

# On Reparation<sup>1</sup>

St. Peter Julian Eymard to the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament  
Paris, Tuesday, March 4, 1862

My dear Sisters, Lent begins tomorrow. Every day should be a time of Lent for you. Why? Because that's your true vocation: you must be always doing penance, making reparation, asking pardon – that's the third end of the sacrifice. **We spoke of adoration and thanksgiving; that leaves reparation. Let's talk about it today.**

[...]

When we adore we make an act of homage: we adore our Lord on his throne, our Lord to whom all honor is due. When we express gratitude, we should be always doing that, since the angels and the saints<sup>2</sup> do nothing else. **But reparation is much more: we give. What do we give?** We give ourselves to the Lord: we offer ourselves as victim, as holocaust with him on the same altar. This grace of reparation becomes a grace of crucifixion, because it becomes a grace of salvation. That is especially what our Lord calls for most in these days. Reparation and expiation are the needs of the times. In the past centuries the Church rarely granted exposition, seemingly jealous to expose her divine spouse only with great solemnity, like on the Feast of Corpus Christi. Today, when Jesus is crucified anew and the outrages of Jews are renewed, the Church multiplies expositions, in order to give greater homage to her divine spouse.

**You don't know how much our Lord is offended.** There are pagans who don't know him. Some are very guilty; attached to their evil passions, they don't want to receive our Lord. There are millions of them, but let us set them aside. Forget also the heretics; and there are an appalling number of them. Consider the Catholics. Those who deny our Lord Jesus Christ and his real presence have nearly all been Catholics who left our ranks. Some unfortunate ones come to church for religious ceremonies, but they no longer<sup>3</sup> believe. Those are renegades who did not pass through heresy and paganism; they are many. Nearly all of them are scholars and the very rich who became wealthy in a short time. For them, our Lord is nothing.

**Today, practically all those in power have chosen to deny our Lord; that's a fact.** To get a complete picture, we might say there are two groups, two societies: one that has the appearance of order, of equity; the other a secret one with two objectives: to destroy religion, and destroy the Pope. Just read newspapers! They want to destroy all authority that comes from God, from royalty, and from parents. Their number is extremely large; most ambitious people are part of this movement.

When you see a wicked and very ambitious man who is against the Pope, you can fear that he belongs to some secret society. These pitiful free-masons, *carbonari*, acquired several popular newspapers, like *Le Siècle* and others, and they wormed their way into high places in government, especially in North America. They are at the head of governments, and hold positions in politics. Today, when we know these things, as we do, we see that kings are surrounded by secret societies; some have even joined them,

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<sup>1</sup> Number 397. *De la réparation. Explication de la règle, Chap. III, Art. 7. Suite.* (On Reparation. Explanation of the Rule, Chapter III, Art. 7. Continued.)

<sup>2</sup> Guillot and (S7bis), variant: les anges et les saints *dans le paradis* (the angels and saints *in paradise*)

<sup>3</sup> De Guillot and (S7bis), instead of S7bis: ne veulent *pas* (they do *not* believe)

thinking they will be stronger – what can we do? God alone can silence those people; and the Church has no one else to speak for it.

In the past, catholic kings were defenders of the catholic Church. If the leaders are good, but subordinates are all sold out, they can do nothing. There was a good young king, along with his young wife; he was well intentioned as king of Naples. Today, he has been betrayed and banished. When he wanted to fight, everyone turned against him.

That's what's happening, my poor Daughters: the Lord is offended not by persecution, but with a kind of patient and hypocritical strength. They call themselves moderates to attain their goal. Kings have been punished severely for their sins: they have defied the Pope and the heads of the Church; they have thrown themselves into the arms of their enemies: they are no longer free. They deserve it, but who will suffer? The people. What can be done? You can see that the Church is persecuted in Russia in a horrible way. Good priests are exiled to Siberia. In Germany, there is a very Christian emperor, but he can do nothing in evil surroundings. There was a king in Bavaria who could have done something good, but he is as bad as the rest.

**That is where we are: persecution of the Church by kings and the powerful.** The Lord wants to show us that he does not need anyone. The boat is a bit shaken, but it is not sinking. **If we look among the Catholics of today**, the impious insult religion, and they are left to do so. If they insulted one of the least rural guards, they would be condemned. But against a priest, the clergy, the Pope, they are left alone: a blessing in disguise. Today, our Lord is insulted like his followers; the Church has its feet in the mud, not in blood – not yet – but it is humiliated to the ground. Today no one comes to its defense; **there are a few good catholic voices, but very few.** All can be bought, even their votes. When conscience is no longer free with God, passions and self-interest take over. That is the least evil.

**Where is the greater evil? Catholics are indifferent;** they no longer have a sense of evil. There is practically no more hatred for evil principles, I don't say hatred for persons. People are indifferent; they want to enjoy themselves. The fault lies with those who lack the energy to protest against wickedness. That's where we are. If there were a persecution of blood or property, what apostates there would be! Maybe a few women would remain faithful – they have preserved their faith a little better – but, how few men would remain! There are some counties where the faith is more alive, in the South and in the North. Some sections are very catholic: Metz, Strasbourg, Nancy, not in the cities, but in the surrounding countryside: they have, so to speak, kept the faith with their German language. But there would be a great number of apostates.

**What is most painful is the great number of priests who are careless.** They wait for people to come to be baptized or to get married. They claim they can do nothing about social evils. They are discouraged, waiting and dozing, while heresy and evil are not wide awake. Then, I won't say like St. Paul does that a certain number of priests *are seeking their own interests, rather than the glory of the master* (Phil 2:21), but, they are more concerned with administration than with the glory of the master<sup>4</sup>. Oftentimes, in the big cities, there is much to lament: moderation politics and their own prudence frighten them. They dare not talk about our Lord Jesus Christ – that is only too true. Men die as they have lived. They fall asleep in their false piety.

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<sup>4</sup> From Guillot and (S7bis): *Puis il y a un certain nombre de prêtres, je ne dirai pas comme saint Paul qu'ils cherchent leurs propres affaires plutôt que la gloire du Maître, mais ils sont plus dans l'administration que dans la gloire du Maître.* (I will not say like St. Paul that there are a certain number of priests who are seeking their own interests, rather than the glory of the Master, but they are more concerned with administration than with the glory of the Master.)

**Our Lord is also much offended<sup>5</sup> by pious persons.** There are a certain number of people who don't take piety seriously, who don't give themselves a rule of life. In their acts of piety, they look for the pleasure of the moment; they look for some enjoyment, a sentimental feeling, a way to get out of darkness. *They suppose religion to be a means of gain* (cf. 1 Tm 6:5), as St. Paul said; those who do this are to be pitied. Others take piety for themselves; they don't know our Lord, they don't live for him. They are not interior souls; they don't purify themselves<sup>6</sup>. There are very few interior souls, because directors don't lead them there. They themselves do not practice it, and they send those souls to the convents. They don't realize that there is more need for interior life in the world, than in the convents, where means are plentiful. A person who wants to live an interior life is deemed to be exaggerating; she is not welcome. The spirit, the sense of the interior life has been lost. Few priests give direction to live an interior life<sup>7</sup>. A soul to be directed is worth more than a dead person to be buried; yet you spend your time burying the dead<sup>8</sup>. People can ask: Who will hear my confession? You are the pastor. Happy are those in the world who can find a little center! They are starving souls. **That is the evil – it starts from very high.**

**And sacrileges!** The more a country is catholic, the more sacrileges it can have. The greater the peace, the more sacrileges there are. Our Lord is honored by some, and outraged by others. Then, good is in dishonor, while evil is in honor<sup>9</sup>. Self-love leads one who has no courage to follow simply what others are doing. Our Lord is offended.

**As for you, what reparation do you need to fulfill before the Blessed Sacrament?** You must make reparation for all sinners, first for what has been done to the Church: that's your first duty. You must ask for grace and mercy – they do not know what they are doing (cf. Lk 23:34). You must pray for bad priests: you must be there to make reparation – there are more than you might think. There are some who go up to the altar with souls as black as the devil; they appear to be alive, but they are whitened sepulchers. Our Lord honors them; he honors the priesthood in them, thinking that his patience will convert them. May the Lord preserve you from ever meeting one – it would be better to meet a hundred demons than a bad priest; his presence is like a scandal. Our Lord is offended more by a bad priest, because the offense comes from one in a high position. Our Lord was offended more by the betrayal of Judas than by the outrages of the Jews: *his friend has raised his heel against him* (cf. Ps 40:10<sup>10</sup>), as the prophet said. Our Lord is shaken and deeply hurt upon seeing these bad priests, all these executioners who dare go up to the altar. These are things that we cannot talk about in the pulpit; we must always presume that the priest is a saint. **Here, we must tell the truth. Who will make reparation? You, my poor Daughters.**

How good is the Lord! If God made known all the sacrileges done by catholic and schismatic priests, who are priests like us, if you could see the crucifixion that our Lord suffers every morning without complaining, you would say: How can you bear these millions of sacrileges? The Good Lord is patient.

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<sup>5</sup> Guillot and (S7bis), variant: est bien offensé (is much offended).

<sup>6</sup> Guillot and (S7bis), variant: ne réparent pas (do not make reparation)

<sup>7</sup> From Guillot and (S7bis): *Quelques prêtres dirigent dans la vie intérieure* (A few priests direct for an interior life)

<sup>8</sup> Missing in Guillot and (S7bis): *vous passez votre temps à enterrer* (you spend your time burying the dead)

<sup>9</sup> The text in the copy reads: *Good is placed in honor and evil is placed in dishonor*. But it seems that the context calls for the inverted reading, because in the corrupt world that Father was talking about, values are reversed.

<sup>10</sup> According to the Septuagint: *qui manducat panem meum levavit contra me plantam*. (the one who partook of my bread, has raised his heel against me)

He bears these unfortunate priests, in order to come to his faithful people, passing through them to come to us and to show us how much he loves us. When he passes through good priests, it's like when he passed<sup>11</sup> through the Blessed Virgin. But through the mouth of sacrilegious priests ...

Our Lord must really love us, to endure so much wickedness! You don't know this, but I do. Is it possible that our Lord accepted so many sacrifices? Our Lord cannot die, although he passes through such black souls. A priest is guiltier than Judas: Judas never said Mass and never gave absolution; clearly he was not so guilty. Also, when I am in adoration, when this thought comes to me, it makes me very sad: we don't know how many. We know that hell does everything it can to damn a priest, and that the sinful world does everything to demoralize a priest who is controlled by his passions and sins.

My poor Daughters, you do not live in society so I will tell you: **Always be very reserved**, treat them like angels and men: as angels in regard to supernatural means, and as men in regard to prudence. I can attest that in my rather long life – fifty years already – I have seen many scandals! I've seen so much that I tell the Good Lord: Why didn't you leave me in my poor corner, in my poor mountains? I used to believe that a priest was like the Good Lord. I saw priests who had converted their entire parish become scandalous to the point that no one dared to go to them. This frightens the others, how can someone who was so high, fall so low? And so, everyone is shaken. See what scandals France experienced by the schism of priests who took the oath. How many they were! Most of them participated: they renounced the Pope and the Church, to depend only on constitutional authority. Is that possible? Even bishops took the oath. This is what we have seen.

Many devout people are too trusting. For them, the priest at the altar and in the confessional is Jesus Christ; in the pulpit his is the word of God. What a disgrace if we speak human words! Be careful: a man with this power can also become despicable. May your trust be as simple as a dove, but prudent in the way it is expressed and felt. We see this in Paris. When you realize that in Paris there are at least nine hundred priests who are sweeping the streets, who are coachmen, stevedores, what would you say? At least if they were doing penance. Most of them lower themselves into vice and filthiness. They should go to the Trappists; but they don't have the courage.

**That is the reparation you must do**, reparation for scandal. We cannot share this with others; their faith would be shaken. We are priests making reparation; you should share everything, since you share our life. You must make reparation for priests, religious, and pious persons who perform sacrilegious actions, because there are some. If the Lord let it be known, people would be shocked and say: Why do you tolerate this? – In order to be gentle with human weakness. But this does not prevent our Lord from being badly treated. Why? Out of love for us. Our Lord suffers a million crucifixions in order to come to a single soul who loves him. For the past eighteen centuries our Lord has been suffering so as to come to me, to come to you. He passed through all these hells.

**Our Lord is so little known**. He is known externally, but few people want to be familiar with him; so few tell our Lord: Show yourself to me. I've been a priest for a long time, but I've found very few who want to enter into our Lord. Charity is good; but, my poor Daughters, we are afraid of his virtues, of his love; we would be obliged to return it. How little our Lord is really loved! There are few souls who love him in order to please him, to make him happy. They love him for themselves, to have peace, and to obtain paradise. In a sense, there is love there, but it is not royal love. We take our crown to put it on our own head; we do not place it at his feet. How few persons are purely for Jesus. Then, I say to our Lord: You made a mistake. I don't condemn them for that, but I say: Most souls are unfaithful; they don't want to rise higher.

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<sup>11</sup> From Guillot and (S7bis): *passait (passed)* instead of S7bis: *passé (passes)*

**Even Lyons**, the pious city, where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed – I had the joy of having the Sisters of Reparation come, by order of the cardinal – practically no one comes to church; the sisters are nearly alone. We cannot understand this; people prefer to give alms to charity, than to give themselves. There is more interior life in Paris than elsewhere; but in the small towns, I know about thirty to forty thousand souls who wonder: Why do we need that? The priests don't speak of it, and the souls render themselves unworthy. If they merited it, our Lord would send a preacher. Therefore, we must make reparation: there's much to do. If you should live for a hundred years, taking one special crime each year for reparation, your lifetime would not suffice. We must work for the conversion of sinners; God is angry – beware. Our Lord is the victim. Suffer in order to make this victim effective. Ask for the conversion of sinners – there is no other way except through penance. Grace is given only to those sinners who do penance, or for whom we do penance. Do not practice penance for them, but for our Lord.

**Here's something to think about: if there is someone whom you love more than yourself with a filial love** – your father, your mother, your friend, or anyone you want, and this person has just been gravely insulted, humiliated, and maltreated, will you not offer consolation. If you are not a true friend, you will not go. This is the proof of friendship: my father, my friend is humiliated and insulted; I fly to give him signs of friendship, honor, and affection in order to make reparation. That's what is happening to our Lord – go then to make reparation for his sufferings through your sacrifices and devotion. When someone is sick, we visit. Our Lord has been wounded to death by so many crucifixions. You might ask: Must we always be crying, asking pardon? We must always have a loving heart. Love is not a state of sadness, especially during this holy time of Lent, during this time of sadness when all the devils are on earth. These are critical times that will give birth to the antichrist, or that will start an important century for the Church through persecutions. Therefore, become victims, you will be even more pleasing to our Lord.

If you could see our Lord, if he showed himself in his state in the Eucharist, you would see Calvary. You must replace the Blessed Virgin and the holy women: if you are not there, he will be alone. What must you do? **The conclusion is that you should love our Lord<sup>12</sup> enough to make reparation, and that you should love the Church enough to become victims for the Church, to make reparation for sinners.** To come back to the subject of penance, do what the Church says; if you cannot, do something else. Corporal penance is very useful.

**If you love our Lord, love will tell you how to sacrifice with a natural or supernatural, and even spiritual delight.** Love will guide you: only love can tell you. If you place yourself in the hands of our Lord, he will tell you clearly what he expects from you. I will tell you: he seeks a soul that can give him his first power on the cross, saying: Forgive them. When he said: *Forgive them, they know not what they do* (Lk 23:34), he was showing his Father his crown of thorns, his body all bruised, his soul in the agony of death: he was asking the price of his sufferings. This was not a prayer, a wish, but a commandment of his love. He can no longer say this: he has now only the power of representation and homage. You must enter into our Lord. He will come into you, and you will give him his offering of love, renew his first power as redeemer and savior. Then he will say: Forgive them. **This word will be all powerful, because it will pass through the heart of our Lord, it will come from a heart who loves you, and it will go all the way to heaven. This is my wish for you.**

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<sup>12</sup> Guillot and (S7bis), variant: que vous aimez Notre Seigneur (that you would love Our Lord to make reparation)



**Points for reflection:**

This presentation develops two main points:

1) Repair the injury made to our Lord; 2) Ask graces for sinners.

In the first part, he tries to evoke the sentiment of reparation and describes the social situation at the political, church, and personal level. What parallels can you make with today's social situation?

In conclusion, reparation is defined as an expression of love for God and for the world. How does this correspond with your own experience?