

THE FOUR PILLARS OF REDEMPTORIST SPIRITUALITY

At the very heart of the spirituality of Saint Alphonsus is love: God's love for us and our love for God in response. Saint Alphonsus was overwhelmed by God's love for him and for all of us, and for Alphonsus, this was especially manifest in Jesus. Jesus is the unshakeable sign and proof that God loves us. The spirituality of Saint Alphonsus focuses on the love of God shown in Jesus, our Redeemer—Jesus, who shared our human condition; who suffered, died, and rose; who continues to be present among us; who gave his own mother to intercede for us.

The spirituality of Saint Alphonsus is about God's self-giving love and presence shown in Jesus. Redemptorists have traditionally summarized that in the words *crib*, *cross*, *altar*, and *Mary*.

CRIB

The mystery of the Incarnation

Jesus, the Redeemer, is God become human in the Incarnation (crib).



From the writings of Saint Alphonsus:

My dearest Jesus, if it is true that ownership is acquired by gift, then you are truly mine since the Father has given you to me. You were indeed born for me; you were given to me. As Scripture says: "For a child has been born for us, a son given to us" (Isa 9:6). Therefore I can justly say to you: "My God and my all!" And since you are mine, everything that belongs to you is also mine. (See Rom 8:32) Therefore your precious blood is all mine, your grace is mine, your paradise is mine; and since you are mine, who can ever take you away from me? Amen. *"Meditation for the Novena of Christmas"*



CROSS

The mystery of Redemption

Jesus redeemed us by emptying himself, becoming a servant, and accepting all the consequences of human life—including a dishonorable death (cross).

From the writings of Saint Alphonsus:

Was it possible that God, the creator of all things, would have been pleased to die for love of his creatures? Yes, it is through faith that he has done so, "as Christ loved us and gave himself for us" (Eph 5:2). The earth, the heavens, and all nature with astonishment witnessed Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, the Lord of the universe, die in intense pain and anguish, like a criminal on a disgraceful cross. Why? For the love of humanity! Lord, I have known your Passion and not only have I not loved you, but I have frequently offended you. Pardon me, I beg you, and remind me continually of the death you have suffered for love of me, so that I may never again offend you, but may always love you.... My crucified Jesus, I want to be yours alone now and forever, and I will love no one else but you. Amen.

The Way of Salvation

ALTAR

The Eucharist

Jesus Christ continues to make his loving and saving grace available to us in the Eucharist (altar).

From the writings of Saint Alphonsus:

My loving Jesus, you can give us no greater proofs of your love than those which you have already given us. You have given your life for us—and you have bequeathed yourself to us in holy Communion, that we may be nourished with your own flesh and blood. How can we see all these testimonies of your love and fail to love you in return? I thank you for giving me the time and opportunity not only to regret the offenses I have committed against you but also to love you for the rest of my life. Help me, my Jesus, to reject and expel from my heart each and every affection which is not directed toward you, so that from this day forward I may not desire, nor seek, nor love anyone but you alone. My God, whom shall I love if not you, who are my supreme good? Amen.

“Meditation for the Octave of Corpus Christi,”



MARY

Mother of the Redeemer

God consoles us through the intercession of his mother, Mary, to whom Jesus entrusted us from the cross.

From the writings of Saint Alphonsus:

O most beautiful Lady, I rejoice in seeing you so dear to God because of your purity and beauty. I thank God for having preserved you from every stain of sin; and since you are so loved by the Holy Trinity, do not refuse to look with love upon me, a sinner. Obtain for me from God pardon for my sins and eternal salvation. Look down upon me and change me. Draw my heart to you so that from now on I may truly love your Son and you. You know that I have placed my hopes in you, my dear mother, so do not abandon me! Help me in life through your powerful intercession, and come to my aid, especially at the hour of my death. Amen.

“Meditation for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception”



Crib, cross, altar, Mary:

Incarnation, redemption, Eucharist, Mary.

It is all one great event by which God assures us that we are loved in Jesus.