

Section 16

A MISSION TOGETHER WITH OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART

What was the main intention of Fr. Chevalier in promoting the Devotion to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart? Fr. Chevalier saw the Devotion to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart first of all as a powerful means to bring people to the Devotion of the Sacred Heart. Spreading the Devotion to the Sacred Heart had been the main purpose of Chevalier's whole life and all his works. He wanted to promote the Devotion to the Sacred Heart everywhere, and by all means, as the remedy for the evils of our time. With that purpose in mind, he founded the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, the Association of the Secular Priests of the Sacred Heart, the Third Order of lay people, the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, and later on, together with Fr. Hubert Linckens, the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart. With the same intention in mind, he started to promote the Devotion to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and the Archconfraternity of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Only *one* devotion was central in the mind of Fr. Chevalier, and that was the Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. However, for him the Virgin Mary was inseparably related to the Sacred Heart of her Son. He used to say, "*All blessings are received from the Sacred Heart through Our Lady.*" In Chevalier's vision, also now in heaven the Risen Lord Jesus Christ acts on the intercession of Mary, while Mary is there to lead us to the Heart of her son.

For Chevalier, Our Lady was the first Missionary of the love of the Sacred Heart. She associates herself completely with the Mission of her Son to realize a regeneration or renewal of humankind. In that way, the Devotion to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart became an integral part of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart. This is a strong element of Fr. Chevalier's charism.

The three statues which represent Our Lady of the Sacred Heart clearly express Chevalier's intention to involve Mary in this project of spreading the Devotion to the Sacred Heart: Jesus, at the age of twelve, standing in front of Mary, his mother; the child Jesus on Mary's arm; and Jesus on the cross accompanied by his mother – in each of the three statues, Mary draws our attention to her son Jesus, by pointing to his heart.

A reflective moment

Please, look for a while
at the three different Images which
follow and which today represent
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.
Each image, in its own way, shows
the intimate relationship between
Our Lady and her son Jesus.
Our Lady regards Jesus
and draws our attention to Jesus,
who shows us his Heart.



This first image above,
designed by Fr. Chevalier,
shows us Mary looking at Jesus,
who as a twelve year old boy
stands in front of her,
pointing to his heart and to his mother.

(In certain places, some images represented Fr. Chevalier's first design in a distorted manner, showing Jesus not as a twelve year old – according to Fr. Chevalier's point of view Luke 2:51 was very important - but as a little boy, sitting at the feet of his mother. Therefore, the Vatican ordered Fr. Chevalier to design a second image. However, the original Statue of Issoudun, shown above, crowned on behalf of the Pope in 1869, was permitted to remain as it was.)



The second image above,
also designed by Fr. Chevalier,
expresses the intimate relationship
between mother Mary and her child Jesus,
who again points to his heart
and to his mother.



The third image
is called “the Calvary of Issoudun”,
and was designed after the Second Vatican Council.
It shows us Jesus, hanging on the cross,
his Heart pierced,
while Our Lady stands near the cross,
inviting us to “look upon him whom they have pierced.”