

ANDRÉ SAMPERS

FATHER JOSEPH PASSERAT'S HEROIC VIRTUE
declared on April 29, 1980

SUMMARIUM

Occasione data decreti super heroicitate virtutum a ven. patre Iosepho Amando Passerat exercitarum, opportunum visum est dare quasdam notitias de vita et actuositate tanti viri, cuius memoria quodammodo neglecta videtur in historiographia Congregationis SS.mi Redemptoris ultimis quadraginta annis.

Vitae curriculum p. Passerat (1772-1858) perlustranti statim apparet eum magnum locum tenuisse in historia Instituti per primum dimidium saeculi XIX, quando continenter munera maximi momenti obibat: vices gerentis s. Clementis in Germania (1803-1807) et in Helvetia (1807-1820), vicarii generalis Congregationis transalpinae (1820-1848). Hoc periodo Redemptoristae firmas sedes constituerunt in Europa centrali et occidentali nec non in Statibus Foederatis Americae, ibique bonam famam acquisierunt. Quod sane non soli p. Passerat debetur, certo certius tamen magna ex parte ipsius perseverantiae ac prudentiae gubernandi attribuendum est, maxime vero ipsius verbo et exemplo, quo suos induxit, ut plene se vocationi dederent.

Sicut eius decessor in munere vicarii transalpini, s. Clemens, p. Passerat firme persuasum habuit, Congregationem diffundendam esse per regiones extra Italiam. Ambo toto corde et omni vi sese huic operi impenderunt, quod prospere eis successit. Notatur tamen quaedam diversitas in eorum regimine. S. Clemens in documentis apparet homo activus, semper exercitio operum pro proximo deditus, p. Passerat e contra magis ad contemplationem inclinatus. Adhortatio ipsius continua in vitam interiorem incumbendi, i. e. ad orationem colendam et virtutes exercendas — et quidem secundum observantiam Constitutionum a. 1764 conditarum — quibusdam s. Clementis discipulis nimia videbatur, atque etiam quodammodo abnegatio spiritus magistri iudicabatur, saltem quatenus talis fidelis observantia Constitutionum usque in minimis praescriptis detrimento quodam esset exercitio laborum apostolicorum.

Quidquid sit de indole et pondere vitae asceticae a p. Passerat congregatis verbo et exemplo impositae, eius regimen — a plerisque subditis ut Dei donum consideratum — salutarem effectum in Instituto habuit et usque ad hunc diem habet. Recte animadvertit superior generalis p. Nicolaus Mauron die obitus Servi Dei: « Quidquid vitae interioris ac asceseos

exercitii habetur hodie in Congregatione transalpina, hoc omne debetur Patri Passerat ».

Postremo in hoc scripto datur, per summa capita, iter causae. Processus ordinarii seu diocesani celebrati sunt ann. 1892-1896. Causa introducta est an. 1901. Deinde processus apostolici celebrati sunt ann. 1902-1910. Post longiorem prolationem causa assumpta est a postulatore generali, p. Nicola Ferrante, et die 29 aprilis 1980 Congregatio pro Causis Sanctorum decretum super heroicitate virtutum p. Passerat edixit. Quod documentum adiungitur forma archetypi.

The studies of Redemptorist history and of the Congregation's outstanding figures published in the last forty years give the impression that Fr. Passerat's important place in the development of the Institute and his spiritual eminence have not received during this time the attention they deserve. The decree, recently issued by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints declaring officially that Fr. Passerat practised the virtues to a heroic degree, is a welcome occasion for a few notes on his personality and his work, and on their significance for the Congregation.

Born on April 30, 1772, at Joinville (Champagne, France), Joseph-Amand-Constantin-Fidèle Passerat wanted at an early age to become a priest. The anti-church policy adopted by the French government around 1790 forced him to interrupt his studies. After deserting from the army (1792), he continued them in Augsburg, where he received minor orders on September 19, 1795, and in Würzburg at the seminary for French emigrants. In Southern Germany he got to know the writings of St. Alphonsus de Liguori and the apostolic work of the Redemptorists; whereupon he decided to join this Congregation. So, in 1796 he went — with three companions — to Warsaw, to the only Redemptorist monastery at that time in existence outside Italy.

St. Clement Hofbauer received the young man with open arms. Passerat was admitted among the sons of St. Alphonsus: he began his novitiate on July 22, 1796, and took his vows — less than four months later — on November 13. After finishing his theological studies, he was ordained in Warsaw on April 15, 1797, by Bishop Jan Albertrandy. A few months later St. Clement appointed him as master of novices and prefect of students; he also taught church history and theology. As confessor and spiritual director, he also took an active part in what is appropriately called the 'perpetual mission' at St. Benno's, directed by Fr. Hofbauer who repeatedly showed that he was very pleased with the newcomer's spiritual attitude and activity. But not for a long time was Warsaw to be the scene of Fr. Passerat's apostolate.

St. Clement succeeded in establishing his first foundation on

German soil, at Mount Tabor near Jestetten, at the end of 1802. He called Fr. Passerat in the summer of 1803 and appointed him superior of the community. Moreover, he gave him ample faculties: such as to transfer the community, to admit candidates to the novitiate and to profession, to authorize his subjects to present themselves for holy orders and to appoint them to community offices. In effect, Fr. Passerat became St. Clement's deputy in matters concerning the Congregation in the German countries.

When the Redemptorists had to leave the diocese of Constance, Fr. Passerat led his men to Babenhausen near Augsburg (1805) and a few years later (1807) from there to Switzerland: first to Chur (canton of the Grisons) and then to Visp (Valais). In 1811 he moved the community to the canton of Fribourg where the fathers, however, were forced at first to remain scattered in different parishes. Finally, in 1818, thanks to Fr. Passerat's persistent efforts, a religious house was assigned to the Redemptorists, viz. the former Carthusian monastery La Valsainte. At last he had at his disposal a building in which all the confreres could be united and where he could set up real religious community life as he had always wished to do. But only two years later, St. Clement died on March 15, 1820, and Fr. Passerat was appointed his successor, which implied that he had to leave his beloved Valsainte.

On May 30, 1820, the document naming Fr. Passerat vicar general of all the Redemptorists outside Italy was signed by the superior general of the Congregation, Fr. Nicola Mansione. Fr. Passerat accepted the nomination, not with pleasure, but out of obedience to his superior, trusting that it was the Will of God who would give him the strength to carry 'this formidable burden'. On September 27 he left La Valsainte for Fribourg, and on October 2 he went from there to Vienna, his new residence, where he arrived on the 20th of that month. For twenty-eight years he remained in office, notwithstanding his repeated offers to resign, offers inspired by his conviction that for several reasons he was not quite fitted for the task. He was reappointed, nevertheless, by Fr. Mansione's successors as superiors general, Frs. Celestino Cocle and Giancamillo Ripoli on July 28, 1824, and on April 14, 1833, respectively.

After the suppression of the Redemptorist house in Vienna on April 6, 1848, Fr. Passerat fled to Belgium, arriving at Liège on May 9. As there was no possibility of continuing in office in the confusion both inside and outside the Congregation, he submitted a final resignation, which was accepted by the superior general, Fr. Ripoli,

on July 9, and by the Roman Congregation of Bishops and Regulars on October 2.

In October he retired to the hospice in Bruges, where he became superior on December 27. Here he remained for two years, mainly as confessor and spiritual director to the Redemptoristines and to celebrate the liturgy in their public chapel. But it was becoming too much for him, at his age of nearly eighty. On June 21, 1850, he suffered a first stroke. Though a mild one, it impaired his memory and both his physical and mental faculties to some extent. Thanks to affectionate and capable treatment, he improved somewhat but soon felt that he should retire completely. On September 3, 1850, he reached the Redemptorist house of Tournai, where he suffered another stroke on October 30 from which he did not recover. There followed a long and painful illness, during which the venerable old man was a spectator, so to say, of his own disintegration. Though he was very much afraid of death, as he confided to a confrere only the day before he died, his end finally came as a relief on October 30, 1858. The prisoner — as he had sometimes called himself — was finally set free. His continuous prayer to die as a member of the Congregation had been heard.

Fr. Passerat's importance in the history of the Redemptorist Congregation emerges clearly from the above summary. From soon after his ordination (1797) until he retired to Tournai (1850) — a period of a good fifty years — he was in a position of authority: master of novices and prefect of students in Warsaw (1798-1803), superior of a community and St. Clement's deputy for the Congregation in Germany and Switzerland (1803-1820), vicar general of the Transalpine branch of the Congregation (1820-1848), superior of the hospice in Bruges (1848-1850).

The first half of the nineteenth century was the period during which the Redemptorists got a firm footing in several countries beyond the Alps and in which the good name of the Institute was widely recognized over Central and Western Europe and in the United States. Obviously, this was not due to Fr. Passerat alone; but, on the other hand, to a large extent it has to be accredited to his perseverance and prudent leadership: mainly to his word and example through which he inspired in many of his subjects a complete dedication to their vocation.

Like St. Clement, Fr. Passerat was absolutely convinced that, for the good of the Church, the Congregation of St. Alphonsus had to be extended to the countries north of the Alps because he saw the

Institute — with its traditional piety and absolute loyalty to the Roman authorities — as a mighty bulwark against the spirit of the times, tending towards materialism and secularism. Both men had the gift of conveying their conviction to others who unconditionally devoted their energies to realizing what their superiors had proposed. This means that both of them were personalities of more than ordinary stature.

St. Clement's and Fr. Passerat's basic attitudes to the Congregation and its role in the Church and the world were undoubtedly very similar. Numerous documents, however, show that there is also some difference; although, on further consideration, this can be seen merely as a difference in emphasis. Differences of this kind are often found in religious groups of so-called mixed life (*vita mixta*), i.e., contemplative personal and active apostolic life. Obviously, every superior and member is inclined to solve the problem according to his own predominantly contemplative or more active nature.

St. Clement emerges from the documents above all as a man of action, always eager to do some good for his neighbour and to stimulate the brethren to apostolic activity. Fr. Passerat's main concern, on the other hand, is the religious life of the Congregation's members, which means he emphasizes the inner contact of each one with God in continuous prayer. There is, of course, no contradiction between these two attitudes. Both men were equally convinced that apostolic work had to be founded in and to result from the religious life of the apostle. It is not a question of one or the other but only of more or less, of what gets primary attention.

Not only was Fr. Passerat principally concerned with the salvation and sanctification of the Institute's members, but he had also quite definite ideas how this perfection should be attained.

From the very beginning of his term as vicar general (1820), he tried to obtain what he considered the authentic Alphonsian Constitutions, drawn up in the General Chapter of 1764, according to which he thought the life of the Congregation in Italy was regulated. As his requests for a copy had no effect, in 1823 he sent Fr. Franz Springer to the headquarters of the Institute in Nocera de' Pagani (Naples) to transcribe these Constitutions.

Although the Redemptorists were recognised as a society in Austria on the basis of different Constitutions, which St. Clement had submitted to the government in 1819, and the Constitutions of 1764 were until then unknown in the Transalpine Congregation, Fr. Passerat did his utmost to introduce them as the only binding rule governing life inside and outside the monastery. Despite many diffi-

culties and a good deal of opposition, he succeeded in this, which certainly had a good effect inasmuch as it consolidated and secured the unity between the Congregation beyond the Alps and the one in Italy.

A close examination of Fr. Passerat's regime poses the question of whether he did not exaggerate in imposing strict observance of the 1764 Constitutions. Many a scholar and even a good religious of our times will be inclined to think that he could have been somewhat more flexible, taking due account of the very different circumstances of country (Southern Italy - Central and Western Europe) and time (1764 - 1824 ff.).

Though the documents show clearly that he was conscious of some such differences and that, therefore, his subjects could not lead exactly the same religious life as their Italian confreres, we get the impression that he was a bit too stubborn in upholding several marginal details — some of which were not observed at the time even in Italy. A tragic consequence of this attitude was that some prominent disciples of St. Clement left the Congregation, while others remained for a long time in opposition to the line of conduct traced by their superior.

They thought, in fact, that making the exercise of apostolic work dependent on the strict observance of, at least in part, outdated Constitutions was contrary to the spirit of the master who had inspired them to join the Congregation. They were convinced — and, as it seems, quite rightly — that where the practice of certain forms of apostolic activity conflicted with strict observance of the Constitutions, St. Clement would have interpreted and, if necessary, relaxed the latter to facilitate the former.

The great majority of the Institute's members, however, followed Fr. Passerat willingly and joyfully, even enthusiastically, considering him a real man of God whose government was enlightened from on high. He had transferred to them his conviction that the true religious has to be judged on the quality of his interior life of prayer and virtue, not on his eagerness for and productivity in external labours, however outstanding they may be.

Saints are of course human beings; their judgment sometimes fails and consequently they make mistakes — *errare humanum est!* But, no doubt, Fr. Passerat's generation-long regime was a blessing for the entire Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, inasmuch as he implanted firmly in its Transalpine branch the spirit of profound interior life and prayer. This spirit outlasted his tenure, fostered as it was by the superiors who succeeded him. Perfectly true is the very significant observation of Superior General Fr. Nicolas Mauron when

he received the telegram announcing Fr. Passerat's death: « Whatever interior life and practical ascetism there are in the Transalpine Congregation today are all due to Father Passerat ». No wonder that Fr. Mauron felt obliged to keep Fr. Passerat's spirit alive for the benefit of the entire Institute.

In the French and Dutch speaking sections of the Congregation in particular, Fr. Passerat's memory was held in veneration. Several Fathers instilled devotion to him also outside the Institute, and people began to invoke his help. Graces, supposedly received through his intercession, were reported; among them several rare recoveries from various diseases. So it is by no means surprising that more than once the saintly man was tentatively proposed for the honors of the altar.

After the beatification of Fr. Hofbauer on January 29, 1888, such proposals took a firmer shape and finally crystallized. On January 6, 1892, Fr. Mauron announced in a circular letter to the members of the Congregation that he was about to begin a cause for Fr. Passerat's beatification. At the same time he asked any of them who might have information useful in promoting the cause to notify Fr. Claudio Benedetti, the postulator general, or Fr. Jules Jacques, the vice-postulator in Tournai.

In fact the ordinary or diocesan processes began that same year: in Tournai (1892-1895), in Vienna (1892-1894), and in Rome (1892-1896). Furthermore, a supplementary process was held at Annecy (1893). The decree by which the cause was introduced at the Congregation of Rites was signed by Leo XIII on May 13, 1901. The apostolic processes began the following year: in Tournai (1902-1907), and in Vienna (1902-1910). On July 9, 1913, the processes were recognized as valid.

During the first twenty years, the cause had proceeded well and rather speedily. Then, for several reasons, it ground to a long halt. The so-called *Positio*, i.e., the printed summary of the depositions given by the witnesses, with the remarks and objections of the Promotor Fidei (the well-known Devil's Advocate) and the lawyer's reply, was ready only in 1959. On the basis of this *Positio*, Fr. Passerat's virtue was finally debated in a first session (the so-called *Congregatio antepreparatoria*) on February 7, 1967, but the outcome was not exactly favourable. A good number of doubts were expressed and questions raised, all of which were summarized by the Promotor Fidei in his new remarks (*Novae Animadversiones*), formulated on June 15, 1971. After a meticulous study the reply to these observa-

tions was presented by the postulator, Fr. Nicola Ferrante, on April 28, 1973.

The remarks plus the reply were printed as a *Nova Positio* and discussed in a special session (*Congressus peculiaris*) of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints on May 15, 1979, and then, in the plenary session (*Congregatio plenaria*) of December 4. This time the proposed question of whether Fr. Passerat had practised Christian virtues to a heroic degree was answered plainly in the affirmative. On March 13, 1980, Cardinal Prefect Corrado Bafle informed the Pope of the positive outcome of the discussions, whereupon His Holiness ordered that the decree declaring Fr. Passerat's heroic virtue be drawn up. The document was issued on April 29. We publish it here in the original Latin text.

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SACRA CONGREGATIO PRO CAUSIS SANCTORUM

Decretum. Tornacen. seu Vindobonen. Beatificationis et Canonizationis ven. Servi Dei Iosephi Amandi Passerat, sacerdotis professi e Congregatione SS.mi Redemptoris.

Super dubio: An constet de virtutibus theologalibus Fide, Spe et Caritate tum in Deum tum in proximum, necnon de virtutibus cardinalibus Prudentia, Iustitia, Temperantia et Fortitudine, earumque adnexis, in gradu heroico, in casu et ad effectum de quo agitur.

« Mementote praepositorum vestrórum, qui vobis locuti sunt verbum Dei, quorum intuentes exitum conversationis imitamini fidem » (*Heb.*, 13, 7).

Redemptoriana familia quae Sanctum Alphonsum M. de' Liguori patrem ac magistrum colit, Sanctumque Clementem M. Hofbauer propagatorem insignem, merito Venerabilem Iosephum Amandum Passerat velut matrem ac nutricem extollit.

Ipsae enim priorum praepositorum heres et alumnus, eorum doctrinam assecutus, eam verbis lustravit, exemplo posteris transmisit. Fuit igitur anulus tertius eiusdem aureae traditionis qua sui evangelii nuntiandi praecones corroborantur et perficiuntur et, ipso duce, victores mundum peragrarunt.

Iosephus Amandus Passerat *Joinville*, in Lingonibus, die 30 Aprilis 1772 ortum duxit, prior duorum filiorum Iosephi ac Catharinae Oliver et eodem die rite baptizatus est. Puer cum egregia indole maxime ad pietatem prona singulare coniunxit ingenium, quod primo enituit in Abbazia Sancti Urbani, ubi sub Patribus Ordinis Sancti Benedicti prima litterarum spatia summa cum laude decurrit. Paulo post in Catalaunense semi-

narium exceptus, humanioribus litteris operam dedit. Interea, cum probe intelligeret quae sit dignitas, quae pulchritudo sacerdotii ad quod sese iam inde impelli sentiebat, prope erat ut Lutetiam Parisiorum peteret superioribus disciplinis addiscendis, quando eius votis rerum publicarum conversiones obstiterunt, quae ad eius patriam funditus evertendam iam aperte fluebant. Ideoque, ne a falsis opinionibus noxiisque erroribus illuc invectis deciperetur, domum paternam rediit, pro sua integra fide ad omnia paratus. Blanditias respuit, minasque refellit, usque ad carcerem restitit ne nefario sacramento novis reipublicae legibus ab Ecclesiae rationibus dissociatis sese devinciri cogeretur. Verum, urgente bello, e carcere deductus, et a rebellibus per vim militiae addictus, anno 1792, Deo protegente, ipsi se subtraxit et per Belgicas terras in Germaniae fines pervenit, pedibus errans, unam post aliam urbem visitans, Augustam Vindelicorum pervenit. Hic primo, deinde Herbipoli sacrae theologiae studiis vacavit. Ast cum novisset Redemptorianam familiam, anno 1732 in Italia exortam, per Sanctum Clementem iam Varsaviae consistere, quasi divino instinctu, ad hunc Ordinem profutendum impulsus, omni abrupta mora, huc pedes convolvit ibique ab ipso Sancto Clemente, die 22 Iulii 1796, inter tirones Congregationis cooptatur.

Novum vitae genus exortus, Iosephus iis comparandis virtutibus quae a Patre Alphonso requiruntur ita prorsus se dedit ut eum tamquam exemplar suspicerent omnes, et ipse eius magister Sanctus Clemens. Hinc eius humilitas et mansuetudo; hinc in seipsum asperitas; hinc eius patientia quam Sanctus Clemens admirabatur cum scriberet: « *Patientia ipsa esse videtur* »; hinc praesertim oriebatur illa mirabilis orandi consuetudo quae, quamdiu vixit, eius forma et quasi naturalis nota fuit eique vulgo *magni precatioris* nomen comparavit. Quid mirum si eodem anno, die 13 Novembris, ad vota nuncupanda admittitur? Anno insequenti, die 15 Aprilis 1797, sacerdotio auctus, statim in ipsa domo Varsaviensi theologiam et ecclesiasticam historiam solerter ac erudite docuit. Paulo post, anno 1798, tironibus efformandis praeficitur, quod officium per 22 annos retinuit. Insimul et rectoris et vicarii itinerantis transalpini Instituti officium obiit ut suos e furore Gallicorum exercituum per Europam sese effundentium eriperet. Quatuor annos per Germanicas regiones, undecim per Helveticas transmigravit, de regno in regnum fugiens, « nec labores recusans, nec pericula timens », ut Sancti Clementis verbis utamur, semper animarum zelo compulsus, semper inter curarum angustias, strenui ducis ad instar qui, variis locatis praesidiis, hac illac discurrit, ad unum ad alium properabat vicum, ad unam et aliam pergebat curiam eo maxime spectans ut vinculum dispersi sodalitiis penitus servaretur ac tirones qui secum erant ad omnem pietatem effingeret. Tandem, anno 1818, in regione quam « Vallem Sanctam » vocant, prope Friburgum tutum refugium invenit. Ibi coenobium vetustissimum et labefactatum erat, at, eius ductu et auspicio, inter paupertatis angustias, disciplinae et perfectionis studium ad miraculum eluxit.

Duobus post annis, Sanctus Clemens qui a Varsavia iam depulsus, Vindobonae Vicarii Generalis munus pro transalpinis regionibus obierat, ad coelitum sedes feliciter evolavit. Tunc Iosephus Passerat, ab eodem Sancto Clemente antea designatus, auctoritate Moderatoris Generalis, plaudibus omnibus, eidem successit et statim arduum demandatum opus

coepit moliri. Difficultates oriebantur ex rerum adiunctis, nam leges a Iosepho II latae vigeant quibus iura laedebantur Ecclesiae ac religiosorum coetuum; et hae palam in publicis academiis docebantur. Quapropter Iosephus omnia movit donec facultatem obtinuit studiorum instituendi palaestram ubi clericis sana et tuta scientia traderetur. Ipse autem tiro-num magisterium suscepit et effecit ut perpetuo subolesceret Patrum copia qui, insigni exercitatione christianarum virtutum et apostolicorum laborum, Instituti nomini gloriam adderent et christianae reipublicae utilitatem magnam procurarent. Tandem, quo tanta fabricanda moles aptioribus fundamentis consisteret, omnibus viribus contendit ut exemplar antiquarum constitutionum quod ipse S. Alphonsus condendo sodalities olim ediderat, manibus haberet, enixe petens ut totum animum ad illarum studium sodales adiungerent. Sic, mentibus constitutis, facilius quidem fuit suam familiam longe lateque propagare: per Austriam, Bavariam, Galliam, Lusitaniam, Belgium, Hollandiam, Angliam, Septentrionalem Italiam, Status Foederales Americae: 29 collegiis, in plures gentes diffusis. Quo melius mentem Sancti Alphonsi perficeret, Sanctimonialium virginum etiam Redemptorianam sodalitates trans Alpes propagare studuit et egit.

Ceterum in regenda religiosa familia, quam ad maiorem Dei gloriam, omni cura auxerat, qua provida et amantissima mater semper se gessit. Singulis quoque annis varias Congregationis domos rite lustravit, studiosissime invigilans ut ubicumque regularis observantia exacte vigeret, exemplis et hortationibus omnes ad perfectam virtutem assequendam incitabat. Itaque effecit ut, licet rigidum disciplinae vindicem sese praebere, ab omnibus summa veneratione et magno amore coleretur: Ast, anno 1848, popularis seditio, Vindobonae erupta, suum templum et coenobium vastavit, religiosus violenta manu depulsus. Tunc Servus Dei, multa mira fortitudine passus, cum suis Leodium petiit; hinc dispersos sodales monuit nulla vi Congregationis nomen labefactari posse, ideoque ita viverent aequae ac si in communitate degerent. Postea, propter devexam aetatem, Vicarii munere abdicato, Brugis per biennium Sanctimonialibus a Sanctissimo Redemptore in spiritualibus pater et magister adfuit. Ultimo, apoplectio ictu correptus, ac Tornacum deductus, per octo annos hanc aegritudinem placide fortiterque sustinuit, donec, Ecclesiae sacramentis munitus, die 30 Octobris 1858, obdormivit in Domino. Egregium profecto virum unde omnium virtutum exempla petas: quarum primo flagrantissima erga Deum caritas eiusque gloria totis viribus promovenda. Ideoque nihil magis eius in votis fuit quam Evangelii lumen inter incultas gentes proferre, terque quaterque beatum se fore dicebat si mortem pro fide potuisset obire. Cum Evangelii praecones quos ipse ad transmarinas regiones mittebat, in eo erant ut discederent, a lacrimis temperare non poterat dicens: « Me Deus refellit! ». At praesertim suorum alumnorum doctor ac praeceptor fuit summus, *forma gregis factus ex animo* (I Pt., 5, 4): regularis disciplina numquam cultorem sui invenit parem. Etenim, quamdiu ipse vixit, tamdiu vitae atque actionum suarum obedientiam perpetuam sociam ac ducem habuit. Nullam umquam, etiam ingravescente aetate, a communibus oneribus vacationem admisit. Paupertatis votum, tamquam sponsam dulcissimam coluit, totiusque animi reginam dominari iussit. Porro verbis, ore, gestu, totoque habitu corporis miram verecundiam et gravitatem prae-

se tulit adeo ut vel ipso adspectu ad eius virtutis amorem intuentes alliceret.

Sanctimoniae fama quam Servus Dei vivens sibi conciliaverat, post obitum adeo aucta et constans extitit, ut Processus Ordinarii super ea instituti et ad exitum perducti tum Tornaci, tum Vindobonae, tum Romae anno 1892, Sacrorum Rituum Congregationi exhibiti fuerint. Deinde et super scriptis et super obedientia Urbanianis decretis praestita inquisitum est.

A S. R. C. decretum super Servi Dei scriptis die 3 Augusti 1896 et 1 Martii 1901 editum est. Die vero 13 Maii eiusdem anni Leo Papa XIII s. m. Commissionem Introductionis causae sua manu obsignavit. Anno insequenti, die 6 Maii a. 1902, super *non cultu* decretum est. Apostolicis processibus rite absolutis, die 9 Iulii a. 1913 iuridica omnium processuum vis recognita fuit. Hisce itaque ad normam iuris anteparaeparatoria quaestio super virtutibus theologalibus et cardinalibus iisque adnexis agitata est; deinde in Congressu Peculiari die 15 Maii a. 1979 habito, ac tandem, die 4 Decembris eiusdem anni, in Congregatione Plenaria Patrum Cardinalium, Rev.mo Cardinali Petro Palazzini causae Ponente seu Relatore; omnesque ad propositum Dubium affirmative responderunt, Famulum Dei scilicet Iosephum Amandum Passerat christianas virtutes heroum in modum coluisse.

Facta postmodum de hisce omnibus Summo Pontifici Ioanni Paulo II die 13 Martii a. 1980 relatione per subscriptum Cardinalem, Sanctitas Sua iussit Decretum super virtutum heroicitate Servi Dei apparari.

Hodierno tandem die, Beatissimus Pater, accitis ad se infrascripto Praefecto necnon Rev.mo Cardinali Petro Palazzini, Causae Relatore, meque a Secretis aliisque convocari solitis; iisque adstantibus, solemniter edixit: *Constare de virtutibus theologalibus Fide, Spe et Caritate cum in Deum tum in proximum, necnon de cardinalibus Prudentia, Iustitia, Temperantia et Fortitudine earumque adnexis Servi Dei Iosephi Amandi Passerat in gradu heroico, in casu et ad effectum de quo agitur.*

Hoc autem Decretum publici iuris fieri et in acta S. Congregationis pro Causis Sanctorum referri mandavit.

Datum Romae, die 29 Aprilis A. D. 1980.

L. ✠ S.

C. Card. BAFILE, Praefectus

† Iosephus Casoria, Archiep. tit. Foronovan., a Secretis