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**To ask Saints Peter and Paul for an Ardent and Generous Love
for the Sacred Heart of Jesus**

Saint Marie Eugenie of Jesus

My dear Daughters,

In celebrating the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul the day after the feast of the Sacred Heart, it is fitting to try to find out what the true servants and friends of the Heart of Our Lord are like.

The Spirit of the Assumption includes a great devotion to the Apostles, especially to St. Peter who is the head of the Church, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the cornerstone on which rests the entire edifice of the Church, and finally, the one who received from God the responsibility to lead us in this world and to open the doors of the Kingdom of Heaven after this life.

To this devotion to St. Peter, we must associate St. Paul, the Apostle who was chosen by Our Lord after His mortal life with a special love for this strong, zealous soul, so ardent in his convictions.

What did the two of them do? What are the traits by which one can recognise them as friends of Our Lord? Without hesitation we say, their great suffering. Both of them were very generous in the faith, very ardent in their love for the Church and for conquering souls for Jesus Christ. And that was done at the cost of their life, their blood, their work, and their sufferings.

It is thus that we should consider the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Assuredly, He calls us to love. He showed us that He loved us to the point of shedding His Blood for us, and He calls us to repay Him by a love which must not be simply theory, or just an outpouring of tenderness, but a love that is energetic, zealous, courageous, and generous.

We must ask this love of St. Peter with great confidence on this day, his feast, when he is disposed to lavish those divine graces on all the members of the Church; and of St. Paul, who gives us as a mark of his apostolate, all that he suffered: "prison, whippings, perils of all kinds from his nation, from pagans and false brothers, labours, fatigue, frequent vigils, hunger, thirst,

fastings, cold, nakedness¹. And again “I am sure that neither life nor death...nothing could separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, Our Lord²”.

Assuredly, if we present ourselves before God, we cannot tell Him we have suffered all these torments, but in all that we have to suffer, be in a past suffering, a present one, a suffering that awaits us, we must love it, embrace it and always find there strength and joy. He who would have the intensity of St. Paul in the depth of his soul before all pains and trials would have the greatest devotion to the Sacred Heart and would best understand the agony which Our Lord suffered for us in the Garden of Olives.

At that time, when nothing was affecting His body, He was a prey to a suffering that was so unspeakable that Sacred Scripture uses the most sorrowful words to make us understand. It shows Him to us “full of sadness, anguish, fear³”. It was His Heart that was suffering, and this Heart is the emblem of the love which He brought us. We should not stop at His “Heart” but should realise that this devotion is to His love, which is so generous and lavish towards us.

Every soul that, following the Apostles, has a true love of this Sacred Heart, wants to give back to Him everything capable of being returned, to endure everything that can be endured, to accept everything in order to manifest their love for Him.

We hear of the difficulties and the sufferings that missionaries meet. The Apostles spread the Faith on all shores, at a time when the name of Jesus Christ was unknown. Their undertaking, according to human standards, was much harder than it is today. The Apostles triumphed through the strength of the Holy Spirit, but always by shedding their blood, going through humiliations, poverty, distress, prisons, sufferings, tortures, and the various hardships that we see in the life of each of them.

Let us ask the Sacred Heart for something virile and courageous so as to love Him with ardour and to endure patiently and without succumbing, the labour and the sufferings that we shall meet in order to establish His Reign within us and in souls around us.



¹ Cf 2 Cor 11:23-27

² Rom 8:38-39

³ Mt 26:37; Mk 14:33