

In Celebration of Pentecost 2018



As the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, our religious family puts special emphasis on our consecration to the Holy Spirit (Bagamoyo 2.1)

During the nine days following the Ascension of the Lord the first Christian community gathered in prayer awaiting the coming of the promised Holy Spirit. The Congregation of the Holy Spirit continues that tradition in Spiritan communities and works throughout the world.

The Center for Spiritan Studies offers nine moments of reflection and prayer in celebration of the Holy Spirit, author and guide of Spiritan life and mission. From the first gathering of Spiritans on Pentecost Sunday in 1703 around Claude Poullart des Places in Paris to this, our time, reliance on Divine Providence which

devotion to the Holy Spirit represents, holds a cherished place in Spiritan tradition and history.

Each moment is prompted by quotations from the Spiritan Rule of Life and the most recent Spiritan General Chapter, Bagamoyo, 2012. These quotations are reflected on in prayer, Scripture and the writing of Venerable Francis Libermann.



1.

Consecrated by the Holy Spirit

SRL & BAGAMOYO GENERAL CHAPTER

- ❖ Like all Christians, we have been called in baptism to the fullness of love and holiness, to carry on Christ's mission in the Church, and to bear witness in the world to the Good News (SRL 50).
- ❖ The mission given us as a Congregation is the mission of God who is revealed as a communion of three Persons: the sending by the Father of the Son and the Spirit into the world reveals God's plan to share his life and his love with all human beings (Bagamoyo 1.1).



PRAYER

All loving God and Father, you have called us together in Spiritan community and consecrated us into your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, through the power of your Spirit. We acknowledge your love for us and the world we are called to serve. Renew us in this service through this time of being present to you and to one another, Amen.

ST. PAUL

A reading from the Letter to the Romans (8: 14-17)

Everyone moved by the Spirit is a child of God. The spirit you received is not the spirit of slaves bringing fear into your lives again: it is the spirit of sons and daughters and it makes us cry out, "Abba, Father!" The Holy Spirit and our spirit bear united witness that we are children of God. And if we are children we are heirs as well: heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ sharing his sufferings so as to share his glory.



FRANCIS LIBERMANN

Called and Gifted

The Holy Spirit calls us and sets us apart to carry on Christ's mission. As Jesus lived his life present to the Father and in sacrifice for the world so must we. As Father Libermann says:

The Spirit wishes to be the soul of our soul. It is up to us to render him absolute Master of this our soul, in order that he might communicate to it his life and his action. Let us allow him to act in us as our body lets act our soul which stirs it as it believes suitable and how it wishes it. The only difference is that our body receives and necessarily follows the impulsion that our soul gives it, whereas our soul should receive and follow willingly the holy impulse of this divine soul the Spirit of Jesus.

Now, our soul is to be dead by itself and in itself, as is our body to the soul. Oh! What happiness, what holiness would be ours if the things were so, if our soul had no more preferences except those the divine Spirit gives it, if it had no longer desire, affection, action, or movement except what it receives from the Holy Spirit, if we no longer loved anything, if we no longer glorified ourselves, if we no longer felt pleasures and satisfactions, if we no longer had any will or life except in him and by him!

In the exercise of the holy presence of God, avoid effort and your own action. The union of our soul with God is the work of our Lord and not ours; it is the divine Spirit who is to operate it in our souls more or less perfectly, according to the designs of God on us and according to our fidelity to correspond with them.

Letter to a Seminarian, January 13, 1841.

PRAYER

Life-giving Spirit of God,

You called Venerable Francis Libermann to follow you through the most difficult of life's journeys.

Lead us now to know your will in our lives. Send your Spirit upon us to give us new strength to live lives of service to others.

Embolden us to work together for peace and justice and strengthen our resolve to be a community of truth and integrity.

This we pray through Jesus Christ, one with you, Source of all life, forever and ever. Amen.

2.

Possessed by the Holy Spirit

SRL & BAGAMOYO GENERAL CHAPTER

- ❖ Freed from the need to own things and finding our fulfilment in God, we try to allow the Spirit of the Lord to take possession of us, so that we may become instruments completely at the service of the Good News (SRL 74).
- ❖ Religious life and mission are core dimensions of our identity. We feel a call to renew our radical commitment to the vows and the option for the poor (Bagamoyo 2.5).



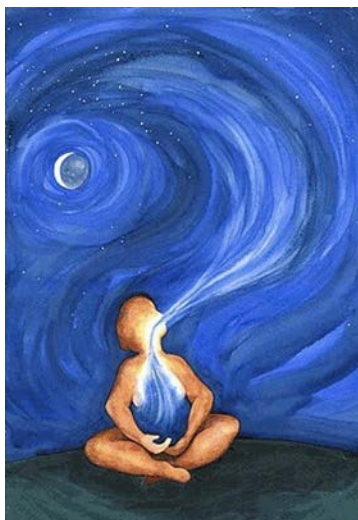
PRAYER

God our Father, your Son fulfilled His promise to remain with us when He sent the Holy Spirit to us. As we gather to pray today we ask the Holy Spirit to take possession of us and to lead us in our time of reflection and sharing. Amen.

ST. PAUL

A Reading from the Letter to the Galatians (2:19 – 3:5)

I have been put to death with Christ on his cross, so that it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. This life that I live now, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave his life for me. I refuse to reject the grace of God. Tell me this one thing: did you receive God's Spirit by doing what the Law requires or by hearing the gospel and believing it? How can you be so foolish! You began by God's Spirit; do you now want to finish by your own power? Does God give you the Spirit and work miracles among you because you do what the Law required or because you hear the gospel and believe it?



FRANCIS LIBERMANN

The perfection to which the Lord calls you all is indeed great. But I leave it to his divine Spirit to instruct you in the depth of your innermost self. Listen well to him, this divine Spirit, and be attentive to his sweet voice. Keep your soul far from the cares of the world, in the forgetfulness of yourselves, in great peace, interior calm and sweet vigilance in the presence

of the One who enters in and fills you totally with his Spirit of holiness. Then he will possess you fully and will bring you to perfection in the holiness and beauty of his love which he brought to perfection so admirably in his very holy Mother.

Letter to Many Seminarians, March 28, 1838.

PRAYER

Life-giving Spirit of God,

You breathe in us a love for the Father and the mission of the Son. Fill us with your wisdom and peace that we can calmly discern your will for us.

Direct all our action by your holy inspirations, and carry them on by your gracious breath within us, that every prayer and work of ours may begin always from you, and by you be happily ended. Amen.

3.

Purified by the Holy Spirit

SRL & BAGAMOYO GENERAL CHAPTER

- ❖ In prayer we are purified and we are changed by the Holy Spirit. It is his gifts and the fruits of his indwelling that become in us a source of both human and spiritual maturity and that make our life fruitful in every way (SRL 86).
- ❖ The General Chapter recognizes the vital importance of formation. Formation is a life-long process leading to transformation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit who is the true agent of formation and works through our lives to bring them to maturity in Christ, in order to allow them to fulfil the universal mission received from the Father (Bagamoyo 3.1).



PRAYER

O Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with noble desires to make our lives wise with knowledge, beautiful with love, and useful with service.

Enlighten the scriptures for us. Teach us what we ought to pray for to purify our lives with the fire of your love so that we may always choose what is good and reject all that is evil.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

(2:1-4)

When the day of Pentecost came, they [about 120 believers] were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.



FRANCIS LIBERMANN

“I have come to set the earth on fire” (Luke 12:49). Wanting to produce fire, the Lord will necessarily put flaming torches in the hands of those that he charges with setting the world ablaze. Why are there so few of his followers to start holy fires in the world? It is because few are saints, few united to God in their every-day living; their torches are therefore doomed to remain put out, they produce at most the fire of a match, not the blaze of a fire.

They remain lovers of themselves, worldly people, following their own pride, their senses, weaknesses, and faults. The sanctifying grace received in the sacraments does not develop in them. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are necessarily denied them, the designs of God remain unfulfilled. The world remains in darkness and slavery; the demons rejoice! Our Lord and his church are in mourning.

Ecrits Spirituels 494-5.

PRAYER

Son of the Eternal Father,

You came to set the earth on fire and wished it to be already kindled.

Kindle in us your Spirit that we may seek and follow your desires and cease making our pursuit of freedom an opportunity for self-indulgence. Empower us to make loving choices, to respect all life and to live up to our dignity as your disciples, redeemed in your blood and emboldened to make your way of love and mercy known through the witness of our lives. We ask this of you who are Lord, Amen.

4.

Empowered by the Spirit

SRL & BAGAMOYO GENERAL CHAPTER

- ❖ It is the Spirit of Christ who “comes to help us in our weakness” (Romans 8:26), who leads us along missionary paths and who prays in the depth of our hearts. We are genuine apostles to the extent that, in our daily living, we entrust ourselves entirely to him (SRL 85).
- ❖ We have received a spiritual heritage rooted in the “apostolic life” (SRL 3). Fidelity to prayer sustains and supports our “practical union”. We are becoming more aware of the call to a deeper interior life and a greater integration of our work and prayer (Bagamoyo 2.4).



PRAYER

Father of light, from whom every gift comes, empower us by your Holy Spirit.

May your Spirit stir us up and disturb us – for we are too content to let things go on as they are.

O Spirit of the living God, awaken us to a sense of urgency. Penetrate the closed gate of our hearts and make us live again with your power manifested in what we say and do.

Make us struggle with the problems around us, for in this way we will grow and develop and so continue the mission of Jesus and bring about the Kingdom of the Father in this place, at this time. This we ask through our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

(24: 45-49)

Then the Lord opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, “This is what is written: the Messiah must suffer and must rise from death three days later, and in his name the message about repentance and the forgiveness of sins must be preached to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem. You are witnesses to these things. And I myself will send upon you what my Father has promised. But you must wait in the city until the power from above comes down upon you.”



FRANCIS LIBERMANN

My very dear friend, how happy we are when we are under the power of the divine Spirit, under the complete influence of the Spirit of the love of Jesus! Everything becomes love in us. All our actions, even the slightest movements of our soul and for much more reason its movements, its intimate actions, all is love: love for our God before whom we are without ceasing prostrate and annihilated; love for people without bitterness, without judging anyone. Our spirit is calm, without getting into gear against those who afflict us, who contradict us, persecute us, or torment us in whatever manner. Good or bad, of our mind or not, no person can ever put our spirit outside its repose in God, nor trigger our discontent, whether he is right or wrong. I tell you all these things in order that you might be able to distinguish what in you comes from the divine Spirit and what comes from your natural activity that is so harmful to the life of Jesus in your soul.

Letter to a Seminarian, Dec 31, 1841.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, before returning to the Father, you promised to send your Holy Spirit to all who believe in you. We ask you to empower us with your

Spirit of Wisdom that we may aspire to what lasts forever;

The Spirit of Piety that we may find peace and fulfillment in serving God through serving others;

The Spirit of Fortitude that we may bear our cross with you and with courage overcome all obstacles to that service;

The Spirit of Knowledge that we may know you and know ourselves and grow in holiness;

The Spirit of Understanding to enlighten our minds with the light of your truth;

The Spirit of Counsel that we may choose the surest way of doing your will and so first seek your Kingdom;

The Spirit of the Fear of the Lord that we may be filled with loving reverence towards you.

Teach us to be your faithful disciples and empower us in every way with your Spirit. Amen.

5.

Inspired by the Spirit

SRL & BAGAMOYO GENERAL CHAPTER

- ❖ We meet regularly as a community to discern what God's will for us is (SRL 44). To ensure that our discernment is in conformity with the Spiritan calling, we endeavor to be receptive to the Holy Spirit as he speaks to us through the local Church, the universal Church, our human environment and through the world we are living in (SRL 44.1).
- ❖ Called by the Father and made Disciples of Christ by the Holy Spirit, we are "set apart" to proclaim the Good News (SRL 1). We are a community in constant discernment, attentive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit (Bagamoyo 2.2).



PRAYER

Life-giving God of Love. Inspire us by your Holy Spirit that we may know the way you want us to follow. Incline our hearts to do what is good and to turn away from all that is evil. Direct us in the mission you have entrusted to us so that we can remain true to our vocation as Spiritans, and loyal to the founding inspiration of Claude Poullart des Places and Francis Libermann. This we ask through Christ, our Lord, Amen.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

(4:32-35)

The group of believers was one in mind and heart. No one said that any of his belongings was his own, but they all shared with one another everything they had. With great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God poured rich blessings on them all. There was no one in the group who was in need. Those who owned fields or houses would sell them, bring the money received from the sale, and turn it over to the apostles; and the money was distributed to each one according to his need.



FRANCIS LIBERMANN

We were not in the desired state up to now in order that the divine charity could unite us perfectly; our spirits were not disposed sufficiently for the Spirit of God to be able to communicate perfectly to one another his light

and coordinate well our views... It has always appeared to me that in the designs of God we would do things together, that we would direct ourselves by the sole Spirit of God, the Spirit of prudence and wisdom. To do that our union needs to be perfect, and thus united, forming one sole spirit and one sole heart, animated and directed by the Spirit of light and charity, we will direct the work towards the goal that God intended in uniting us and we will give it the form that his divine will imposes on us.

Letter to Fr. Levavasseur April 27, 1847.

PRAYER

O Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with noble desires and make our lives wise with knowledge, beautiful with love, and useful in service. Inspire our minds and guide us to know always what is good and true and the will to do it. Amen.

6.

Obedient to the Spirit

SRL AND BAGAMOYO GENERAL CHAPTER

- ❖ We live out our mission in willing obedience to the Holy Spirit, taking Mary as our model. This condition of habitual fidelity to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is the “practical union” of which Libermann speaks (SRL 5).
- ❖ The Chapter recognizes the mission of our aged and sick confreres as they continue to give courageous witness through their sufferings and prayer (Bagamoyo 2.8).



PRAYER

Father of light, from whom every gift comes, send your Spirit into our lives.

With the power of the mighty wind, and by the flame of your wisdom, open the horizons of our minds.

Loosen our tongues to sing your praise in words beyond the power of speech, for without your Spirit we could never raise our voice in words of peace, or announce the truth that Jesus is

Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

THE BOOK OF JOEL

(2:28-29)

I will pour out my spirit on everyone: your sons and daughters will proclaim my message; your old men will have dreams, and your young men will see visions. At that time I will pour out my spirit even on servants, both men and women.



FRANCIS LIBERMANN

Here is something for your manner of acting in general. A ship has its sails and rudder. The wind blows in the sail and makes the ship move in the direction it ought to take. It is by the sail that it goes and that it takes a general direction. However, this direction would be too vague and would sometimes put the ship off course. One has therefore a rudder which guides it exactly on the line it ought to take, the Holy Spirit is the wind. He blows in your will and the soul proceeds, and it proceeds towards the goal that God intends. Your mind is the rudder which ought to prevent you, in the force and vivacity of movement given to your heart, from straying from the direct line determined by the divine goodness.

Letter to a religious priest, 1845.

PRAYER

Great Spirit, whose voice we hear in the winds, and whose breath gives life to all the world, hear us.

We are small and weak. We need your strength and wisdom.

Let us walk in beauty, and make our eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.

Make our hands respect the things you have made and our ears sharp to hear your voice.

Make us wise so that we may understand the things you have taught us.

Let us learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.

We seek strength not to be greater than others but to fight the enemy within, our selfishness.

Make us always ready to come to you with clean hands and straight eyes.

So when life fades, as the fading sunset, we may come to you without shame, Amen.

** Native American Indian Prayer, adapted.*

J.

The Spirit of Love

SRL AND THE BAGAMOYO CHAPTER

Charity, the Spirit's greatest gift, is the sign that it is the Lord who brings us together and sends us out. "It is by your love for one another, that everyone will recognize you as my disciples" (John 13:35) (SRL 39).

To have "one heart and one soul" means sharing everything one is and has, as well as combating every form of individualism. This fundamental principle demands both transparency and a simple life-style (Bagamoyo 4.3).



PRAYER

God and Father of love, you so love us that you have brought us to knowledge of you through Jesus, your Son. Send the Spirit of that love of Father for Son, and Son for Father, into our hearts and among us. May the indwelling of your Spirit enable us to recognize the dignity that is ours as your children and empower us to make loving choices, to respect all life and to live up to our dignity as your sons and daughters, redeemed by your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

(4: 34-38)

Jesus said to his disciples, “My food is to obey the will of the one who sent me and to finish the work he gave me to do. You have a saying, ‘Four more months and then the harvest.’ But I tell you, take a good look at the fields; the crops are now ripe and ready to be harvested! The one who reaps the harvest is being paid and gathers the crops for eternal life; so the one who plants and the one who reaps will be glad together. For the saying is true, ‘One plants, another reaps.’ I have sent you to reap a harvest where you did not work: others worked there, and you profit from their work.”



FRANCIS LIBERMANN

He who sows is the Son of God, the Incarnate Word; it is he who merits and imparts the seed of grace in each soul. The one who reaps is different – the Holy Spirit. For the Church was formed only after the completion of all the mysteries of our Lord and after the descent of the Holy Spirit who was to consummate the work of sanctifying souls. He is the light and strength of the Apostles, the power of all their words. It is he who touches souls, who draws them, who is the life imparted by the sacraments which bring people into the Church and sanctify them. Our Lord attributes to himself the sending of missionaries since he sends the Holy Spirit and merited him. Our Lord merited him and sent him, but the divine Spirit consummates the work and is the true harvester.

Commentary on John's Gospel I.134.

PRAYER

Come, Holy Spirit, come!

And from your celestial home shed a ray of light divine!

Come, Father of the poor!

Come, source of all our store!

Come, within our bosoms shine.

You, of comforters the best;

You, the soul's most welcome guest;

Sweet refreshment here below;

In our labor, rest most sweet;

Grateful coolness in the heat;

Solace in the midst of woe.

O most blessed Light divine, shine within these hearts of yours,
And our inmost being fill!

Where you are not, we have naught;

Nothing good in deed or thought, nothing free from taint of ill.

Heal our wounds, our strength renew;

on our dryness pour your dew;

Wash the stains of guilt away:

bend the stubborn heart and will;
Melt the frozen, warm the chill;
guide the steps that go astray.

On the faithful, who adore and confess you,
evermore in your sevenfold gift descend; give them virtue's sure
reward;
Give them your salvation, Lord; give them joys that never end.
Amen.

8.

Gifted by the Spirit

SRL AND THE BAGAMOYO CHAPTER

- ❖ Each confrere, according to the gifts he has from the Spirit, has a role to fulfil in his community's organization, life and mission (SRL 43)
- ❖ Spiritan community is the privileged place for listening to the Spirit and for living in fidelity to our vocation and mission. Here all are called to live the religious vows, which are unambiguous values, in a coherent manner supported by a deep spiritual life. The witness of community life is the primary form of evangelization and of experiencing God (Bagamoyo 4.1).



PRAYER

Almighty and ever living God, giver of all that is good, you promised us the gift of your Spirit and fulfilled it on the first Pentecost Day. We your children, humbly beg you to infuse into us the divine person of the Holy Spirit. Send him into us that we might be renewed. May we experience him now as on the day of Pentecost so that our faith might be strengthened and we will be inspired to bear witness for Christ in the Church, through the testimony of our word and life and the practice of our religious calling. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SAINT PAUL

First Letter to the Corinthians (12: 4-11)

There are different kinds of Spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. There are different ways of serving, but the same Lord is served. There are different abilities to perform service, but the same God gives ability to everyone for their particular service. The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all.

The Spirit gives one person a message full of wisdom, while to another person the same Spirit gives a message full of knowledge. One and the same Spirit gives faith to one person, while to another person he gives the power to heal. The Spirit gives one person the power to work miracles; to another, the gift of speaking God's message; and to yet another, the ability to tell the difference between gifts that come from the Spirit and those that do not. To one person he gives the ability to speak in strange tongues, and to another he gives the ability to explain what is said.

But it is one and the same Spirit who does all this; as he wishes, he gives a different gift to each person.



FRANCIS LIBERMANN

Our Lord will impart the most abundant gifts of his Holy Spirit who will so fill us with his holiness, his power and all the other graces he contains, which are ours for the asking. These gifts will so greatly fill us that we will overflow with them being unable to contain them. And by means of these gifts rivers of grace will flow from us which will spread around and produce excellent fruits of holiness in a multitude of souls. These will be refreshed, satiated, inundated by rivers of grace flowing from us. Not only shall we have life in ourselves, but from us will issue rivers of this sacred water bringing life to countless souls.

By the “rivers of living water” which were to flow from those who believed in him, our Lord intended the Holy Spirit, which was to be given to all who believe in him in this way. This does not mean that the Apostles and other faithful disciples had not got the Holy Spirit before our Lord’s Passion.

They were in the state of grace, and every soul in the state of grace has the Holy Spirit.

But our Lord was speaking of that extraordinary and perfect mission of the Holy Spirit, which is already in the soul through Baptism. By perfect faith in a soul, our Lord perfects and develops his gifts and favors, and this he does as a result of this particular mission.

These gifts of the Holy Spirit had great importance in the early days of the Church; they were very common and produced innumerable conversions. They flowed from almost all Christians like rivers, and still today all the saints have these graces, that is, all souls who give themselves completely and perfectly to our Lord with the generosity and perfection of faith that the divine Master desires. They leave everything to cling to our Lord alone, the only fountain of living water. In all such souls we shall find highly developed gifts and graces that our Lord promises here. Such gifts were received by the first Christians.

Commentary on John's Gospel II. 130, 131.

PRAYER

Almighty ever-living God, out of infinite love, you created the world and filled it with your Spirit. You gave us a bountiful world filled with beauty and goodness. You placed us in this world to care for it in the joy of communion with you.

In the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, you renewed the face of the earth and made all things new. You conquered evil, poured out your love, and opened for all men and women the path to your kingdom.

May we rise with Christ to newness of life!

May his Spirit transform the evil around us to good.

Heal our broken relationships, turn our hearts firmly to you, and conquer the powers of evil in us and in the world.

Grant us a heart that respects the dignity of all life – the unborn and the vulnerable, the homeless and the trafficked.

Heavenly Father, give us the grace to recognize your Spirit dwelling in each of us and so appreciate the gift we are to one another.

Rid us of evil thoughts and make us see all men and women as brothers and sisters. Help us to create a joyful community that embraces mercy, love, peace and service in humility and charity.

Unite us and make us one with you, in union with our brother Jesus Christ, and in the power of your Holy Spirit who gives life.
Amen.

9.

Mary is Our Model

SRL & BAGAMOYO GENERAL CHAPTER

- ❖ We are dedicated to the Holy Spirit, author of all holiness and “source of the apostolic spirit”. We place ourselves under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who was filled beyond measure by the same Spirit “with the fullness of holiness and apostolic zeal” (SRL 6). Mary is our model of willing obedience and of faithfulness. We offer her veneration and prayer so that we may, as she did, welcome within us the Holy Spirit who dwelt in her Immaculate Heart (SRL 89).
- ❖ We take Mary as our model in creating our identity, she who “meditated these things in her heart...” (Bagamoyo 2:2)



PRAYER

Father of light, from whom every gift comes, send your Spirit into our lives.

With the power of the mighty wind, and by the flame of your wisdom, open the horizons of our minds.

Loosen our tongues to sing your praise in words beyond the power of speech,

For without your Spirit we could never raise our voice in words of peace,

Or announce the truth that Jesus is Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

(12: 46-50)

Jesus was still talking to the people when his mother and brothers arrived. They stood outside, asking to speak with him. So one of the people there said to him, "Look, your mother and brothers are standing outside, and they want to speak with you." Jesus answered, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" Then he pointed to his disciples and said, "Look! Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does what my Father in Heaven wants him to do is my brother, my sister, and my mother."



FRANCIS LIBERMANN

It is not words that fill our souls with divine love and which keep us united in this holy love, but the Spirit of our Lord, who lives in us and who wants to operate everything in us. It is enough for me to give your soul without ceasing to Jesus Christ our Lord and the very holy Virgin our good Mother, so that the divine Spirit be the absolute master in you, that he fill you and that he unite you to Jesus and Mary, with the same union, although less perfect, with the very holy love with which he united them together. It would be a very great sweet, and admirable thing if the Holy Spirit accomplishes in your souls this very holy union with Jesus and Mary, and with Mary in Jesus. May Jesus live in us as he lived in Mary; may we be united to Mary as she had been united with Jesus, in a union of desire, in a union of love, a union of will, in a union of vision. May we be blind, lost and annihilated in ourselves and for ourselves, and may the Spirit of Jesus be all occupation, all movement and all life in us, in order to unite us and make us one thing with him in Mary, by Mary, and with Mary.

Letter to a clergyman January 19, 1840.

PRAYER

Most Holy Mother of God,

We pray to you as mother of the Church, mother of all Christians who suffer.

We beg you, through your ardent intercession, to bring down this wall, the walls of our hearts, and all the walls that generate hatred, violence, fear, and indifference between people and between nations.

You who crushed the ancient Serpent by your Fiat, gather and unite us under your virginal cloak, protect us from all evil and open forever in our lives the gate of Hope.

Bring to birth in us and in our world the civilization of Love that sprang forth from the Cross and Resurrection of your divine Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns forever.
Amen.

** This prayer was inspired by the Icon of the Mother of the Church written on the separation wall between Jerusalem and Bethlehem.*