



**DIRECTED READING #3 – INTRODUCTORY
SESSION C
PROCLAIMING GOD’S LOVE**

Introduction

Again and again, in the letters of Father Coindre, in the circulars of Brother Polycarp and in the Rule of Life, a spirituality of love is consistently proclaimed, a love that God expresses daily in many ways to each of us.

In forming a school community, we need both to be aware of that spirituality of love and to create structures which encourage its expression in our faculty and students. This perspective colors all aspects of life in a school.

In Scripture, this spirituality of love is most clearly expressed through a love of God, love of self, love of family (koinonia) and community (diakonia), love of all (agape), and love of the poor. The Rule calls us to compassion, concern, tolerance and justice, among many other expressions of God’s love. Paralleling these, the characteristics of a school in the tradition of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart provide a glimpse into the values which we are constantly challenged to embody in the daily life of the school community.

Readings

- *Rule of Life* # 112-118, 156-161
- *The Educational Charism Statement of the United States Provinces of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart*

Suggestions for Journal Reflection

1. The Rule articulates the Brothers’ experience of God’s love. In what ways does it echo your own experience?
2. The charism statement expresses the core values of education in the tradition of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. How do you see those values expressed in your school today?
3. The philosophy of education that we share is based on a single precept: we wish to make God’s love known. How does this coincide with or inform your own philosophy of education?

Prayer

*Jesus,
Son of the Father and our Brother,
your example of love lived daily in the gospels
is a constant challenge to each of us in our ministries.*

*It is not enough to be a good teacher.
It is not enough to administer things well.
We are called to look at all things
through the perspective of love,
so that your love might flow through us to others.*

*Give us the wisdom to ponder these values,
and seek ways to embody them in our daily lives.
May our ministries be avenues of your love,
for those with whom we work,
for those whom we serve.*

*Through our school community,
may we each be challenged to be people of love,
who believe in the love of God,
who bring that love to life in our actions,
and who share that love with all whom we meet.*

*Then, Lord,
we will hopefully become
signs of your compassion in a wounded world.*

Amen.

READINGS

Rule of Life

Brothers of the Sacred Heart, 2007

Part Three

WE ARE UNITED AND CONSECRATED IN THE HEART OF CHRIST

Chapter VIII

THE HEART OF CHRIST

112. Christ in our Life

Our founders made us heirs of their devotion
to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

And so Christ, in his mystery of love,
holds first place in our life
as Brothers of the Sacred Heart.

He is our reference point
and the center of our motivations,
just as he is the very principle
of our total self-offering
and of our apostolic action.

113. An Everlasting Love

The Heart of Jesus bears and reveals
the everlasting love with which God
traced the whole history of humanity.

His heart also expresses
the intense divine and human affection
which Jesus experienced
through his incarnation
to the point of offering his life
so that we might all become
sons of the Father.

In our everyday lives,
Christ continues to lavish this love on
us
by his presence and by the attention,
friendship, and affection
we receive from our brothers.

114. The Open Heart

The Gospel reveals the pierced side of the Savior

as the source of the life-giving Spirit,
the channel and symbol of divine love.

From his open side

out of which blood and water flow,
Jesus gives birth
to the Church and the sacraments.

He invites all to his heart

“to draw water with joy
from the springs of salvation.” (Is 12:3)

115. Book of God's Love

Meditation on Scripture leads us to discover
the loving plan of God,
which attains its supreme expression
in the redemptive death of the Son.

Indeed, “the kindness and love of God” (Ti 3:4)

for all people
has appeared to us in the Heart of the Son.

116. The Eucharist, Celebration of Love

The Eucharistic celebration
is our primary act of homage
to the love of the Savior.

It is also the memorial

of Jesus' ultimate act of love for us:

“A man can have no greater love than
to lay down his life for his friends.” (Jn 15:13)

Our participation in the Eucharist

unites us to Christ,
offering the Father the perfect act
of adoration, thanksgiving,
reconciliation, and intercession.

117. Love for Love

The Mystical Body

has not yet reached its full stature.

Our consecration

to the exclusive service of Christ's love
contributes to the growth of the Church
and hastens the coming
of the kingdom of love.

Yet love is not always accepted:
refusals and delays are part of our lives.
That is why, in a spirit of reparation,
we make up in our bodies what is
lacking
in the sufferings of Christ,
accepting the hardships inherent in our
lives
as consecrated men and apostles.

118. Love of Neighbor

“I have come to bring fire to the earth, and
how I wish it were blazing already.”
(Lk 12:49)

This ardent desire of Jesus can only
enkindle our hearts and excite our zeal.
The love for our brothers
and for the young people entrusted to
us,
then, radiates from Jesus' love for us.
Our dedication to others,
marked by respect, pardon,
and unconditional love,
will be a sign to them
of the compassion of Christ.

Chapter X Apostolic Life

155. Context of the School

We work in schools of all types
and hold key positions
in the field of education as the need
arises.

We attach great importance
to the formation
of new generations of teachers,
to the Christian animation of teaching
teams,

and to the promotion of social respect
for the teaching profession.

Among the diverse calls which reach us,
we give preference to deprived children
and to less developed regions.

156. School Community

Christian education cannot easily be realized
without the witness of a school
community
which is built on close relationships
among teachers, parents, students,
and the local people.

We wholeheartedly support the
establishment
of programs for participation and
animation
which give dynamism
to the school community,
especially through the search
for a common educational vision.

157. Christian Mission of the School

We share with the lay teachers
the responsibility for the religious
and moral formation of the students,
creating an atmosphere
of understanding and generosity
which awakens in young people
a sense of community
and a desire to serve others.

In this way, we are helping
to form a dedicated laity
and to develop religious,
priestly, and missionary vocations.

We are also supplementing
the formation given in the family
and carrying out
the educational mission of the Church.

158. Education in the Faith

Christian education is often associated
with schooling and cultural
development.

It fills the school with the spirit of the Gospel.

We carry out our role as educators in the faith especially through the teaching of religion,

which leads the young
to an enlightened and close union with Christ.

To accomplish this goal and to kindle in our students a desire for the interior life,
it is essential
that we cultivate a dynamic relationship both with them and with the Lord.

159. Apostolic and Moral Awareness

In an atmosphere of respect and trust,
we educate the young
to a sense of personal responsibility.

We also attempt to challenge them
to become involved in social ministry,
to promote justice and peace,
and to appreciate the value of sharing.

We support those students involved in movements and extra-curricular groups
which promote
human and Christian formation,
as well as those who feel called to a special vocation
within the Church or society.

160. Christian Acceptance

In our dealings with people
of different faiths and ideologies,
we look for points of agreement
and we welcome dialogue.

We also foster among the young
a spirit of acceptance
which leads them to love all people
regardless of their race, nationality, or creed.

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***The Educational Charism Statement of the United States Provinces
Brothers of the Sacred Heart***

The charism of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart is a gift from God to the Church. Our predecessors made us heirs of this charism through their devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. As members of a school community striving to embody this charism, our primary mission is the evangelization of young people. Fundamental to our educational charism is the response of André Coindre to poor, neglected, and dechristianized youth.

Today we draw our inspiration from a spirituality of love expressed in the Gospel and lived through the compassion of Christ. This spirituality informs, shapes, and directs the educational ministry of the school community. Through our commitment as professional educators in the faith, we nurture and model love and compassion in Christian community.

Each and every student is known, valued, treasured, and taught in partnership with the family. Hospitality, availability, personal interest, and concern for others are hallmarks of this charism. We emphasize the formation of the whole person, traditional values, high expectations, self-discipline, fairness, professional competence and collaboration. The respect, kindness, and concern, which flow from the charism, are signs within the school of the compassion of Christ.