

it to heart and so strive to make their apostolate really fruitful. In this way certainly they will ward off the danger that threatens the religious life today, a danger expressed in St. Paul's words of warning: "Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around you" (Rom. 12:2); and so they will continue to be of great service to the Church.

The Holy Father therefore earnestly prays that the celebrations to honor the centennial of the naming of St. Alphonsus as a Doctor of the Church may bring to his Congregation much spiritual profit. On you and on all the religious entrusted to your care the Holy Father lovingly bestows his Apostolic Blessing.

In virtue of my office I convey this message to you, and I declare myself most devotedly yours in the Lord.

THE PASTORAL CHARITY OF ST. ALPHONSUS*

The Holy Father addressed a Letter to the General Chapter of the Redemptorists meeting in Rome in 1967. In his letter, Pope Paul referred to the pastoral charity of St. Alphonsus. He asserted that it was pastoral charity "which more than anything else moved your Father and Lawgiver to found your Congregation .

"St. Alphonsus, indeed, more than any other Doctor of the Church, may be said to belong to our times, because of his marvelous activities, because of the forms of the sacred apostolate which he introduced, and especially because of his splendid writings, which are still to be found in the hands of the faithful to their great spiritual profit. In these writings the personality of this Saint in heaven still lives as it were and breathes, and his voice like that of one inspired from on high still resounds, sweetly attracting, as it did while he was here on earth, those who hear it and powerfully inflaming their hearts with love for God, and at the same time teaching us how the word of God is to be preached.

"Though possessed of great learning, far from flaunting it in an ostentatious display of erudition, he loved rather the simplicity of the language of the Gospel. His one and only concern

*This is a letter of the Pope to the General chapter of the Redemptorists.

was to proclaim the message of the Gospel, so that all who heard him might understand; and the power and efficacy of his preaching derived wholly and entirely from his very close union with God. Beloved sons, it is such an example that our own times need most of all. For it is especially by their own personal sanctity of life that heralds of the word of God must bear witness to the truth. Nor is there any other way by which priests and religious can truly become 'the salt of the earth and the light of the world' " (AAS 59, 1967 p. 962).

RELEVANCE OF THE TEACHING OF ST. ALPHONSUS*

In a circular letter of March 15, 1971 to all the members of his Congregation, Father Amaral explained the value of the works of St. Alphonsus, and his relevance in the Church today as a writer, moralist, and missionary. The following are extracts from the letter of Father Amaral:

1. LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST.

To live a Christian life means to make Christ the center of one's existence. St. Alphonsus makes Christ the center of his whole life and work. His one great concern is to induce all men to love the Saviour, as he so often repeats in his circular letters addressed to his spiritual sons.

The love of St. Alphonsus for Jesus Christ is, above all, devotion to the Person of the Saviour, with whom he strives to live in a most intimate and true friendship, as is evident from his prayers and affections, coming forth from a heart all on fire with love. His love is a continuous contemplation of the Mystery of Christ in all its aspects. The natural result of this contemplation is imitation of Our Lord; but for St. Alphonsus imitation of Christ's virtues was not principally a form of devotion or an ascetical method; rather it was the fruit of union with the Savior, a demand of love.

Some of the ways in which St. Alphonsus expressed his love for Christ may no longer appear attractive to Christians

*This is a letter by the Most Rev. Tarcisio Ariovaldo Amaral, C.S.S.R., Superior General of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer addressed to all the members of his Congregation.