, 36, 80, 113, 182, 186, *RL*, pp. 257, 267, 89, 144, 106, 109.

His infinite generosity".¹⁷ Even the smallest details do not go unnoticed as a gift from God. To another sister he writes: "God has given you quite a good handwriting; you should preserve it".¹⁸

Inspirations and a desire for conversion come from God as do natural talents. The fact that certain persons are available as guides and helpers is likewise an indication of the goodness of God.¹⁹ He alone is the source of love and unity, of peace and consolation; it is He who touches hearts and inspires good desires. So convinced is Gailhac of the initiative of God in all good things, that he often expresses this conviction in terms of instrumentality.²⁰ Man is the instrument used by God to achieve good. If God is able to do His work through us, it is because of His goodness, not because of our merit. Success in the apostolate should inspire first of all thanksgiving and secondly humility: "Let us give glory to God and let us think that if God does some good with such poor instruments, what good would He not do if we were saints! Let us humble ourselves at His feet and thank Him that He chooses to use us for His work, full of misery and lacking in fidelity as we are".²¹

From Liverpool where the sisters have been well received by the local population and where they are doing much good, he writes to Mother Saint-Félix, then superior general:

May God be blessed for His immense mercy, may He be blessed for deigning to make use of us poor and unworthy instruments. But let us not forget that all glory

¹⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3417: "Or, vous n'êtes qu'un composé de ses dons; vous n'avez rien que vous n'avez reçu de son infinie libéralité."

¹⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3379: "Dieu vous a donné une assez bonne écriture, il faut la conserver."

¹⁹ On the presence and availability of holy priests as evidence of God's goodness, see *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3348, 3362; vol. 12, p. 4503; on the presence of the superior general, vol. 10, p. 3235.

²⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3277, 3282, 3371, 3410, 3454; vol. II, pp. 3702, 3712, 3933, 3944, 3976; *VR*, p. 186, *RL*, p. 109.

²¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3371: "Rendons gloire à Dieu et pensons que si Dieu, avec de si pauvres instruments fait quelque bien, quel bien n'opérerait-il pas si nous étions des saints. Humilions-nous à ses pieds et remercions-le de ce qu'il daigne nous employer à son oeuvre, nous, si misérables et si peu fidèles à sa grâce."

belongs to God alone and to us belongs contempt and nothingness.²²

There is never any doubt for Father Gailhac that God is the sole author of any good that comes from his own efforts or those of the religious.

In the context of man's sin and poverty, God's goodness reveals itself as mercy. He wills to use even the radical incapacity and the faults of man as an instrument for accomplishing the mystery of salvation. Gailhac is penetrated by the contrast between man who is weak and God who is all-powerful, between man who is sinful and God who is all-holy. It is only God's mercy which can overlook such radical differences:

What a grace, what a favor on the part of God who is so rich in mercy! What are you that in His admirable providence He has chosen you rather than another? He wants you to know that He chooses what is nothing and what appears the least fit to realize His designs so that, in success, all the glory will belong to Him.²³

Also in the context of man's sin is a prayer for "obtaining the interior life" which recapitulates the history of man's infidelity in the light of God's mercy:

O my God, through Your immense love, and without any need of us, You have drawn us from nothingness, You have created us to Your own image and likeness... Ungrateful that we are, ... we have separated ourselves from You, O just and powerful God; we deserve only punishment... Instead, O God, infinitely good and merci-

²² *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3277: Que Dieu soit béni de ses immenses miséricordes, qu'il soit béni de vouloir se servir de nous pauvres et indignes instruments. Mais aussi n'oublions pas qu'à Dieu seul appartient toute gloire, et à nous appartiennent le mépris et le néant.

²³ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3267: Quelle grâce, quelle faveur de la part de ce Dieu riche en miséricordes. Qu'êtes-vous pour qu'il ait, dans son admirable providence, voulu vous choisir, plutôt que telle autre? ... Il veut que vous sachiez qu'il choisit ce qui n'est rien, et ce qui paraît le plus impropre à réaliser ses desseins afin qu'après la réussite toute gloire lui revienne.

ful, You have given us a pledge of love, the greatest that Your loving Heart could bestow. You have given us Your Son . . . But we have abused Your ineffable pledge of mercy and love, we have spurned it . . . O God, ineffable Goodness, Your infinite mercy grows as our transgressions multiply, and the more we offend you, the more you love us.²⁴

The same history of man's infidelity is recalled in a letter written during Holy Week 1883. Father Gailhac sees that by his refusal to love, man has continuously provoked the vengeance of God. However, in response to the question: "O all-powerful God, awesome in Your vengeance, what will become of us?", Gailhac responds: "God whose mercy goes beyond justice, You will love us more than ever . . . Love is the life of God, His strength, His weapon".²⁵

In this last citation we have the essence of Gailhac's concept of God: God is love. All that He does, He does through love. In a letter written in 1882, Gailhac speaks of this love existing within the Trinity, made manifest in Jesus Christ and communicated to mankind:

God is love, love is His essence, love is His life. He delights in revealing His love, in communicating it. The whole universe, which is the revelation of His power, is in a certain sense an even greater revelation of His love. He has made everything for us because He loves us. But the highest, most admirable, most ineffable manifestation of His love is Jesus Christ. In giving Him to us, He has expressed His fulness.²⁶

²⁴ *VR*, pp. 97-98, *RL*, p. 104-5.

²⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3802: "Dieu dont la miséricorde dépasse la justice, vous allez nous aimer plus que jamais. . . L'amour est la vie de Dieu, sa force, son arme."

²⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3734: Dieu est amour, l'amour est son essence, l'amour est sa vie; il se fait un bonheur de révéler son amour, de le communiquer. L'univers tout entier, qui est la révélation de sa toute-puissance, l'est en quelque manière plus encore de son amour. Il a tout fait pour nous parce qu'il nous aime. Mais la plus haute, la plus admirable, la plus ineffable manifestation de son amour, c'est Jésus-Christ. En nous le donnant, il s'est épuisé lui-même.

The word "love" sums up the entire being and all the attributes of God. In a passage where he mistakenly attributes the phrase "God is love" to Saint Paul, Gailhac continues: "God wished to sum up all His qualities in a single expression: I am love".²⁷

Because God is love, He acts toward man as a Father. He pardons sinners,²⁸ He loves those who are small and humble,²⁹ He is patient³⁰ and faithful,³¹ He answers our prayer.³² Even when He tries or chastises us, He does so as a loving Father and never crushes us.³³ On the contrary He consoles us in the very trials He sends:

What a good Father God is! If in order to make us like Jesus His Son in whom He places His love and all His good pleasure, He sends us sorrows and difficult trials, His tenderness will not leave us without consolation . . .³⁴

Being Father by nature, God can act with us in no other way. To one of the sisters Gailhac writes: "My daughter, be convinced that God never changes. He is and always remains Father".³⁵ He then goes on to use the parable of the prodigal son to illustrate the solicitude and tenderness of God Himself. Gailhac has this same paternal attitude in mind when he uses the expression "the heart of God".³⁶

Gailhac begins each of his letters to the congregation — to communities as a whole and to individual sisters — with a wish,

²⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4096: "Dieu a voulu résumer tous ses attributs dans ce seul mot: Je suis l'Amour."

²⁸ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3437.

²⁹ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3442; vol. 12, pp. 4244, 4369.

³⁰ Cf. *VR*, p. 156, *RL*, p. 197.

³¹ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4267.

³² Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3188.

³³ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3193, 3254, 3419, 3606; vol. 12, p. 4506.

³⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3966: Que Dieu est un bon Père. Si pour nous rendre semblables à Jésus son Fils en qui il met son amour et toutes ses complaisances, il nous envoie des peines et de rudes épreuves, sa tendresse ne veut pas nous laisser sans consolation . . .

³⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4247: "Ma fille, soyez persuadée que Dieu ne change jamais. Il est et reste toujours PERE."

³⁶ Especially *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4195.

a prayer, usually related to the purpose of the letter. Many times this wish speaks of God as Father. James 1:17 "Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change" serves as a basis for many of these opening lines. We read, for example, "May God the Father of light (or 'the Father of mercies'³⁷ or 'the Father of Jesus Christ'³⁸) from whom proceeds every good and perfect gift, overwhelm you with His favors".³⁹

If God is acting as a Father to us, the greatest gift He can give is to make us like His own Son. Gailhac expresses this: "Oh, how good God is to you! He has preferred you to so many others, in His infinite love He has known you from all eternity, He has called you by your name, He has justified you and glorified you in making you images of Jesus, His divine Son".⁴⁰ This passage is also an example of the facility with which Gailhac expresses himself in scriptural language.

This conformity to Jesus Christ is the greatest gift because it is in the measure that we become sons and daughters like the Son that God's love is able to be passed through us to others. Because Jesus is the Son *par excellence*, in the measure that we become one with Him we can more freely and consciously live our relationship of sonship with the Father and of brotherhood with all men.

That Gailhac sees God primarily as the Father of Jesus Christ is evident in the whole body of his correspondence with the congregation. He often refers to Jesus using the phrase from the synoptic gospels: "This is my beloved Son with whom I am

³⁷ For example, *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3293; vol. 12, pp. 4342, 4352.

³⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3323.

³⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3177. See also vol. 10, pp. 3242, 3263, 3267, 3299, 3335, 3621; vol. 11, p. 3706; vol. 12, pp. 4320, 4494, 4496, 4513, 4522, 4554, 4594, 4606; vol. 13, p. 4648; *VR*, p. 113, *RL*, p. 144.

⁴⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3453: "Oh, que Dieu est bon à votre égard! Il vous a préférées à tant d'autres, dans son amour infini il vous a connues de toute éternité, il vous a appelées par votre propre nom, il vous a justifiées et il vous a glorifiées en vous rendant les images conformes de Jésus, son divin Fils."

well pleased".⁴¹ He also often cites those passages in the fourth gospel which stress the identity of life between Father and Son, the union of Father and Son: "I and the Father are one", (Jn. 10:30)⁴² and "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9).⁴³ He speaks of the Father who loves His Son, who contemplates His Son, who sends His Son. In short, what he stresses is the life of love which exists between Father and Son, the love which is the Spirit. This life of love is the subject of a letter written in 1880:

The life of Jesus Christ is the life of the heavenly Father, and because Jesus Christ has but one life with His Father, He has only one thought, one will, one intention with His Father. He did only the will of His Father, He did it at each instant, seeking nothing but the glory of His Father, and Jesus Christ could say: My Father knows that I love Him because I do His will. Those, then, who model their entire life on that of Jesus Christ live the true life, that life which is a witness to the fact that they love God in and with Jesus Christ.⁴⁴

Further on in the same letter he writes:

Jesus Christ, being the only Son of God, His substantial image, is necessarily one with His Father. We creatures can be one with God only through Jesus Christ. And we can be one with Jesus Christ only through the grace of Jesus Christ, the divine link with His Father.

⁴¹ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3311, 3529, 3561, 3605, 3646; vol. 11, p. 3976; vol. 12, pp. 4358, 4503; vol. 13, p. 4652; *VR*, p. 97, *RL*, p. 104.

⁴² Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3579; vol. 11, pp. 3720, 4027; *VR*, p. 158, *RL*, p.

⁴³ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3365; vol. 11, p. 3890, 4004; *VR*, p. 277, *RL*, p. 71.

⁴⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3579: Or, la vie de Jésus-Christ est la vie du Père céleste et parce que Jésus-Christ n'a qu'une vie avec son Père, il n'a qu'une pensée, qu'une volonté, qu'une intention avec son Père. Il n'a fait que la volonté de son Père, il l'a faite à chaque instant, il n'a cherché que la gloire de son Père et Jésus-Christ a pu dire: Mon Père sait que je l'aime parce que je fais sa volonté. Donc, celles-là vivent de la véritable vie, de cette vie qui prouve qu'on aime Dieu en Jésus-Christ et avec Jésus-Christ qui conforment toute leur vie à celle de Jésus-Christ.

He describes the life of union with the Son as “the interior life” and adds: “. . . the interior life is the life of the Holy Spirit living in our mind and in our heart”.

Although it is not made explicit in his letters, Gailhac sees the mystery of suffering in terms of sonship also. Suffering, by identifying us with the Son, establishes us in a relationship of sonship with the Father. “If you suffer because God wishes you to be like Jesus Christ, His well-beloved Son, rejoice in this likeness”.⁴⁵ This aspect of identification with the Son will be developed in the next chapter.

We could summarize this entire section on God the Father by saying that it is essentially *as Father* — Father of Jesus Christ and Father of all men — that Gailhac sees God. This Father is merciful and loving and is not removed from or indifferent to the life of man. Rather, He is present through His love and goodness in the smallest details of life. He is always ready to pardon the sinner; He loves all men and wills to save them. Because of this, He sends His own Son. An introductory sentence to a letter written in 1882 summarizes in Gailhac’s own words what we have said here: “The heavenly Father, loving the world with an inexpressible love, wished to save it by His own Son and He said to this Son, object of His love and His good pleasure: Go and save the world”.⁴⁶

C. GOD THE SON

1. *Jesus when?*

Reading through even the smallest part of the correspondence of Father Gailhac leaves no doubt that his theological vision was profoundly christocentric. It is the Person of Jesus Christ who is the center, the axis around which the other elements of his synthesis revolve. What aspects of the mystery of Christ’s

⁴⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3959: “Si vous souffrez parce que Dieu veut que vous soyez semblable à Jésus-Christ son Fils bien-aimé réjouissez-vous de cette ressemblance.”

⁴⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3733: “Le Père céleste, aimant le monde d’un amour ineffable, voulut le sauver par son Fils et il dit à ce Fils, objet de son amour et de toutes ses complaisances: Allez et sauvez le monde.”

person were most emphasized by him? What were those elements in the life and mystery of Jesus which had the greatest resonance in the spirituality of the founder?

First of all, as a background to all that we will say later on about the titles he gives Jesus, it might be well to see just where Gailhac situates Jesus in time. That is, is his focus that of one who remembers Jesus primarily in the past? Does he see the life of Christ as one very rich in *examples* for the sisters? Does the power of the Person of Jesus come chiefly in the process of remembering and “applying” His life and message? Or, on the other hand, does he see Christ primarily as glorified, as He is now before the Father? If so, is there a distance between this Christ in His present glory and the sisters as they are here and now — waiting for their own future glory?

This question seems important in order to know how Gailhac situated himself with regard to the Person of Christ here and now — and to determine how he expected the Congregation of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary to do so. What was the primary source of the *power* of Jesus in their lives — a past remembering? a hope in the future? a presence here and now?

If it were on the “historical Jesus” that Gailhac put primary emphasis, one might expect to find great insistence on the various mysteries of the life of Christ as they are recorded in the gospel. One might expect to find frequent references to scenes of healing, exorcism, preaching, to the various events which the evangelists show as composing the daily life of Jesus. But in Gailhac’s writings to the religious, the presentation of such scenes is rare. Most of his references to the life of Christ are to His doctrine and His words. He often repeats the words which the evangelists put on the lips of Christ, but rarely sees Christ “from the outside”, so to speak.⁴⁷

There are, however, a few letters where he reflects at length on certain mysteries. There are two lengthy ones on the birth of Christ and one on the Good Shepherd. The two on the nativity are examples of written meditations. In his Christmas letter of 1878, he says: “What wonders are presented for our meditation

⁴⁷ This is not always so in Gailhac’s retreats and conferences.

by an Infant God whom the Father in the immensity of His love has given us to be our Savior, our Model, our Doctor".⁴⁸ And indeed Gailhac, in a manner greatly resembling Ignatian contemplation, opens various avenues for the contemplation of the sisters. We will examine this letter in some detail because it witnesses well to Gailhac's approach to the mysteries of the life of Jesus.

In the opening paragraph, Gailhac already goes to the essence of the mystery — that Jesus wishes to be united to each sister and wishes as well that they be united among themselves. In short, "that you all live His life". Gailhac then presents the three-fold subject of the reflections he will develop:

A child of earth and heaven has been given to us; a new year is beginning; in a stable, beside a poor crib, the shepherds and kings, representatives of all humanity, are come together.⁴⁹

In elaborating on the birth of the Child-God, he does not imagine the event in itself, concentrating on external details, but rather goes to the theological heart of the event: "This Infant-God saves us by His life which He comes to communicate to us... This child is our Savior".⁵⁰ He sees the totality of the mystery of salvation, speaking already of the cross and the reconciliation with the Father which is its fruit. "His crib is an altar. There Jesus begins His sacrifice which will be consummated on Calvary".⁵¹ The unity of the mystery of redemption is here underlined by Gailhac just as it is by Ignatius in the contempla-

⁴⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3438-3443: "Quel faisceau de merveilles offre à nos méditations un Dieu Enfant que Dieu le Père dans l'immensité de son amour nous a donné pour être notre Sauveur, notre Modèle, notre Docteur." All subsequent references to this letter are to be found on these pages.

⁴⁹ Un Enfant de la terre et du Ciel nous est donné; un nouvel an commence; dans une étable, au pied d'une pauvre crèche, les bergers et les rois représentant de toute l'humanité se trouvent réunis.

⁵⁰ "Cet Enfant-Dieu nous sauve par sa vie qu'il vient nous communiquer. ... cet Enfant est notre Sauveur."

⁵¹ "Sa crèche est un autel. Là Jésus commence son sacrifice qui sera consommé au Calvaire."

tion of the Nativity.⁵² The new-born Jesus is presented as a model of sacrifice, of poverty and of humility, and His attitude of total self-giving provokes a response: "Thanksgiving, docility and imitation are the three canticles which we should sing around the crib of Jesus".⁵³

The second reality that Gailhac presents for the contemplation of the religious in this same letter is the beginning of a new year. New life, renewal of life, is a theme precious to him, as we shall see further on, and it is in terms of renewal that he reflects on the new year. In this passage we see how closely he associates the symbol of light with life:

A new year is beginning. Listen to the voice of the apostle who announces it to us: the night is past; the first rays of the sun have appeared; the sun is rising; the old life must pass away; everything must be renewed. Jesus, the great Restorer, comes to renew everything on earth and in heaven. Let us leave the darkness of sin, then, and enter into the light; shadows and falsehood disappear; at the coming of Jesus, all is light and truth.⁵⁴

Once again, man's response is to be "love, gratitude, imitation".

It is the third "meditation" which is the most fully developed and which witnesses to Gailhac's respect for the Ignatian method of contemplation which we can follow almost point by point. Like Ignatius, Gailhac begins this section with a picture — sketchily traced, it is true — evoking the entire universe: "The universe represented by Jews and Gentiles, the little people and the great; the rich and the poor all have heard the voice of

⁵² See *Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, § 116. We have used here the translation of Thomas Corbishley, S.J.

⁵³ "Actions de grâces, docilité, imitation, tels sont les trois cantiques que nous devons chanter au pied de la crèche de Jésus."

⁵⁴ Un nouvel an commence. Entendez la voix de l'apôtre qui nous l'annonce: la nuit est passée; les premiers rayons du soleil ont paru; le soleil se montre. La vieille vie doit passer; tout doit être renouvelé. Jésus le grand Restaurateur vient rétablir toutes choses sur la terre et dans le Ciel. Quittons donc les ténèbres du péché; entrons dans la lumière; les ombres et le mensonge disparaissent; à la venue de Jésus tout est lumière et vérité.

Heaven announcing the wonderful event to them".⁵⁵ Then, as in the second point of the Ignatian contemplation of the Incarnation, we hear the voice of the angel to the shepherds: "Fear not..." To the wise men as well the good news is announced through the appearance of a star. Then, with Ignatius, Gailhac looks at and considers what the shepherds and the wise men do:

The shepherds leave their flocks to go to meet the newborn child who has been announced to them. The wise men leave their palaces, their pleasures in order to begin their journey guided by the star.⁵⁶

He elaborates especially on the detachment and the poverty of both shepherds and wise men. Then he describes the shepherds in the stable itself:

The poor shepherds offer Jesus their meager presents; but they are prostrate at the feet of the divine Child; their eyes contemplate Him; their tongues are dumb; but their hearts burn; their minds, their souls adore, praise, bless the God who is faithful to His promises. They admire the Word made accessible, the Infant God. They receive Him from the hands of Mary, pressing Him to their hearts, kissing His feet...⁵⁷

Then, passing to the wise men, Gailhac says: "Remember the wise men. Look at them". He terminates his presentation of this third aspect of the total mystery with the words: "What

⁵⁵ "L'univers représenté par les Juifs et les Gentils; les petits et les grands; les riches et les pauvres, tous ont entendu la voix du Ciel qui leur annonce la grande merveille." *Cf. Spir. Ex.*, § 106.

⁵⁶ Les bergers quittent leurs troupeaux pour aller à la rencontre de l'Enfant nouveau qu'il [*sic*] leur a été annoncé. Les mages laissent leurs palais, leurs jouissances pour entrer dans la route que leur indique l'étoile. *Cf. Spir. Ex.*, § 108.

⁵⁷ Les bergers pauvres offrirent à Jésus leurs pauvres présents; mais ils sont prosternés aux pieds du divin Enfant; leurs yeux le contemplent; leur langue saisie est muette; mais leur coeur est brûlant; leur esprit, leur âme adorent, louent, bénissent le Dieu fidèle à ses promesses, admirent le Verbe rapetissé, le Dieu petit enfant. Ils le reçoivent des mains de Marie, le pressent sur leur coeur, baisent ses pieds...

wonders on which to meditate! What beautiful example to copy, what virtues to imitate!"⁵⁸

That the mystery of the Nativity is not just a past event to be reflected on is evident in the next paragraph:

So, in order to profit from the love of the Divine Word made flesh for us, who delights in living in our midst in order to be our Savior, our Doctor, our Model, and encouraged by the example of the shepherds and the magi, let us go to Bethlehem, let us go to the crib of Jesus; let us remain close to Jesus in heart and in spirit. Let us contemplate His love for us.⁵⁹

This paragraph seems to have as its objective the personalization of the mystery. The essence of the mystery of the Incarnation is not just something to be remembered but it is a reality to be assimilated through contemplation and to be responded to: "How could we not love Him?"⁶⁰

Finally, Gailhac terminates with the equivalent of the Ignatian colloquy:

Let us say to Jesus with a heart burning with love: Jesus, little Jesus, Jesus burning with love, consume our hearts in the fire of your love; make us humble, little, like you; strip us of ourselves; clothe us with you; may we be one with you; and every day may this resemblance

⁵⁸ "Que de merveilles à méditer. Que de beaux exemples à copier, que de vertus à imiter."

⁵⁹ Donc, pour profiter de tout l'amour que le Verbe divin qui s'est fait chair pour nous, qui fait ses délices d'habiter au milieu de nous pour être notre Sauveur, notre Docteur, notre Modèle, encouragés par les exemples des bergers et des mages, allons à Bethléem, allons à la crèche de Jésus; fixons notre demeure dans cette pauvre étable; tenons-nous par l'esprit et le coeur bien près de Jésus. Contemplons son amour pour nous.

⁶⁰ "Pourrions-nous ne pas l'aimer?" Presence to the mystery seems to be the point of Ignatius' introducing "an impoverished attendant" into the contemplation of the nativity. See *Spir. Ex.*, § 114. In his commentary on the *Exercices*, H. Coathalem writes: "Le premier point [114] souligne l'actuation dans le mystère de celui qui contemple, avec l'attitude de grand respect toujours de mise." *Commentaire du livre des Exercices*, Paris, 1965, p. 178. See also W. Peters, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: Exposition and Interpretation*, New Jersey, 1968, p. 84.

grow in us so that having lived in you, by you and through you during our whole life, we may have the happiness of living in you in our true fatherland, heaven.⁶¹

What we see in this letter is how Gailhac presents the mystery of the Incarnation so that the religious might come to a "deep-felt knowledge of our Lord, made man for me, that I may the better love and follow Him".⁶² He seems to recognize Ignatian contemplation as an apt means for arriving at this interior knowledge. This interior knowledge and love of Jesus Christ is the objective he constantly sets before the sisters. It is a knowledge and love of Jesus *as He is*; reflection on the events of the life of Jesus has this knowledge alone as its objective: to know in order better to love and to follow.

While he does not stress the external actions of Jesus, he certainly means for the sisters to reflect upon them:

In the Gospel, the Holy Spirit recounts in such a clear and striking way and with such detail the life of this divine Savior that we see Him, we hear Him, we find in Him the model of the conduct which we ought to have in the diverse circumstances of life, as well as the model of what we should be towards God, our neighbor and ourselves.⁶³

He urges the religious to keep their eyes fixed on Jesus Christ in order to come to an understanding of the interior attitudes of Christ.

⁶¹ Disons à Jésus avec un coeur tout brûlant d'amour: "Jésus, petit Jésus, Jésus brûlant d'amour, consommez nos coeurs par le feu de votre amour; faites-nous humbles, petits comme vous; dépouillez-nous de nous-même, revêtez-nous de vous; que nous ne soyons qu'une même chose avec vous; que tous les jours cette ressemblance croisse en nous afin que pendant toute notre vie ayant vécu, de vous, par vous, nous ayons le bonheur de vivre en vous dans la véritable Patrie, au Ciel."

⁶² *Spir. Ex.*, § 104.

⁶³ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4299: Le Saint-Esprit, dans le saint Evangile, nous raconte d'une manière si claire, si frappante, et avec un tel détail la vie de ce divin Sauveur, que nous le voyons, nous l'entendons, nous trouvons en lui le modèle de la conduite que nous devons tenir dans les diverses circonstances de la vie, comme de tout ce que nous devons être envers Dieu, le prochain et nous-mêmes.

It is the inner dispositions of Jesus which Gailhac most emphasizes — those dispositions which Jesus had on earth and which He now has before the Father. It is especially as He offers Himself to the Father for the salvation of man that Gailhac sees Him:

Jesus continues His sacrifice and in a mysterious but real way He continues to bring about the great work which will last not for a century only but for all eternity.

A Victim on the cross, on the altar and in heaven, and Saint John in his divine vision saw the lamb on the altar as dead and living; because He is risen, He dies no more. But John also sees Him as dead because He is the eternal Priest. Moreover, Jesus Christ has finished His work which will endure throughout eternity.⁶⁴

Several times he refers to the eternal sacrifice of Jesus, usually in terms of the vision of the Lamb in the Apocalypse.⁶⁵

It is the love which prompted Jesus' total gift of Himself which Gailhac also presents as actual, as real in the here and now. "Jesus Christ loves us, not only during His mortal life but also in His glorious life".⁶⁶ "He has done everything for us, He continues to do everything for us".⁶⁷

Shown in His earthly life and in His glory, Jesus Christ is especially understood by Gailhac as present in the here and now. Indeed, it is this presence which is central in his faith-vision. The attitudes of Christ during His earthly life, His stance before the Father in glory are both underlined to enable the

⁶⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p.3912: [Jésus] continue son sacrifice et d'une manière mystérieuse mais réelle, il continue à opérer la grande oeuvre qui durera non pas un siècle seulement, mais pour toute l'éternité. Victime sur la croix, Victime sur l'autel, Victime au ciel, et S. Jean dans sa vision toute divine vit l'Agneau sur l'Autel comme mort et vivant; parce que ressuscité, il ne meurt plus, mais comme mort parce qu'il est le prêtre éternel. Aussi Jésus-Christ a consommé son oeuvre qui sera actuelle pendant l'éternité.

⁶⁵ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp.3526, 3645.

⁶⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3526: "Jésus-Christ nous aime, pas seulement pendant sa vie mortelle mais aussi dans sa vie glorieuse."

⁶⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p.3473. See also p.3399: "Il a tout fait pour nous, il continue à tout faire pour nous."

sisters to come to a knowledge of Jesus as He is now, as He is present to them, in them. It is through His presence that He forms us: "In time and in eternity, the whole task of Jesus Christ is to form souls. His life on earth and His glorious life are completely consecrated to them".⁶⁸

To what does He form us? To Himself. The active, transforming presence of Jesus is emphasized in a letter Gailhac writes to Mother Saint Jean just six months after the founding of the congregation:

Why do we not leave Jesus enough freedom to work this marvel [holiness] in our hearts? For, after all, why does He come to us? Why does He make Himself the nourishment of our souls if not in order to transform us into Himself? He Himself assures us that that is His only desire, His will, the only work He intends to achieve in us.⁶⁹

Christ's presence *par excellence* is identification of the Christian with Himself. "A true Christian is another Jesus Christ."⁷⁰ Jesus is present to His Church in and through Christians. Gailhac

⁶⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3572: "Dans le temps et dans l'éternité, la formation des âmes c'est toute l'occupation de Jésus-Christ. Sa vie sur la terre et sa vie glorieuse leur sont toutes consacrées."

⁶⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 3, p. 568: "Pourquoi ne laissons-nous pas assez de liberté à Jésus sur nos cœurs pour qu'il y opère cette merveille [la sainteté]? Car enfin pourquoi vient-il en nous? Pourquoi se fait-il l'aliment de notre âme si ce n'est pour nous transformer en lui? C'est lui-même qui nous l'assure, c'est tout son désir, c'est toute sa volonté, c'est tout l'effet qu'il prétend opérer en nous." Of the correspondence between Gailhac and Mother Saint Jean, the first superior general, there remain thirty-three letters written by her and eight responses of Gailhac. Most of these letters were written in 1849, at a time when Gailhac came daily to the community to say Mass and assist at the sisters' meditation. The correspondence between founder and foundress is a good example of the genre of letters of spiritual direction. Their purpose is stated specifically by Gailhac: "Your letter consoled me. It seems to me that your soul needed to write that letter. Our heart is made in such a way that it suffers as long as it does not open itself completely ... I also need this openness on your part so that I can follow the action of God in you." *Ecrits*, vol. 3, p. 562.

⁷⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3615: "Un vrai chrétien est un autre Jésus-Christ."

rarely speaks of Christ *among* us;⁷¹ much more frequently he refers to Jesus *within us*. This inner presence is one which guides,⁷² sustains,⁷³ consoles,⁷⁴ gives light⁷⁵ and communicates strength⁷⁶ — all actions which are attributed to the Spirit as well.

A paragraph of a "rule of life" written for Mother Saint Jean indicates various modes of Christ's presence. In an imaginary dialogue between the foundress and Christ Himself, the latter says:

You do not know how to follow me? But, my daughter, am I not always with you? Doesn't my Gospel place me before your eyes? Don't you constantly hear my voice? Has it for an instant ceased to echo in your ears? Is my life not always before you as an indestructible picture? Do you not really possess me in the Holy Eucharist?⁷⁷

In another letter, previously referred to, he elaborates on Scripture as a place of Christ's presence:

Even though Jesus Christ does not live among us in a perceptible way as when He was fulfilling His mission, He is in our midst and He is there until the end of time. What is more, the Holy Spirit, in the Gospel, recounts in such a clear and striking way and with such detail the life of this divine Savior, that we see Him, we hear Him,

⁷¹ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 11, pp. 3859, 3912; *VR*, p. 107, *RL*, p. 37.

⁷² Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3475; vol. 11, pp. 3719, 3993; vol. 13, p. 4707; vol. 14, p. 63.

⁷³ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3475, vol. 11, p. 3792; vol. 13, p. 4710.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3596, 3605; vol. 11, p. 3792; vol. 13, p. 4738; vol. 14, p. 63.

⁷⁵ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3495, 3497; vol. 11, pp. 3993, 4084.

⁷⁶ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3792; vol. 12, p. 4140; vol. 14, p. 63.

⁷⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 3, p. 583: Vous ne savez pas comment me suivre? Mais, ma fille, ne suis-je pas toujours avec vous? Mon Evangile ne me met-il pas devant vos yeux? N'entendez-vous pas continuellement ma voix? A-t-elle un instant cessé de retentir à vos oreilles? Ma vie n'est-elle pas devant vous comme un tableau impérissable? Ne me possédez-vous pas réellement dans la sainte Eucharistie?

we find in Him the model of the conduct we ought to have...⁷⁸

The culmination of these modes of presence is complete identification with Christ. One should be able to say with Saint Paul: "It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). This phrase, as well as "For me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21), recurs often in the pages of Gailhac's letters and expresses vividly how he understood Christ's presence: for the Christian, to live is to be identified with Jesus Christ.

This identification of the Christian with Christ determined Gailhac's understanding of the Church as well. For him, Jesus Christ is with the Church, but in such a way that "the Church is none other than Jesus Christ continued"⁷⁹ It is often in the mystery of suffering that this identification with Christ is evident:

Jesus Christ teaches that it is only on condition that we are like Him that He will recognize us as His brothers. Here are His words: If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; the slave is not above his master, the servant is not above his lord. If you are of the world, the world will love you, but you, you are not of the world; that is why the world will hate you, will persecute you. I tell you this so that when these things happen you will not be surprised.

Also, my children, notice in reading the history of the Church, which is none other than the continuation of Jesus Christ, that its life is one of tribulation. At His birth, Jesus is persecuted by Herod; at her birth, the Church too is persecuted by tyrants. ...⁸⁰

⁷⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4299: Quoique Jésus-Christ ne vive pas parmi nous d'une manière sensible comme lorsqu'il remplissait sa mission, il est au milieu de nous et il y est jusqu'à la fin des temps. De plus, le Saint Esprit, dans le Saint Evangile, nous raconte d'une manière si claire, si frappante, et avec un tel détail la vie de ce divin Sauveur, que nous le voyons, nous l'entendons, nous trouvons en lui le modèle de la conduite que nous devons tenir...

⁷⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4520. See also vol. 11, pp. 3792, 3832, 3898.

⁸⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3605: Jésus-Christ enseigne que ce ne sera qu'à condition que nous lui serons semblables qu'il nous reconnaîtra pour ses

In another letter he writes:

Every work of God should bear His likeness and the traits of the life of Jesus Christ. What has the Church, which is but the continuation of Jesus Christ, not suffered. . . . This institute, then, a branch of the Church, must experience all that the Church has suffered and must pass through all the vicissitudes through which she also will pass until the end of time.⁸¹

Because of his grasp of the identification of Jesus Christ with His Church, Gailhac refers to her as the "mystical body of Christ."⁸²

Again, the Person of the Spirit is related to the mystery of Christ's presence in the Church. Jesus Christ is with us "through His Holy Spirit who lives in the Church. . . . But all that is mysterious and hidden, all that will be fully revealed only on the day of judgment."⁸³ The relationship between Jesus and the Holy Spirit will be taken up later when we study Gailhac's understanding of the Spirit.

To summarize this section on how Father Gailhac situates Jesus Christ in time, we can say that it is in the present that he sees Him, as present, active and continuing His mission in persons. The mysteries of His earthly life are important for direct-

frères. Voici ses paroles: S'ils m'ont persécuté, ils vous persécuteront, l'esclave n'est pas au-dessus de son Seigneur. Si vous étiez du monde, le monde vous aimerait, mais, vous, vous n'êtes pas du monde. Je vous dis ces choses afin que lorsque ces choses arriveront vous ne soyez pas surpris. Aussi, mes enfants, remarquez en lisant l'histoire de l'Eglise, qui n'est que la continuation de Jésus-Christ, sa vie est toute dans la tribulation. Jésus naissant est persécuté par Hérode; l'Eglise naissante est persécutée par les tyrans . . .

⁸¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3792: Chaque oeuvre de Dieu doit porter sa ressemblance et les traits de la vie de Jésus-Crist . . . La Sainte Eglise, qui n'est que la continuation de Jésus-Christ, que n'a-t-elle pas souffert . . . Donc, branche de l'Eglise, cet Institut doit ressentir tout ce qu'a souffert l'Eglise et passer par toutes les péripéties par lesquelles elle passera jusqu'à la fin des temps.

⁸² *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3534; vol. 11, p. 3888; *VR*, p. 122, 128, *RL*, p. 187, 150.

⁸³ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3859: "par son Saint Esprit qui vit dans l'Eglise . . . Or tout cela est mystérieux et caché, tout cela ne sera pleinement sensible qu'au jour des grandes assises."

ing our imitation of Christ, for throwing light on who He is now. The glorious Christ will be seen face to face in the future and is now living with His Father in an attitude of total self-giving.

2. *Jesus-model*

We might now ask what were the traits of the Person of Christ which Gailhac most emphasized. What were the aspects of the mystery of Christ which had most resonance in him, which are the central focus of his theological vision?

Gailhac refers to Christ under many aspects and gives Him many titles: Word, King, Messiah, Doctor. There are several titles, however, which occur again and again which capture the essence of his theological vision. The first of these is Model. In our age, this word evokes, perhaps, an external conformity of conduct, but one does not have to read far in Gailhac's correspondence with the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary to realize that the term had a much deeper meaning for him. More than 165 times this title is applied to Jesus. At least twenty-five times it is accompanied by the citation: "I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you" (Jn. 15:15). Jesus is a Model who attracts by his example rather than a master who commands by his authority. He is an exemplar of external conduct — "May Jesus be your model and may His example stimulate you to walk in His footsteps and teach you to neglect nothing, to conform your conduct to His"⁸⁴ — but this is because His actions are an expression of love for the Father and for mankind. It is the *life* which animates Jesus which should be reflected in the life of the sisters: "It is a pressing duty for you to be the images of this perfect model; your life must be the true reflection of His life, you must be other Jesus Christs."⁸⁵

⁸⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p.3686: "Que Jésus soit votre modèle et que son exemple vous stimule à marcher sur ses traces et vous enseigne à ne rien négliger, à rendre votre conduite semblable à la sienne."

⁸⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p.3706: "C'est un devoir impérieux pour vous d'être les images de ce Modèle parfait, votre vie doit être le vrai reflet de sa vie, vous devez être d'autres Jésus-Christ."

As the One in whom God and man met and were reconciled, Jesus is one of us, our Brother. It is in His humanity that Christ is our model. Near the end of his life, Gailhac makes this explicit in a letter to the congregation:

God wishes to use me in order to help you . . . to take for your rule of life the life of Jesus Christ. . . . This is why: Jesus Christ, the God-Man, is our brother, and the heavenly Father praises His incarnate Son only to make us understand that . . . it is a pressing obligation to become, with the help of grace, one with Jesus Christ.⁸⁶

Before the sanctity of the second Person of the Trinity, one can only be filled with admiration, adoration and love. One might then ask:

But how can we imitate Him? Let us try to study Him, made accessible in His humanity. Let us admire Him as He seems to have wished to show Himself to us as a model.⁸⁷

a. *Jesus - Model in His relationship to the Father*

Again, it is the interior dispositions of Jesus which the sisters are urged to study, to contemplate, to assume. These dispositions express themselves in Christ's relationship to His Father and in His relationship to men. In His relationship with the Father, Christ is essentially SON, Image of the Father, receiving life from the Father, sent to communicate that life to men. In His Son, the Father contemplates His own perfect image,⁸⁸ and "The Father has nothing that is not in His Son. . . . The

⁸⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p.3976: Dieu veut se servir de moi pour vous aider . . . à prendre pour règle de votre vie la vie de Jésus-Christ . . . En voici la raison: Jésus-Christ Homme-Dieu est notre Frère et le Père céleste ne fait l'éloge de son Fils humanisé que pour nous faire comprendre que . . . c'est un devoir impérieux de devenir, avec le secours de la grâce, un avec Jésus-Christ.

⁸⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p.3516: Mais comment l'imiter? Essayons donc de l'étudier comme rapetissé dans son Humanité. Admironons-le comme il semble avoir voulu se montrer à nous comme modèle.

⁸⁸ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p.3311; vol. 12, p.4503.

Father has given Him to us clothed in a human body so that in His person might be shown forth all that can be revealed of the ineffable and invisible holiness of the divinity.”⁸⁹ The unity between Father and Son is such that

the life of Jesus is the life of the heavenly Father, and because Jesus Christ has only one life with His Father, He has only one thought, only one will and one intention with His Father. He did only the Father’s will, He did it at every moment, He sought only the glory of His Father.⁹⁰

The reference to Jn. 8:29 in this last passage is obvious. We have seen that John’s gospel was a source on which Gailhac constantly drew, and of all the citations from the fourth gospel that we find in his letters, 8:29, stressing the unity of Father and Son, appears most frequently: “He who sent me is with me ... for I always do what is pleasing to Him.” The Son is given by the Father,⁹¹ is sent by the Father,⁹² and union with the Father was the dynamism of all that He said and did: “Jesus Christ united to His Father spent the days doing His work and the nights in prayer.”⁹³ Christ is a model of “fidelity to His commitment before His Father.”⁹⁴

Jesus is the image of the Father and therefore is holy as the Father is holy. It is precisely when speaking of Jesus as model that Gailhac refers to Him as the “Holy of Holies.”⁹⁵ His

⁸⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3365: “le Père n’a rien qui ne soit en son Fils... Le Père nous l’a donné revêtu d’un corps humain afin qu’il nous montrât en sa personne tout ce qui peut être révélé de la sainteté ineffable et invisible de la divinité.”

⁹⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3579: ...la vie de Jésus-Christ est la vie du Père céleste et parce que Jésus-Christ n’a qu’une vie avec son Père, il n’a qu’une pensée, qu’une volonté, qu’une intention avec son Père. Il n’a fait que la volonté de son Père, il l’a faite à chaque instant, il n’a cherché que la gloire de son Père.

⁹¹ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3331.

⁹² Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3883; vol. 12, p. 4205; vol. 13, p. 4663; *VR*, pp. 276, 301, *RL*, p. 70, 283.

⁹³ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3333: “Jésus-Christ uni à son Père passait les jours à opérer son oeuvre et les nuits il les passait en prière.”

⁹⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3770.

⁹⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3258, 3246; vol. 11, p. 4088.

infinite holiness manifests itself in His life on earth. He lived what He taught to such an extent that He could defy His enemies to find fault with Him, and so revealed the holiness of the Father. Gailhac implies this revelation of the holiness of the Father when he says: "He [Jesus] does His work more by His example than by His words. His words were spoken only to recall His example."⁹⁶ Motivated by love, Jesus revealed His holiness "in order to stir up the zeal of His friends and to bring them to holiness."⁹⁷ Far from discouraging His disciples, the example of Jesus' holiness is a motivation to their own. In Jesus they see God's holiness incarnated in a man:

In an ineffable love, God wished to make His holiness visible in Jesus Christ our Lord. How could we imitate God if we did not have a model before our eyes? But if God manifested Himself with so much love, if He chose to pass through every age and, we might say, every difficulty of life, thus experiencing all its suffering and contradiction, if in His hidden life, His public life and on Calvary He united in His own person all the circumstances and the situations through which we ourselves must pass — only to be our model — then we have no excuse if we do not imitate Him.⁹⁸

As man, Jesus was one with the Father. He was constantly concerned to do what the Father does (Jn. 5:19), to give life as the Father does (Jn. 5:21), to say what He had heard from the

⁹⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p.3427: "Il [Jésus] fait son oeuvre plus par son exemple que par ses paroles. Les paroles n'ont été dites que pour rappeler ses exemples."

⁹⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p.3554-5.

⁹⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p.4343: C'est par un amour ineffable que Dieu a voulu rendre sensible sa sainteté en Jésus-Christ notre Seigneur. Comment imiter Dieu si nous n'avions un modèle devant les yeux? Mais si Dieu s'est manifesté avec tant d'amour, s'il a voulu passer par tous les âges, et, nous pouvons dire, par toutes les péripéties de la vie, et par conséquent en éprouver toutes les peines et toutes les contradictions, si dans sa vie cachée, sa vie publique et au Calvaire il a réuni toutes les circonstances, tous les états par lesquels nous sommes nous-mêmes obligés de passer, uniquement afin d'être modèle, nous sommes sans excuse si nous ne l'imitons pas.

Father (Jn. 8:26). The greatest witness to the oneness between the Father and Son was the unity of will between them: "I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me" (Jn. 5:30). For this reason, Gailhac sees Jesus in relationship to His Father most fundamentally as a Model of obedience. The hymn in Philippians "And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" expresses for Gailhac, as it did for Saint Paul, the "mind" of Jesus Christ. In Christ, obedience is the great expression of love for the Father. Gailhac sees it as such: "Obedience is love, the greatest act of love."⁹⁹

Never does he envisage Jesus as obedient to an exacting Father who demands the sacrifice of the life of His Son as some sort of ransom. Even when Gailhac does speak of Christ as sent to calm the anger of the Father, it is in the context of *our* ingratitude, to underline the infidelity of humanity. Christ stands as our brother and pleads for the pardon and reconciliation of humanity.¹⁰⁰

For Gailhac, obedience, because it is love, sums up the entire interior attitude of Jesus before the Father:

In the soul of Jesus, there was only one disposition and this disposition included in a wonderful and eminent way more holiness and perfection than in all the angels and saints. Saint Paul, to whom the divine Savior had revealed all the mysteries hidden in the Incarnation, teaches us: Christ, he tells us, coming into this world said to His Father: Here I am to do your will; for it is written at the head of the book that you send me to do your will.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ VR, p. 67, RL, p. 21.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3469.

¹⁰¹ VR, p. 70, RL, p. 170. See also *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3454: Dans l'âme de Jésus, il n'y avait qu'une disposition, et cette disposition renfermait en elle-même d'une manière ineffable et éminente plus de sainteté et de perfection qu'il ne peut y en avoir dans tous les anges et dans tous les saints. Saint Paul, à qui le divin Sauveur avait révélé tous les mystères renfermés dans celui de l'Incarnation, nous l'enseigne: Le Christ, nous dit-il, entrant dans le monde, dit à son Père: Me voici pour faire votre

This passage on obedience is preceded by an exhortation to make Christ in His obedience our model: "May Jesus coming into the world be your model."

In another letter, Gailhac goes even further and identifies obedience with Jesus:

Jesus Christ is obedience. We can call the Word of God made man obedience *par excellence*. In obedience He offered Himself to His Father at the first instant of His Life. He Himself referred only to His obedience: I have come, this admirable model says, to obey. My Father knows that I love Him because I obey Him. I will not omit a single iota of obedience. Humiliations, sufferings will find me obedient. In obedience I will drink the chalice to the dregs.¹⁰²

In Jesus, obedience to His Father is so related to love, zeal and humility that Gailhac often interchanges these terms to express Christ's attitude. We have already seen how he identifies love and obedience. As for humility, he sees it as a disposition "prior" to obedience and calls obedience the first act of humility.¹⁰³

In his treatise on humility, he says: "The virtue which Christ chose as His virtue of *prédilection* is humility, the first He practised on entering the world."¹⁰⁴ The greatest act of humility was the Incarnation itself. That the second Person of the Trinity, the image of the Father, would humble Himself, "empty

volonté; car il est écrit à la tête du livre que vous m'envoyez pour faire votre volonté.

¹⁰² *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3559: Or, Jésus-Christ est l'obéissance. On peut appeler le Verbe de Dieu fait Homme l'obéissance par excellence. Il s'est offert à son Père au premier instant de sa vie comme obéissant. Il n'a lui-même parlé que de son obéissance; je suis venu, dit cet admirable modèle, pour obéir. Mon Père sait que je l'aime parce que je lui obéis. Je ne retrancherai pas un seul iota de l'obéissance. Les humiliations, les tourments me trouveront obéissant. Par obéissance je boirai le calice jusqu'à la lie.

¹⁰³ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3874.

¹⁰⁴ *VR*, p. 112, *RL*, p. 143: "... c'est l'humilité dont Jésus-Christ a fait sa vertu de *prédilection*; c'est la première qu'il a pratiquée en entrant dans le monde."

himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:7), never ceases to be a source of contemplation, of gratitude, of wonder for Father Gailhac. The mystery of self-emptying is a strong emphasis in his spirituality. Verses 7 and 8 of the hymn in chapter two of the epistle to Philippians are frequently on his pen. The self-emptying of Christ is always seen, though, as a mystery of obedience and love. Because Christ loves the Father and shares the Father's own love for men, He empties Himself. It is in this self-emptying and in the profound dispositions of love and obedience which it implies that Jesus is Model.

b. *Jesus - Model in His relationship with men*

Jesus is model also in His relationship with men. Again, love is the most fundamental disposition of Christ in His relationship with persons. This love is one with His love for the Father: "Jesus Christ lived for us and His love for us was the reflection of His love for His Father."¹⁰⁵ It is also one with the Father's love for mankind: "Our Lord Jesus Christ has come . . . revealing the immense love of God for His creation."¹⁰⁶ In His oneness with the Father, Christ embodies the Father's own love for men, loving mankind as the Father loves. Love, therefore, motivates Christ's emptying of Himself for mankind.

If the word "obedience" expresses the love of Jesus as He is turned toward the Father, the word "zeal" expresses this same love turned toward mankind. Explaining what Jesus means when He speaks of the zeal of God's house, Gailhac writes: "It is His love, but His love in its most admirable effects."¹⁰⁷ It is in his manner of perceiving the virtue of zeal that we best see the unity of his theological vision. When he speaks of Christ's zeal, Gailhac states as its object the glory of God and/or the salvation of souls. Jesus Christ "burned with zeal for the glory

¹⁰⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3668: "Jésus-Christ a vécu pour nous et son amour pour nous a été comme le reflet de son amour pour son Père."

¹⁰⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3646: "Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ est venu . . . en révélant l'amour immense de Dieu pour sa créature."

¹⁰⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3734: "C'est son amour, mais son amour dans ses effets les plus admirables."

of His Father and the salvation of souls.”¹⁰⁸ “May Jesus, burning with zeal for the glory of God His Father and for our salvation, always be your model.”¹⁰⁹ He opens his treatise on zeal with the following words:

May Jesus, Who is most zealous for the glory of His heavenly Father and for the salvation of the world, inundate your hearts with His holy presence and inflame your souls with the divine fire which consumes Him.¹¹⁰

He goes on to say:

Zeal seems to have but one object, since the glory of God is its ultimate end. Nevertheless, this object includes first of all our own sanctification and then that of the neighbor: one is the fruit of the other.¹¹¹

The first object of Christ's zeal was the glory of His Father. The zeal with which He was filled was a zeal to make His Father known and loved by men. What Gailhac seems to be saying is that His love for the Father was such that Jesus was filled with the desire to reveal His Father — to make Him known and loved. Not alone by His words did Jesus do this, but especially by His life. It was this very revelation of the Father which brought salvation to mankind; in making the Father known, Jesus gave mankind access to the Father.

In treating the interior disposition of zeal, we pass on to analysis of the title “Savior” which Gailhac applies to Christ

¹⁰⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4690: “brûlait de zèle pour la gloire de son Père et le salut des âmes.”

¹⁰⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3774: “Que Jésus, brûlant de zèle pour la gloire de Dieu son Père et pour notre salut, soit à tout jamais votre modèle.”

¹¹⁰ *VR*, p. 140, *RL*, p. 177: Que Jésus, le zéléteur par excellence de la gloire de Dieu son Père céleste, et du salut du monde, remplisse votre cœur de sa sainte présence et allume dans votre âme le feu sacré qui consume la sienne!

¹¹¹ *VR*, p. 141, *RL*, p. 177: Le zèle semble n'avoir qu'un but, puisque la gloire de Dieu est sa fin dernière, cependant ce but vise aussi notre propre sanctification d'abord et ensuite celle du prochain: l'une est le fruit de l'autre.

more than any other.¹¹² Before doing so, however, it might be well to comment briefly on Christ as Good Shepherd, since we know that this parable was a favorite of Father Gailhac and that it is especially as “model” that he saw the Good Shepherd.

It is surprising that in his letters to the congregation Gailhac does not refer more frequently to the Good Shepherd.¹¹³ We know that the refuge which he founded in 1834 bore the name “Good Shepherd” — a name common to such establishments — and that his congregation of priests and brothers also bore this title. And yet to the sisters, he rarely refers to Christ as Good Shepherd. Perhaps this is because the title “Model” is much more comprehensive and if the sisters take Jesus as their model, imitation of the Good Shepherd will follow. When Gailhac does refer to Christ as Good Shepherd, it is in various contexts: once to show Christ as a model of devotion; again to underline His love for sinners. Another letter mentions the Good Shepherd as a model of zeal and compassion. In only one letter, addressed specifically to superiors, does Gailhac elaborate on Jesus as the Good Shepherd.¹¹⁴ He presents Christ in this mystery as a model of what the superior should be, of how she should act. The superior should know her sisters well. “She is to love them, for in the Good Shepherd, to know is to love.”¹¹⁵ Gailhac then elaborates on how a superior should lead the sisters, form them, care for them. “Finally, if someone has erred, it is then that the heart of a mother should be evident . . . speaking to her from the heart of the goodness of God and the joy He experiences in finding the lost sheep.”¹¹⁶ The attitude of the entire community toward a sister who has committed a fault is to be one of compassion and love. Indeed, “many religious have remained lost because the community has not acted as indicated above,” that

¹¹² More than 185 times as compared with “model” which he uses more than 165 times.

¹¹³ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3537, 3565, 3582, 3625; vol. 11, p. 3661; *VR*, p. 152.

¹¹⁴ *Ecrits*, p. 3541-2. The following three citations from the same letter are also found on these pages.

¹¹⁵ “Elle doit les aimer, car dans le Bon Pasteur, connaître c’est aimer.”

¹¹⁶ “Enfin si quelqu’une s’était égarée, alors doit paraître tout le coeur d’une mère . . . lui parlant avec le coeur de la bonté de Dieu et de la joie qu’il éprouve en retrouvant la brebis égarée.”

is, has not had that attitude of the Good Shepherd who seeks and receives lovingly the lost sheep.

The parable of the Good Shepherd expresses many of the traits most prominent in Gailhac's spirituality. In the constitutions of the Priests of the Good Shepherd, we find these traits articulated:

The priests of this little congregation are called Priests of the Good Shepherd.

This is a name that should be very dear to us for it was dear to Jesus Christ our Lord. He gave it to Himself.

While the Scribes, the Pharisees, the high priests of the old law were heaping insults upon Him, were accusing Him of being an evildoer, wicked, possessed by the devil, as His only vindication the Savior Jesus says: I am the good Shepherd, *ego sum Pastor Bonus*.

This name will remind the priests of the congregation that if they happen to suffer calumnies, persecutions from evil men, they will be more like Jesus Christ who has given them His name. This name will tell them what should be their concern, their zeal, their devotion for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. In a word, this name will ceaselessly recall to them the end of their vocation.¹¹⁷

We see here the same loving acceptance of the mystery of suffering, conformity to Christ, and zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of man that is evident throughout Gailhac's

¹¹⁷ *Pos Hist.*, p. 338: Les Prêtres de cette petite congrégation ont nom Prêtres du Bon-Pasteur. C'est un nom qui doit nous être bien cher, car il fut bien cher à Jésus-Christ notre Seigneur; c'est lui-même qui se l'est donné. Tandis que les scribes, les pharisiens, les pontifes de l'ancienne loi l'accablaient d'injures, l'accusaient d'être un malfaiteur, un impie, un possédé du démon, pour toute justification le Sauveur Jésus dit: Je suis le bon Pasteur, *Ego sum Pastor Bonus*. Ce nom rappellera aux prêtres de la Congrégation que s'il leur arrive de souffrir, de la part des méchants, des calomnies, des persécutions, ils n'en seront que plus semblables à Jésus-Christ qui leur a donné son nom. Ce nom leur dira quelle doit être leur sollicitude, quel doit être leur zèle, leur dévouement pour la gloire de Dieu et le salut des âmes; en un mot, ce nom leur rappellera sans cesse la fin de leur vocation.

writings to the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary. These are the interior dispositions of the Good Shepherd which the sisters are to imitate.

To summarize what we have said about Jesus as model: as the manifestation of the love and holiness of the Father, it is the *life* of Jesus which is exemplary. It is primarily in His interior dispositions as He situates Himself as Revealer of the Father's life to men that He is to serve as model. His stance of love toward the Father is one of obedience, expressing itself in the self-emptying humility of the Incarnation. In His stance toward men, Christ is a model of zeal — zeal for His Father's glory and zeal for the salvation of man.

3. *Jesus - Savior*

The zeal of Jesus Christ for His Father and for men led Him to offer Himself to the Father as Savior of all mankind. The relationship between the titles of Model and Savior is made explicit by Gailhac:

Jesus Christ prepared humanity by His example and His words; . . . by His sacrifice on the cross, He broke mankind's chains, He gave men the freedom of the children of God, He merited for them the graces needed to embrace the law of the gospel.¹¹⁸

He begins another letter: "May Jesus, Savior of all men, sent by the Father to be their light by His doctrine, their model by the holiness of His life, their salvation by His sacrifice, be Himself your rule of life."¹¹⁹

Although Jesus was Savior from the moment of the Incarnation, it is in His passion, death and resurrection that He com-

¹¹⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3428: Il [Jésus-Christ] a préparé l'humanité par son exemple et ses paroles; . . . par son sacrifice sur la croix il brise les chaînes de l'humanité, lui donne la liberté des enfants de Dieu, lui mérite des grâces dont elle a besoin pour embrasser la loi évangélique.

¹¹⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3742: "Que Jésus, sauveur des hommes, chargé par son Père d'être leur lumière par sa doctrine, leur modèle par la sainteté de sa vie, leur salut par son sacrifice, soit lui-même votre règle de conduite."

pletes the work of salvation. In a letter which speaks of the seriousness of the work of salvation, Gailhac writes: "The Savior Jesus did not undertake the work of our salvation lightly. . . . the gospel shows Him to us beginning His sacrifice in the crib, continuing it throughout every moment of His life, finishing it only on Calvary."¹²⁰ "It is because Jesus drank the chalice and suffered all the torments of the Passion that He saved the world."¹²¹

Because Gailhac sees the cross as the source of salvation, he also sees it as the mark of identification with Christ and as the source of all apostolic good. "Can anything be done without the Cross? Is it not from Calvary that everything comes? The cross is the source of all good things."¹²² The expression "All good comes from Calvary" is frequent in Gailhac's letters.¹²³

The mystery of salvation through the cross was not merely an abstract concept which Gailhac accepted intellectually. Rather he saw it as a reality to be continued in the life of the congregation. In all of his undertakings, he sees suffering and trials as marks of God's blessing and presence:

The cross is the whole hope and salvation of the world. It is by the cross that the world was overcome. Everything good is born from the cross and what is not founded on the cross is built on moving sand and does not last. It is impossible for any real good to be effected if the cross does not give it birth. I fear for any foundation which would not have its cross; the greater the designs God has on a house, the more it must be tested.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4202: "Le sauveur Jésus n'a pas entrepris légèrement l'oeuvre de notre salut. . . . L'évangile nous le montre commençant son sacrifice sur la crèche, le continuant tous les instants de sa vie, ne le consommant que sur le Calvaire."

¹²¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4569: "C'est parce que Jésus a bu le calice et qu'il a souffert tous les tourments de la passion qu'il a sauvé le monde."

¹²² *Ecrits*, vol. 19, p. 3183: "Rien peut-il être fait sans la croix? N'est-ce pas du Calvaire que tout découle? La croix est la source de tout bien."

¹²³ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3183, 3210, 3275, 3337, 3543, 3596; vol. 11, pp. 3670; vol. 12, p. 4455, 4486, 4520, 4569, 4613; vol. 13, p. 4710.

¹²⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3805: La croix est toute l'espérance et le salut du monde. C'est par la croix que le monde a été vaincu. . . . C'est de la

A life lived in union with Christ, a life of love and zeal, will necessarily be one lived in the shadow of the cross:

The life of love and zeal is nothing but sacrifice and continuing martyrdom, but such has always been the life of Jesus Christ and of His true disciples. All good has its source and its perfection in the cross.¹²⁵

The cross saves the world and gives life because it is on the cross that Jesus gave the clearest revelation of the Father as love. On Good Friday, Gailhac writes to the congregation: "Today Jesus has given us, according to His own words, the witness of His greatest love. He died to give us life."¹²⁶ In another letter he speaks of Jesus "manifesting His zeal to the point of dying on the cross for the glory of His Father and for our salvation,"¹²⁷ thus identifying once again zeal and love.

Gailhac sees the cross primarily in terms of reconciliation¹²⁸ and access to the life of God Himself. Because man had sinned, he needed to be freed. The work of redemption is described as life and reconciliation in a letter of 1880:

Jesus is our savior; everyone knows that that is the meaning of His name, and that meaning is not empty, it is a reality. He bears this name, it was given to Him on the day of His Incarnation, it was revealed to the world on the day of His birth because, truly, Jesus came only to save the world. Yes, the Word came down from

croix que naît tout bien et ce qui n'est pas fondé sur la croix est bâti sur le sable mouvant et n'a pas de durée. Il est impossible qu'aucun bien réel s'opère si la croix ne lui donne naissance. Je tremble pour toute fondation qui n'aurait pas sa croix; plus les desseins de Dieu sont grands sur une maison, plus elle doit être éprouvée.

¹²⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3670: La vie d'amour et de zèle n'est que sacrifice et martyre incessant mais telle a été toujours la vie de Jésus-Christ et de ses véritables disciples. Tout bien a son principe et sa perfection dans la croix.

¹²⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3807: "C'est aujourd'hui que Jésus nous a donné, d'après ses propres paroles, le témoignage de son plus grand amour; il est mort pour nous donner la vie."

¹²⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3830: "faisant éclater son zèle jusqu'à la mort sur la croix pour la gloire de son Père et notre salut."

¹²⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3543; vol. 12, p. 4569.

heaven to bring to unity what had been separated. He freely fell into nothingness only to draw out of that nothingness what had freely cast itself into the nothingness of sin. Yes, Jesus is savior. He restores life to whatever has lost it. He gives back the title "child of God" to man who had renounced it, and He opens heaven to man who had closed it.¹²⁹

Certainly Gailhac saw the paschal mystery as one. The cross and resurrection are different aspects of the one mystery of God's love for mankind. "Jesus rose for love of us, to give us a striking proof of our future resurrection."¹³⁰ Life and death are closely associated in Gailhac's spirituality — to die is to live. The death and resurrection of Christ are different facets of the one mystery of life through death. "If His death tells us how we ought to put off the old man, His resurrection tells us what our new life should be, once we have been raised up by His grace."¹³¹ If it is through His passion and death that Jesus saves us and gives us access to the life of the Father, it is the resurrection which shows us the life into which we enter.

Gailhac does, however, attribute different effects to Christ's death and resurrection: "He rose for your justification as He died for your sanctification."¹³² It is to the resurrection that

¹²⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3549: Jésus est notre Sauveur; tout le monde le sait, c'est la signification de son nom et cette signification n'est pas vaine; elle est une réalité. Il ne porte ce nom, il ne lui a été donné au jour de son Incarnation, il n'a été révélé au monde le jour de sa naissance que parce qu'en effet Jésus n'est venu que pour opérer le salut du monde. Oui, le Verbe n'est descendu des cieux que pour réunir ce qui était séparé. Il n'est librement tombé dans le néant que pour arracher au néant ce qui s'était librement jeté dans le néant du péché. Oui, Jésus est Sauveur. Il rend la vie à ce qui l'avait perdue. Il rend le titre d'enfant de Dieu à l'homme qui l'avait effacé, et ouvre le Ciel à l'homme qui l'avait fermé.

¹³⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3473: "Jésus est ressuscité par amour pour nous, pour nous donner une preuve éclatante de notre résurrection future."

¹³¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3526: "Si sa mort nous dit comment nous devons nous dépouiller du vieil homme, sa résurrection nous dit quelle doit être notre nouvelle vie une fois ressuscités par sa grâce."

¹³² *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3473: "Il est ressuscité pour votre justification comme il est mort pour votre sanctification."

Gailhac turns to describe the life which is salvation, the life into which Christ introduces us. At Easter 1877 he writes to the sisters urging them to rise spiritually with Jesus Christ and he identifies this spiritual resurrection with love.¹³² To the question: "What is it to love Jesus Christ?" he answers: "It is to rise." Then to the reciprocal question "What is it to rise?" he responds: "It is to love Jesus Christ." The identification of love, life, resurrection and conformity to Christ is evident in these lines:

Let us sing the cry of victory, the cry of life. Let us love, love Jesus Christ. Love is life; true life is love. Love is the transformation into Jesus Christ; transformation into Jesus Christ is the resurrection. We must, we must, my dear children, be risen, be transformed into Jesus Christ. We must love Jesus Christ.¹³⁴

Gailhac then goes on to develop three characteristics of Christ's risen life, of the life into which He introduces us: Christ is *truly* risen, He shows Himself truly risen, He dies no more. These characteristics appear again in a letter written six years later. We will examine this letter in some detail because it gives an insight into the way Gailhac saw the risen life of Jesus in which the Christian is called to participate.

Just as Jesus died to draw all things to Himself, so in rising "He wanted souls to participate in the glory of the resurrection, in a mysterious but real way."¹³⁵ He is both Savior and Model in His resurrection just as He was throughout His life. The three characteristics of His resurrection are therefore to be re-

¹³³ This letter is not found in the 14 volumes of Gailhac's writings. It was discovered with other souvenirs in Seafield Convent, Liverpool, England, in 1967. A verified copy is now in the unclassified archives material.

¹³⁴ Chantons le cri de victoire, le cri de la vie. Aimons, aimons Jésus-Christ. L'amour c'est la vie; la véritable vie l'amour. L'amour c'est la transformation en Jésus-Christ; la transformation en Jésus-Christ, c'est la résurrection. Il faut! il faut, mes chères enfants, être ressuscitées, être transformées en Jésus-Christ. Il faut aimer Jésus-Christ.

¹³⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3807. This letter ends on page 3809. All the references to it which follow are found on pp. 3807-3809.

flected in the sisters' own spiritual resurrection. First of all, Jesus truly rose. Gailhac then gives a description of bodily resurrection: "He took His body again, from which only the soul had been separated but which the divinity had never left. He was not a ghost."¹³⁶ Gailhac describes the risen Christ as "resplendent with life, glory, power." The sisters will be truly risen only if they are transformed, if they become one with Him, living His life. This transformation demands that each one work "unceasingly to supernaturalize her thoughts, her actions, her intentions, her will."

Secondly, Jesus Christ appeared to His disciples. Gailhac sees in this a call to prove the authenticity of one's spiritual resurrection by one's manner of living. "The true resurrection is proved by works and by one's entire way of acting."¹³⁷ The life of the sisters should witness to the life of Jesus Himself; seeing them, others should see Him.

Finally, once risen, Jesus was to die no more. "That is the great characteristic of true resurrection." The resurrection to which the sisters are called is not a passing one prompted by a retreat, a celebration or other extraordinary circumstance. Rather it is to be rooted in what has been called "*le terrible quotidien*."

Gailhac draws the following conclusion:

The natural consequence of these truths is that if we want our spiritual resurrection to be true, edifying and permanent, we must strip off the old man, all our habits, whatever in us does not conform to the example of Jesus Christ, to the teachings that He has given us. According to the words of Saint Paul, we must die and our life must be hidden in God with Jesus Christ.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ "Il a repris son corps dont l'âme seule s'était séparée, mais que la divinité n'avait jamais quitté. Ce n'était pas un fantôme."

¹³⁷ "La résurrection vraie se prouve par les oeuvres et toute la conduite."

¹³⁸ La conséquence naturelle de ces vérités est que si nous voulons que notre résurrection spirituelle soit vraie, édifiante et permanente, il faut nous dépouiller du vieil homme, de toutes nos habitudes, de tout ce qui en nous n'est pas conforme aux exemples de Jésus-Christ, aux

We have here the essence of Gailhac's doctrine concerning life and death: the old man must die in order for the new man to live. Whenever Gailhac speaks of renunciation, of stripping oneself of old habits, sins, faults, it is always in the context of entry into life. That is perhaps why Colossians 3:3 "For you have died and your life is hid with Christ in God" was one of his favorite passages. It no doubt expressed for him the unity of the mystery of life and death. It is to live God's own life that we are to die to ourselves. All that is negative in our lives has no other *raison d'être*.

We see then that Jesus as Savior saves us from ourselves. He offers to mankind a totally new life, the life of God Himself.

Along with the titles "Model" and "Savior", that of "Spouse" is also applied to Jesus more than fifty times. Gailhac uses it to reinforce the union which should exist between Christ and the sisters. Because the term "spouses" is applied even more frequently to the sisters, we prefer to treat this aspect of the mystery of union with Christ in the next chapter.

To grasp the unity between the titles "Model" and "Savior", and to summarize what we have said here, we might say that Gailhac sees the work of redemption as the establishment of relationships. Man is saved as he becomes more and more like Jesus, the Son *par excellence*, who is the exemplar and the source of these relationships. Standing in a relationship of loving obedience before the Father and in total self-giving to man, Jesus is both Savior and Model.

4. *Heart of Jesus*

This study of Gailhac's christological vision would not be complete without a reference to the Heart of Jesus. No doubt because of the central role of the humanity of Christ in Gailhac's faith-vision, he easily refers to the heart of Jesus as a symbol of His love for mankind. His manner of perceiving the heart of Jesus is clear from his writings. Rarely does he put emphasis on the physical heart as such. In one letter he speaks of the

maximes qu'il nous a enseignés; il faut que, selon la parole de S. Paul, nous soyons morts et que notre vie soit cachée en Dieu avec Jésus-Christ.

heart pierced by the centurion's lance, but even then sees the pierced side only as an entrance to the "dwelling place" which is the heart of Christ.¹³⁹

By far the major number of texts refer to the heart as the place of residence of the sentiments of Christ: In the heart of Christ are His dispositions, His interior sentiments; it is there that one encounters most especially His love for the Father and for men, His humility and His obedience.

Because the heart of Jesus is a loving heart, it is the source of grace as well and the sisters are urged to draw frequently at this source. Gailhac often uses the term "heart of Jesus" in a context of intimacy between Christ and the "heart" of the sisters; the title is often linked with that of Spouse. The sisters are to "dwell in His heart," to unite their heart to His. The heart of Christ is a place of presence, of meeting. Insofar as each sister is "in the heart of Jesus", she is one with her sisters. And so the exhortation to be "one in the heart of Jesus" is common in Gailhac's letters.¹⁴⁰ This dwelling in the heart of Jesus can also erase the distance which might separate the sisters from one another.

Gailhac speaks not only of union with the heart of Jesus, but also of an exchange of hearts.¹⁴¹ What he envisages here is that the interior dispositions of the sisters would be identified with those of Christ to such an extent that His heart would be theirs, so to speak.

A note which is almost absent from Gailhac's writings on the Sacred Heart is that of reparation. In only one letter does he speak of reparation, and this is in a concrete situation in which two of the sisters are living in a way that is obviously not in harmony with their religious consecration. Gailhac writes: "Let us try to make up to Jesus for the pain that they [the two sisters] inflict on His loving heart."¹⁴² In another letter,

¹³⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4316.

¹⁴⁰ See, for example, *Ecrits*, vol. 12, pp. 4145, 4165, 4178, 4365, 4544.

¹⁴¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3964.

¹⁴² *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3270: "Tâchons de dédommager le bon Jésus des plaies qu'elles [les deux soeurs] font à son Cocur si aimant."

he urges a superior to respond to the graces she has received in order to console the Heart of Jesus.¹⁴³ The absence of this note of reparation is remarkable in a century which accented it rather strongly. In his apostolic letter *Benigno divinae Providentiae* of 1889, Leo XIII states that one of the principal ends of devotion to the Sacred Heart is expiation of the ingratitude of men and appeasement of the divine wrath.¹⁴⁴

Likewise absent from Gailhac's passages on the Sacred Heart is reference to the universal dominion of that heart. This characteristic was prominent enough in nineteenth century devotion to the heart of Jesus to lead to the consecration of the human race to the Sacred Heart both in 1875 and in 1899.

Gailhac centers his attention almost exclusively on the heart of Christ as symbol, source and locus of the interior life of Jesus. This centering reflects the central role which identification with the Person of Jesus Christ holds in his faith-vision.

The heart of Jesus is often linked with the heart of Mary in Gailhac's writings. Indeed, he rarely speaks of the heart of Mary without referring in some way to the heart of Jesus. The religious are often called upon to imitate Jesus and Mary: "In imitating Mary you will imitate Jesus, for Mary is the faithful image of Jesus."¹⁴⁵ The relationship between the hearts of Jesus and Mary is outlined in a letter written less than four years before Gailhac's death where his love for the heart of Christ is so evident that he seems almost incapable of speaking of the heart of Mary without an immediate return to the heart of her Son:

It is true that the heart of Mary is the treasure of graces, for Jesus Christ has confided them to her to distribute to us, but the heart of Jesus is the source; it is from this divine heart that all the riches of heaven come to us. If we love the heart of Mary, even more should we love the heart of Jesus; it is the heart of Jesus that has created the heart of Mary, the heart of Jesus is eternal; the

¹⁴³ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3981.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Leonis XIII, *Pontificis Maximi Acta*, vol. IX, Rome, ex typographia vaticana, 1890, pp. 121-125.

¹⁴⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3892: "en imitant Marie, vous imitez Jésus, car Marie est l'image fidèle de Jésus."

heart of Mary has limits, the heart of Jesus has none. The moon owes its light to the sun, the sun burns with the light which is its being.¹⁴⁶

As the heart of Jesus is the symbol of all Christ's interior dispositions, so with Mary, her heart is that symbol of her most fundamental attitudes before God and man. Her heart is symbolic of who she is. Gailhac writes to the congregation: "In creating you, He [God] has given you a name which unites all the attributes of Mary, for the name 'Sacred Heart of Mary' says Mary completely."¹⁴⁷ He outlines some of the dispositions of the heart of Mary in the same letter: purity, humility, poverty, obedience, charity, zeal for the glory of God. All these dispositions are embodied in a single word: love.

Now, with what is the Heart of Mary filled? With the love of Jesus, and with nothing but that love. . . . Oh, ineffable happiness! A lowly creature shares in the love of the Blessed Trinity. God the Father has given Mary a share of His own love for His well-beloved Son Who is the object of all His goodness; God the Son has communicated to her His love for His Heavenly Father and for all men whom He adopted by becoming Incarnate; God the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Love, has consumed her with divine love, so that, with Him, she may communicate to men the love of the Father and the merits of the Son. . . . Ever faithful to His love Mary guarded it carefully, causing it to grow and expand in her heart by abandoning herself to the action of the Holy Spirit and

¹⁴⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3955: Il est vrai que le Coeur de Marie est le trésor des grâces car Jésus-Christ les lui a confiées pour nous les distribuer, mais le Coeur de Jésus en est le principe, c'est de ce Coeur divin que toutes les richesses du Ciel nous arrivent. Si nous aimons le Coeur de Marie, encore plus devons-nous aimer le Coeur de Jésus; c'est le Coeur de Jésus qui a créé le Coeur de Marie, le Coeur de Jésus est éternel; le Coeur de Marie a des bornes, le Coeur de Jésus n'en a pas. La lune doit sa lumière au soleil; le soleil brille de la lumière qui est son être.

¹⁴⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3767: "En vous créant, Il [Dieu] vous a donné un nom qui réunit tous les attributs de Marie, car le nom 'Sacré-Coeur de Marie' dit Marie toute entière."

by corresponding to all His inspirations. She was all love. . . . Because of her perfect conformity to the Will of God, she became the Mother of the Savior and the co-operatrix in the work of the Redemption.¹⁴⁸

This last title, "co-operatrix in the work of the redemption", expresses well how Gailhac saw Mary in the Christian mystery. We will return to it in the next chapter which addresses Gailhac's understanding of Christian participation in the redemptive mystery.

D. THE HOLY SPIRIT

The place of the Holy Spirit in Gailhac's faith-vision is remarkable. While there are more than 170 direct references to the third Person of the Trinity, His role in the Christian mystery is implicit on almost every page of Gailhac's writing. The Spirit it is who sanctifies us, that is, who transforms us into Jesus Christ. Since Gailhac sees identification with Christ as the objective of the Christian life and since that identification with Christ is a gift worked in us by the third Person of the Trinity, the Spirit necessarily holds a central place in his faith-vision.

How does Gailhac envisage the Person of the Spirit? Principally as the Love between Father and Son. Gailhac's understanding of the Holy Spirit is revealed in a prayer, unfinished and undated, addressed to the Spirit "eternal member of the adorable trinity, infinitely adorable love of the Father and the Son, one God with the Father and the Son."¹⁴⁹ He states further on in this prayer: "The Father loves the Son He has begotten; the Son loves the Father Who has begotten Him. This two-fold love is the Holy Spirit Who thus proceeds from the Father and the Son."¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ *VR*, pp. 269-270, *RL*, p. 63. We have reversed the order of this passage.

¹⁴⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4095.

¹⁵⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4095: "Le Père aime le Fils qu'il a engendré; le Fils aime le Père qui L'engendre. Ce double amour est le Saint Esprit qui ainsi procède du Père et du Fils."

As the Love between Father and Son, the Spirit is sent by them, and Gailhac sometimes urges the sisters to pray the Father to send the Spirit of His Son; at other times he urges them to beg the Son to send His own Spirit. Although "all works outside the divine nature are done by the one God in three Persons,"¹⁵¹ a specific role in the Christian mystery is attributed to the Spirit. Various gifts, for example, are an effect and a sign of His presence. Among these gifts of the Spirit, Gailhac most frequently mentions light, joy, and peace. "God wishes to be served with a happy heart; He wants us to give Him our heart and all things joyfully. Joy is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit."¹⁵² With light, the Spirit also communicates strength:

May the God of mercies whose daughter you are pour more and more into your soul His Holy Spirit, and may the Holy Spirit enlighten you with His divine light and communicate His strength to you, so that knowing the will of God you might faithfully accomplish it.¹⁵³

He speaks as well of a "gentle and holy peace which is one of the most precious gifts of the Holy Spirit."¹⁵⁴

Within a community, it is the Spirit of love who unites the sisters to one another. In a letter on unity, Gailhac speaks of what he calls interior and exterior unity and says: "Interior unity is that charity which God pours into souls by His Holy Spirit."¹⁵⁵ The Spirit of love at work in the sisters gives them the power to love one another. The role of the Spirit in the

¹⁵¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4096.

¹⁵² *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4199: "Dieu veut être servi avec un esprit gai; il veut que nous lui donnions notre cœur et toutes choses gaïment. La joie est un des fruits du Saint Esprit."

¹⁵³ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4284: "Que le Dieu des miséricordes dont vous êtes l'enfant répande de plus en plus dans votre âme son saint Esprit, et que le Saint Esprit vous éclaire de ses divines lumières et vous communique toutes ses forces, afin que connaissant la volonté de Dieu vous l'accomplissiez fidèlement."

¹⁵⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3558.

¹⁵⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3686: "L'intérieure est cette charité que Dieu répand dans les âmes par son Saint Esprit."

very creation of the community is made explicit in the following passage:

“To enter into community” means to enter into a union with other persons animated, guided by charity,¹⁵⁶ which makes all one. The word “community” can neither be understood nor explained in any other way. So a community is no other than a number of persons united to God and to each other by charity. To put it better, a community is the true image of heaven where all are ONE by the love which God has for the elect, a love which includes God and His elect. It follows from this that a community animated by the Spirit of God, who is the union of the Father and the Son, is a true image of heaven.¹⁵⁷

Unity, however, is not a gift which is bestowed on a community “from the outside”, so to speak. It is an effect of the transformation of the sisters into Jesus Christ, transformation which is the mission of the Spirit. Only in the Spirit can the Christian cry “Abba, Father” (Gal. 4:6), that is, only in the Spirit can he stand before the Father as a son in the Son. It is the Spirit who not only “brings to remembrance all that Jesus has said” (J. 14:26) but who also bears witness to Christ within the believer (cf. Jn. 15:27). As the love between the Father and the Son, the Spirit introduces the Christian into that love by His very presence. The person led by the Spirit becomes ever more “filial”. “The Holy Spirit produces the same effect in all

¹⁵⁶ Instead of “charity,” we might write “Charity” or “Spirit” in all fidelity to Gailhac’s thought.

¹⁵⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4302: “Entrer en communauté,” c’est entrer dans une réunion d’êtres animées [*sic*], dirigées par la charité, laquelle de toutes ne fait qu’un. Le mot “communauté” ne peut s’entendre ni s’expliquer d’une autre manière. De telle sorte qu’une communauté n’est qu’un nombre d’âmes unies à Dieu et entre elles par la charité. Pour mieux dire, une communauté est l’image vraie du ciel où tout est UN par l’amour que Dieu a pour les élus, amour qui embrasse Dieu et les élus. Il suit de là qu’une communauté où règne l’Esprit de Dieu, qui est l’union du Père et du Fils, est une image vraie du Ciel.

souls who possess Him. Jesus Christ is the model.”¹⁵⁸ Unity is an effect of this transformation into Jesus Christ.

In imitation of the Son, the Christian opens himself to the Spirit to be led by Him. Docility to the Spirit is one of the characteristics of Jesus’ life on earth. In a letter already referred to where Gailhac treats of the rule and the spirit of the rule, he presents Jesus as a model of one who is constantly led by the Spirit:

Jesus Christ did nothing but by the Holy Spirit: it is by the Holy Spirit that Jesus Christ was led into the desert. It is the Holy Spirit who appeared at His baptism, in the form of a dove; it is by the Holy Spirit that He preached His heavenly doctrine, that He inundated the world with His light, that He showed men the way to heaven by the perfection of His life and the holiness of His example. It is by the Spirit that He worked the miracles which showed forth His divinity. It is by the Holy Spirit that He founded His Church, that He enabled His own apostles to spread it throughout the world. It is also by the Holy Spirit that He fashions His chosen ones and prepares them for the possession of heaven.¹⁵⁹

For Gailhac, identification with Christ will come about through total docility to the transforming Spirit. This sensitivity and openness to the Spirit are at the heart of a “spiritual life”, an interior life. The *life* to which the sisters are called is the life of the Father who is one with His Son:

¹⁵⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3873: “L’Esprit-Saint produit les mêmes effets dans toutes les âmes qui Le possèdent. Jésus-Christ est le modèle.”

¹⁵⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3872: Jésus-Christ n’a rien fait que par le Saint Esprit: c’est par le Saint Esprit qu’a été conduit Jésus-Christ au désert. C’est le Saint Esprit qui parut sur lui au baptême, sous la forme d’une colombe; c’est par le Saint Esprit qu’il a prêché sa céleste doctrine, qui a inondé le monde de sa céleste lumière, qu’il a montré aux hommes la route du ciel par la perfection de sa vie et la sainteté de ses exemples. C’est par le Saint Esprit qu’il a opéré les miracles qui ont révélé sa divinité. C’est par le Saint Esprit qu’il a fondé son Eglise, qu’il a rendu les apôtres propres à la propager dans tout l’univers. C’est encore par son Saint Esprit qu’il forme les élus et les façonne pour la possession du ciel.

We, creatures, can be one with God only through Jesus Christ, divine link with His Father, only by the grace of Jesus Christ and our fidelity to grace. And we correspond to this grace when by it we enter into the interior life which, leading us to Jesus Christ, unites us to Jesus Christ and by Him to His heavenly Father.¹⁶⁰

He goes on to state that it is impossible to enter into the life of God without dying to ourselves but that this death is necessary only so that the Spirit can live in us:

It is therefore impossible to enter into this life without dying to all that is earthly, worldly. Yes, because the interior life is the life of the Holy Spirit living in our spirit and in our heart and guarding all our senses and subjecting them to God so that they may not be masters but servants. It is only through this subjection that the Holy Spirit can live in our soul, unite it to Jesus Christ and enable it to live this life hidden in God with Jesus Christ, which is the only true one producing fruit for eternal life.¹⁶¹

The Spirit alone can introduce us into the life of union between the Father and the Son, and He can do this only when He finds in us a willingness to die. Gailhac refers to this "preparation" for the coming of the Spirit:

¹⁶⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3579: Nous, créatures, nous ne pouvons faire un avec Dieu que par Jésus-Christ, divin trait d'union avec son Père, que par la grâce de Jésus-Christ et notre fidélité à la grâce lorsque par cette grâce nous entrons dans la vie intérieure qui, elle-même nous conduit à Jésus-Christ, nous unit à Jésus-Christ et par lui au Père céleste.

¹⁶¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3579: Il est donc impossible d'entrer dans cette vie sans mourir à tout ce qui est terrestre, humain. Oui, car la vie intérieure est la vie du Saint Esprit vivant dans notre esprit et dans notre coeur et de là tenant tous nos sens et les assujettissant à l'empire de Dieu pour qu'ils ne soient pas maîtres mais serviteurs. Ce n'est en effet que par cet assujettissement que le Saint Esprit peut vivre dans notre âme, l'unir à Jésus-Christ et la faire vivre de cette vie qui est cachée en Dieu avec Jésus-Christ et qui, cependant, est la seule véritable produisant des fruits pour la vie éternelle.

Only the Holy Spirit can prepare a dwelling place in souls, but there is also the cooperation of the soul to which He wishes to communicate Himself. Before sending the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, our Lord Jesus Christ demanded that they withdraw to the Cenacle, and that there, in silence in prayer, in mortification and free from sin, they prepare themselves for His coming.¹⁶²

It is not, however, a question of renouncing oneself *before* the Spirit can come. Renunciation itself is the work of the Spirit.

Oh, how happy you will be if you allow yourselves to be led by the Holy Spirit! The creature [self?] will be effaced in you; guided by this Spirit who is the perfection of God, you will renounce all that is earthly, natural, worldly in you.¹⁶³

Rather, Gailhac sees a fundamental openness to being led by the Spirit, a willingness to die to oneself as a condition for the Spirit's life in us. He calls these conditions "the spirit of recollection and sacrifice."¹⁶⁴ The first is necessary so that one can listen to the Spirit, "to be attentive to the voice of God who speaks to your soul, to the various movements of His Spirit working in your heart." The spirit of sacrifice is necessary "to make all the sacrifices which His grace asks" and because "one can do nothing without dying to oneself."

Gailhac repeatedly urges the sisters to let themselves be led by the Spirit: "There is . . . nothing good nor meritorious in our life which has not been inspired by the Spirit of our Lord,

¹⁶² *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3872: Or, seul le Saint Esprit peut préparer une demeure dans les âmes, mais il existe la co-opération de l'âme à laquelle il veut se communiquer. Avant de faire descendre le Saint Esprit sur les apôtres, Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ exigea qu'ils s'enfermassent dans le Cénacle, et que là dans le silence, la prière, la mortification, l'éloignement du péché, ils se préparassent à sa venue.

¹⁶³ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3892: Oh! Que vous serez heureuses si vous vous laissez conduire par le Saint Esprit! La créature s'effacera en vous; guidé par cet Esprit qui est la perfection de Dieu, vous renoncerez à tout ce qu'il y a en vous de terrestre, de naturel, d'humain.

¹⁶⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3337.

done in the Spirit of our Lord.”¹⁶⁵ “Fill yourselves more and more each day with the Spirit of God; let yourself be guided in all things by His inspirations.”¹⁶⁶ “Follow the light which enlightens you. We are called to live not only in flesh and blood but according to the Spirit of God.”¹⁶⁷ “May the Spirit of our Lord continue to direct your life, may His light and His strength become ever more evident in you.”¹⁶⁸

The life of the person open to the action of the Spirit becomes rooted in love. Introduced into the love between the Father and the Son, he gradually lives more and more in that love. Gailhac sees love as “being taken possession of by the Holy Spirit.”¹⁶⁹

The Spirit of love is likewise a Spirit of truth. The stress which Gailhac puts on simplicity and authenticity seems to be based on his comprehension of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth. A life lived under His guidance is necessarily a truthful life. Gailhac’s insistence on truth and veracity is remarkable. He writes at one point: “Among all the virtues which the Rule recommends, simplicity, openness, occupies the first place.”¹⁷⁰ That Gailhac succeeded in communicating this understanding of the Spirit of truth is evident in a letter written by Mother Sainte-Croix in 1882. Referring to the spirit of the community, she says: “It is the very Spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord. This spirit knows no ruse, no deviousness towards anyone.”¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3779: “Il n’y a . . . de béni et de méritoire en notre vie que ce qui est inspiré par l’Esprit de notre Seigneur, fait dans l’Esprit de notre Seigneur.”

¹⁶⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3433: “Remplissez-vous tous les jours de plus en plus de l’Esprit de Dieu; conduisez-vous en tout par ses inspirations.”

¹⁶⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4147: “Suivez la lumière qui vous éclaire. Nous sommes appelés à vivre non seulement la chair et le sang mais selon l’Esprit de Dieu.”

¹⁶⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3717: “Que l’Esprit de notre Seigneur continue à diriger votre vie, que sa lumière et sa force soient de plus en plus en vous.”

¹⁶⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3777.

¹⁷⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4451: “Entre toutes les vertus que recommande la sainte règle, la simplicité, la franchise occupe la première place.”

¹⁷¹ *Arch. Hist.*, vol. II-D, p. 52: “C’est l’Esprit même de Jésus-Christ notre Seigneur. Cet esprit ne connaît ni ruse, ni détour envers qui que ce soit.”

In addition to His work in individuals and in communities, Gailhac sees the Spirit as accomplishing a specific mission within the whole Church. He speaks of the Spirit "who lives in the Church and in His vicar, as in all those who are members of the teaching Church."¹⁷² In his prayer to the Holy Spirit he mentions the Church "whose life, light and guide you are, who can say and teach only what You have revealed and taught to her."¹⁷³ In another letter he praises "the Church filled with the Spirit of Jesus Christ and acting according to this Spirit."¹⁷⁴ Gailhac's faith in the Church and his love for her were rooted in his grasp of the Spirit's presence within her.

His love for Scripture also is founded on his conviction that the biblical books are the work of the Spirit. Often he precedes scriptural citations with the phrase: "The Holy Spirit tells us. . ."¹⁷⁵ On one occasion he even attributes a non-biblical saying to the Spirit, perhaps mistakenly believing that it is found in Scripture.¹⁷⁶ Elsewhere he ascribes the Rule to the inspiration of the Spirit; but when he does this, it is only because of his understanding of the Rule as the explanation of the gospel, its concretization in the life of the community.¹⁷⁷ Never is the Rule seen in opposition to the gospel. That Scripture is the Word of God is stressed to the congregation: "Listen to the words of the Holy Spirit; it is He who speaks through the mouth of the evangelists and the apostles."¹⁷⁸

We can recapitulate this section by saying that it was primarily as the Spirit of love between the Father and Son that Gailhac saw the third Person of the Trinity. Within the Christian mystery, the Spirit has a specific mission: throughout the ages He speaks of Jesus Christ through Scripture and works

¹⁷² *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3859.

¹⁷³ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4095.

¹⁷⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3949.

¹⁷⁵ Among others, see *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3341, 3391, 3421, 3447, 3515; vol. 11, pp. 3662, 3720, 3706, 3818, 3911, 4005; vol. 12, pp. 4151, 4176, 4238, 4317, 4482.

¹⁷⁶ "The Holy Spirit tells us elsewhere that the eyes are the windows of the soul and that through them the devil enters and destroys our interior life." *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4482.

¹⁷⁷ *VR*, pp. 45, 208, *RL*, p. 15.

¹⁷⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4004. See also p. 4095.

the transformation of persons into Jesus Christ. He bestows His gifts of light, joy, consolation and love which are likewise signs of His presence. Because identification with Christ is the work of the Spirit, the Christian is to live in constant openness and fidelity to Him and His promptings. Rectitude and authenticity will be qualities of such a life. Gailhac not only sees the Spirit of truth acting within the individual but sees Him acting within the whole Church as well, guiding her and preserving her from error.

From what we have seen of Gailhac's understanding of the Father, Son and Spirit, it is clear that his vision of the Trinity was profoundly Christ-centered. The Incarnate Son of God stands at the heart of history, at the heart of life, giving meaning to both. This divine Person is essentially Son, and as man stands in a relationship of obedience to His Father. His obedience is not that of a slave but of a Son, that is, it springs from the love which exists between Father and Son.

Because the Son shares the Father's love for mankind, he "emptied himself" to reveal the Father's love in His own humanity. Through this revelation, all men have access to the Father and are invited to share in the life of God Himself. The supreme manifestation of the love of the Father was given on Calvary when Jesus loved His own even unto death. The mystery of salvation is prolonged in eternity where the Son continues His mission as mediator.

His mission of salvation on earth is continued by His Spirit, sent from the Father and the Son. The work of the Spirit is to continue the life and mission of Jesus — by transforming persons into sons and daughters, according to the model of the Son, through His presence with them.

The mystery of salvation, or rather the Person of Christ-Savior, is the axis on which Gailhac's faith-vision turns. All elements in his personal synthesis of revelation are ordered around this central reality which is always a mystery of love. It is this love which is the essence of God's own life.

How the Christian, the religious, is called to participate in this life is what we shall see in the next chapter.

The first part of the book is devoted to a general introduction to the subject of the history of the English language. It discusses the various influences that have shaped the language over time, including the contributions of Old English, Middle English, and Modern English. The author also explores the role of literature and the spoken word in the development of the language.

In the second part, the author provides a detailed account of the historical development of the English language. This section covers the period from the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons in the fifth century to the present day. It examines the changes in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation that have occurred over the centuries, and how these changes have been influenced by external factors such as contact with other languages and social changes.

The third part of the book focuses on the modern English language. It discusses the influence of American English and the role of the media in the spread of the language. The author also explores the relationship between the English language and other world languages, and how the English language has become a global lingua franca. This section also touches upon the future of the English language and the challenges it faces in a globalized world.

The final part of the book is a conclusion that summarizes the main points discussed in the previous sections. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the history of the English language in order to appreciate its richness and diversity. The author also offers some thoughts on the role of the English language in the future and the need for continued research and study in this field.

CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE LIFE OF THE TRINITY

The great Gift to mankind in Jesus Christ is the invitation to share in the life of God. This invitation is totally gratuitous on God's part and one to be responded to. The Christian mystery is a mystery of dialogue. Just as man, as man, is one who speaks a word in response to his world, so man, as believer, is one who speaks a word in response to the Word which he has perceived. A view of the Christian mystery which would not consider man's response to the divine invitation would be incomplete.

In chapter III, we saw Gailhac's understanding of the gift of Life which is offered to mankind. In the present chapter, we shall try to analyze man's response to that offer. In reality, we are looking at the same mystery of the life of the Trinity, but this time from the angle of participation in that life.

A. "ETRE A DIEU"

Perhaps the most basic and most general response that Gailhac describes, we could translate as "being turned toward God." It is the "être à Dieu" which occurs more than 140 times in his letters. Often he terminates his letters to the sisters with the expression "Soyons à Dieu" ("Let us be turned toward God") or "Soyez à Dieu" ("Be turned toward God") which seems to summarize the message he has tried to convey in the body of the letter. Throughout the forty years in which Gailhac writes to the congregation, the term appears consistently. A letter to Mother Saint Jean written on August 29, 1849 concludes: "Bonjour, my child, always be totally turned toward God, love Him

unreservedly.”¹ From Liverpool, during his last visit to England in August 1887, he writes to the sisters in Béziers: “My dear children, I ardently desire on my arrival to find all of you very holy and turned toward God.”² In 1886 he refers to the fact that this has been a constant message to the sisters throughout his life: “I wish, dear children, to repeat what I have told you so often: Be turned toward God totally and undividedly; let us live in God, let us live of God, for God.”³

The contexts in which he uses the expression are varied. Sometimes he addresses the exhortation to individuals, at other times to whole communities. He urges “being turned toward God” as a response to trials or temptations as well as to consolation. The same phrase sums up the obligations of the religious and serves as the nub of the evaluation they make of their own lives. The term occurs in letters where Gailhac has been very specific on practical points as well as in letters of direction and inspiration. The frequency of its use and the variety of contexts in which it appears no doubt spring from his conviction that being “turned toward God” is the essential condition of the sisters’ vocation.

Gailhac never really defines “être à Dieu”, but those letters where he completes the “Soyez à Dieu” with other expressions intended to reinforce his exhortation throw light on the meaning of the expression. What he seems to envisage is the fundamental orientation of one’s life, the deepest determination of one’s person. What is it that one really longs after? What is the object of one’s deepest and most fundamental desires? In 1871 he writes: “My daughter, be totally turned toward God. See everything in God, do everything for God.”⁴ Further on in the same letter, he adds: “When will we be totally turned toward

¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 3, p. 554: “Bonjour, mon enfant, soyez toujours toute à Dieu, aimez-le sans partage.”

² *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4024: “Mes chères enfants, je désire ardemment à mon arrivée de vous trouver toutes bien saintes, et toutes à Dieu.”

³ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3970: “Je veux, chères enfants, vous répéter ce que tant de fois je vous ai dit: ‘Soyons à Dieu sans partage et sans réserve; vivons en Dieu, vivons de Dieu, pour Dieu.’”

⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3118: “Ma fille, soyez toute à Dieu. Voyez tout en Dieu; faites tout pour Dieu.”

God? When will He be the sole master of our heart?"⁵ According to the context here, "being turned toward God" means looking on all of creation with the eyes of faith, having God and His glory as the principal motivation of all one's actions; it means having God as the ultimate criterion of all one's choices and actions.

The term "être à Dieu" has in some cases its most literal meaning of belonging or possession. To a community who has asked him what they must do to be turned toward God, Gailhac responds: "He [God] wants our heart to be penetrated with that profound conviction that it is God's possession."⁶ Often, being turned towards God is set in contrast to being turned toward oneself: "To be turned towards God, we must be completely dead to ourselves."⁷ "Be entirely turned toward God; never listen to yourself."⁸ One cannot be turned in two directions at the same time. A radical choice is necessary.

It is the process of personal conversion which changes one's orientation from oneself to God. "I hope to receive as soon as possible one of your letters consoling me, telling me that you are converted and completely turned toward God."⁹

When Gailhac urges the sisters to be turned toward God, he frequently underlines the totality, the extent of this state of being turned. Ideally, one cannot be half-turned or partially turned. He uses various expressions to indicate the totality of one's orientation toward God: "Be turned toward God, completely toward God, undividedly toward God;"¹⁰ "Toward God,

⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3178: "Quand serons-nous tout à Dieu? Quand sera-t-il le seul maître de notre coeur?"

⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4159: "Il [Dieu] veut que notre coeur soit pénétré de ce profond sentiment qu'il est la propriété de Dieu."

⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3405: "Pour être à Dieu, il faut être absolument morts à nous-mêmes."

⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3224: "Soyez à Dieu tout entière; ne vous écoutez jamais." See also p. 3244; vol. 12, pp. 4234, 4391, 4513.

⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4558: "Qu'au plus tôt je reçoive une de vos lettres qui me console en m'apprenant que vous êtes convertie et toute à Dieu."

¹⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3305: "Soyez à Dieu, toute à Dieu, sans partage." See also p. 3373; vol. 11, p. 3692; vol. 12, pp. 4159, 4612; vol. 13, p. 4721.

toward God entirely without any holding back;"¹¹ "Be always completely turned toward God in spirit, heart, will."¹² At the end of 1877, he writes to a community:

I cannot let the New Year begin without saying to you: My children, be turned toward God, toward Him once and for all, toward God entirely, toward God unreservedly, toward God in every detail of life, toward God always.¹³

All these phrases attempt to express the orientation of the whole person toward God. Gailhac speaks explicitly of the whole person: "All that we are must be turned toward God."¹⁴

He conceives of the orientation toward God as something dynamic. It is not something acquired once and for all which can give one security in the spiritual life. On the contrary, it demands continual renunciation, a constant deepening of one's desires:

We often say: My God, I give and consecrate myself entirely to you. Because our lips say it, we think that that is the sentiment of our heart and the disposition of our soul. In trials, in difficulties, in the crosses that come our way, we see, we experience indeed that there is much lacking in our offering, in our sacrifice.¹⁵

¹¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3308: "A Dieu, à Dieu toute entière, sans aucune réserve." See also vol. 12, p. 4280.

¹² *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3264: "Soyez toujours, toute, toute à Dieu d'esprit, de coeur, de volonté." See also vol. 12, pp. 4193, 4198, 4456, 4535.

¹³ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3398: Je ne puis laisser arriver l'année nouvelle sans vous dire: mes enfants, soyons à Dieu, à Dieu tout de bon, à Dieu entièrement, à Dieu sans partage, à Dieu dans tout le détail de la vie, à Dieu toujours.

¹⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3481: "Il faut que tout ce que nous sommes soit à Dieu." See also p. 3528.

¹⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3508: Nous disons souvent: Mon Dieu, je me donne et consacre entièrement à vous; parce que nos lèvres le disent, il nous semble que tel est le sentiment de notre coeur et la disposition de notre âme. Dans les épreuves, dans les peines, dans les croix qui se présentent, nous voyons, nous sentons bien qu'il y a beaucoup d'imperfection dans notre offrande, dans notre sacrifice.

The events of life sometimes show the insincerity or the superficiality of our orientation.

"Being turned toward God," however, is not an unattainable ideal. On occasion, Gailhac recognizes that the sisters are "completely turned toward God" and he rejoices in that fact.¹⁶ Even then, though, he exhorts them:

May God alone be our master, our king, our God. Be turned toward Him once again and toward Him alone. This must be our only cry everywhere and in everything, the only goal of our searching and the only objective that we set ourselves in everything.¹⁷

Perhaps the dynamism of Gailhac's concept springs from the fact that he situates the orientation toward God in the realm of desire, of desire which is never vague sentiment. "You ask me what you must do to be turned totally toward God? The question gives me great pleasure; it proves to me that you have the desire to belong to the God who has made you what you are and who has made you for Himself."¹⁸ It is not sufficient to say "I want to belong to God;" one's desire must be effective:

It is all very well to say: We wish to be turned toward God. But our conduct almost always contradicts our words. Oh, if once and for all, sincerely, effectively, we would say to God "We are yours," at that same moment God would be all ours.¹⁹

¹⁶ Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 12, pp. 4136, 4244, 4287.

¹⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, pp. 4456: Que Dieu seul soit donc notre maître, notre roi, notre Dieu. A lui donc encore une fois, et à lui seul! Il faut que ce soit l'unique cri en tout et partout, l'unique objet de nos recherches et la seule fin que nous nous proposons en tout.

¹⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4158: "Vous me demandez ce que vous devez faire pour être tout à Dieu? Cette question me fait plaisir; elle me prouve qu'il y a en vous le désir d'appartenir à ce Dieu si bon qui vous a faites ce que vous êtes et qui vous a faites pour lui."

¹⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4140: Nous disons bien: Nous voulons être à Dieu; mais presque toujours notre conduite dément nos paroles. Ah, si une bonne fois, sincèrement, efficacement, nous disions à Dieu: 'Nous sommes vôtres,' au même instant Dieu serait tout nôtre.

Spiritual desire is implicitly underlined in the following passage which echoes the vocabulary of the *Canticle of Canticles*:

Be turned then toward Jesus, possess Him, do not give yourself any rest until you have found Him... Run toward Him, embrace His feet, place your heart in His heart, withdraw from it no more.²⁰

This latter passage is one of the few where Gailhac uses the expression "be turned toward Jesus" rather than "be turned toward God."²¹ To be turned toward God is to be like Jesus, who is Himself turned toward the Father. As one becomes transformed into Him, identified with Him, one is more and more "turned toward God" as Jesus was, so that it is *by* Him that one is turned toward God.²² In a letter which speaks of imitation of Christ, Gailhac says: "Fix your eyes on Jesus Christ. Imitate Him; like Him, be humble, be faithful to grace... be turned toward God like Jesus Christ and nothing will be difficult for you."²³

The fruit of this state is joy and peace. The passage just quoted reflects this theme: "Nothing will be difficult for you."²⁴ Because being turned toward God is an act of love, all things become easy:

My dear daughters, be turned toward God, love Him with all your heart, may He be all for you; be all for Him. With love, nothing is painful, nothing is costly. Without love, the heart languishes, is heavy, finds everything difficult; it sees only obstacles everywhere. The heart which loves uses everything in order to love more.²⁵

²⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 3140: *Soyez donc tout à Jésus. Ayez Jésus, cherchez-le, ne vous donnez pas de repos jusqu'à ce que vous l'ayez trouvé. ... Courez auprès de lui, embrassez ses pieds adorables, mettez votre coeur dans son coeur, ne l'en retirez plus.*

²¹ See also *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4132.

²² Cf. *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3289.

²³ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4037: "Fixez vos regards sur Jésus-Christ. Imitiez-le; comme lui, soyez humbles, soyez fidèles à la grâce ... soyons à Dieu comme Jésus-Christ et rien ne vous coûtera."

²⁴ See also *Ecrits*, vol. 12, pp. 4213, 4332.

²⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3301: *Mes chères filles, soyez à Dieu, aimez-le de*

B. IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

1. *Interior Identification*

That identification with the Person of Jesus Christ is to be central in the lives of the religious is evidenced in many of Gailhac's letters. The transformation into Christ as He is in His relationship with the Father and with men is to be the sole concern of the religious. In 1881, Gailhac writes:

In reality, God has predestined you to this heavenly vocation in order that by His grace you might become images of Jesus Christ, His adorable Son. To form Jesus Christ completely in you, to live by Him, to be another Jesus Christ: that is the goal of your journey and the crown of your work... Therefore, renew yourself ceaselessly in the spirit of your vocation; take no rest until Jesus Christ is fully formed in you.²⁶

For Gailhac, this identification with Christ, indeed the whole Christian life, is contained in the words: "Imitate Jesus Christ." For him, the imitation of Christ includes everything: a proper attitude toward God, toward man, toward oneself, toward all created things. Every aspect of the Christian life is to be ruled by Jesus-Model. The example of Jesus is not merely an external norm against which to measure one's conduct but it exercises a power of attraction for the Christian. In a letter which he entitles "Jesus Christ, Model of the True Religious," Gailhac speaks of this power of attraction:

tout votre coeur, qu'il soit tout pour vous, soyez toutes pour lui. Avec l'amour rien n'est pénible, rien ne coûte. Le coeur sans amour languit, se traîne, trouve tout difficile, il ne voit que des obstacles partout; le coeur qui aime se sert de tout pour aimer davantage.

²⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3651-2: En effet, Il [Dieu] vous a prédestinées à cette céleste vocation afin qu'avec sa grâce vous devinssiez les images conformes de Jésus-Christ son adorable Fils... Former pleinement Jésus-Christ en vous, vivre de Jésus-Christ, n'avoir qu'une même vie avec Jésus-Christ, être d'autres Jésus-Christ, c'est le terme de votre course et le couronnement de votre oeuvre... Donc, renouvelez-vous sans cesse dans l'esprit de votre vocation, point de repos jusqu'à ce que Jésus-Christ soit pleinement formé en vous.

The model is there always before you, you can look at Him, admire Him, study Him at will. This first task is delightful in itself, it is thrilling. Does this first task not draw you even further? It produces the will, the generous determination to work to become like Him, completely one with Him.²⁷

Imitation of Christ, therefore, is not exterior conformity to certain material gestures but rather an identification with the Person of Christ, a putting on of His mind, a loving union with Him.

There are numerous letters which evidence the depth of the concept of "imitation" in Gailhac's writings. "Jesus is our model, our pattern; it is according to Him that we must form ourselves; it is only by becoming another *Him* that we will be what we ought to be."²⁸ In an unfinished letter he writes:

Your life must be the image, the copy of His life. You must all unite yourselves to Jesus Christ, clothe yourselves in Him, so penetrate yourselves with His spirit, His thoughts, His intentions, so imitate His works that you will be only one with this divine Savior. So without delay, after the example of Jesus Christ, hasten to dedicate your whole life to the glory of God, to the up-building of the neighbor, to the works of salvation.²⁹

²⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3722: Le Modèle est là toujours présent, vous pouvez le regarder, l'admirer, l'étudier à volonté. Ce premier travail est délicieux en lui-même, il est ravissant. . . . N'est-ce pas que le premier travail entraîne plus que cela, il produit la volonté, la généreuse détermination de travailler à lui devenir semblable, à ne faire qu'un avec lui.

²⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4279: "Jésus est notre modèle, notre moule; c'est sur lui que nous devons nous former; ce n'est qu'en devenant un autre lui-même que nous serons ce que nous devons être."

²⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3860: Votre vie doit être l'image, la copie de sa vie. Vous devez toutes vous unir à Jésus-Christ, vous en revêtir, vous tellement pénétrer de son esprit, de ses pensées, de ses intentions, tant imiter ses oeuvres que vous ne soyez qu'un avec ce divin Sauveur. Donc sans plus tarder, hâtez-vous à l'exemple de Jésus-Christ de consacrer toute votre vie à la gloire de Dieu, à l'édification du prochain, aux oeuvres de salut.

And again:

To imitate Jesus Christ is not an empty word; it is to live the life of Jesus Christ to the point of being able to say with St. Paul: For me to live is Jesus Christ. I live, no, it is no longer I who live, it is Jesus Christ who lives in me. To imitate Jesus Christ, then, is to love all that He loves and to hate all that He hates.³⁰

Because the exterior of Jesus was the overflow of his interior dispositions, the sisters are urged to study and to contemplate the actions, the external mode of being of Christ. “[The religious] must study Jesus Christ, contemplate Him. This study, meditated with love, will result in a double light which will show her Jesus Christ in His exterior life and reveal to her the interior life of Jesus Christ.”³¹ Always, though, the primacy of Christ’s interior dispositions is recalled: “It is not enough to imitate the exterior of Jesus; you must study His interior life as well in order to make yours like that of Jesus.”³² “Work every day by prayer and meditation to know well both the life and the interior of Jesus, not only to know Him well but also to imitate Him.”³³

Imitation is more than studying, contemplating Jesus. Contemplation is a first step towards imitation, an imitation which engages all the faculties of the person. We see in the following passage that imitation is the culmination of the process of think-

³⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4679: Imiter Jésus-Christ n'est pas un vain mot; c'est vivre de la vie de Jésus-Christ au point de pouvoir dire avec Saint Paul: Mon vivre, c'est Jésus-Christ. Je vis, non, ce n'est plus moi qui vis c'est Jésus-Christ qui vit en moi. Donc, imiter Jésus-Christ, c'est aimer tout ce qu'il aime et abhorrer tout ce qu'il abhorre.

³¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3516: “Elle [la religieuse] doit étudier Jésus-Christ, le méditer. Dans cette étude, méditée avec amour, il en résultera une double lumière qui lui montrera Jésus-Christ dans sa vie extérieure et lui révélera l'intérieur de Jésus-Christ.”

³² *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3325: “Il ne suffit pas d'imiter l'extérieur de Jésus; il faut de plus étudier l'intérieur de Jésus pour rendre votre intérieur conforme à celui de Jésus.”

³³ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4641: “Travaillez tous les jours par la prière et la méditation à bien connaître et la vie et l'intérieur de Jésus, non seulement pour le connaître mais pour l'imiter.”

ing about Jesus, studying Him, contemplating Him, "savoring" Him:

Dear children, always remain united to Jesus Christ; may the thought of Him ceaselessly fill all the powers of your soul; may your intelligence wish to know only Jesus Christ and Him crucified; may He be always present to your memory. Study Jesus Christ, His life, His words, His works; ask Him to allow you to enter into His heart in order to contemplate its sentiments, intentions, love, devotion. But though it is no doubt delightful to study Jesus Christ, to contemplate Him, that is not enough; you must imitate Jesus Christ.³⁴

In a letter which praises Jesus Christ as the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all things, Gailhac writes:

In Jesus Christ are all the treasures of God's knowledge and wisdom. Happy then the soul who dedicates her life to studying Jesus Christ; happier yet she who succeeds in knowing Him; still happier she who knowing Him, loves Him and who loving Him, imitates Him; finally, fully happy is she who knowing Him, loving Him, copying Him, has succeeded in forming Him entirely in herself. She can say with St. Paul: For me to live is Jesus Christ. Seeking Jesus Christ must be your only thought, your desire, your entire concern, the only goal of your thoughts, of your will, of your life.³⁵

³⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4547: Chères enfants, tenez-vous toujours unies à Jésus-Christ; que sa pensée remplisse sans cesse toutes les facultés de votre âme; que votre intelligence ne veuille savoir que Jésus-Christ et Jésus-Christ crucifié; qu'à votre mémoire il soit toujours présent. Étudiez Jésus-Christ, sa vie, ses paroles, ses oeuvres; priez-le de vous permettre d'entrer dans son coeur pour en contempler les sentiments, les intentions, l'amour, le dévouement. Mais étudier Jésus-Christ, le contempler, c'est bien précieux sans doute; ce n'est pas assez; il faut imiter Jésus-Christ.

³⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3529-30: En Jésus-Christ sont tous les trésors de la science et de la sagesse de Dieu. Heureuse donc l'âme qui consacre sa vie à étudier Jésus-Christ; plus heureuse celle qui est parvenue à le connaître; bien plus heureuse celle qui, le connaissant, l'aime et qui l'aimant, l'imité; enfin pleinement heureuse l'âme qui le connaissant, l'aimant,

It is evident that for Father Gailhac imitation is an act of knowledge and of love; it is that interior resemblance which allows one to say: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me."

Identification with the thoughts, sentiments and desires of Jesus Christ, in short with the "interior" of Jesus, is necessarily reflected in one's way of acting, in one's external conduct. This exterior reflection is the test of the authenticity of one's imitation of Christ. "May your life be the image of the life of Jesus Christ. May Jesus Christ be expressed by all your actions . . . Dear children, study Jesus Christ. Have Him constantly in your mind, even more in your heart; may He reveal Himself in your whole life." ³⁶

2. *Following of Christ*

Gailhac sometimes uses another expression — "the following of Christ" — when referring to the imitation of Christ. To follow Jesus, to imitate Him, to be His disciple are equivalent terms for Gailhac. The rule of life written for Mother Saint Jean reflects the way in which he understands the following of Christ. He puts the following words on the Lord's lips:

You do not know what it is to follow me?

I will teach you:

To follow me is to imitate me.

To follow me is to model your life on my example.

To follow me is to think my thoughts. It is to love me alone and to sacrifice everything either to preserve or to increase my love in your heart.

To follow me is to do as I have done . . .

le copiant, est parvenu à le former entièrement en elle; elle peut dire avec Saint Paul: Mon vivre c'est Jésus-Christ. . . Chercher Jésus-Christ doit être toute votre pensée, votre désir, toute votre sollicitude, tout le but de vos pensées, de votre volonté, de votre vie.

³⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4549: "Que votre vie soit une image de la vie de Jésus-Christ. Que Jésus-Christ soit représenté par toutes vos actions. . . Chères enfants, étudiez Jésus-Christ. Ayez-le constamment dans l'esprit, plus encore dans le coeur; qu'il se révèle dans toute votre vie."

To follow me is to act in such a way that you are able to say in truth: It is no longer I who live, it is Jesus Christ who lives in me.³⁷

Although a later letter states that "the first step to take in order to follow Jesus Christ is to imitate Jesus,"³⁸ it is clear from the context of this letter and others that there is no distinction between the following of Christ and imitation of Him.

When Gailhac speaks of the following of Christ, he often cites Lk. 9:23: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." This passage summarized for him the whole of the Christian life: "There is the summary, the essence of all gospel teaching. It is the sure and only way to true perfection."³⁹ "The whole Christian life, the life of holiness, is contained in these few words."⁴⁰ Out of forty-two quotations from the gospel according to Luke, twenty-two refer to this passage. The sisters must have been accustomed to Gailhac's referring to this verse as the "three words" summing up the Christian life and there is interesting evidence of this. In the twelfth volume of Gailhac's writings, we find letters whose originals had been lost but which had been copied into notebooks by the sisters. This practice of re-copying Gailhac's letters was common in the congregation, no doubt because of the difficulty the sisters would have had in reading Gailhac's handwriting, but also so that they might be able to "read, re-read and meditate" his letters as he sometimes exhorts them. A copy of a letter of June 7, 1875,

³⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 3, p. 583: Vous ne savez pas ce que c'est que me suivre? Je vais vous l'apprendre: Me suivre, c'est m'imiter. Me suivre, c'est conformer votre vie à mes exemples. Me suivre, c'est penser mes pensées, c'est m'aimer uniquement et tout sacrifier ou pour conserver ou pour augmenter mon amour dans votre coeur. Me suivre, c'est faire comme j'ai fait. . . . Me suivre, c'est vous conduire de telle sorte qu'en vérité vous puissiez dire: Ce n'est plus moi qui vis, c'est Jesus-Christ qui vit en moi.

³⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3993.

³⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4635: "Voilà l'abrégé, l'essence de toute la morale évangélique. C'est la voie sûre mais unique de la vraie perfection."

⁴⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4583: "Toute la vie chrétienne, sainte est contenue dans ces quelques paroles."

written to a superior, reads as follows: "Help them to understand . . . that Jesus Christ's whole doctrine and His example are summarized in these words: If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, carry his cross every day of his life and follow me."⁴¹ The original of this letter was found in 1967, after volume 12 of Gailhac's writings had been compiled, and it is remarkable that the scriptural quotation is missing. The passage simply reads: "Help them to understand . . . that Jesus Christ's whole doctrine and His example are summarized in these three words." It must have been evident to which "three words" Gailhac was referring, no doubt because of the prominent place they held in his doctrine.

The importance of this Lukan passage in Gailhac's faith-vision and in the life of the congregation is underlined also in the first general chapter held in 1876. At its final session the delegates wrote:

Let the rule of perfection consist in:

- 1) the rule which we must observe in all its points, all its details;
- 2) these three words of our Lord: Deny oneself, carry the cross, follow Him;
- 3) these words of St. Paul: "I die every day," "Strip yourself of the old man in order to clothe yourself with the new;"
- 4) the words of the Prophet-king: "My soul is always in my hands and I forget neither God nor His holy will."⁴²

The fourth item, it seems to us, captures the reality we have previously referred to as "being turned toward God." Gailhac implies this in a letter where, having seen that "the 'self' tends to be a center to which everything refers as if to its ultimate end," he adds: "To renounce oneself is the equivalent of this other word of the heavenly Father: Walk in my presence and

⁴¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4366: "Faites-leur bien comprendre . . . que toute la doctrine de Jésus-Christ et ses exemples sont résumés dans ces paroles: Si quelqu'un veut venir après moi qu'il se renonce lui-même, qu'il porte sa croix tous les jours de sa vie et qu'il me suive."

⁴² *Cop. Pub.*, fol. 1589 (*Summ.*, p. 2735-6).

you will be perfect.”⁴³ To walk in God’s presence is to be turned toward Him and turned away from oneself.

The second and third items of the general chapter statement were seen by Gailhac and the sisters as synonymous. Gailhac often associates the text from Luke with Eph. 4:22-24 (or Col. 3:9-10): “Put off your old nature . . . and put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.” In 1880 he writes:

He also taught us that one can only go to Him by practising His word, by living according to His doctrine. It is all in these three words: If anyone wishes to come . . . that is to say, as St. Paul explains, let him strip off the old man and clothe himself in Jesus Christ.⁴⁴

He is even more explicit regarding the relationship of the Lukan and Pauline passages in this letter:

Our Lord said: If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, let him carry his cross every day of his life and follow me; and St. Paul expressing the same thought said: Strip yourself of the old man and put on the new man who has been created by God in justice and holiness of truth. Compare these two texts; their meaning is identical: It is impossible to arrive at renewal without renunciation of oneself and without the stripping off of the old man.⁴⁵

⁴³ *VR*, p. 249, *RL*, p. 218.

⁴⁴ Letter of July 9, 1880. Unclassified in archives; found in Seafield Convent, Liverpool, England, in September 1973: Il nous a enseigné aussi qu’on ne peut aller à lui qu’en pratiquant sa parole, qu’en vivant conformément à sa doctrine. Or cette doctrine vous venez de l’entendre. Elle est toute dans ces trois mots: Si quelqu’un veut venir . . . C’est-à-dire comme l’explique S. Paul, qu’il se dépouille du vieil homme, qu’il se revête de Jésus-Christ.

⁴⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4767: Notre Seigneur a dit: Si quelqu’un veut venir après moi, qu’il se renonce soi-même, qu’il porte sa croix tous les jours de sa vie et qu’il me suive. Et Saint Paul exprimant la même pensée a dit: Dépouillez-vous du vieil homme et revêtez-vous de l’homme nouveau qui a été créé de Dieu dans la justice et la sainteté de la vérité. Comparez ces deux textes; leur signification est identique: il est impossible d’arriver

It is in his treatise on order that Gailhac elaborates on the passage from Luke which we are considering here, putting emphasis especially on freedom in the following of Christ. Because this scriptural text recapitulates for him the total reality of imitation of Christ, we will analyze it here.

Gailhac begins his treatise by describing what he means by order.⁴⁶ He seems to be envisaging the correspondence of all reality to the divine plan, the establishment of all things in proper relationship to God and to one another. Order is all-embracing and produces peace which is the "tranquillity of order." "Order enters into life when God alone is our life, when the soul is able to say with Saint Paul: For me to live is Jesus Christ."⁴⁷ Once more Gailhac seems to be focussing the total response of the Christian, the identification of the Christian with Jesus Christ.

If one has the interior dispositions of Christ, these attitudes will necessarily be reflected exteriorly. And so "order is in one's conduct." Gailhac then analyzes "conduct" from three points of view: in itself, in the principles which regulate it, in its materiality. It is the second aspect which interests us here because it is as a principle of order that he elaborates on the following of Christ.

An ordered life is one lived in harmony with the will of God who is the source of all order. This will is not vague and esoteric but has been revealed to man throughout history — first of all through the patriarchs and prophets, but totally and definitively in Jesus Christ. Through His words and especially through His life, the Son proclaimed the will of the Father. "The theory of His will was made quite clear by the life of His Son who preached it."⁴⁸

à une rénovation sans le renoncement du moi, et sans le dépouillement du vieil homme.

⁴⁶ This treatise is found in *Ecrits*, vol. 3, pp. 787-812, and in somewhat edited form in *VR*, pp. 232-241, *RL*, pp. 222-231.

⁴⁷ "L'ordre entre dans la vie lorsque Dieu est toute notre vie. ... lorsque Dieu occupe tout notre coeur si grand, si vaste. ... L'ordre est dans la vie lorsque l'âme peut dire avec Saint Paul: 'Mon vivre, c'est Jésus-Christ.'"

⁴⁸ "La théorie de sa volonté fut toute éclairée par la vie de son Fils qui la prêchait."

The gospel, as the memory of the words and deeds of the Son, is the résumé of all the truths God has revealed to man. In the gospel — especially in the sermon on the mount — the novelty of the message of Christ is recalled. Values held by the world are totally reversed. “Who, before Jesus Christ, had dared to say that poverty is the source of true riches, that suffering is the principle of real happiness which lasts forever?”⁴⁹

In order to assure that the total gospel message would be easily remembered and recalled, the Lord willed to summarize it, first of all in the commandment of love of God and neighbor which contains all the Law and the prophets. Secondly, He recapitulated the total message in the three words: If anyone will follow me . . .

Gailhac then proceeds to explain these “three words.” First of all, he sets them in the context of freedom, underlining the introductory phrase: “If anyone *wishes* to come after me.” “Jesus Christ does not want His disciples to be forced but free . . . There is a contradiction between the name ‘slave’ and that of ‘child of God’.”⁵⁰ Since it is by sons and daughters that the Lord wishes to be served, it is a filial obedience that He expects and not the obedience of a slave. Gailhac states that the obedience of the disciples of Jesus Christ should be “rooted in esteem for what is true and, consequently, good, useful and necessary.” Only those who prefer truth to lies, God to Satan, can be disciples of Jesus Christ.

The conditions of discipleship are three-fold. First of all, one must renounce oneself. Gailhac shows the reasonableness of this condition since man is created by God and therefore owes all to Him. He then reinforces his logic by showing that because of sin the struggle to renounce oneself is even more urgent and more difficult. And yet only the renunciation of all in us that is pride, ambition — in short, of all that is sin — will allow us to be truly free. “To rise above what is created . . . above

⁴⁹ “Qui, avant Jésus-Christ, avait osé dire que la pauvreté est la source des vraies richesses, que la souffrance est le principe du bonheur réel à jamais durable?”

⁵⁰ “Si quelqu’un *veut* venir après moi.” “Jésus-Christ ne veut pas des disciples forcés mais libres. . . il y a contradiction entre le nom d’esclave et celui d’enfant de Dieu.”

self . . . to be subject only to the One who is truth and infinite holiness, is this not the true and only real freedom? Only the soul who believes and practises the doctrine of renunciation is just, holy, free . . ." ⁵¹

The second condition of discipleship is to carry one's cross daily. "It is also the second condition of true freedom, of Christian liberty." ⁵² Gailhac underlines the word "carry." The Lord does not say to "drag" one's cross. Certainly resignation is needed to accept the cross in one's life, but "resignation does not last if it is not strengthened by love." Love alone enables one to carry one's cross joyfully. The cross one is asked to carry is his own, not one of his own choosing, but the one rooted in his own life. "In a word, our cross is everything that makes us suffer . . . whatever the source of our pain, suffering, humiliation, privation, it is God who directs it and says to us 'Carry your cross'." ⁵³

The word "daily" is an important one for Gailhac. In spite of his inexactitude in quoting Scripture, he never fails to add this phrase to the passage in question, even though the versions in Matthew and Mark omit it. Although he does not elaborate on it here, he does say: "But is there no respite, a moment of rest? Jesus' words are adamant: every day of your life." ⁵⁴

The third condition of discipleship — to "follow me" — includes dying with Christ:

Where is Jesus Christ going with His cross? To Calvary.
Why? To be nailed to the cross. If, then, we must

⁵¹ "S'élever au-dessus de ce qui est créé . . . au-dessus de soi-même . . . n'être soumis qu'à Celui qui est la Vérité et la sainteté infinie, n'est-ce pas la vraie, l'unique liberté? Seule l'âme qui croit et pratique la doctrine du renoncement est juste, sainte, libre . . ."

⁵² "C'est aussi la seconde condition de la vraie liberté, de la liberté chrétienne."

⁵³ "En un mot, notre croix c'est tout ce qui nous fait souffrir . . . D'où que vienne la peine, la souffrance, l'humiliation, la privation, c'est Dieu qui la dirige et nous dit: 'Portez votre croix.'"

⁵⁴ "Mais enfin n'y a-t-il pas de trêve, un moment de repos? Les paroles de Jésus-Christ sont formelles: tous les jours de sa vie."

carry our cross and follow Jesus Christ, we must go to Calvary to be nailed to the cross with Jesus Christ.⁵⁵

The last words of the above quotation are of capital importance in understanding the spirit in which Gailhac speaks of renunciation, of suffering, of death. All are done with Jesus Christ, in imitation of Him. This identification with Him transforms death into life, suffering into joy. "There is only one way not to feel the suffering of the Cross: to carry it with Jesus Christ and for the love of Jesus Christ."⁵⁶ Participation in the redemptive work of Christ is another reason or "justification" for our being crucified with Him:

It is nailed to the cross that He completed the work of His Father, that He drew everything to Himself and that thus He became the link, the mediator who reconciled heaven with earth, humanity with divinity . . . The work of Jesus Christ is complete; it is up to each one of us to take our place in this work by consenting to be nailed to the cross with Jesus Christ.⁵⁷

The following of Christ to Calvary is not a theoretic, abstract reality. Gailhac recalls the words of Saint Paul "I am nailed to the cross of Jesus Christ," the example of the saints, especially of the martyrs of the first centuries, and that of the ascetics and virgins throughout the history of the Church. The grace of physical martyrdom is not given to all and yet all are called to the martyrdom of everyday life. "The martyrdom of blood is short-lived; the martyrdom required of all those who

⁵⁵ Où va Jésus-Christ avec sa croix? au Calvaire. Et pourquoi? Pour y être cloué à la croix. Donc si nous sommes obligés de porter notre croix et de suivre Jésus-Christ, il nous faut aller au Calvaire pour y être cloué à la croix avec Jésus-Christ.

⁵⁶ "Il n'est qu'un seul moyen de n'en pas sentir les douleurs, c'est de porter [la croix] avec Jésus-Christ et dans l'amour de Jésus-Christ."

⁵⁷ C'est cloué à la croix qu'il a consommé l'oeuvre de son Père, qu'il a attiré toutes choses à lui et qu'ainsi il a été le trait d'union, le médiateur qui a réconcilié le ciel avec la terre, l'humanité avec la divinité . . . L'oeuvre de Jésus-Christ est complète; c'est à chacun de nous de prendre notre place dans cette oeuvre en consentant d'être cloué à la croix avec Jésus-Christ.

would live the life of Jesus Christ is as long as life itself.”⁵⁸ This martyrdom is the death to oneself required to enter into the life of God.

The one who renounces himself unceasingly in order to listen to and follow the doctrine of Jesus Christ, His example — is that person not a martyr? When every spiritual and physical trial, all persecutions which God sends, either by the devil or by men are received . . . with resignation, with love, is this not death to self?⁵⁹

In this third section of his explanation, Gailhac does not continue the theme of liberty which he had underlined in the two previous sections. He seems rather so intent on developing the notion of dying with Christ that he has forgotten that of freedom. He ends rather abruptly his elaboration on the “three words” which summarize the conditions for following Christ and then goes on to consider “external order,” that is, the hierarchy existing in society and especially in religious congregations. We see from what he writes about the following of Christ, that it is a reality which encompasses all of life, which is rooted in daily life, which is motivated and sustained by love. The renunciation which it involves is secondary in the sense that it is not something sought after for itself. Identification with Christ is always the center of Gailhac’s vision, but if one is totally identified with a Crucified Jesus, suffering is necessarily an integral part of one’s life. One can easily understand why the Pauline expression “Put off the old man and put on the new” was so precious to Gailhac. “Putting on” the New Man, Jesus Christ, was the goal of his own life and he saw “putting off the old man” as a necessary corollary of this transformation.

⁵⁸ “Le martyre du sang est de courte durée et celui qui est nécessaire à toutes les âmes qui veulent vivre de la vie de Jésus-Christ est aussi long que la vie.”

⁵⁹ L’âme qui se renonce sans cesse pour écouter et suivre la doctrine de Jésus-Christ, ses exemples, n’est-elle pas martyre? . . . Lorsqu’on reçoit toutes les épreuves de l’esprit, du corps, toutes les persécutions que Dieu envoie ou par les démons ou par les hommes . . . avec résignation, avec amour, n’est-ce pas la mort à soi-même?

3. *Renunciation*

The role of renunciation may seem preponderant in Gailhac's spirituality, and indeed it is one of the keystones in the structure of his theological vision. A radical attachment to Christ implies a radical detachment from oneself. A centering of one's life on Christ necessarily involves a de-centering from oneself. Renunciation, therefore, is an integral part of union with Jesus. Indeed, imitation of Him under any aspect of His personality would require this de-centering. But in a spirituality such as Gailhac's where the "area of imitation" is precisely Christ's gift of Himself — which is one of self-emptying (cf. Phil. 2: 6-8) — the role of renunciation is even more evident. It is because of this that renunciation plays such a great part in Gailhac's faith-vision.

There is hardly a letter in which he does not urge the sisters to renounce themselves, to die to themselves. Why this is so has been stated in general, but it might be well to examine the reasons at greater length.

The key place of renunciation hinges on three distinct but related convictions: 1) the propensity of human nature to selfishness; 2) the mystery of identification with the suffering Christ; 3) the participation of the Christian in the redemptive, paschal mystery. As we examine these three convictions, we must remember the unity of Gailhac's theological vision and recognize that in his letters the distinctions among the fundamental motivations for renunciation are not clear. What we are in fact doing is looking at the same reality from three different points of view. First of all, there is Gailhac's conviction of man's propensity to selfishness which makes renunciation necessary. Looked at from this point of view, renunciation becomes a sort of preparation for union with Christ. Naturally tending to look toward himself, to seek his own glory and interests, man can be freed from the tyranny of his own selfishness only by renunciation. In this context, renunciation is a means to freedom which permits identification with Jesus Christ and with His values. That the gospel values are not those men hold naturally is implied in the following definition: "What is

renunciation? It is to live in harmony with gospel values."⁶⁰

Gailhac has two treatises on renunciation — one on the spirit of renunciation⁶¹ and the other "Renunciation, Infallible Road to Heaven."⁶² In both he comments on the verse: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." This fact alone shows us how renunciation was seen by Gailhac in the context of the following of Christ. Both treatises develop this first aspect of renunciation. Even more significant, though, is a letter which in *La Vie Religieuse* bears the title "Renewal of oneself," a title not found on the original letter.⁶³ Again, it is the passage "If any man would come after me . . ." which is commented upon, as well as the Pauline passage "Put off the old man . . ." In this letter, Gailhac elaborates upon the sinful tendencies which make renunciation necessary. He speaks of the "denial of oneself" of the Lukan passage and of the "stripping off of the old man" of Saint Paul:

The 'self' is the soul who has lost justice, who walks in the darkness of pride, evil tendencies, earthly, sensual and corrupt appetites, who lives in sin, in deceit, in illusions, who rejects God and His holy law in order to satisfy itself. The old man is the man degraded by sin and all the evil tendencies which dominate him, drawing him away from God and from all that God ordains; he takes pleasure only in what God forbids. It is evident that as long as these two obstacles [the self and the old man], which in reality are only one, are not destroyed, renewal is impossible. Light and darkness are incompatible.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ VR, p. 105, RL, p. 35: "Qu'est-ce que se renoncer? C'est vivre d'une manière conforme aux principes évangéliques."

⁶¹ VR, pp. 102-107, RL, p. 32-37; in part in *Ecrits*, vol. 3, pp. 868-9.

⁶² VR, pp. 108-111, RL, p. 126-129. *Ecrits*, vol. 3, pp. 816-821.

⁶³ VR, pp. 246-252, RL, pp. 216-221; *Ecrits*, vol. 3, pp. 697-703. The same treatise-letter is found in *Ecrits*, vol. 13, pp. 4767-4772. In the English version of VR the treatise bears the title "Renunciation".

⁶⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 3, p. 698 and VR, p. 247, RL, p. 217: Le moi actuel, c'est l'âme qui a perdu la justice, qui marche dans les ténèbres de l'orgueil, des

This passage summarizes well the manner in which Gailhac sees renunciation related to the following of Christ: the old man must be stripped so that the new man can be put on. It is this aspect which predominates in his doctrine on renunciation.

There is also found in his letters, though, a strong strain urging sacrifice and renunciation because that is what Christ Himself lived while on earth. Here renunciation is no longer seen as a preparation for identification with Christ but rather as an effect or a proof of that identification. It is in the light of the mystery of imitation of the crucified Christ that renunciation is seen. Jesus emptied Himself and became obedient unto death. "Without delay, then, with eagerness and generosity, I would even say with joy and love, let us make the most of the examples which He gives us."⁶⁵

The renunciation Gailhac refers to in this context is usually a passive renunciation — a joyful and loving acceptance of sufferings and difficulties which come through various events and persons. He writes to a sister who is sick, urging her to bear her suffering in union with the suffering Christ: "My dear daughter, let us stay then on Calvary with Jesus, let us contemplate all His wounds . . . everything in Jesus suffers . . . Let us unite ourselves more closely with Jesus our suffering Savior. He is so good to those who are united to Him by suffering."⁶⁶ Acceptance of suffering is a proof of one's love:

We can really be turned toward God and love Him only by fulfilling the conditions which Jesus Christ in-

penchants mauvais, des appétits terrestres, charnels, corrompus, qui vit dans le péché, dans le mensonge, dans les illusions, qui rejette Dieu et sa sainte loi pour satisfaire le moi. Le vieil homme, c'est l'homme dégradé par le péché et tous les vilains penchants qui dominent en lui, l'éloignent de Dieu, de tout ce que Dieu ordonne et ne se plaît que dans ce que Dieu défend. Il est évident que tant que ces deux obstacles [le moi et le vieil homme], qui en réalité n'en font qu'un, ne sont pas détruits, la rénovation est impossible. La lumière et les ténèbres sont incompatibles.

⁶⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 3, p. 702: "Donc, sans retard, avec ardeur, générosité, je dirai même avec joie et amour, profitons des exemples qu'il nous donne."

⁶⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4183: "Ma chère fille, restons donc sur le Calvaire avec Jésus, contemplons toutes ses plaies. . . tout en Jésus souffre. . . Unissons-nous donc plus étroitement à Jésus notre Sauveur souffrant. Il est si bon pour les âmes qui lui sont unies par la souffrance."

dicates to us by His life . . . No, one does not really love God when one avoids suffering, pain, sorrows, renunciation, the cross . . . Suffering in love is the proof of true love.⁶⁷

The epitome of identification with Christ is love of the Cross:

Oh dear child, love the cross, then. Make it loved by your beloved daughters; it is costly to fallen nature but the cross is the beloved and divine object of faith. Hearts which love Jesus Christ desire His cross; they burn with the desire to carry it with Jesus Christ . . . Yes, love the cross that your heavenly Spouse has carried.⁶⁸

Suffering identifies one with Christ and is a sign of that identification.

Finally, it is the role of the paschal mystery in the work of redemption which rules Gailhac's doctrine on renunciation. Mankind's salvation was worked through the cross of Jesus Christ. His total self-giving for the sake of others is to be imitated by the sisters and will necessarily involve a high degree of renunciation. There is no other way to participate in the work of redemption than by sharing in the passion, death and resurrection of Christ. "Forgetfulness of self, death to oneself, the spirit of sacrifice in every detail of life are indispensable for embracing the apostolic life."⁶⁹

⁶⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3667-8: Nous ne pouvons réellement être à Dieu, l'aimer qu'en remplissant les conditions que Jésus-Christ nous indique par sa vie. . . Non, on n'aime pas Dieu quand on fuit la souffrance, la peine, les douleurs, les renoncements, la Croix. . . La souffrance dans l'amour est la preuve du véritable amour.

⁶⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3898: O, chère enfant, aimez donc la croix, faites-la aimer à vos chères filles; il en coûte à la nature viciée, mais elle est l'objet aimé et divin de la foi. Les coeurs aimant Jésus-Christ désirent la croix de Jésus-Christ; ils brûlent du désir de la porter avec Jésus-Christ. . . Oui, aimez la croix qu'a portée votre céleste Epoux.

⁶⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3332: "L'oubli de soi, la mort à soi-même, l'esprit de sacrifice dans tout le détail de la vie sont indispensables pour entrer dans la vie apostolique."

Oh, wondrous mystery, true good, good *par excellence* — is there any good more precious than the salvation of souls? — that is our work... Therefore we must taste the sufferings and humiliations of the cross. Neither fine discourses nor elegant phrases will bring the world back to truth. Only the power of the cross will.⁷⁰

The expression “All good comes from Calvary” summarizes this apostolic aspect of renunciation.

All three aspects of Gailhac’s doctrine on renunciation must ultimately be seen in terms of union with Christ. First of all, it is because man’s sinfulness can close him to union with the Lord that it must be combatted by renunciation. Secondly, the paschal mystery is lived as a means of union with Christ. The Christian mystery of life through death is at the heart of the Christian-religious life. In His infinite wisdom and love, God chose to redeem mankind through a God-man’s life and death lived in total fidelity to the will of His Father. In passing through death into life, Christ gave all men the power to transform their own “deaths” — those experienced daily as well as that ultimate experience of human temporal existence — into life. The divine logic of the death-life paradox is so clear that the risen Lord called “foolish men and slow of heart” those disciples going to Emmaus who did not understand that it was “necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into His glory” (Lk. 24:25-26.) Renunciation — the free and loving acceptance of one’s own “deaths” — is a passage to the union with Jesus Christ which is life, Who is Life.

Finally, union with Christ implies openness to all aspects of His life, suffering included. In His earthly life, Jesus chose to identify Himself with the Suffering Servant, although other messianic possibilities were available to Him. He chose a path of poverty, humility and obedience which remains an invitation to

⁷⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3898: Oh, mystère admirable, le bien véritable, le bien par excellence — or, est-il un bien plus précieux que le salut des âmes? — c’est notre oeuvre; donc... nous devons goûter les souffrances et humiliations de la croix. ... Ce ne seront ni les beaux discours, ni les phrases élégantes qui ramèneront le monde à la vérité. C’est la vertu de la Croix.

Christians of all ages to renounce all that is self-seeking and desire for riches and power. The path chosen by Jesus led ultimately to His own death. Union with Christ, then, implies willingness to embrace His most radical choices.

The emphasis on renunciation has undoubtedly shifted from the mid-nineteenth century to the conciliar and post-conciliar ages. This shift, hinging chiefly on the twentieth century's understanding of man, makes the language and the categories used by Gailhac sound somewhat harsh today. He speaks, for example, of renunciation in one's spirit, one's heart, one's body. In describing the latter, he writes: "In what does renunciation of the body consist? It consists in never acting merely according to one's inclinations; in not seeking one's ease; . . . in holding the body in subjection, dominating it; . . . in reducing the body to a condition of slavery that it may not rule the soul."⁷¹

This statement that the body is to be "brought into subjection" underlines the same truth that Vatican II expresses: "The very dignity of man postulates that man glorify God in his body and forbid it to serve the evil inclinations of his heart" (GS, § 14). The Council, however, speaks from an understanding of man — soul and body — as the "instrument" through which all elements of the material world "reach their crown and . . . raise their voice in free praise of the Creator" (GS, § 14). It speaks from a positive understanding of the human body which is quite different from Gailhac's understanding as expressed here.

In spite of the prominent place renunciation and sacrifice play in the faith-vision of Father Gailhac, he insists that the sisters are not to fast and are to undertake corporal penances only with the authorization of the superior or of the confessor. Their renunciation was primarily that involved in the imitation of Christ and in fidelity to the apostolic life. In a letter which dispenses the sisters from fasting, Gailhac writes: "It is a duty for us to make of our lives a perpetual sacrifice by imitating Jesus Christ."⁷² They will replace their fasting "by the thousand contradictions which they will have to bear and by the innu-

⁷¹ *VR*, pp. 104-5, *RL*, p. 35.

⁷² *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3949: "C'est un devoir pour nous de faire de notre vie un sacrifice perpétuel en imitant Jésus-Christ."

merable renunciations which they have to make in order to bring up the children confided to them.”⁷³ Several years earlier he had written in a post-script: “One can do nothing more agreeable to God than to procure His glory; working for the glory of God, then, is worth more than fasting. That is the spirit and the letter of the Rule.”⁷⁴ It is daily fidelity to the evangelical life which is the heart of renunciation: “In a word, what is renunciation? It is to live in harmony with gospel values.”⁷⁵

Renunciation is never an end in itself, but, as we have seen, is always integrated into the context of identification with Christ. The basic conviction that life comes through death underlies all Gailhac’s teaching on renunciation, even when that conviction is not made explicit. It is in order to share in the life of God that one must die to oneself. In a letter of 1880 he makes this conviction explicit:

It is [by the observance of the rule⁷⁶] that the soul strips itself, that it dies, that it carries its cross, that it opens itself to receive life, to receive it in abundance. Marvellous effect of grace when one corresponds to it! It makes us die in order to communicate true life to us. The stripping off of the old man opens the doors of the soul to life, to the life of God in it. Oh, since God desires so ardently to live in us, since He begs us to give Him our hearts, since He complains that for so long a time we have let Him wait at the door, since He knocks and knocks again, let us open, let Him come in. Let us beg Him to communicate life to us.⁷⁷

⁷³ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3949.

⁷⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3724: “On ne peut jamais faire une chose plus agréable à Dieu que de procurer sa gloire; donc travailler à la gloire de Dieu vaut plus que jeûner. C’est l’esprit et la lettre de la Règle.”

⁷⁵ *VR*, p. 105, *RL*, p. 35: “En un mot, qu’est-ce que se renoncer? C’est vivre d’une manière conforme aux principes évangéliques.”

⁷⁶ For Gailhac, “your rule is but the gospel applied to your vocation.” (Letter of June 26, 1880, unclassified in archives. See also *VR*, p. 208). We are therefore still speaking of fidelity to the evangelical life.

⁷⁷ Letter of July 9, 1880. Unclassified in archives; found in Seafield, England, in summer 1973: C’est par là [l’observation de la règle] que l’âme se dépouille, qu’elle meurt, qu’elle porte sa croix, qu’elle se rend

Gailhac then goes on to speak of the "degrees" of life. Just as the sun has its dawn, its rising, its noon, so does life. But the degree of life corresponds to the degree of death. Gailhac sees in baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist a gradual entrance into death — and by that very fact into life. For the religious, the stages of postulancy, noviceship and profession represent this same entrance into death-life: "She enters further into life by each one of these steps and each one of these steps is a sacrifice which unites her more closely to life and gives her a greater share in this life."⁷⁸

4. Holiness

Another term which in Gailhac's synthesis is synonymous with imitation of Christ is holiness or perfection. Perfection is understood by him as the evangelical call to be "perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt. 5:48). While it is never a merely external perfection, neither is it an interior disposition unrelated to one's conduct, to one's way of being-in-the-world, of being-with-others. Authentic "perfection" is an interior conformity to Christ which is reflected exteriorly in one's choices, in one's daily life.

Gailhac often speaks of "the true Christian", "the true religious" or "true" life. This accent on the word "true" reflects his love for truth, for authenticity. In a letter on faith he says: "The true Christian is not the one who thinks he has fulfilled all justice by believing in the gospel, but rather the one who believes and conforms his conduct to the teachings of the gos-

propre à recevoir la vie, à la recevoir avec abondance. Merveilleux effet de la grâce lorsqu'on y correspond. Elle nous fait mourir pour nous communiquer la vie véritable. ... Le dépouillement du vieil homme ouvre les portes de l'âme à la vie, et à la vie de Dieu en elle. Oh, puisque Dieu désire si ardemment de vivre en nous, qu'il nous conjure de lui donner notre cœur, qu'il se plaint que nous le laissons si longtemps attendre à la porte, qu'il frappe, frappe encore, ouvrons-lui, qu'il vienne. Pressons-le de nous communiquer la vie.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*: "Elle entre davantage dans la vie par chacun de ces degrés qu'elle monte et chacun de ces degrés est un sacrifice qui l'unit plus étroitement à la vie et la rend plus participante de cette vie."

pel.”⁷⁹ He then details possible contradictions between what the Christian says he believes and what in fact he lives. He concludes his list of contradictions with this question: “Oh, how long would be the list of the contradictions between your life and your faith if we were to place every detail of your life against the faith of the gospel?”⁸⁰

Gailhac’s horror of inauthenticity, of false pretensions, is especially marked when it is a question of holiness. “Holiness is not a meaningless word or a vague imagination. It is a reality.”⁸¹ “Holiness is not a word empty of sense; it is a word full of meaning. To be holy is to be the image of Jesus Christ, and with the grace of Jesus Christ to copy His virtues.”⁸² In another letter he says: “Let our determination not be vague but real and practical. And feeling the need of entering into the mind of God, let us become other Jesus Christs.”⁸³

There is a certain lack of precision in Gailhac’s use of the terms “perfection” or “holiness”. He entitles one of his letters “Imitation of Jesus Christ: Sole Means to Achieve Perfection.” This title and the letter itself demonstrate two different uses of the term “perfection”. In the title, “perfection” has an ultimate sense; it is the definitive transformation into Christ which in this life will remain a goal to be achieved. Imitation, then, would refer to the gradual process of identification with Christ, to the response of the person to the work of the Spirit within him. In this sense, imitation of Christ is a means to attain

⁷⁹ June 26, 1880, unclassified in archives: “Le vrai chrétien n’est pas celui qui croit avoir rempli toute justice en croyant à l’évangile, mais bien celui qui croit et conforme sa conduite aux enseignements de l’évangile.”

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*: “Oh quelle serait l’énumération des oppositions de votre vie avec votre foi si nous mettions tout le détail de votre vie en face [de] la foi de l’évangile?”

⁸¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3364: “La sainteté n’est pas un vain mot ou une imagination. Elle est une réalité.”

⁸² *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3381: “La sainteté n’est pas un mot vide de sens; c’est une parole pleine de signification; être sainte, c’est être l’image de Jésus-Christ. C’est avec la grâce de Jésus-Christ copier ses vertus.”

⁸³ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4681: “Ne prenons pas une détermination vague, mais réelle, pratique; et sentant la nécessité d’entrer dans la pensée de Dieu, devenons d’autres Jésus-Christ.”

“perfection”. In the body of the same letter, Gailhac says: “It is certain that all perfection consists in being like Jesus Christ.”⁸⁴

He goes on to use the term “perfection” in another sense, however — no longer as the ultimate goal to be attained but as the quality of one’s acts; perfection is the striving for the ultimate goal. He writes: “Therefore, the soul who sets about imitating Jesus Christ and who truly imitates Him is perfect. All perfection consists in working seriously to imitate Jesus Christ.”⁸⁵ Here, imitation is perfection; it is life; it is something dynamic which is never possessed once and for all. So both “imitation” and “perfection” are used at times by Gailhac to denote the goal to be reached and/or the process itself of reaching that goal. “Imitation” is a means to ever greater union, to complete “imitation” or identification.

Holiness consists in identification with Jesus Christ, in having his attitude of love and humility expressed in obedience toward the Father and in zeal toward man. In a letter to the newly-formed community in America, Gailhac expresses the wish that they might all be holy. He elaborates:

May Jesus Christ be our life. Study Jesus; His whole life, all His actions. . . . He sought only two things: the glory of His Father and the salvation of men. May your sentiments be His. Remain in Jesus, He Himself invites you: Remain in my love. . . . May Jesus be our only thought, may He be all your love.⁸⁶

Gailhac often tells the sisters what they should do to open themselves to the transformation which will be worked in them.

⁸⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3594: “Il est certain que toute perfection consiste à être semblable à Jésus-Christ.”

⁸⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3594: “Donc, l’âme qui s’applique à imiter Jésus-Christ et l’imite véritablement est parfaite. Donc, toute perfection consiste à travailler sérieusement à imiter Jésus-Christ.”

⁸⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3376-7: Que Jésus-Christ soit notre vivre. Etudiez Jésus; toute sa vie, tous ses actes. . . . Il n’a cherché que deux choses: la gloire de son Père et le salut des hommes. Que vos sentiments soient les siens. Restez en Jésus; lui-même vous y invite: “Restez dans mon amour”. . . . Que Jésus soit donc votre unique pensée, qu’il soit tout votre amour.

The christocentric, affective nature of his own spirituality is evident in these passages:

With your eyes fixed on Jesus Christ, you must constantly work to become another Christ. Your exterior conduct must recall the exterior conduct of Jesus Christ. . . . For this to be so, you must make your interior conform to the interior of Jesus Christ. The exterior is but the reflection of the interior. Study Jesus Christ, then. Make Him the continual subject of your meditation, see Him always and in everything.⁸⁷

Gailhac implies here the transforming nature of contemplation. He again stresses loving contemplation in the following passage:

To be holy is to copy Jesus Christ, to be clothed with Him. To copy Jesus Christ, you must have Him before your eyes . . . One cannot copy what one does not see. It is not sufficient to look at Him for a moment, you must see Him always. It is not enough to see Him, you must study Him. There are so many facets in this admirable model. You must study Him, then, and study Him always. It is not enough to study Him, you must meditate on Him. You must know Jesus Christ, according to the words of St. Paul. To know Jesus Christ is not only to have Him in one's memory or in one's imagination, it is to have Him in one's heart, to love Him. One only imitates what one loves. You must meditate, then, for it is only in meditation that love is enflamed. . . . Not just any love suffices in order to imitate Jesus Christ. You must have a strong, powerful love which seizes all the powers of the soul, sets the will in motion; once moved, the will begins to act.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3328: Vos yeux fixés sur Jésus-Christ vous devez constamment travailler à devenir un autre lui-même. Votre conduite extérieure doit rappeler la conduite extérieure de Jésus-Christ. . . . Pour qu'il en soit ainsi vous devez rendre votre intérieur conforme à l'intérieur de Jésus-Christ. L'extérieur n'est que le reflet de l'intérieur. Etudiez donc Jésus-Christ, faites-en le sujet continuel de vos méditations, voyez-le toujours et en tout.

⁸⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3365: Etre sainte, c'est donc copier Jésus-Christ,

True life consists in imitation of Christ. There is no other life of any value, of any importance for the Christian. "To live in order to be holy by imitating Jesus Christ: that is true life."⁸⁹ "Who are those who live the true life? They are those who remain united to Jesus Christ and who do His works. . . . who conform their lives to that of Jesus Christ."⁹⁰ To a sister whom he calls "my child of predilection" he writes:

Live in God, of God, for God, that is the only true life. Every other life is only a shadow which passes like the morning mist. Life in God lasts forever and grows like the light of the sun. . . . [True life] is the life of Jesus Christ communicated to the soul.⁹¹

Gailhac's treatise on "The Interior Life" is a development of the equivalence between true life and identification with Jesus Christ. "To lead a supernatural or interior life is to imitate Jesus Christ and to practise the commandment of love which He has given us."⁹² Life and identification with Christ through

s'en revêtir. Pour copier Jésus-Christ il faut l'avoir devant les yeux. . . . On ne peut pas copier ce que l'on ne voit pas. Il ne suffit pas de le regarder un instant, il faut le voir toujours. Il ne suffit pas de le voir, il faut l'étudier; il y a tant de nuances dans cet admirable modèle. Il faut donc l'étudier et l'étudier toujours. Il ne suffit pas de l'étudier, il faut le méditer. Il faut savoir Jésus-Christ, selon la parole de Saint Paul. Savoir Jésus-Christ, ce n'est pas seulement l'avoir dans la mémoire, ni dans l'imagination, c'est l'avoir dans le coeur; c'est l'aimer. On n'imité que ce qu'on aime. Donc il faut méditer, car ce n'est que dans la méditation que l'amour s'enflamme. . . . Il ne suffit pas même d'un amour quelconque pour imiter Jésus-Christ. Il faut un amour fort, puissant, qui s'empare de toutes les puissances de l'âme, ébranle la volonté; la volonté ébranlée se met à l'oeuvre.

⁸⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4681: "Voilà la véritable vie: vivre pour être saints en imitant Jésus-Christ."

⁹⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3579: "Quelles sont celles qui vivent de la véritable vie? Ce sont celles qui restent unies à Jésus-Christ et qui font les oeuvres de Jésus-Christ . . . qui conforment leur vie à celle de Jésus-Christ."

⁹¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4739: Vivez en Dieu, de Dieu, pour Dieu, c'est la seule véritable vie. Toute autre vie n'est qu'un fantôme qui passe comme la brume du matin. La vie en Dieu dure toujours, elle croît comme la lumière du soleil. . . . elle est la vie de Jésus-Christ communiquée à l'âme.

⁹² *VR*, p. 80, *RL*, p. 89. This treatise is found on pp. 79-97 (*RL*, pp. 88-105) and also in *Ecrits*, vol. 3, pp. 675-692.

love are equated in an Easter letter already referred to where Gailhac speaks of spiritual resurrection (life):

What it is to love Jesus Christ? It is to rise. What is it to rise? It is to love Jesus Christ . . . These two truths resemble each other and are one and the same truth. My dear children, love, rise, be transformed into Jesus Christ.⁹³

Because transformation into Christ is seen as life, Gailhac writes about renewal and renovation of life:

A new year is about to begin; you must renew yourselves. Erase what is imperfect in the years which are past; become new creatures by entering fully into the spirit and purpose of your vocation.⁹⁴

It is especially in his letters written at Easter that he urges the religious to live a new life: "Let us rise spiritually then if we wish to give Jesus a proof of our love. . . . It is only in imitating Him, following Him, walking in His footsteps, that you will be made one with Jesus Christ and sing the alleluia of spiritual resurrection and one day the alleluia of eternal life."⁹⁵ "If His death tells us how we must strip ourselves of the old man, His resurrection tells us what our new life, once raised by His grace, must be."⁹⁶

⁹³ Letter of March 26, 1877. Unclassified in archives: Qu'est-ce qu'aimer Jésus-Christ? C'est ressusciter. Qu'est-ce que ressusciter? C'est aimer Jésus-Christ. . . . Ces deux vérités se ressemblent et ne sont qu'une même vérité. . . . Mes chères enfants, aimez, ressuscitez, transformez-vous en Jésus-Christ.

⁹⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4003: Une année nouvelle va commencer, il faut donc vous renouveler; il faut effacer ce qu'il y a eu d'imparfait dans les années qui se sont écoulées, il faut devenir de nouvelles créatures et pour cela entrer pleinement dans l'esprit et la fin de votre vocation.

⁹⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3473 and 3476: "Ressuscitons donc nous-mêmes spirituellement si nous voulons donner à Jésus une preuve de notre amour. . . . Ce n'est qu'en l'imitant, le suivant, en marchant sur ses traces qu'il vous sera donné d'être un avec Jésus-Christ, de chanter l'alleluia de la résurrection spirituelle et un jour l'alleluia de la vie éternelle."

⁹⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3526: "Si sa mort nous dit comment nous devons nous dépouiller du vieil homme, sa résurrection nous dit quelle doit être

This renewal of life is to be continued in the life of the sisters:

To form Jesus Christ fully in you, to live by Jesus Christ, to have only one life with Him, to be other Christs: that is the goal toward which you are running. . . . Be renewed, therefore, in the spirit of your vocation; take no rest until Jesus is fully formed in you.⁹⁷

It is by their vocation that the religious must become one with Christ. The two extracts which follow underline this obligation and indicate as well the centrality of the work of identification with Christ in the lives of the sisters:

Is it not undeniable that the true religious must be a living image of Jesus Christ? It is also certain that for you to be this living image, you must copy Jesus Christ and copy Him with such fidelity that all the traits of Jesus Christ will be found in you, in such a way that you might truly be another Jesus Christ, trait for trait.⁹⁸

Can a religious have any other thought than Jesus Christ? Can she set herself any other objective than to become like Jesus Christ? . . . Oh, what a holy and sublime vocation! You are called to be like Jesus Christ in whom the Father, with an infinite love, contemplates His perfect image. Imitate Jesus Christ, copy Jesus Christ. Do not neglect any of his traits without imprinting them in your soul; become who He is.⁹⁹

notre nouvelle vie une fois ressuscités par sa grâce." See also pp.3664, 3807 and 4642.

⁹⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p.3651: Former pleinement Jésus-Christ en vous, vivre de Jésus-Christ, n'avoir qu'une même vie avec Jésus-Christ, être d'autres Jésus-Christ, c'est le terme de votre course . . . Donc, renouvelez-vous dans l'esprit de votre vocation, point de repos jusqu'à ce que Jésus-Christ soit pleinement formé en vous.

⁹⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p.3667: N'est-ce pas une chose certaine que la vraie religieuse doit être une image vivante de Jésus-Christ? Donc, il est certain aussi que, pour que vous soyez cette image vivante, vous devez copier Jésus-Christ et le copier avec tant de fidélité qu'on doit trouver en vous tous les traits de Jésus-Christ, de telle sorte que vous soyez un autre Jésus-Christ, trait pour trait.

⁹⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p.3311: Une religieuse peut-elle avoir d'autre pensée que Jésus-Christ? Peut-elle se proposer d'autre bien que de devenir sem-

Gailhac however never limits the call to holiness to religious. All Christians are called to imitate Jesus, are called to be united to Him. "It is a divine obligation for every Christian to imitate Jesus Christ. Only those who bear His image will enter heaven."¹⁰⁰ The religious vocation is the Christian vocation lived in all its radicality. "Jesus Christ must be all the true Christian knows. How much more is this so, then, of the religious who is the perfect Christian."¹⁰¹ Again he says: "If one cannot be a Christian without imitating Jesus Christ, how much less can one be a religious? For the religious life is the perfection of Jesus Christ imitated."¹⁰²

It is interesting to see Gailhac struggle with the "comparative" terms which have traditionally been used to describe religious life in its relationship to the Christian life. Is it a higher life? a deeper one? a closer following of Christ? a more perfect state? In a passage which surely rings strange in the post-Vatican II Church, Gailhac says:

It is certain that there is a great distance between a simple Christian and a person consecrated to God. If I can use this comparison: for a Christian to be saved, it suffices to be a true sketch of God; the person consecrated to God must be the completed portrait of God insofar as a creature can be. The Christian, in a certain sense, follows Jesus Christ from afar; the person con-

nable à Jésus-Christ? ... Oh la sainte vocation, la sublime vocation. Vous êtes appelées à être semblables à Jésus-Christ dans lequel le Père contemple, avec un amour infini, sa parfaite image. ... Imitiez Jésus-Christ, copiez Jésus-Christ. Ne laissez aucun de ses traits sans l'imprimer dans vos âmes, devenez d'autres lui-même.

¹⁰⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3976: "C'est une obligation divine pour toute âme chrétienne d'imiter Jésus-Christ; il n'y aura que celles qui porteront son image qui entreront dans le ciel."

¹⁰¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3529: "Jésus-Christ doit être toute la science de l'âme vraiment chrétienne. Combien plus de la religieuse qui est la parfaite chrétienne."

¹⁰² *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3723: "Si on ne peut être chrétien sans imiter Jésus, combien moins religieuse? Car l'état religieux est la perfection imitée de Jésus-Christ."

separated to God follows Him so closely that God and the person seem to be only one.¹⁰³

Gailhac himself seems to hesitate in using his images: "If I can use this comparison..." and "the Christian, *in a certain sense*, follows Jesus Christ from afar." He seems to situate the "difference" in the degree of union with Christ. Further on in the same letter, though, he implies that it is in the practice of the counsels and the public obligation to imitate Jesus that religious are differentiated from lay persons:

It is enough for the Christian to observe the commandments but the person consecrated to God is obliged to practise the counsels and to try each day to become more and more one with Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁴

In underlining this specification, Gailhac is echoing the commonly accepted doctrine of his time. We read, for example, in a book of canonical responses published in a second edition the year after Gailhac's death, that all Christians are obliged to tend toward perfection. To the question "Are religious obliged to strive after perfection in a more particular way than the ordinary faithful?", we read the following answer:

Evidently, since they are called to a higher sanctity and since they have embraced a state of perfection by profession. Religious are therefore obliged to tend toward perfection not only by fulfilling the ordinary duties of Christianity but also by several specific means which

¹⁰³ Letter of July 9, 1880. Unclassified in archives: Il est certain qu'il y a une distance immense entre une âme simplement chrétienne et une âme consacrée à Dieu. Si je puis me servir de cette comparaison: à une simple chrétienne pour être sauvée, il suffit d'être le vrai croquis du bon Dieu, l'âme consacrée à Dieu doit être l'image achevée de Dieu autant qu'une créature peut l'être. L'âme simplement chrétienne en quelque manière suit de loin Jésus-Christ; l'âme consacrée à Dieu le suit de si près que Dieu et l'âme consacrée ne semblent faire qu'un.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* Il suffit à l'âme chrétienne d'observer les commandements, mais l'âme consacrée à Dieu est obligée de pratiquer les conseils et s'efforcer chaque jour de devenir de plus en plus un avec Jésus-Christ.

are only counsels and especially by the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.¹⁰⁵

In fact, though, Gailhac seems more concerned to situate the religious vocation in the line of baptism than to specify the difference between the religious and the christian. "Dear children, you are religious, that is to say, doubly bound to Jesus Christ. Baptism has made you Christians and profession has made you spouses of Jesus Christ. As Christians you must imitate Jesus Christ; as religious you must be one with Him."¹⁰⁶

5. *Spouse of Jesus Christ*

The most revealing and consistent term which Gailhac uses to express the relationship of the religious to Christ is that of spouse.

Every Christian must imitate Jesus Christ. . . . You are religious, that is to say, spouses of Jesus Christ. And if the servants must be images of Jesus Christ, the spouses must be one with Him. The life of Jesus Christ must be their life, according to this word of Saint Paul: For me to live is Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ A.-M. Meynard, *Réponses canoniques et pratiques sur le gouvernement et les principaux devoirs des religieuses à vœux simples* (second edition), Clermont-Ferrand, 1891, p.71. This book, found with several of Gailhac's letters and other souvenirs in the summer of 1973, bears an interesting title, since at the time of publication "The Church does not ordinarily give the name 'religious' to Christian virgins without solemn vows. Nevertheless, nothing prevents a person from conforming to common usage in the ordinary circumstances of life; Christian virgins consecrated to God by simple vows can find a certain consolation in the title and this does not seem to us to present difficulties." (P. 51-52).

¹⁰⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3559: "Chères enfants, vous êtes religieuses, c'est-à-dire doublement liées à Jésus-Christ. Le baptême vous a fait chrétiennes et la profession vous a fait épouses de Jésus-Christ. Comme chrétiennes vous devez imiter Jésus-Christ; comme religieuses vous devez être un avec Jésus-Christ."

¹⁰⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4537: Toute âme simplement chrétienne doit imiter Jésus-Christ. . . . Vous êtes religieuses, c'est-à-dire épouses de Jésus-Christ, et si les servantes doivent être les images de Jésus-Christ, les épouses doivent être avec Jésus-Christ une même chose. La vie de Jésus-

More than eighty-five times in his letters, the religious are referred to as spouses of Christ, and in an additional fifty-five passages, Christ is referred to as Spouse.

Gailhac's use of this title is incorporated into his all-embracing vision of the imitation of Christ. By their profession the religious become spouses of Jesus Christ. "You are spouses of Jesus Christ. Do you wish to prove it? Imitate Jesus Christ. Like Him, do the will of the heavenly Father at each moment. Thus you will prove that you love the heavenly Father and that you not only bear the name of spouses of Jesus Christ but you truly are His spouses."¹⁰⁸ "Imitate Jesus Christ your spouse; walk in His footsteps."¹⁰⁹

To become a spouse of Jesus Christ is to arrive at a certain stage in a relationship which has existed "from all eternity". If the religious are spouses of Christ, it is because God has led them throughout their lives in a relationship with Him which expresses itself in, and is fostered by, life within a religious congregation. In a treatise on the religious state, Gailhac devotes a brief section to the question of vocation where it is evident that he sees the vocation as existing "from all eternity". He does not hesitate to use the term "predestined", no doubt echoing Romans 8: 30: "Those whom he predestined he also called . . ." Gailhac writes:

When a soul is called by Christ to become His spouse, He inspires her both at the beginning and at later periods, with a lively faith, a firm hope and especially with an ardent love. Gradually these virtues increase in her, her faith grows more vivid, her hope increases in

Christ doit être leur vie, selon cette parole de Saint Paul: Mon vivre, c'est Jésus-Christ.

¹⁰⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3655: "Vous êtes les épouses de Jésus-Christ, voulez-vous le prouver? Imitiez Jésus-Christ. Comme lui, faites à chaque instant la volonté du Père céleste et vous prouverez par là que vous aimez le Père céleste et que vous ne portez pas seulement le nom d'épouses de Jésus-Christ, mais vous l'êtes réellement."

¹⁰⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3382: "Imitez Jésus-Christ votre Epoux; marchez sur ses traces." See also pp. 3230, 3239, 3257, 3638; vol. 11, pp. 3706, 3748, 3784, 3862, 3981, 4003, 4084, 4089 and others.

strength, her charity in ardor. If she is faithful to grace, God gives her light. . . .¹¹⁰

When Gailhac speaks here of the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, he is implying a relationship with Jesus Christ. He is speaking of the "fundamental attitude of Christian existence", that fundamental option which is a loving response to God's gift in Jesus Christ.¹¹¹ In the passage cited, Gailhac distinguishes between the vocation which is a dynamic relationship with God which gradually grows and deepens, and the perception of the vocation which he describes as light.

The light the person receives, according to Gailhac, allows her to see two things: the beauty of heaven and the nothingness of earth. In the "beauty of heaven", we read the attraction of a Christian to the Persons of the Trinity which is beyond all space and time. This it is which draws one to assume a life of total consecration to God.

Realizing the "nothingness of earth" is also, according to Gailhac, a motivation for a life within a religious congregation. Here Gailhac's perspective is quite different from a contemporary view of the world. Certainly, Vatican II speaks of a renunciation of the world (PC § 5a) and of all things (PC § 5d), but this renunciation is not because the world is worthless, is "nothingness". In *Gaudium et Spes*, the Church has affirmed the autonomy of the world and its values (§ 35). The Church and the world are seen as two realities, not opposed to one another but in dialogue with one another. Recognizing that the "struggle against the powers of darkness pervades the whole history of man", the Council distinguishes the "world" as the place where human history unfolds and the kingdom takes root, from the "world" as "that spirit of vanity and malice which transforms into an instrument of sin those human energies intended of the service of God and man" (GS § 37).

Such a distinction would indeed have been difficult for Gailhac to make, living as he did in an age where the world was seen as opposed to the Church. Gailhac speaks of "the world

¹¹⁰ VR, p. 12, RL, p. 4.

¹¹¹ See J. Alfaro's article "Attitudes fondamentales de l'existence chrétienne," NRT, July-August 1973, pp. 705-734. See especially p. 733.

with its corruption and all the dangers it presents to one's eternal salvation" ¹¹² and again he says: "Everything in the world is corrupted." ¹¹³ It is not difficult to understand, then, that a negative attitude toward the world was presented by him as an ideal for religious. ¹¹⁴

Still in the context of the title "spouse", there are several aspects that are particularly underlined by Gailhac. First of all, there is the union between Christ and the religious. The spousal image is for Gailhac the most apt to express both the depth and the quality of this union:

What shall we say of religious destined from all eternity to be not only disciples of Jesus Christ but spouses? According to what we know and above all according to Scripture, the spouse and her beloved are but one. The true religious, therefore, must be one with Jesus Christ. ¹¹⁵

This union, associated with the act of profession causes him to express his awe:

The soul is elevated in an astonishing manner by profession; her union with Jesus Christ becomes so close that He addresses as His spouse the soul consecrated to Him by the vows of religion. The soul in her turn is

¹¹² *VR*, p. 12-13.

¹¹³ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4421.

¹¹⁴ That this negative attitude prevailed until recent times is evident in the following passage taken from a book on religious life published as recently as 1961: "Except in the case of a miracle, a minimum of contact with the exterior world, cosmos and society, is always necessary to human equilibrium. . . . Religious life is concretely organized in terms of the real world around us where the spirit of evil reigns. Its discipline plays a protective role: it helps to avoid dangerous contacts and to envelop souls in an atmosphere of purity, sweetness, grace where nothing distracts one from God. The cloister is an antechamber of heaven on earth and an ancient tradition describes the life that is led there as 'angelic'." A. Motte, "Théologie de la séparation du monde," *Séparation du monde*, Paris, 1961, pp. 185-6. Nothing indicates whether this statement is addressed only to contemplative, cloistered religious.

¹¹⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3599: Que dirons-nous des religieuses prédestinées de toute éternité pour être non seulement disciples de Jésus-Christ mais ses épouses? . . . D'après les idées reçues et surtout d'après les livres saints, l'époux et l'épouse ne font qu'un. Donc, la vraie religieuse ne doit être qu'un avec Jésus-Christ.

daring enough to address Him as “her Spouse”, and she has a perfect right to call Him by this ineffable name.¹¹⁶

This union is personal and free. The religious enters into it as a loving response to the divine initiative:

The religious is the spouse of Jesus Christ. . . . Jesus Christ chooses her and in her turn she chooses Jesus Christ. He says to her: “Come, leave everything, I will espouse you forever.” Jesus Christ shows Himself to her in the light of faith, she sees Him, she loves Him, she entrusts herself to Him, she prefers Him to everything.¹¹⁷

To postulants, novices and the professed sisters, Gailhac writes:

Is there a life which must resemble the life of Jesus more than yours? You are the spouses of Jesus or you are on the point of becoming His spouses, or at least you aspire to be His fiancées. . . . A spouse must be but one with her beloved.¹¹⁸

What Gailhac seems to want to capture in the image of the spouse is the totality of the relationship between Christ and the sister. He is to be her only love and she is to hold nothing back:

My well-beloved daughters, God wants you entirely; He wants you totally, without reserve; He would have your life, your entire being and every moment of your life for His service. Is that not what you solemnly promised when, by profession, you became spouses of Jesus Christ? Can a religious have any other thought than Jesus Christ?

¹¹⁶ *VR*, p. 46, *RL*, p. 18.

¹¹⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3512: La religieuse est l'épouse de Jésus-Christ. . . . Jésus-Christ la choisit et à son tour elle choisit Jésus-Christ. [II] dit à cette âme: 'Viens, quitte tout, je t'épouserai pour l'éternité.' Jésus-Christ se montre à elle dans les lumières de la foi, elle le voit, elle l'aime, elle se confie à lui, elle le préfère à tout.

¹¹⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3826: Quelle vie doit être plus la ressemblance de la vie de Jésus sinon la vôtre? Vous êtes les épouses de Jésus ou vous êtes sur le point de le devenir ou enfin vous prétendez être ses fiancées . . . Une épouse ne doit être qu'un avec son époux.

Can she aspire after any other good than to become like Jesus Christ?¹¹⁹

Because there is total identification of spouses, the destiny of Jesus becomes the destiny of the sisters. They should not be surprised at the crosses they are called to bear. On the contrary, love should make it a joy for them to share the destiny of their Spouse:

Spouses of Jesus Christ, the life you must lead is traced out for you. In looking at Jesus, you His true spouses, you know what Jesus asks of you. He is poor, you have promised poverty; He is humiliated, the spouse can not expect more glory in this world than her beloved; she can and must desire only the lot of her beloved.¹²⁰

The total centering of one's life on the Person of Jesus which Gailhac expresses in the title "spouse" can be summarized in one word — love. Love for Jesus Christ is to characterize the lives of the religious, is to be their only concern. This love is a response to God's love for them: "May Jesus, the beginning and the end of all things, the alpha and the omega . . . be your first and last thought, your first and last love; that is to say, your only love."¹²¹ "Love ought to be the soul of your life, the source

¹¹⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3310: Mes bien-aimées filles, Dieu vous veut toutes entières, il vous veut sans partage, sans réserve, il veut que votre vie, tout votre être et tous vos instants soient pour son service . . . N'est-ce pas ce que solennellement vous avez promis lorsque, par la sainte profession, vous êtes devenues les épouses de Jésus-Christ? Une religieuse, peut-elle avoir d'autre pensée que Jésus-Christ? Peut-elle se proposer d'autre bien que de devenir semblable à Jésus-Christ?

¹²⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3394: Epouses de Jésus-Christ, la vie que vous devez mener vous est tracée. En regardant Jésus, vous ses véritables épouses, vous connaissez ce que Jésus demande de vous. Il est pauvre, vous avez promis la pauvreté; il est humilié, l'épouse n'a pas à attendre dans le monde plus de gloire que son époux; elle ne peut ni ne doit désirer que le sort de son époux. See also vol. 11, p. 3855.

¹²¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3598: "Que Jésus, qui est le commencement et la fin de toutes choses, l'alpha et l'omega . . . soit aussi votre première et votre dernière pensée, votre premier et dernier amour; c'est-à-dire tout votre amour."

and origin of all your thoughts, of all your feelings, desires, the moving force of your conduct.”¹²²

C. PARTICIPATION IN THE REDEMPTIVE MISSION

In this first section, we have tried to show how the Christian's imitation of Christ, that is, total union and identification with Him, summarizes the Christian life for Father Gailhac. This imitation, however, is seen as the *sine qua non* of participation in the mission of Christ. Salvation comes from Jesus Christ alone and the religious participates in the work of redemption only if, and insofar as, she is one with Him. It is this participation in the mission of Christ which we shall now examine.

As early as 1853, when tracing the “glories and obligations” of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Gailhac writes:

How can we cooperate in the Work of Jesus Christ; how continue it without being like Jesus Christ, without bearing His traits, His image, without being clothed with Jesus Christ? . . . Only Jesus Christ in person or persons having the spirit, the heart of Jesus Christ, persons one with Him can do the Work of Jesus Christ.¹²³

“To help Jesus save the world,” the sisters are to be “the perfect image of the Son of God made man.” There is no other way to participate in the mission of Christ.

Holiness — that is, union with Christ — is apostolic in itself and it is rare in the letters of Father Gailhac to the congregation that it is not seen in its apostolic dimensions. “Before all else, then, let us be holy. It is doubly an obligation for

¹²² *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3601: “L’amour doit être l’âme de toute votre vie, la source et le principe de toutes vos pensées, de tous vos sentiments, désirs, le mobile de toute votre conduite.”

¹²³ *VR*, pp. 299, 305, *RL*, p. 281, 286: Comment co-opérer à l’Oeuvre de Jésus-Christ; comment la continuer sans être semblable à Jésus-Christ, sans porter ses traits, son image, sans être revêtues de Jésus-Christ? . . . Pour l’Oeuvre de Jésus-Christ, il faut, ou Jésus-Christ en personne, ou des âmes qui aient l’esprit, le coeur de Jésus-Christ, qui ne fassent qu’un avec Jésus-Christ.

us. It is an obligation for us if we wish to be saved; and even more urgent if we wish to be apostles, and it is for this that He has called us.”¹²⁴ “Let us be holy, let us work to become more perfect so that we might be better able to win souls for God. . . . Only saints make saints; one holy person will do more than a thousand tepid ones.”¹²⁵

The congregation exists to enable the sisters to participate in the work of the salvation of mankind. The glory of God through the “salvation of souls” is the unique purpose of the congregation and this can only be achieved by the sisters’ union with Jesus Christ: “Remember that the principal end of your vocation is the sanctification of souls. But to enter into the plan of God, your life must be the image of that of Jesus Christ.”¹²⁶

In order to make others holy, we must be holy; that is an essential prerequisite. . . . Jesus gives us no other means for attaining the end that He envisaged in creating the Institute. You are the continuation of Jesus Christ and you are in some way the continuation of the apostles; therefore, you can attain the goal which Jesus Christ set for Himself and for which the apostles worked so hard only by becoming holy and a victim.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3427: “Avant tout, soyons donc saints. C’est doublement un devoir pour nous. C’est un devoir pour nous si nous voulons être sauvés; et encore plus impérieux si nous voulons être apôtres et c’est pour cela qu’il nous a appelés.”

¹²⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3692: “Soyons saints, travaillons à devenir plus parfaits afin que nous soyons plus en état de gagner des âmes à Dieu . . . Les saints font les saints, une seule âme sainte fera plus que mille tièdes.”

¹²⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4002: “Rappelez-vous que la fin principale de votre vocation, c’est la sanctification des âmes. Or, pour répondre aux desseins de Dieu, il faut que votre vie soit l’image de celle de Jésus-Christ.”

¹²⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3830: “Pour faire des saints, il faut être saint, c’est la condition nécessaire . . . Jésus ne nous fournit pas d’autres moyens pour atteindre le but qu’il s’est proposé en créant l’Institut. Vous êtes la continuation de Jésus-Christ et vous êtes en partie la continuation des apôtres; donc, vous ne pouvez atteindre le but que s’est proposé Jésus-Christ, pour lequel ont tant travaillé les apôtres, qu’en devenant sainte et victime.”

It is because the sisters are to the continuation of Jesus Christ in His mission that they must also be the "continuation" of His holiness. "A good religious is, as it were, Jesus Christ continued."¹²⁸ "By vocation and by their free commitment, the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary must be true images of our Lord Jesus Christ. By vocation they are called to imitate Him, to continue . . . the work of the Redemption. They must be other Jesus Christs."¹²⁹

1. "The Work of God"

When speaking of the end of the congregation, of holiness or of participation in the work of redemption, Gailhac often uses the term "l'oeuvre de Dieu". Because this term appears so frequently in his letters — at least 125 times — and because it expresses the unity of his theological vision, we will look at it more closely here.

The "work" which Gailhac envisages seems to be the work of salvation in all its aspects: the paschal mystery which stands at its heart; holiness which is necessary for participation in the work; external activity which fosters it.

It is a dynamic work which is accomplished little by little and will only be perfectly achieved when Christ is "all in all". Gailhac identifies the fulness of the "work" with eschatological unity:

The realization of the work of God began through the mystery of the Incarnation . . . ; but it will only be fully accomplished when time is ended and the just who form the mystical body of Jesus Christ have gone to heaven. Then God will be all to the elect united in Jesus Christ, and the mystery of unity will be consummated.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3328: "Une bonne religieuse est comme Jésus-Christ continué."

¹²⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3474: "Par vocation et par leur libre engagement les Religieuses du Sacré-Coeur de Marie doivent être les images vraies de Jésus-Christ Notre Seigneur. Par vocation elles sont appelées à l'imiter, à continuer . . . l'oeuvre de la Rédemption. Il faut qu'elles soient d'autres Jésus-Christ."

¹³⁰ *VR*, p. 183, *RL*, p. 107.

There are several characteristics of this work of unity of which Gailhac speaks. First of all, it is evident that it is God's work. Most often Gailhac uses the expression "the work of God".¹³¹ At other times he speaks of "the work of Jesus Christ"¹³² but when he does so it is because Jesus did only the will — the work — of His Father. To the question: "To what extent did Jesus do the Father's will?", Gailhac answers: "IN EVERYTHING. His thoughts are those of His Father, His works are those of His Father, everything in His life is for His glory, everything for the elect who are the great work of the Father."¹³³

The sisters' role is to continue this work, to co-operate with it, but it is never their work: "You are Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Immaculate Virgin, only to continue the work of Jesus."¹³⁴ They can only continue God's work because He Himself calls them to it. Gailhac asks the superior of a community in Portugal to remind the sisters of their calling: "God has called them to represent Him, to continue His Work."¹³⁵ To a priest who has communicated to him the bishop's satisfaction with the work of the sisters in one of the branch houses, Father Gailhac writes: "I have always wished that all the members be penetrated with this thought — that God has chosen them in this end-time only to be co-workers of Jesus Christ in His great work for the salvation of the world."¹³⁶

The call to participate in the mission of Christ, in the work of God, inspires Gailhac with awe — an awe which he communicates to the congregation. "It is a great happiness to be called

¹³¹ In *Ecrits*, vol. 10 alone, see pp. 3258, 3346, 3403, 3410, 3452, 3550, 3595, 3596, 3649.

¹³² See *Ecrits*, vol. 11, pp. 3845, 4019; vol. 13, pp. 4674, 4738, 4759.

¹³³ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3595: "EN TOUT. Ses pensées sont celles de son Père, ses oeuvres sont celles de son Père, tout dans sa vie est pour sa gloire, tout pour les élus qui sont le grand ouvrage du Père."

¹³⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4759: "Vous n'êtes religieuses du Sacré-Coeur de Marie, Vierge Immaculée, que pour continuer l'oeuvre de Jésus."

¹³⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 14, p. 67: "Dieu les a appelées pour Le représenter, pour continuer son Oeuvre."

¹³⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3906: "Or, j'ai toujours désiré que tous les membres fussent pénétrés de cette pensée — que Dieu ne les a choisis à la fin des temps que pour être les aides de Jésus-Christ dans sa grande oeuvre du salut du monde."

by God to work for the salvation of souls, continuing to spread in every nation the Work of Jesus Christ: the Redemption.”¹³⁷ “Never forget, dear children, how good God has been to you, how great God’s love for you has been. He has revealed this love to you in calling you to be spouses of Jesus Christ His Son and in associating you with His work of redemption; of all vocations, it is without doubt one of the most beautiful.”¹³⁸ Again trying to inspire in the sisters some sense of the grandeur of their call to participation in the mission of Christ and of the responsibilities which flow from it, he writes: “You are the continuation of Jesus Christ in the work of Redemption. What glory! What honor! But, noblesse oblige...”¹³⁹

Because of their participation in the work of redemption, the sisters are associates of the apostles: “By your vocation you participate in the apostolic life.”¹⁴⁰ This theme — that the religious must be apostles themselves — is a constant one in the writings of Gailhac. He often emphasizes the gratuity and greatness of the call to be apostles: “With sincere humility, can you not say that God has associated you with Jesus Christ and His apostles? No doubt it is a fully gratuitous grace from the goodness of God, but nevertheless you have received it.”¹⁴¹

He tells the sisters that each community and the entire institute should be an image of the apostolic college and of the

¹³⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3406: “C’est un grand bonheur d’être appelé de Dieu pour travailler au salut des âmes, pour continuer à étendre en toute nation l’oeuvre de Jésus-Christ: la Rédemption.”

¹³⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3358: “N’oubliez jamais, chères enfants, combien Dieu a été bon pour vous, combien a été grand pour vous l’amour de Dieu qu’il vous a révélé en vous appelant à être les épouses de Jésus-Christ son Fils, et en vous associant à son oeuvre de Rédemption; parmi toutes les vocations c’est sans contredit une des plus belles.”

¹³⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4763: “Vous êtes la continuation de Jésus-Christ dans l’oeuvre de la Rédemption. Quelle gloire! Quel honneur! Mais noblesse oblige...”

¹⁴⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4421: “Par votre vocation, vous participez à la vie apostolique.”

¹⁴¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3358: “Avec une sincère humilité, ne pouvez-vous pas dire que Dieu vous a associées à Jésus-Christ et aux apôtres? Sans doute c’est une grâce pleinement gratuite de la bonté de Dieu mais cependant vous l’avez reçue.”

first Christian community.¹⁴² On the feast of the Ascension 1883, he reminds them that they are called to be successors of the apostles.¹⁴³ In an unfinished letter, Gailhac praises the apostolic vocation:

It is to you, the chosen ones of Jesus Christ before time began and the continuation of the apostles and apostolic men, that it is given to carry the name and the knowledge of the divine Savior, come to make His Father known to us and to re-establish His Kingdom among men. . . .¹⁴⁴

In this same letter, he goes on to compare the apostolic vocation to other callings — it is far superior to that of the kings and princes of this world. Then follows an interesting and somewhat hesitant paragraph where he apparently struggles with the fact that the religious are not part of the hierarchical structure of the Church while the apostles are its foundations:

Proportionately and to a lesser degree, no doubt, but the apostles' vocation and yours? — in a certain sense you are to the apostles what they are to Jesus Christ. The apostles direct, govern; you, you are directed. They command; you obey. But their commanding and your obeying attain the same goal: to make God the Father and Jesus Christ His Son known. The highest objective of the apostles' work and of your own is to lead others to eternal life.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3804.

¹⁴³ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3820.

¹⁴⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3330. C'est à vous qui êtes les élus de Jésus-Christ avant que fussent les siècles passés, et la suite des apôtres et des hommes apostoliques qu'est donné de porter le nom et la connaissance du divin Sauveur qui est venu pour nous faire connaître son Père et rétablir son règne sur les âmes...

¹⁴⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 331: Avec proportion, et bien au-dessous sans doute, mais la vocation des apôtres et la vôtre? — vous êtes, en quelque manière, aux apôtres ce que les apôtres sont à Jésus-Christ. Les apôtres dirigent, gouvernent; vous, vous êtes dirigées; ils commandent, vous obéissez; mais les apôtres en commandant, et vous en obéissant, vous atteignez le même but: faire connaître Dieu le Père et Jésus-Christ

In this passage which has obvious Johannine overtones, Gailhac seems to be working with two orders at one and the same time: the "charismatic" and the hierarchical.¹⁴⁶ When stating that religious continue the work of the apostles, he is referring to the former, and underlining the importance of their gift of service to the Church. They do not share in the hierarchical role of governing the Church and do not share the vocation of the apostles in the same sense as do bishops within the Church. It is the aspect of ministry — of participation in the saving, revelatory mission of Jesus Christ — that Gailhac is stressing rather than that of authority or government.

Having made the necessary clarification, Gailhac continues:

Oh, sublime vocation! For God has done nothing and does nothing except to save souls. It is to this work that your vocation associates you. . . . The final goal is the great, the infinite glory of God and the deification of the creature. Consequently, the greater your vocation, the nearer it draws you to the apostles and to God, the greater are the obligations it imposes on you.¹⁴⁷

The same distinction between the "charismatic" and hierarchical orders seems to be referred to in a sentence already quoted: "You are the continuation of Jesus Christ and you are in some way the continuation of the apostles."¹⁴⁸

That in sharing the task of the apostles, the religious are doing the work of the whole Church is clear: "You are called by God to be united to the great apostolic workers by whom the Church, spouse of Jesus Christ, continues the work of her Belov-

son Fils. Le but suprême du travail des apôtres et du vôtre, c'est de conduire les âmes à la vie éternelle.

¹⁴⁶ For the sense in which we are using these terms, see chapter 1, p. 23.

¹⁴⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3331: Oh, la sublime vocation! Car Dieu n'a rien fait, il ne fait rien que pour sauver les âmes . . . C'est à cette oeuvre que votre vocation vous associe . . . le terme final est la grande, l'infinie gloire de Dieu et la déification de la créature. Mais par une conséquence naturelle, plus votre vocation est grande, plus elle vous approche des apôtres et de Dieu, plus les obligations qu'elle vous impose sont grandes.

¹⁴⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3830: "Vous êtes la continuation de Jésus-Christ et vous êtes en partie la continuation des apôtres."

ed. With the Church, in the rank she accords you, you must expend your whole life for this Work.”¹⁴⁹

In associating the religious so closely with the apostles, Gailhac is conscious that he is speaking to women — women whose position in nineteenth century France was far from one of leadership. We read, for example, in a work entitled *De l'instruction des femmes*, published in 1866:

It is desirable that she [a woman] have enough instruction so as not to remain completely unacquainted with or indifferent to the affairs, the business of her husband. She must be able, up to a certain point, to interest herself in his studies, his discoveries, in his successes. But it is precisely to attain this end that her studies must be contained within certain limits. . . . That a woman possess certain elementary notions in the sciences . . . nothing better; but she must have, above all, the knowledge essential to her sex, her condition, those things which are indispensable to fulfill in a holy way her duties as wife and mother and to keep order, cleanliness and economy in the house. If this knowledge is the foundation and main part of her instruction, one can allow as well, without danger, certain other gifts of the spirit and accomplishments as an embellishment.¹⁵⁰

Perhaps even more revealing is a passage on the question of manifestation of conscience within religious communities of women which comes from the same milieu. The Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars having limited “for the time being” account of conscience to public transgressions of the Rule, our author justifies this limitation as follows:

The words “for the time-being” which the Sacred Congregation customarily adds in restricting manifestation

¹⁴⁹ VR, p. 282; “Vous êtes, vous, appelées par Dieu pour être unies aux grands Ouvriers Apostoliques par lesquels l’Eglise, Epouse de Jésus-Christ, continue l’Oeuvre de son céleste Epoux. Avec l’Eglise, vous devez, dans le rang où elle vous pose, travailler toute votre vie à cette Oeuvre.”

¹⁵⁰ M. l’abbé Balme-Frézol, Paris, 1866. Cited in *Réponses Canoniques* (see note 92), pp: 279-280.

of conscience are explained by the precarious state of modern congregations. That these words are especially found in the approbation of institutes of women is due to the infirmity of the naturally more excitable sex, which is less discreet, more inclined to curiosity and deprived of those guarantees which a priest offers to manifestation of conscience made in confession. One may believe, therefore, that these restrictions are neither definitive nor applicable to institutes of men. . . .¹⁵¹

Although very much a product of his time insofar as the practical rules he would apply to the religious ("I shall repeat to you a counsel which I have already given: live like moles!"¹⁵²), Gailhac does not hesitate to associate women to the redemptive work. He writes:

Dear children, it is not only men who are to take part in this divine work; women must contribute to it as well, and that to a great degree. Jesus Christ willed to have Mary as cooperatrix in the Redemption. . . . It is you then . . . who are chosen to work in union with Jesus, in company with Mary, the holy apostles and apostolic men to gather the harvest of the Father of the family who is God Himself. . . .¹⁵³

The work of salvation includes the "works" undertaken by the congregation but is not identified with or limited to those works. All the apostolic activities of the sisters are seen as means to accomplish the one work of redemption. The relationship between the one work of salvation and the various works

¹⁵¹ B. Valuy, *Du Gouvernement des communautés religieuses*. (5^o édition), Lyon-Paris, 1875, p. 618.

¹⁵² *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4726: "Je vous répéterai un conseil que j'ai donné: vivez comme les taupes!"

¹⁵³ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3888: Chères enfants, ce ne sont pas seulement les hommes qui doivent avoir part à cette oeuvre divine; les femmes doivent y contribuer et largement. Jésus-Christ voulut Marie pour Co-opératrice de la Rédemption . . . C'est donc vous . . . qui êtes choisies pour travailler en union avec le divin Jésus, en compagnie de Marie, des saints apôtres, des hommes apostoliques à travailler à ramasser la moisson du Père de famille qui est Dieu lui-même . . .

undertaken by the congregation is underlined very clearly on several occasions. In a letter where Gailhac says: "I have been a priest for fifty-one years and two months. I am already more than 75 years old and with a total submission to the will of God I willingly consent to live not for myself but for the works of God," he describes the work of salvation and its relationship to the works of the institute:

The works which we do are not passing works but works which we desire to see live until eternity since these works, properly understood, are but the continuation of the work of the Redemption. To make known God the Father and Jesus Christ His Son whom the Father has sent; to make the Holy Spirit known; to bring others to love all the Christian mysteries and to bring them to fulfill the commandments of God and of the Church; to fill others with a holy zeal for the sacraments of mercy and of love which Jesus Christ instituted; to reclaim souls from the devil, from the world, from sin; to fill them with enthusiasm for the practice of virtue; to make them desire heaven: is that not the work of Redemption? But are our works anything else? Is this not the end of our Institute?¹⁵⁴

In another letter written in 1875, Gailhac says: "For 40 years I have been occupied with this Work of God and it is still far from what it should be."¹⁵⁵ Forty years previous to 1875

¹⁵⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4510: Les oeuvres que nous faisons ne sont pas des oeuvres passagères, mais des oeuvres que nous désirons voir vivre jusqu'à l'éternité puisque ces oeuvres bien comprises ne sont que la continuation de l'oeuvre de la Rédemption. Faire connaître Dieu le Père et Jésus-Christ son Fils que le Père a envoyé; faire connaître le Saint Esprit; faire aimer tous les mystères chrétiens; porter les âmes à accomplir les commandements de Dieu et de la sainte Eglise; remplir les âmes d'un saint zèle pour les sacrements de miséricorde et d'amour que Jésus-Christ a institués, arracher les âmes au démon, au monde, au péché; les remplir d'ardeur pour la pratique des vertus; leur faire désirer le ciel, n'est-ce pas l'oeuvre de la Rédemption? Mais nos oeuvres sont-elles autre chose? N'est-ce pas le but de notre Institut?

¹⁵⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4360: "Voilà 40 années que je m'occupe de cette Oeuvre du bon Dieu et elle est encore loin de ce qu'elle doit être."

would bring us to 1835, that is, to the establishment of the Refuge, fourteen years before the founding of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary. Gailhac obviously considers all the works he had undertaken — orphanages, refuge, priests and brothers of the Good Shepherd, Oblate sisters, Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary — as “cette Oeuvre du bon Dieu.” To a community whose school has just been praised by the school examiners, Gailhac writes:

I am confident that this success will inspire you with a new zeal. . . . Remember that you are associates of the apostles, that you should be their aides in the great work of re-establishing the Kingdom of God in souls. That is the work, all the rest is only a means. The true end of your work, of your dedication, is to make God known, to make Him generously loved, to establish Him in an unshakeable manner in the souls God confides to you.¹⁵⁶

The Work of establishing God’s kingdom is the end to which all apostolic “works” are subordinated.

Because the works of the congregation are an expression of the work of redemption, the sisters are to give themselves totally to these works. For this, they need their health. Several months before Mother Saint Jean’s death, Gailhac writes from Aven where she has gone for a health cure: “Pray very much that our mother may return strong, vigorous in order to do the work of God.”¹⁵⁷ He repeats his prayer for health to one of the sisters who is sick, asking that “for many long years you may be able to do His work.”¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, pp. 3878-9: J’ai confiance que ce succès ne fera que vous inspirer un nouveau zèle . . . Rappelez-vous que vous êtes associées aux apôtres, que vous devez être leurs aides dans la grande oeuvre du rétablissement du règne de Dieu sur les âmes. C’est là l’oeuvre, tout le reste n’est qu’un moyen. La fin véritable de votre travail, de votre dévouement, c’est de faire connaître Dieu, de le faire aimer généreusement, de l’établir d’une manière inébranlable dans les âmes que Dieu vous confie.

¹⁵⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3175: “Priez beaucoup afin que notre Mère arrive forte, vigoureuse pour faire l’oeuvre de Dieu.”

¹⁵⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4607.

Gailhac likewise urges the sisters to develop their talents in view of the works they have undertaken: "Holiness of life is necessary; without it, talents would be useless. . . . But when talents are joined to holiness, greater service can be rendered to God."¹⁵⁹

The works of the congregation seen in the light of the one work are worthy of the total dedication of the sisters. All of their energies are to be expended in the work of salvation. "Let us apply ourselves then to the work of God. By every means, may our life be dedicated to doing the work which God Himself has given us to do."¹⁶⁰ To a community which is unsure about opening a night school because of its possible effects on their community life and on the prayer life of the sisters, Gailhac responds:

Concerning what you say about the night school, know, my dear superior, that since your Institute was created by God for the works of zeal, it is an obligation to adapt yourself to their demands.¹⁶¹

He warns the sisters, however, against an activism which would center their attention on the work to be done rather than on the salvific plan of God:

Serenity through faith and keeping God in view in everything is the surest means of bringing to perfection the work which has been confided to us. You cannot imagine how much too great an activity and busy-ness is harmful to the work of God and to the peace of our souls. Let us do our best and remain at peace.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4221: "La sainteté de vie est nécessaire; sans elle les talents seraient inutiles . . . Mais lorsque les talents sont unis à la sainteté on peut rendre plus de services à Dieu."

¹⁶⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, pp. 3774-5: "Employons-nous, donc, à l'oeuvre du bon Dieu. Par tous les moyens, que notre vie soit consacrée à faire l'oeuvre dont Dieu lui-même nous a chargés."

¹⁶¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3355: Quant à ce que vous dites des écoles du soir, sachez, ma chère supérieure, que votre institut étant créé de Dieu pour les oeuvres de zèle, c'est un devoir de s'accomoder à leurs exigences.

¹⁶² *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4709: Le calme par la foi et la vue de Dieu en tout est le moyen le plus sûr pour . . . conduire à la perfection l'oeuvre

The religious are never to forget that salvation comes through the Paschal Mystery and that their work always stands in the light of the great Christian paradox of power through weakness. God chooses weak instruments to do his work and chooses likewise means which often do not coincide with human capability and efficiency. So that although "He wants us to apply ourselves to the works of salvation He has entrusted to us as if everything depended on our efforts. . . . God will do His work through the very things which seem most opposed to it. Everything, in the hands of God, becomes a means to attain His purposes."¹⁶³

So while Gailhac insists on the importance of health and the development of one's talents, he can also write to a sister who is ill that even her sickness can be for the good of God's work:

Oh my daughter, let us profit of everything for our sanctification and for the good of the work of God. His designs are so wonderful; to accomplish something, He almost always takes the means which seem opposed to its success.¹⁶⁴

The Work of God takes place in the heart. At least 30 times Gailhac makes his own the passage in the epistle to the Philipians: "I am sure that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus-Christ." (1:6). One's transformation into Jesus Christ, worked by the Spirit, is already the work of salvation. And this transformation is also what

qui nous est confiée. Vous ne sauriez comprendre combien une trop grande activité et empressement nuit à l'oeuvre de Dieu et à la paix de notre âme... Faisons tout ce que nous pouvons et tenons-nous tranquilles.

¹⁶³ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3212: "Il veut que nous nous appliquions aux oeuvres de salut dont Il nous charge comme si tout dépendait de nos efforts... Dieu fera son oeuvre par les choses mêmes qui y semblent les plus opposées. Tout, entre les mains de Dieu, devient moyen pour arriver à ses fins."

¹⁶⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3181: O ma fille, profitons de tout pour notre sanctification et pour le bien de l'oeuvre de Dieu. Ses desseins sont si admirables, pour faire les choses, il prend presque toujours les moyens qui semblent opposés à leur réussite.

renders one able to participate in the work of redemption. In a brief, undated, unfinished letter where Gailhac speaks of the apostolic vocation, he says: "The Holy Spirit transformed the apostles to live by Jesus Christ and to continue His work, to bring the world back to the God who created it."¹⁶⁵

This identification with Christ is the "quality of life" which is to characterize the religious and which is itself apostolic. Often when writing to the sisters in the branch houses, Gailhac urges them to be the "good odor of Jesus Christ". This exhortation is usually placed in the context of apostolic work among protestants.¹⁶⁶ It is to be remembered that the first foundations outside of France were in regions where hostility existed between Catholics and Protestants — Liverpool in England, Lisburn in Northern Ireland — and while the sisters were not sent exclusively for Catholics in the area, their explicit proclamation of the gospel among protestants was necessarily limited. Their lives, however, were to be a strong witness, were to be the "good odor of Jesus Christ". Gailhac writes to one of the branch houses:

With much prudence, make yourselves esteemed, even by Protestants. Who knows if God has not destined you to be a means of salvation for a great many of them. True virtue, solid virtue is fruitful. An appropriate word, an example of devotion are often more effective than a great sermon. . . . Preach, preach continually by example; you will produce great fruits. Finally, be turned toward God so that you may be the perfume of heaven, the good odor of Jesus Christ and so that you may win many souls for this divine Savior.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4080: "L'Esprit-saint les [les apôtres] transformât pour vivre de Jésus-Christ et continuer son oeuvre, ramener le monde à Dieu qui l'avait créé."

¹⁶⁶ See, for example, *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3199, 3307, 3348, 3370, 3403; vol. 12, pp. 4150, 4337, 4434.

¹⁶⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3369-70: Avec beaucoup de prudence, faites-vous estimer, même des protestants. Qui sait si Dieu ne vous destine pas à être un moyen de salut pour le salut d'un grand nombre d'entre eux; la vraie vertu, la vertu solide est féconde. Un mot dit à propos, un exemple de dévouement sont souvent plus efficaces qu'une grande prédi-

The quality of the sisters' lives was to be such that they, like Saint Paul, could say: "Be imitators of me as I am of Christ." (1 Cor. 11:1) Their lives were to speak loudly of Jesus Christ; their words would be effective only if accompanied and supported by their example. Gailhac was totally convinced of the importance of personal contact, of the effect that one person has on another. His travels to visit the various branch houses are ample witness of this fact. In a letter to a superior, he echoes Saint Paul's words and says: "Dear child, you are in Lisburn to take my place."¹⁶⁸ This statement is no doubt prompted not only by the fact that he is founder and considered all the first superiors as foundresses, but especially by his understanding of the influence of the authenticity of one's life on others. Gailhac can urge the sisters to imitate him because

... your father always has a model before his eyes; this model is Jesus Christ. He studies Him continually and as much as he can with the help of grace, he tries to imitate Him. And since in imitating Christ he falls somewhat short, in imitating your father, try to fix your eyes on Jesus Christ. If there are shortcomings in your father's life, there are none in the life of Jesus Christ.¹⁶⁹

It is especially superiors that he urges to be so united with Christ that they can say to their communities: "Be imitators of me as I am of Christ."¹⁷⁰ Gailhac saw the superiors as having

cation... Prêchez, prêchez continuellement par l'exemple; vous produirez de grands fruits. Enfin, soyez toutes à Dieu afin que vous soyez le parfum du Ciel, la bonne odeur de Jésus-Christ et que vous gagniez beaucoup d'âmes à ce divin Sauveur.

¹⁶⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4433: "Chère enfant, vous êtes à Lisburn pour y être un autre moi-même."

¹⁶⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4433: "... votre père a un modèle toujours devant les yeux; ce modèle c'est Jésus-Christ. Il l'étudie continuellement et autant qu'avec le secours de la grâce il le peut, il tâche de l'imiter. Et comme en l'imitant il laisse se glisser des lacunes, en imitant votre père, efforcez-vous de fixer vos yeux sur Jésus-Christ. S'il est des lacunes dans la vie de votre père, il n'y en a pas dans la vie de Jésus-Christ.

¹⁷⁰ See *Ecrits*, vol. 10, pp. 3313, 3387, 3434, 3538, 3642; vol. 11, pp. 3701, 3981, 4006, 4028; vol. 12, pp. 4343, 4433, 4442, 4621; vol. 13, p. 4745.

a special role to play in the formation of the spirit of the congregation. The first general chapter concluded its sessions with the following resolution:

All the superiors present participating in the government of the community are properly considered foundresses and must consequently be models for all those who will come after them.¹⁷¹

The example of their lives was to be a strong incentive to the imitation of Jesus Christ.

Gailhac would extend the title "foundress" to all the religious of the first generation and he sees this title as an additional motivation to follow Christ:

Do not forget that God has chosen you, all those who belong to the first generation of the Institute, to be the foundresses of the building which God wishes to create or the roots of the tree which He has already planted; and He wants these roots to be deep in order to produce branches which spread far so that they might shelter the birds of paradise.¹⁷²

To summarize what we have said thus far about the work God, we see that for Gailhac the "Work" was salvation itself and Christian participation in that work. God alone can save mankind, can give life, can do good. The Work is His. However, He calls Christians to continue the mission of His Son Jesus Christ, and they do this primarily by opening themselves to the action of the Spirit who transforms them into the likeness of the Son. By their vocation, religious have a particular call to participate in the Work of God.

All the elect are members of Jesus Christ; among them, from all eternity, are chosen those who, united to Jesus

¹⁷¹ *Cop. Pub.*, fol. 1589 (*Summ.*, p. 2736).

¹⁷² *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3711: N'oubliez pas que Dieu vous a choisies, toutes celles qui appartenez à la première époque de l'Institut, pour être les fondatrices de l'édifice que Dieu veut bâtir ou les racines d'un arbre qu'il a planté déjà et il veut que ses racines soient profondes pour produire des branches qui s'étendent au loin pour abriter les oiseaux du paradis. See also p. 3742.

Christ and walking in His footsteps, faithful to their vocation, should work to achieve the great Work of Redemption.¹⁷³

2. Zeal

Identified with Jesus Christ, the sisters share His own love for the Father and for mankind — a love which expresses itself in an effective desire to help others share in the same life of God. All external activities are seen in the light of this one desire. The essence of the apostolic life is the ability to say: "Be imitators of me as I am of Jesus Christ."

The effective desire to participate in the Work of Redemption is what Gailhac characterizes as zeal. The accent which he puts on zeal in his writings to the congregation is extraordinary. He does not hesitate to call zeal "the principal mark of your vocation, for it is the end of your institute."¹⁷⁴ And he adds:

All the members who form the institute must have zeal to a high degree. To live for God, the good of souls, zeal, in a word, must be their entire life. If you wish to show yourselves worthy of your vocation, your souls, burning with love, will be filled with zeal for the sanctification of others.¹⁷⁵

It is the virtue of zeal which reveals the unity of Gailhac's theological vision. Zeal has as its object the glory of God achieved through the redemption of others and personal holiness. To be zealous is to imitate Jesus Christ who Himself burned with

¹⁷³ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3999: Tous les élus sont membres de Jésus-Christ; parmi eux sont choisis de toute éternité ceux qui doivent, unis à Jésus-Christ et marchant sur ses traces, fidèles à leur vocation, travailler à consommer la grande oeuvre de la Rédemption.

¹⁷⁴ *VR*, p. 140, *RL*, p. 177. This treatise is also found in *Ecrits*, vol. 3, pp. 657-666.

¹⁷⁵ *VR*, pp. 140, 144, *RL*, p. 177, 180: Tous les membres qui le composent doivent posséder le zèle à un haut degré. Vivre pour Dieu, le bien des âmes, le zèle en un mot, doit être toute leur vie... Si vous voulez vous montrer dignes de votre vocation, votre âme brûlante d'amour sera remplie de zèle pour la sanctification des âmes.

zeal for the mission his Father had given Him. As the religious become more and more identified with Christ, as they put on His spirit and His attitudes, zeal becomes more and more the motivating force in their lives. Gailhac often presents Jesus burning with zeal for the glory of His Father and the salvation of men as the model of the sisters' zeal. In 1880 he writes to a sister:

May your whole life be a model and the perfume of Jesus Christ. That is the only way to do good, to gain souls for God. May your dedication resemble that of Jesus Christ. He burned with zeal for the glory of His Father and the salvation of souls.¹⁷⁶

In the following passage, we might read "zeal" as identified with "love":

Jesus Christ loved His Father and He loved us. It is the love for His Father and for our salvation that directed Him in all His works, which made Him suffer everything, endure everything in order to obtain the glory of His Father and the sanctification of souls. Be burning with this love, then, and don't draw back from anything that true love of God and neighbor demands.¹⁷⁷

While zeal is an effect of identification with Christ, it is also presented as a means for achieving this oneness with Jesus. Having spoken of obedience "which brings about the likeness of the Incarnate Word in you," Gailhac adds:

For you, there is still another mark of resemblance with Jesus Christ: zeal. "The zeal of your house consumes

¹⁷⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4690: Que toute votre vie soit un modèle et le parfum de Jésus-Christ; c'est l'unique moyen de faire le bien, de gagner les âmes à Dieu. Il brûlait de zèle pour la gloire de son Père et le salut des âmes.

¹⁷⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4679: Jésus-Christ a aimé son Père et il nous a aimés. C'est l'amour de son Père et de notre salut qui l'a dirigé dans tous ses travaux, qui lui a fait tout souffrir, tout endurer pour procurer la gloire de son Père et la sanctification des âmes. Donc, soyez brûlantes de cet amour et ne reculez devant rien de ce que demande le véritable amour de Dieu et du prochain.

me," was said of Jesus. Souls are the house of God. To remove obstacles between God and man, to draw souls to God, to merit grace for them, to draw them to God by example and to win them for God by every sacrifice, to make them temples of the Holy Spirit by His love: that was the Savior's occupation during His whole life. That also must be your conduct in order to be total and exact images of Jesus Christ. You must be entirely dedicated to the service of Jesus Christ so as to continue the Work of Redemption.¹⁷⁸

The zeal of which Gailhac speaks is intimately linked with love of God. This love cannot be contained and necessarily spills over into love of others. One cannot have an authentic love of God without loving others. Zeal is an expression of love — love for God and men, a love which is a sharing in the very love of Jesus for the Father and for mankind. The more one becomes identified with Jesus, the more one shares in His love which unifies and integrates one's life. Gailhac sees that in a life which continues the existence and mission of Christ, the glorification of the Father and the salvation of the world, the love of God and the love of man are one. The total giving of each religious to the "works of zeal" springs from her love and union with the Lord. Gailhac states this in his treatise on zeal:

If it really springs from the love of Jesus Christ, zeal surely wishes in its own person to glorify Jesus Christ by a holy and perfect life: that is rigorously necessary. But it cannot be contained, it must communicate itself. It needs to share all that God has given it. It knows God and wants to make Him known, it loves God and

¹⁷⁸ *VR*, p. 295, *RL*, p. 272: Il est encore pour vous un autre trait de ressemblance avec Jésus-Christ: le zèle. "Le zèle de votre maison me dévore," disait-on de Jésus. La maison de Dieu, ce sont les âmes. Enlever les obstacles posés entre Dieu et l'homme, attirer à Dieu les âmes, leur mériter la grâce, les entraîner à Dieu par ses exemples, les conquérir à Dieu par tous les sacrifices, en faire les temples du Saint-Esprit par son amour, telle fut l'occupation de toute la vie du divin Sauveur.

Telle aussi doit être votre conduite pour être entièrement les images conformes de Jésus-Christ. Vous devez être tout entières au service de Jésus-Christ pour continuer l'Oeuvre de la Rédemption.

wants to make Him loved; it serves Him, it adores Him and wants the whole world to serve and adore Him.¹⁷⁹

Gailhac's favorite description of zeal shows well the relationship which he saw between love and zeal: "Zeal is the flame of love."¹⁸⁰

Gailhac summarizes the substance of zeal in a phrase which he often repeated and which he urged the sisters to adopt as the motto of the congregation: "To love God and to make Him loved, to glorify God and to make Him glorified — that is my whole life."¹⁸¹ The glory of God is Jesus Christ; God is glorified insofar as persons become identified with Jesus, become one with Him. The holiness of persons, therefore, is the greatest external glory that can be given to the Father. "Indeed, is there anything more precious than glorifying God by sanctifying ourselves? God has created us for this purpose and we could not explain our existence if this truth were unknown."¹⁸² What is needed for the works of God is not just any group of persons to carry on what might be a valid and good work of service, but persons whose holiness is the most effective way of glorifying God and bringing others to the salvation of Jesus Christ.

In a letter of 1882, Gailhac writes a paragraph which, in our opinion, summarizes what we have said about zeal. We see here its relationship to holiness, to love; we see also the apostolic value of holiness, the importance of authenticity of life:

¹⁷⁹ *VR*, p. 142, *RL*, p. 178: Si réellement il a pris naissance dans l'amour de Jésus-Christ, il [le zèle] veut sans doute, en sa propre personne, glorifier Jésus-Christ par sa vie sainte et parfaite: c'est rigoureusement nécessaire; mais il ne sait pas se borner à lui-même, il faut qu'il se communique. C'est un besoin pour lui de donner tout ce qu'il tient de Dieu. Il connaît Dieu, et veut le faire connaître; il aime Dieu et veut le faire aimer; il le sert, il l'adore, et il voudrait que tout le monde le serve et l'adore.

¹⁸⁰ See, for example, *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3254; vol. 11, pp. 3821, 3876.

¹⁸¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4538: "Aimer Dieu et le faire aimer; glorifier Dieu et le faire glorifier — c'est toute ma vie."

¹⁸² *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4548: "Qu'y a-t-il en effet de plus précieux que de glorifier Dieu en nous sanctifiant? Dieu nous a créés pour cette fin et nous ne saurions expliquer notre existence si cette vérité nous était inconnue."

“The zeal of your house consumes me.” Jesus Christ addressed these words to His Father. Engrave them in your soul; they state the sentiments which must fill your heart, for they express in an admirable way the spirit of the Institute. Indeed, to be holy and to work to make others holy, is that not your vocation and the determining motive which led you to choose this Institute in preference to every other one? Love and the love of God produces this two-fold effect. Love sanctifies the heart it possesses, but love has its flame which seeks to enkindle everything around it. First you must be holy; those who are not are unsuitable for the work of God. . . . It is not enough to have a common and ordinary holiness. Your holiness must be sufficient to make you an example. Words without reality cannot help others to be holy; words must be supported by example. Surely even the words of Jesus Christ would not have had much power if He had not previously lived them. That is why He begins by doing, then He teaches what He has done. That is what gives strength, power to His word.¹⁸³

¹⁸³ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, pp. 3714-15: “Le zèle de votre maison me dévore.” Ces paroles sont de Jésus-Christ à son Père; gravez-les dans votre âme; elles expriment les sentiments qui doivent remplir votre cœur, car elles disent d’une manière admirable l’esprit de l’Institut. En effet, être saintes et travailler à faire des saintes, n’est-ce-pas votre vocation et le motif déterminant qui vous a portées à choisir l’Institut de préférence à tout autre? L’amour et l’amour de Dieu produit ce double effet. L’amour sanctifie le cœur qu’il possède, mais parce que l’amour a sa flamme, par elle il cherche à embraser tout ce qui l’environne . . . D’abord il faut être des saintes; celles qui ne le seraient pas ne seraient pas propres à l’oeuvre de Dieu . . . Ce n’est pas assez d’avoir une sainteté commune et ordinaire; il faut que votre sainteté soit à un degré assez élevé afin que vous soyez modèle. On ne fait pas les saintes par des paroles sans réalité; il faut que les paroles soient appuyées sur l’exemple. Certes, les paroles même de Jésus-Christ n’auraient pas une grande puissance s’Il ne les avaient auparavant réalisées par sa conduite. Voilà pourquoi il commence par faire puis Il enseigne ce qu’Il avait fait; voilà ce qui donne de force, de puissance à sa parole.

3 Mary

This chapter on Christian participation in the life of the Trinity can be summed up in Gailhac's reflection on Mary, since he sees her as the human person whose participation in the salvific mission of Christ was total. The titles which Gailhac attributes to her most frequently capsulize what we have said in this chapter: Mary is the most beautiful image of Jesus, she is the most perfect co-operator in the work of Redemption.

Mary is the one in whom Jesus is faithfully mirrored. She is the image of Jesus. In imitating her, the sisters are imitating Jesus Christ.¹⁸⁴ Gailhac underscores the fact that the Christian ideal realized in Mary makes identification with Jesus seem more within the reach of the sisters:

Study Jesus in Mary; the model will be more within your reach. Even though Jesus did, as it were, make Himself small, condensed so as not to dazzle us, He is nevertheless the Sun. He can only be contemplated through a veil. Mary is this luminous cloud which allows us to contemplate Jesus living in her. In studying Jesus through Mary and in Mary, you will lose none of Jesus' own traits.¹⁸⁵

Gailhac puts Mary before the eyes of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary because "the spirit of Mary is precisely the spirit of Jesus Christ, her Son."¹⁸⁶ Not only does Mary present an image of Jesus Christ, but she intercedes for Christians in the great work of their transformation into Jesus Christ.¹⁸⁷

By her loving acceptance of the Word of God in her life

¹⁸⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, pp. 3892, 3939.

¹⁸⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3723: Etudiez Jésus en Marie, le modèle sera un peu plus à votre portée. Quoique Jésus se soit, en quelque manière, abrégé, rapetissé pour ne pas trop nous éblouir, Il est cependant soleil, on ne peut guère Le contempler qu'à travers un transparent; Marie est cette nuée lumineuse qui nous permet de contempler Jésus vivant en elle. En étudiant Jésus à travers Marie ou en Marie, vous ne perdrez aucun des traits de Jésus.

¹⁸⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3903.

¹⁸⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3555.

and her constant fidelity to that Word in all its mystery, Mary fully co-operated in the great work of Redemption. It is her total and loving acceptance of the will of the Father which Gailhac admires when he attributes to her the title "co-operatrix in the Work of Redemption." He speaks of this title in a letter to a superior:

All the titles of Mary are sublime, heavenly, divine. Her Immaculate Conception, her fullness of grace, her divine maternity are beyond expression. And nevertheless I believe there is one title even greater: that of co-operatrix in the Work of Redemption. Is it not true that she only received all the other privileges in order to be able to bear the title of co-operatrix?¹⁸⁸

The sisters are to share Mary's role as "co-opératrice": "You are children of the Sacred Heart of Mary, of that heart which co-operated so well in the redemption of the world. This name alone tells you what your devotion must be, with what zeal you must co-operate in the sanctification of souls in order to glorify God throughout eternity."¹⁸⁹ In their lives, the sisters are to "to bring Jesus to spiritual birth in all hearts"¹⁹⁰ just as Mary brought Him to birth.

We have tried in this chapter to show how Gailhac envisaged the Christian's participation in the Trinitarian life. The Christian, the religious, is to be totally turned toward God, docile to the Spirit whose work is to identify persons with Jesus

¹⁸⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3839: "Tous les titres de Marie sont sublimes, célestes, divins. Son Immaculée Conception, sa plénitude de grâces, sa maternité divine sont au delà de toute expression et cependant, je crois qu'il est un titre même plus grand: c'est celui de Co-opératrice à l'oeuvre de la Rédemption. N'est-il pas vrai en effet qu'elle n'a reçu tous les autres privilèges qu'afin de pouvoir porter le titre de co-opératrice?" See also vol. 11, pp. 3768, 3896, 4003; *VR*, pp. 100, 101, 270, 271, *RL*, pp. 207, 209, 64, 65; unclassified letter of Feb. 9, 1880.

¹⁸⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3903: "Vous êtes les enfants du Sacré-Coeur de Marie, de ce coeur qui a tant co-opéré à la rédemption du monde. Ce nom seul vous dit quel doit être votre dévouement, avec quel zèle vous devez coopérer à la sanctification des âmes pour glorifier Dieu pendant l'éternité."

¹⁹⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4015.

Christ, to transform them into sons in the Son. One responds by "imitating" Jesus Christ, by consciously, freely and lovingly choosing Him as the center of one's life. This centering on Christ necessarily presupposes a de-centering from oneself — a death to oneself in order to live the life of the Son.

The life of the Son to which the Christian is called is a life for others. As the Christian-religious becomes more and more united with Christ — a union which Gailhac characterizes by the image of the spouse — she feels the need to make the Father known and loved by others; that is, she desires to share more fully in Christ's own mission. Reciprocally, her love for others and her understanding of the nature of the redemptive work in which she is called to participate urge her to center her life ever more on the source of all salvation: Jesus Christ.

We would like to conclude with a rather lengthy passage, echoing Saint Paul's own apology for his apostolate, which shows that Gailhac's understanding of the Christian response which we have articulated in this chapter was not a theoretical one. On the contrary, it was the unique motivation of his whole life and all his activities:

God created me for Himself; He wants me to live only for His love and His glory. From my youth He has filled me with His holy fire. My heart has never wished to live without His love. That is not all. I have always felt in me the duty and the need to make Him loved. Quite young, He called me to the priesthood. I agreed to be a priest only on condition that I would live only to love Him and make Him loved.

From my childhood, God has placed in me a great love for souls. That is the source of the works that He has urged me to undertake, for I have undertaken nothing except what He has indicated to me as His wish . . .

As for work, fatigue, dedication to works, I have not spared myself. It seems to me that for the works of God I am even prepared to sacrifice myself entirely until my last breath.

But what am I saying, my children? Pardon me if I speak to you so long of what God has done for me.

I do not speak for myself for I feel my own nothingness, my emptiness. I feel how little I am more than I can tell you. It is for you that I am speaking. . . .¹⁹¹

¹⁹¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3425: Dieu m'a créé pour lui; Il veut que je ne vive que de son amour et pour sa gloire. Dès ma plus tendre jeunesse il m'a rempli de son feu sacré. Mon coeur n'a jamais voulu vivre sans son amour. Ce n'est pas tout. J'ai toujours senti en moi le devoir et le besoin de le faire aimer. Tout jeune il m'a appelé au sacerdoce... Je n'ai consenti à être prêtre qu'à condition que je ne vivrais que pour l'aimer et le faire aimer.

Depuis mon enfance Dieu a mis en moi un grand amour pour les âmes. C'est là le principe des oeuvres qu'il m'a fait entreprendre, car je n'ai rien entrepris que ce qu'il m'a indiqué vouloir...

Pour le travail, la fatigue, le dévouement aux oeuvres, je ne me suis pas trop épargné; il me semble même que pour les oeuvres du bon Dieu je suis prêt à me sacrifier tout entier et jusqu'à mon dernier soupir.

Mais que fais-je, mes enfants. Pardonnez-moi si je vous parle si longuement de ce que Dieu a fait pour moi. Ce n'est pas pour moi que je parle, car je sens mon rien, mon néant; je sens le peu que je suis plus je ne saurais vous le dire. C'est pour vous que je parle...

CHAPTER V

LIFE WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

We have previously stated the importance of the institution in preserving the original charism. Without external expression, the spirit of a congregation cannot endure or be entered into by later generations. Gailhac was conscious of the gift given to him by the Spirit and of his responsibility to respond to it. His response took shape in the communication of that gift to those whom God sent to collaborate in His own work. The purpose of this chapter is to underline certain elements of Gailhac's theological vision as we have analyzed it which were so central that they are reflected in the structures, in the "cadre de vie" of the congregation in its early years. We do not propose to study the history of the congregation but merely to underline certain significant aspects in the life of the congregation which highlight the central points of Gailhac's own faith-vision.

A. CENTRALITY OF JESUS CHRIST

First of all, Gailhac's specific reference to the spirit which he wished to animate the congregation reflects the centrality of Christ in his own faith-vision. Jesus Christ, Savior and Model, was to be the sole concern, the only desire of the sisters. Their chief occupation was to be the acquisition of His spirit. Their spirit was to be His spirit. The second chapter of this work has already shown how important Gailhac considered a common spirit to be. This fact is also specifically stated in the first constitutions: "What is most important and what should be

cared for above all in a community is that all its members be animated by its own own particular spirit.”¹

1. *Spirit of Jesus Christ*

In the constitutions, Gailhac capsulizes the spirit of the congregation in the word “faith”. The spirit of the Institute is stated as “primarily a spirit of faith which should manifest itself in all their conduct. . . .” and “secondly in an ardent zeal for the salvation of souls.”² We have already seen — and will see again — the emphasis Gailhac placed on zeal. To capture the richness of the term “faith”, it is necessary to look once again at Gailhac’s writings to the congregation. Faith, for him, is an all-embracing reality which he describes in various ways. In one letter he says: “The reality of faith is none other than Faith, Hope and Love at work in every detail of life.”³ The beginning of this phrase where he describes faith in terms of itself is hardly revealing as to his conception of faith. And yet the words “at work in every detail of life” reveal that he considered faith as a motivation, as a reality which affected every aspect, every moment of one’s life. In another letter he says: “Faith is true life” and goes on to describe the effects of faith: “Faith gives merit to all our works. . . . purifies our intentions, lifts us up above the earth, makes us live the life of Jesus Christ.”⁴

It is also by analogy that he attempts to describe faith: “Faith is to the divine life what the roots are to a tree, what the foundations are to a building.”⁵ What he seems to envisage

¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 14, pp. 222-223. This sentence — as indeed several other sections of the original constitutions — is not Gailhac’s own composition. In the 1835 constitutions of the Brothers of the Christian Schools who were situated in Béziers at the time of the foundation of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary we read, word for word, the same sentence. Regardless of its source, the sentence expressed Gailhac’s own conviction.

² *Ecrits*, vol. 14, p. 223.

³ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3462: “La vie de foi n’est autre chose que la Foi, l’Espérance et l’Amour agissant dans le détail de la vie.”

⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3384: “[La foi] communique le mérite à toutes nos oeuvres. . . . purifie nos intentions, nous élève au-dessus de la terre, nous fait vivre de la vie de Jésus-Christ.”

⁵ Letter of June 26, 1880. Unclassified in archives: “La foi est à la

is a way of seeing all things in God and God in all things.⁶ Faith is being turned toward God and living accordingly. Gailhac always emphasizes the living out of faith, speaking about what he calls "practical faith". In other words, faith is not merely an intellectual adherence to a body of doctrine but a living, motivating conviction of God's presence and action in all things. "Speculative faith does not give life; only practical faith unites us to God who is the source of life."⁷

Although the constitutions of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary state that the spirit of the congregation is a spirit of faith, in Gailhac's letters we find the spirit of faith specifically referred to only a few times. On the contrary, Gailhac describes the spirit of the congregation in various ways: as zeal, obedience, love, simplicity.

What was the reality that he envisioned in using these different terms? He himself states it: the spirit of Jesus Christ. "Since the spirit of the Institute is the spirit of Jesus Christ, one cannot have the spirit of Jesus Christ without having all His virtues."⁸ To a young woman entering the congregation, he writes:

Dear child, I would admit you as a postulant? Put on the spirit of Jesus Christ; in a special way it is the spirit of our Institute. The spirit of Jesus Christ is a spirit of humility, of renunciation, of dedication, of sacrifice.⁹

In 1883 he thanks God for sustaining and prolonging his life so that he can "work with renewed zeal to confirm you in the

vie divine ce que les racines sont à l'arbre, ce que le fondement est à un édifice."

⁶ See *VR*, p. 163, *RL*, p. 280.

⁷ Letter of June 26, 1880. Unclassified: "La foi spéculative ne donne pas la vie, seule la foi pratique nous unit à Dieu qui est la source de la vie."

⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3643: "L'esprit de l'Institut étant l'esprit de Jésus-Christ, on ne peut posséder l'esprit de Jésus-Christ sans en posséder les vertus."

⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4688: Chère enfant, je vous admets au rang de postulante? Prenez l'esprit de Jésus-Christ; c'est d'une manière particulière l'esprit de notre institut. Or, l'esprit de Jésus-Christ est un esprit d'humilité, de renoncement, de dévouement, de sacrifice."

spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ who is the foundation and life of the Institute and of all its members . . .”¹⁰ In 1885 he thanks a confrère for all that the latter has done for the sisters and exhorts him: “Imbue them with the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ which is the only spirit of the Institute.”¹¹

There is in Gailhac’s handwriting a copy of “Règles communes des Dames du Sacré-Coeur de Jésus et Marie.”¹² These unfinished constitutions were perhaps a first draft of the original constitutions of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary. The object of the institute and its practices as outlined in the “Common Rules” are those that Gailhac did in fact determine for the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary. The statement of the spirit of the institute in the “Common Rules” reads as follows, making explicit the relationship between the spirit of faith and the spirit of Jesus Christ:

The spirit of the Institute is, in fact, the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ and consequently a spirit of faith which should make them see God and His glory in all things. The sisters will take great care never to say, do or think anything which is not directed to this end.

Secondly, to be images of their Model, and as persons consecrated to God, they will direct all their efforts toward the practice of humility, simplicity, detachment from the world.

Thirdly, since the Rule prescribes no penances other than those that the Church prescribes for all her children, they will replace penitential practices by a burning zeal for the salvation and sanctification of souls.¹³

¹⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3800.

¹¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3906: “Pénétrez-les bien de l’esprit de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ qui est l’unique esprit de l’Institut.”

¹² *Ecrits*, vol. 3, p. 623-627.

¹³ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 624: L’esprit de Jésus-Christ Notre Seigneur est proprement l’esprit de l’institut, esprit, par conséquent, de foi qui doit, en toutes choses, leur faire envisager Dieu et sa gloire. Les soeurs auront un grand soin de jamais rien dire, faire ou penser que pour cette fin.

En second lieu, pour être conformes à leur modèle, elles mettront comme des personnes consacrées à Dieu tous leurs soins de [sic] s’appliquer à l’humilité, la simplicité, l’éloignement du monde.

We find here all the elements articulated in the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary constitutions as essential to their spirit — faith, simplicity, humility, detachment and zeal — but all summarized and subsumed under the term “spirit of Jesus Christ.” No doubt this term was considered too broad to serve as a specification of a particular spirit and so was expressed in the original, approved constitutions as a “spirit of faith”.

Obedience, humility and zeal, as we have already seen, are the characteristics which best express Jesus’ relationship to God and man. The accent on simplicity which Gailhac makes explicit in the constitutions seems to hinge on his understanding that the spirit of the congregation is the spirit of Jesus Christ, that is, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth.

He identifies the spirit of Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit. “The spirit of Jesus Christ is the Holy Spirit. . . . The spirit of the Rule is the spirit of Jesus Christ. Therefore the religious must be animated by the Spirit of Jesus Christ.”¹⁴

When, at the end of his life and after disintegration of the congregation of the Priests of the Good Shepherd, Gailhac sought a religious congregation of men who could continue to direct and spiritually animate the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, he turned toward the Society of Jesus. His reasons for doing so are stated in terms of the spirit common to both apostolic groups. He writes in 1887 to Father Michel, provincial of the Society of Jesus in Toulouse, asking that the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary be taken under the “protection” of the Society of Jesus: “I will die happy knowing that they are in the

En troisième lieu comme la Règle ne leur prescrit d'autres pénitences que celles que l'Eglise prescrit à tous ses enfants, elles suppléeront aux austérités par un zèle brûlant pour le salut et la sanctification des âmes.

¹⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3872. It is sometimes difficult to determine in Gailhac's letters whether he is referring to the “spirit of Jesus Christ” in broad terms indicating the quality of life within the congregation or the “Spirit of Jesus Christ” indicating the third Person of the Trinity. The use of capital or small letters is no indication of the meaning since he uses them inconsistently. Also, his letters written after 1873 are written in pencil because his hand trembled so that it was difficult for him to hold a pen. His writing — whether in pen or pencil — is hard to decipher and he sometimes disregards both capital letters and punctuation.

hands of holy religious who will bring the work begun to perfection. As far as I could, I have tried to inspire in them the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ which is the spirit of your holy and illustrious Institute.”¹⁵

2. *Emphasis on Prayer*

The central role of the Person of Jesus Christ in Gailhac's spirituality, and the fact that he meant the congregation to be animated by the spirit of Jesus Christ, leads to a great emphasis on prayer, especially affective, contemplative prayer centered on the Person of Christ. The sisters are to read, re-read, study contemplatively the Sacred Scriptures. Christ is to be always before their eyes and in their hearts. After the statement that the spirit of the congregation is a spirit of faith, one edition of the constitutions — that of 1873 — adds: “The Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary must ceaselessly study and practise the lessons of the gospel, the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, of His holy Mother and the saints.”¹⁶

The prayer of the sisters was to be made with great simplicity, according to the movements of the Spirit within each one. Prayer was to open them to union with God through identification with Jesus Christ and was therefore, also to be the source of their apostolate. It is an unfinished letter where Gailhac speaks of prayer which is perhaps most revelatory of his understanding of that reality — which he easily calls either “*méditation*” or “*oraison*”. Speaking of meditation, he says:

It is the prayer *par excellence*, that which Jesus Christ came to teach us and that He indicated to us in these words: Henceforth my disciples will adore God in spirit and in truth. *In spirit*, that is . . . in the Holy Spirit, because in meditation it is the Spirit who prays and who

¹⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 14, p. 47. This request was made to the Society of Jesus two years after a similar unsuccessful request to the Holy Ghost Fathers: “P. P. du St. Esprit et du Très Saint Coeur de Marie.” See *Cop. Pub.*, fol. 1245-6 (*Summ.*, p. 4585-6).

¹⁶ *Arch. Hist.*, 11-A, p. 8.

forms in our heart unutterable groanings. *In truth*, because the soul of the true disciple does not lose itself in vague ideas, in empty dreams or in imaginary fantasies, but rather in the contemplation of truth, that is, of God our creator and of Jesus Christ His Son and our Savior, in order to be attached, united to God by faith, hope and love.¹⁷

B. ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE: GLORY OF GOD

Gailhac's unified theological vision is revealed in the statement of purpose of the congregation. In his letters, the term most frequently used to express the objective of the congregation is the "glory of God." This term includes the aspects of consecration and mission within the congregation. Personal holiness, Christian service of others, the various works undertaken by the congregation — all are to be seen in terms of the glory of God. Most often when referring to the end of the institute, Gailhac renders the term "glory of God" explicit by coupling it with another phrase. "In all that we do, our great objective must be the glory of God and the sanctification of souls."¹⁸ This second term should be seen as explanatory of the glory of God rather than as a second, additional objective. The terms are not two distinct ends but rather a single aim. The glory of God is the salvation of man. Personal perfection or holiness is an in-

¹⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 3, p. 741-42: C'est la prière par excellence, celle que Jésus-Christ est venu nous enseigner et qu'il nous a indiquée par ces paroles: Désormais mes disciples adoreront Dieu en esprit et en vérité. En esprit, c'est-à-dire... dans le Saint Esprit, car dans la méditation c'est l'Esprit qui prie et qui forme dans le coeur des gémissements inénarrables. En vérité, car l'âme des vrais disciples ne se perd pas dans des idées vagues, dans des songes creux ou dans des imaginations fabuleuses, mais dans la contemplation de la vérité, c'est-à-dire de Dieu, notre créateur et de Jésus-Christ son Fils et notre Sauveur, pour s'attacher, s'unir à Dieu par la foi, l'espérance et l'amour.

¹⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4321: "Dans tout ce que nous faisons, notre grand but doit être la gloire de Dieu et la sanctification des âmes."

dispensable means to the attainment of this single end; it is both the condition and the fruit of true apostolic service.

Therefore, when he joins the term "personal sanctification" to "the glory of God", Gailhac adds: "But it is not sufficient for us to glorify God by our own holiness; our vocation has still another objective: the sanctification of others, in such a way that we can only glorify God by our own holiness joined to that of the persons entrusted to us."¹⁹ He also recognizes that God has chosen him to help the sisters of the congregation become "suited to devote themselves to a work and to obtain the glory of God by the sanctification of souls."²⁰

In certain letters, Father Gailhac speaks solely of the service of others as the object of the Institute. "The whole purpose of our Institute is to lead souls to the love of God."²¹ "The supreme object of the apostles' work and of your own is to lead souls to eternal life."²² The zeal with which this one objective is to be undertaken is reflected in the following passage: "...As for us, let us seek only souls, long only for them, work for them, wear ourselves out for them, sacrifice ourselves for them. What a beautiful life is the one spent solely winning others to Jesus Christ!"²³

In a letter dated February 18, 1881, Father Gailhac traces the relationship which he sees among the various ends of the institute, ends which are in fact only one entity — the glory of God:

The Institute of which you are members has a double

¹⁹ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4548: "Mais ce n'est pas assez pour nous de glorifier Dieu par notre sanctification; notre vocation a encore une autre fin qui est la sanctification des âmes. De telle sorte que nous ne pouvons glorifier Dieu que par notre sanctification jointe à celle des âmes qui nous sont confiées."

²⁰ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3840.

²¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3718: "Tout le but de notre Institut est de conduire les âmes à l'amour de Dieu."

²² *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3331: "Le but suprême du travail des apôtres et du vôtre, c'est de conduire les âmes à la vie éternelle."

²³ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3406: "...Pour nous, ne cherchons que les âmes, ne veuillons que les âmes, travaillons pour les âmes, fatiguons-nous pour les âmes, épuisons-nous pour les âmes, sacrifions-nous pour les âmes. Oh, la belle vie que celle qui n'est employée qu'à les gagner à Jésus-Christ."

objective: the holiness of its members and the sanctification of the souls God entrusts to each house. The two objectives have another one which is their ultimate goal: the glory of God. These first two objectives blend into the third, since all is ordered ultimately to God.

But the first two objectives must go together, one cannot exist without the other. Separately they cannot be the end of the Institute because the constitutions do not separate them. They are only one reality which itself produces the glory of God.²⁴

This letter was written very shortly after the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars required that the personal sanctification of the members of the congregation be stated as the principal end of the institute and it seems to be an attempt to insure unity of purpose and vision regarding the institute.²⁵

This unity of intention and of vision was concretized in the constitutions as a look at the statement of objectives in the original constitutions and at its evolution will reveal. In the first constitutions, written in Gailhac's own hand, we read: "The object of the Institute of the Sacred Heart of Mary is to undertake all the works that can contribute to the salvation of female per-

²⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3641: L'institut dont vous êtes membres a un double but: la sanctification des membres qui le composent et la sanctification des âmes que Dieu confie à chaque maison. Ces deux fins ont une autre fin qui est la fin suprême: la gloire de Dieu. Ces deux buts premiers se confondent dans le troisième, car il est de l'ordre que tout arrive à Dieu. Or, les deux premiers buts doivent aller ensemble, un seul ne peut aller; ils ne peuvent se séparer pour être la fin de l'Institut, car les constitutions ne les séparent pas; elles n'en font qu'une même chose laquelle produit la gloire de Dieu.

²⁵ Such interventions of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars were not uncommon at this time. For a treatment of this question, see G. Lesage, *L'Accession des congrégations à l'état religieux canonique*. Ottawa, 1952; J. M. R. Tillard, *Devant Dieu et pour le monde*, Paris 1974, especially pp. 84-94. A. Battandier, *Guide canonique pour les constitutions des Instituts à vœux simples* (6e édition), Paris, 1923; J. Creusen, "Evolution du droit des religieux de Vatican 1 au code de 1917," *NRT*, 1929, p. 885; V. La Puma, "Evoluzione del diritto dei religiosi de Pio IX a Pio XI," *Acta Congressus Juridici Internationalis an. 1934*, vol. IV, Rome, 1937, pp. 193-204.

sons.”²⁶ Already here the glory of God and personal sanctification are implicit, the salvation of persons being the greatest external glory that one can give to God,²⁷ and personal sanctification being an indispensable means toward the salvation of others.

In the constitutions submitted to Rome for approval in 1870, we find somewhat more specifically: “The object of the Institute of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary is to undertake all the works of zeal that can contribute to the glory of God and the salvation of souls.”²⁸ In response to an objection by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars that the statement of objective was too broad and ought to be more specific²⁹, Gailhac revised the statement as follows: “The object of the Institute of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Immaculate Virgin, is the formation and education of young girls of all classes of society.”³⁰

Again at the request of Rome, the personal sanctification of the members was stated as the primary aim of the congregation and several other modifications regarding the “secondary aim” were made, so that the constitutions definitively approved in 1899, nine years after Gailhac’s death, read: “The object of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Immaculate Virgin, is to obtain the glory of God, not only through the personal sanctification of its members but also through the salvation of the neighbor.”³¹ These changes must be seen in the context of

²⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 14, p. 222.

²⁷ See *VR*, p. 301, *RL*, p. 283.

²⁸ *Cop. Pub.*, fol. 2674-5 (*Summ.*, p. 4532).

²⁹ “Expungendum periter, finem Instituti extendi ad omnia opera quae in Dei gloriam et animarum salutem influunt; finis enim Instituti debet esse determinatus.” “Animadversiones,” *Cop. Pub.*, fol. 2747 (*Summ.*, p. 4651, n. 4).

³⁰ *Arch. Hist.*, vol. 11-A, p. 8.

³¹ *Arch. Hist.*, 11-B², p. 32. These changes were prompted by a second set of “animadversiones” in 1880 (see *Cop. Pub.*, fol. 2751-6; *Summ.*, p. 4656-4663) and especially by a third set in 1892. The relevant article of the 1892 document reads: “Finis primarius Instituti i.e. propria sanctificatio per trium votorum simplicium observantiam assequenda, et finis secundarius per media idonea ab Instituto sibi proposita operandum tum per institutionem catholicam, civilem et literarium honestarum puellarum, tum per scholas et orphanotrophia pauperum ejusdem sexus, distincte praefiniantur; circa quae improbandum videtur perniciosas distinctiones, quae ad

the Church at the turn of the century. This was a period when a strong movement toward centralization prompted the Sacred Congregation to stress uniformity of religious rules so that all constitutions were to conform to certain "model constitutions", the same for all congregations. What is evident in all the revisions of the statement of the objective is that the congregation is founded to participate in the Work of Redemption. This it is which reflects the unity of Gailhac's theological vision. Gailhac had expressed this unity of aim in the very first years of the congregation's existence:

We must admit, it seems to me, that the orders most pleasing to God are those which glorify Him most. But those Orders which unite their members so closely to Jesus Christ that His work becomes theirs, do these not give the greatest glory to God?... The order you are entering is among these.³²

C. PARTICIPATION IN WORK OF REDEMPTION

1. *Fourth Vow of Zeal*

The desire and promise to participate in the Work of Redemption was incorporated into the formal public commitment made by the sisters. They were to make a fourth vow of zeal. It was common among congregations at this time to underscore certain aspects of their life, or to render more precise their specific character by means of a fourth vow. This vow expressed a characteristic trait of the congregation and translated its own proper identity. That Father Gailhac gave zeal — solemnized by

minus sunt inexacta, spiritum proprii Instituti describere." *Arch. Hist.*, vol. 11-B², p. 29.

■ "Gloires et Devoirs de la Vocation Religieuse," September 18, 1853. *RL*, p. 300-301: Il faut bien avouer, ce me semble, que les Ordres qui procurent le plus de gloire à Dieu sont plus agréables. Mais les Ordres qui unissent si fort à Jésus-Christ que l'Oeuvre de Jésus-Christ devient leur Oeuvre, ne sont-ce pas ceux qui procurent le plus de gloire à Dieu?... Or, l'Ordre dans lequel vous entrez est de ce nombre." This passage has been omitted from *RL*, p. 282.

vow — as a characteristic note to the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary is significant. The vow formula in the original ceremonial reads: “. . . I vow and promise to God Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, and I will consecrate all the days of my life to the works of zeal prescribed for me by Holy Obedience.”³³ The relationship between zeal and obedience is evident in this formula but is even more explicit in the statement of the obligations of the vow of zeal found in the first constitutions:

By this vow, the religious commit themselves to do all that their superiors will prescribe as contributing to the salvation of souls. They will refuse no employment either because it would not seem to be in harmony with the talents they believe they have or because it would not suit their tastes and inclinations.

On the contrary, they will desire what is most humble, most hidden and least glorious in the eyes of the world.

They will always be ready for any sacrifice or renunciation which could contribute to the salvation of souls.³⁴

Both zeal and obedience are expressions of participation in the mission of Redemption.

When the Holy See asked in 1873 that the fourth vow of zeal be suppressed because “in modern pious institutes only the three customary simple vows of poverty, obedience and chastity are allowed,”³⁵ Gailhac made the relationship between obedience and zeal explicit in the vow formula: “. . . I vow and promise to God Poverty, Chastity and Obedience by which I commit myself to undertake all the works of zeal which it will prescribe for me and that in any nation.”³⁶

After the suppression of the fourth vow, Gailhac continues to

³³ *Arch. Hist.*, 11-B¹, p. 16. Formula found in handwritten, unpaginated copy of ceremonial.

³⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 14, p. 235.

³⁵ “Expungendum quartum votum incumbendi operibus zeli christiani, quum id contineatur in voto obedientiae et in modernis piis Institutis non admittuntur nisi tria consueta simplicia vota paupertatis, obedientiae et castitatis.” “Animadversiones,” 1873, n. 14. *Cop. Pub.*, fol. 2748 (*Summ.*, p. 4653).

³⁶ *Arch. Hist.*, 11-A, p. 8.

consider zeal the specific mark of the congregation. He writes: "Though the virtue of zeal is inherent in the religious life, I know of no other institute which includes it in the vow of obedience as yours does to imitate Jesus Christ in a special way."³⁷ And again he writes: "Your vows are of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, including as a distinctive characteristic of your institute, zeal and dedication to the works which you have undertaken."³⁸

He even continues to consider zeal as a vow. In a letter of 1880, he questions the sisters on their observance of their vows and then strongly underlines zeal:

You have made a vow of poverty. Are you really poor in spirit, in heart? . . . You have vowed chastity. Do you cherish it as your most precious treasure? . . . You have vowed obedience. How do you practise it? . . . You have made a vow of zeal. How do you live it?³⁹

Still in the context of zeal, he goes on:

What do you do to imitate Jesus Christ, to become another Jesus Christ, to live His life? Do you walk more generously each day in this path? Do not forget that without that you cannot fulfill this vow which is the principal object of your vocation. No, a religious who is not perfect is not suited to the works of zeal. . . . Only another Jesus Christ can bring Jesus Christ to birth and make Him grow in souls.⁴⁰

³⁷ VR, p.140, RL, p.177: "Quoique la vertu de zèle soit inhérente à la vie religieuse, cependant je ne connais pas d'Institut qui la fasse entrer dans le voeu d'obéissance, ainsi que vous le faites pour imiter plus particulièrement Jésus-Christ."

³⁸ VR, p.45, RL, p.17: "Vos voeux sont ceux de Pauvreté, Chasteté et d'Obéissance, renfermant comme caractère distinctif de votre Institut, le zèle et le dévouement pour les oeuvres auxquelles vous êtes appliquées."

³⁹ Letter of June 26, 1880. Unclassified in archives: Vous avez fait voeu de pauvreté. Etes-vous réellement pauvre d'esprit, de coeur? . . . Vous avez voué la chasteté. L'estimez-vous comme votre plus précieux trésor? . . . Vous avez fait voeu d'obéissance. Comment la pratiquez-vous? . . . Vous avez fait voeu de zèle. Comment l'exercez-vous?

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*: Que faites-vous pour imiter Jésus-Christ, à devenir un autre lui-même, à vivre de sa vie? Devenez-vous tous les jours plus généreuse pour marcher dans cette voie? N'oubliez pas que sans cela vous ne pou-

The totality and the centrality of the vow of zeal in the lives of the sisters is underlined in the following passage: "The vows, these divine bonds which encompass your whole being, are contained in the Rule. . . . The fourth . . . includes all the others because it is only love."⁴¹

Well after the suppression of the vow of zeal, Gailhac writes to a superior regarding one of the sisters who apparently has not manifested enthusiasm about her work: "I know that if she understood her vow of zeal properly, she would be happy to empty herself, to wear herself out."⁴² As late as 1883 he mentions zeal as a means of fully responding to the obligations of one's commitment: "Apply yourself to the practice of poverty, chastity, obedience, and have an ardent zeal for the works to which the Institute of the Sacred Heart of Mary is dedicated."⁴³

2. *The Works*

The fact that Gailhac saw all the works of the congregation as an expression of the one Work of Redemption resulted in a certain quality given to these works. We might enumerate these qualities as solidity, flexibility and universality.

By solidity, we mean that Gailhac saw the seriousness of the works which the congregation undertook. It was not just any group of people, of workers, who were needed for the work of Redemption through certain works, but it was important that those persons be holy, be other Christ's. He tried to assure solid foundations of holiness in each of his works. "To strengthen an

vez accomplir ce voeu qui est la fin principale de votre vocation. Non, une religieuse qui ne sera pas parfaite ne pourra être propre aux oeuvres de zèle. . . . Il faut être un autre Jésus-Christ pour faire naître, grandir Jésus-Christ dans les âmes.

⁴¹ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3401: "Dans la Règle sont contenus les voeux, ces liens divins qui embrassent tout votre être. . . . Le quatrième . . . renferme tous les autres, car celui-ci est tout amour."

⁴² *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4755: "Je sais que si elle comprenait bien son voeu de zèle, elle serait heureuse de se consumer, s'user."

⁴³ *Ecrits*, vol. 13, p. 4755: "Vous appliquer à pratiquer la pauvreté, la chasteté, l'obéissance et avoir un zèle ardent pour travailler à toutes les oeuvres auxquelles est consacré l'Institut du Sacré-Coeur de Marie."

institute, it is not enough to multiply communities; it must have a solid foundation. The only foundation is true holiness.”⁴⁴

He also sees the unity of the community as necessary for the solidity of the works. If there is no true charity among the sisters, if they are not truly united through their common conformity to Jesus Christ, the works of the congregation cannot subsist. Gailhac writes: “I insist on this point since it is so essential that the success of the Work which Providence has given the community depends on it.”⁴⁵

He also saw a minimum of human resources as necessary to assure the solidity of the congregation’s works. Only seven years after the establishment of the first branch house, the congregation had five communities outside France — these in three different countries. Gailhac fears that the rapid expansion might jeopardize the solidity of the works undertaken. He writes to a superior: “We have undertaken too much at once. We can only be in great difficulty. The Mother House is in greater difficulty than anyone.”⁴⁶ A realistic evaluation of the resources at hand in terms of the needs to be met characterized all Gailhac’s undertakings.

Because Gailhac saw all works as an expression of the one Work, there is a certain flexibility in the works of the congregation. In spite of his conviction of the value of the works he had established, he did not hold to them blindly but was always sensitive to the events of his time, to the needs around him and to the inspirations of the Spirit. We have seen the transformation of the refuge, a work which was very dear to him. In 1849 when the congregation was founded, possibilities for the education of young girls of the middle and upper classes were sadly lacking and this was a need which he realized that the primitive community of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary

⁴⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3721: “Pour affermir un institut, il ne suffit pas de multiplier les fondations; il faut un fondement solide. Il n’est pas d’autre fondement que la vraie sainteté.”

⁴⁵ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4486: “J’insiste sur ce point, car il est si essentiel que, de lui, dépend la réussite de l’Oeuvre dont la communauté est chargée par la Providence.”

⁴⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4486: “Nous avons trop entrepris à la fois; nous ne pouvons qu’être très gênés; la maison mère est la plus gênée de toutes.”

was qualified to meet. And so the boarding school was begun, having as its purpose not only to meet the needs of Christian education for young girls in a France still suffering the after-effects of the revolution, but to provide as well financial resources for the maintenance of the works for the poor. Having a clear vision of the objective of all his works — participation in the redemptive mission of Christ — he was able to adapt himself to the needs of society in terms of the resources of the congregation.

Finally, his works are characterized by what we might call “universality”. By this we mean that he was sensitive to the needs of the populations where the congregation was implanted. The sisters were sent to all classes of society and were to meet the needs of all as far as this was possible to a particular community. We find, therefore, a variety of works in each place where the sisters are located: boarding schools, orphanages, day schools, free schools. In 1877, he writes to the sisters who have just arrived in America: “Let all the children come to the school. . . . I would like you to have as well a catechism class which the older girls and even the mothers could attend. . . . Profit of every occasion to win the respect and affection of the people in the area.”⁴⁷ He sees new opportunities to meet specific needs as a call to participate in the work of making God known and loved. He writes to a sister: “You are being asked to visit the sick; that is a new blessing for the community, a new means of making our Lord Jesus Christ known and loved.”⁴⁸

⁴⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3369: “que toutes les enfants viennent à l'école. . . . Je tiendrais beaucoup à ce que vous eussiez un catéchisme auquel assisteraient toutes les grandes filles et même les mères de famille. . . . Profitez de toutes les occasions pour gagner l'estime des habitants et vous les attacher.”

⁴⁸ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4065: “Vous serez chargée de visiter les malades; c'est une nouvelle bénédiction pour la communauté, un nouveau moyen de faire connaître et aimer Notre Seigneur Jésus Christ.”

D. REDEMPTION: QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIPS

Gailhac envisaged the work of redemption as the establishment of relationships: a relationship of filial love toward the Father, of fraternal love for all men.

His faith-vision is reflected, therefore, in the quality of relationships which he tried to promote within the congregation. Again and again he urges great simplicity among the sisters — a simplicity which is based on truth. There was to be no pretension, no sophistication, no ruse, no deceit in their relationships with one another — and indeed in their relationship with God Himself. The authenticity and openness which he desired among the sisters reflected his own personal intransigence as far as anything deceitful was concerned. He writes a strong letter to the sisters in Lisburn after his first visit there:

It is truly unfortunate that my daughters cannot understand me. I thought I was speaking a language easily understood, even by children. No one has ever before accused me of hiding my thought in enigmas or in uncultured language. No one has ever before said that my mind, my intentions were mysterious. I have always been told that I was as clear as day, both in private and in public. And now my daughters say that they no longer understand either my thoughts or my words. Nevertheless it is true that I speak and write very clearly, even though my handwriting is bad.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ *Œuvres*, vol. 12, p. 4168: "C'est bien malheureux que je ne puisse être compris de mes filles. Je croyais parler un langage assez intelligible, même pour des enfants. Jamais encore personne ne m'avait accusé de cacher mes pensées dans des énigmes ou dans des termes barbares. Jamais encore on ne m'avait dit que mon esprit, mon intention fussent des mystères. On m'a toujours dit que, soit dans l'intimité, soit en public, j'étais clair comme le jour. Et maintenant mes filles disent qu'elles ne comprennent plus ni mes pensées, ni mes paroles; il est cependant vrai que je parle et j'écris très clair, quoique je peigne très mal." Apparently some of the sisters claimed not to understand Gailhac when he spoke, referring surely to his message rather than the French language since the sisters in Lisburn had just come from France themselves the year before.

In the sisters' correspondance with him, he exacts the same honesty and candor. He praises such candor when he meets it:

I congratulate you on the childlike simplicity with which you speak to your father. God will bless you if you live in this spirit your whole life long because it is in a special way the spirit of your vocation.⁵⁰

The reason he demands such openness is given in another letter: "You must show me your soul just as my own reveals itself to you. We must be one in God since we are one in His Work."⁵¹ Without sincerity and honesty among the sisters, true community is not possible. An atmosphere of confidence and trust, essential to community, cannot be established without these qualities. Gailhac sees openness as the sign of a good conscience and as an indication that one is "turned toward God."⁵²

The honesty and simplicity which he wished to see among the sisters was to spring from a sincere respect and love. He writes to one of the superiors whose assistant has apparently taken on airs:

Gailhac, having "left Ireland with a heavy heart" because of this lack of understanding, tries to seek its cause: "Might it be that they dread anything that goes against them? I am afraid so. Might it be because in order to follow the orientation and the advice given them they would have to sacrifice their own ideas, their inclinations, their moods? I believe so." What Gailhac has presented to the sisters, however, is none other than the gospel message. And so he asks with a note of anguish: "How then can a community be established in God's own spirit? How can there be a true community life? ... How can anything serious be done that God might bless for all ages? There is only one foundation which lasts forever: Jesus Christ and His Word. ..." pp.4168-4169. This passage reminds us of Jesus' own question: "Do you also wish to go away?" (Jn. 6:67)

⁵⁰ *Ecrits*, vol.10, p.3179: Je vous félicite de la simplicité et naïveté avec lesquelles vous parlez à votre père. Dieu vous bénira si toute votre vie vous vivez dans cet esprit, qui est spécialement l'esprit de votre vocation.

⁵¹ *Ecrits*, vol.10, p.3461: "Il faut que vous me montriez votre âme comme la mienne se révèle à votre âme. Nous ne devons faire qu'un en Dieu, puisque nous ne faisons qu'un dans son oeuvre."

⁵² "Considérations pratiques ajoutées ... en l'année 1864," *Arch. Hist.*, 11-B, p.10.

The spirit of the Institute is certainly not that the choir religious would look on the lay sisters as servants, but rather as their sisters, to be treated with politeness, gentleness and charity. The superiors or those who participate in the government must not act as ladies of the world but rather as servants of God. Jesus Christ, Son of God and God with His Father, said: I have not come to be served but to serve.⁵³

This simplicity, respect and love was to rule the sisters' relationships among themselves and with their superiors. Gailhac characterizes it as "the family spirit" which, he says, "is the source of the community's happiness and edifies and delights all those who witness it."⁵⁴ He describes the spirit which is contrary to the "family spirit": "The contrary spirit creates favoritism, falsifies the mind and heart of the religious, making them deceitful, dishonest, hypocritical; it sows among them an uneasiness which greatly hinders their fervor and leads to disunity."⁵⁵

All that is rigid, harsh, cold or violent should be unknown within the community. The rule he gives to superiors is "love your daughters; let them know it, see it, feel it,"⁵⁶ and again and again he insists on gentleness in relationships. This he does from his own experience:

I can speak to you from experience. The little good I have done in my sixty years of ministry, if I have done a little good and if I have won any souls for God, has come from gentleness, goodness, patience and a constant

⁵³ *Ecrits*, vol. 10, p. 3590: L'esprit de notre Institut n'est nullement que les dames regardent les soeurs comme des servantes, mais comme leurs soeurs et qu'on les traite avec honnêteté, douceur et charité. Les supérieures ou celles qui participent à la supériorité ne doivent pas agir comme des dames du monde, mais bien comme les servantes de Dieu. Jésus-Christ, Fils de Dieu, Dieu avec son Père, a dit: Je ne suis pas venu pour être servi mais pour servir moi-même.

⁵⁴ *Ecrits*, vol. 12, p. 4174.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*: "L'esprit contraire établit des partialités, fausse l'esprit et le coeur des religieuses, les rend rusées, fourbes, hypocrites, jette parmi elles un malaise qui nuit beaucoup à leur piété et mène à leur désunion."

⁵⁶ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 4068.

perseverance without allowing myself to be discouraged by obstacles or difficulties. Nothing is a powerful as gentleness when it has its source in the love of God.⁵⁷

All of the qualities we have mentioned as important in the sisters' relationship with one another are seen in the light of unity — unity which is the great objective of Jesus' mission. In 1864 Gailhac adds to the constitutions eleven practical considerations having to do with the union of the religious. After stating that "all the sisters of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Immaculate Virgin, must have but one heart and one soul,"⁵⁸ Gailhac goes on to show how "union of hearts is the great objective of Jesus' mission." He refers to the Eucharist as a means to this end and sees the final reward of the disciples of Jesus as follows: "All together in heaven in Him, with Him and by Him, they will be only one in the glory of His divinity."

We see then that in the institution itself, in the documents which expressed and regulated the life of the congregation, Gailhac's faith-vision was well embodied. All was to be centered on Jesus Christ. Christ's spirit was to be that of the congregation and like Him the religious were to give themselves unceasingly and untiringly for the salvation of all men. Rooted in Jesus Christ and *one* with Him, the religious could give themselves totally to the works of the congregation with the compassion and the zeal of Christ Himself. Their work was to make the Father known and loved.

This participation in the mission of Christ — in His own love for the Father and for mankind — was so central to the life of the congregation that it was to be rendered solemn and public by a vow of zeal. There was no doubt or hesitation in Gailhac's mind that the congregation was to be fully apostolic. The various works of service to the Church were to be determined

⁵⁷ *Ecrits*, vol. 11, p. 3983: Je puis vous parler avec expérience. Le peu de bien que j'ai fait dans 60 ans de ministère, si j'ai fait un peu de bien, si j'ai gagné des coeurs à Dieu, ça a été par la douceur, la bonté, la patience et une continuelle persévérance sans jamais me décourager malgré les obstacles et les difficultés. Rien n'est puissant comme la douceur lorsqu'elle a son principe dans l'amour de Dieu.

⁵⁸ *Arch. Hist.*, 11-B¹, p. 10.

according to the needs of others and the resources of the community, and the sisters were to be totally dedicated to them.

Finally, if Gailhac insisted on a certain quality of relationships among the sisters, it is because he understood unity as the great goal of the Work of Jesus Christ, and therefore of all his own works as well. The Work of God is to be done by a group who are united in the same spirit — the Spirit of Jesus Christ Himself. Such unity demanded relationships based on simplicity, sincerity, respect, care and love. These qualities were to be evident in the sisters' dealings with one another; they were to be the solid foundations on which the community rested. In giving to the community the "spirit of Jesus Christ," in explicitly stressing zeal, in urging unity among the sisters, Gailhac was merely drawing out the implications of his own fundamental vision — that the essence and goal of the Christian-religious life is identification with Jesus Christ, that only a group identified with Jesus Christ can continue His mission, and that it is through union with Jesus Christ that all creation is eventually led to the consummation of unity.

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CONCLUSION

The congregation founded by Jean Gailhac finds itself in 1975 in a situation which it has never before experienced. Many factors have converged to make the present moment unique in the history of the congregation. We would like in these concluding pages to underline three "signs of the times" which have recently affected the congregation and will continue to influence it in the future. All three of these factors present privileged situations for reflection on Gailhac's faith-vision and the living out of his charism. The three "signs" which we refer to are: 1) a new understanding of apostolic religious life in the Church; 2) the evolution of the understanding of woman's role in society and specifically within the Church; 3) the search for a new sense of community.

Founded at a time when the only canonical form of life known to religious congregations of women was largely based on the monastic tradition, the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary find themselves in the wake of Vatican II realizing in a new way what Gailhac meant when he told the sisters: "You are to continue the work of the apostles." In their search for an apostolic spirituality adequate to sustain them as they try to respond to needs and to situations of injustice and human misery which the world has never known on such a scale, the faith-vision of Gailhac shows its extraordinary contemporaneity and aptness to serve as a dynamism in their lives. Gailhac's vision was broad and centered on what was essential and perennial in the apostolic life. Identification with Jesus Christ was presented by him as both goal and means; there was no task worth undertaking if it did not have union with Christ as its objective. We see from his own life that he understood that the alleviation of human misery was intimately related to this mission; indeed, the two tasks could not be separated.

In the achievement of this mission, the most effective instrument was the sister's own holiness, her own relationship to the Lord. Gailhac would have rejoiced to see the day when the sisters would be very conscious of their mission as apostolic religious and he surely would have encouraged reflection on that mission and the appropriate means to accomplish it.

When one considers the action of the Spirit in the foundation of religious congregations of women in the nineteenth century, one sees that a seed was planted at that time which was not able to come to full flowering until an age which would properly distinguish between the monastic tradition and what has come to be called "apostolic religious life." Nor do we claim that the seed has yet reached its maturity. What we find in Gailhac — and in other founders and foundresses — is an intuition, no doubt the work of the Spirit, of what is the essence of apostolic religious life. The structures to express that life in its fulness did not exist at the time the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary were founded. And yet Gailhac was clear in his intuition that the congregation was to be truly apostolic, that the sisters were to participate in an active way in the work of salvation, which was at the same time the work of fostering human dignity. When he gave a vow of zeal to the congregation, he saw the sisters as an apostolic group fully at the service of those in need. Sensitive to the fact that in his times education was an effective means of promoting the human and Christian dignity of all classes of society, and recognizing in those whom God had called to be his collaborators special capacities and talents for the educational field, he responded to this indication of the Lord by opening educational establishments, most often accompanied by a variety of other apostolic activities. He never saw these schools as ends in themselves. All his "works" were concrete expressions of the one Mission in which the congregation was called to participate. His own faith-vision, the needs around him and the capacities and spiritual desires of the sisters were always the determining factors in his concrete response. In its response to the Lord's call today, Gailhac's congregation has the same factors to guide it.

A sign of today's times which Gailhac certainly never knew is the changed position of women in society. In his age, social

custom ruled quite strictly woman's participation in society, woman's relationships with others. This social custom whose objective was the protection of women, coupled with the quasi-monastic form of religious life known at the time, accounts for many of the rules of enclosure and "semi-cloister" which the congregation knew in its early and not-so-early days. Gailhac, however, sensed — and stated specifically — that women were called to play an essential role in the work of redemption, and this conviction is reflected in the very fact that he founded an apostolic congregation, one which was to be governed by the sisters themselves. He urges the superior general to exercise her leadership within the congregation, and local superiors to animate spiritually their own communities. He worked closely with the primitive community and, in collaboration with them, sent the sisters to foreign lands to be pioneers in often unforeseen and difficult circumstances. Again, Gailhac would surely have rejoiced to see the day when women would be able to contribute more effectively to the life of the Church, when they would collaborate in new and creative ways in the great Work of Redemption in which they are in fact called to participate.

The sense of community which the congregation is searching for today, reflecting that same search within contemporary society, takes great *élan* in Gailhac's faith-vision. Community as constituted by authentic and open relationships among persons; community as a sharing in the same faith and in the same faith-vision, articulated and reflected upon by the local, provincial and general communities; community as participation in a common tradition, a common Mission and a common destiny: all these find their roots in Gailhac's own orientation of the primitive community.

The charism given through Gailhac to the Church is not a static gift. Given by the Spirit who continues to "make all things new", it is embodied in a congregation which refers itself constantly to the normative gift in the lived faith-vision of the man Gailhac, and which reflects on the way preceding generations have responded to that gift in their own historical settings. The gift has been confided to the congregation not as a treasure to be locked away and preserved, but as a plant to be watered, pruned, cared for — always drawing its life and strength from

the same roots, adapting itself to various weather conditions and to changing seasons. Each generation must live the gift in its own situation, must, through the prism of Gailhac's faith-vision — which is itself a particular perception of the gospel message —, discern the call of the Lord to the congregation in the here and now. Fidelity to the gift can be lived in no other way.

Finally, Gailhac's most basic message is addressed to the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary in all ages: "Be totally turned toward God," "Imitate Jesus Christ." The call to be completely "for others" is rooted in this fundamental message. Certainly the response of the congregation will require the same docility to the action of the Spirit, the same renunciation, the same spirit of faith and prayer that Gailhac stressed. And it is no less true in our day that "All good comes from Calvary." The paschal mystery continues to stand at the heart of the mystery of redemption.

Jesus Christ, totally turned toward His Father and totally given to man, is the same yesterday, today and forever. He it is who was the center of Gailhac's life and faith-vision and who must continue to be the source and center of the congregation's fidelity to the gift of the Spirit to the Church in Jean Gailhac.

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