



**Novena
Of reflection and prayer
For the feast of
Blessed Nicolas Barre**

October 13th to 21st

Day 1 October 13th



It is God alone who can satisfy us; all else is but a means, a direction or a path. God is our goal, the centre and object of all our motivations. We should devote our energies only to whatever will lead us in this direction. (Letter 9)

What a wonderful resolution to want to belong to God alone!
What a lofty and precious desire to be committed to and lost in God in this way!

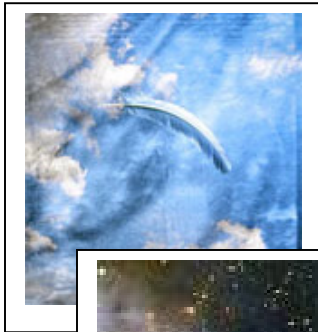
Think often of this:-

Nothing but God

All for God

God alone

My God, nothing else but only You! (Letter 30)



*They belong to God, and God belongs to them,
The Spirit carries them where it wills,*

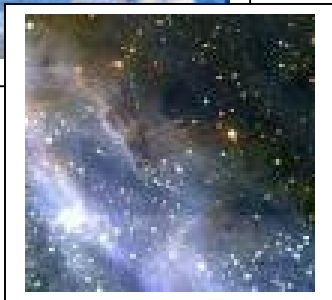
*Acts in them, possesses them, moves them,
Like faithful servants,*

*No feather borne hither and thither upon the
wind*

Moves with such race and freedom,

*As do they who allow themselves
to be carried by God without resisting.*

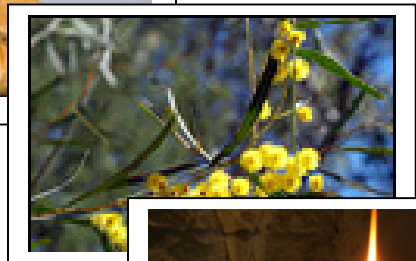
(Spiritual Canticle 37)



Day 2 October 14th

Try not to let one hour of any day go by without casting a glance at Jesus, who is your One and Only, your All; a glance either of love, trust, pleading, wonder or surrender, irrespective of whether you feel totally dry, spiritually empty or full of supernatural affection.

A loyal and generous person never complains, convinced that apparent desertion by God serves but to test, increase and confirm his or her love. (Letter 55)



*O God, by whom all that is, has being,
O Depth, by which all is supported.
O Milieu, by which all is held together.
O King, Master of all.
O pure and sovereign Spirit,
Holding all things in your hand.
Life that animates every soul,
Through your goodness,
Be the Spirit, the source and the flame
Animating our will. (Spiritual Canticle 45)*



Day 3 October 15th

Be at peace. Do not be afraid. God's ways can be strange and surprising. "How incomprehensible are his ways" (Rom 11:33). You need a tremendous amount of humility, simplicity, obedience and fidelity in order to set out on these ways, persevere and arrive at the goal, which is none other than God. (Letter 8)

*LORD, I want nothing more,
I desire nothing more
only to be ready to desire what you
desire and as you desire it.
It is enough for me that you hold me in
your presence,
that you take care of 'everything,
that you watch over all my concerns,
all that happens to me
and that nothing escapes your adorable
guidance of my life.
O Jesus! O Love!*

*You are my God and my All,
centre and unfathomable depth of
goodness and greatness!
May Jesus live and his will be done!
There is nothing left for me to desire.
(Letter 12)*



Day 4 October 16th

Many people want to serve God, but the majority do not want to become God's instruments. Yet, this should be the proper disposition of everyone who is faithful. We should be in the hand of God like the brush in the hand of the painter; like the quill in the hand of the writer. Note, by the way, that the quill, if it is to write well, must often be cut, trimmed and shaped. (P.M. 31)



Let your hearts be opened with a holy joy as you contemplate your happiness and the excellence of your vocation. (P.M. 35)

*Choose, Lord, what you want of me.
Order all things,
plan and arrange all things in the way that pleases you,
and I will try to make my desires and actions yours,
to follow you in everything and everywhere,
without reserve or limit.
Finally, Lord, I want to belong totally to you,
no more measuring or portioning out,
neither in life nor in death,
in sorrow or in joy, on earth or in heaven
My beloved is all mine and I am his forever.
O Jesus! O Love! (Letter 12)*

Day 5 October 17th

Let us work for pure love and the greater glory of God. Let us do all that we can to accomplish our duty well and above all with great fidelity. God will be faithful in rewarding us in this world and in the next. But it is not the thought of a reward that should motivate us. It is pure and holy love which should encourage us. (Letter 50)



A Master orders his servant to draw water from a well and pour it into a drum. The water escapes from the drum through a series of holes and flows into several canals. The master has set up these canals to water different parts of the garden, but the servant being unaware of this, grumbles against him and complains that it is a waste of effort and time. But later, when the master leads him to the garden and shows him the well-filled reservoirs of water, he recognises his master's wisdom, and resolves in future to carry out his orders without bothering about anything else. (M.A.P. 201)

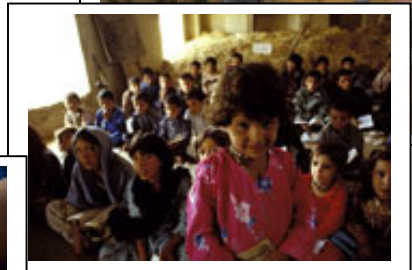
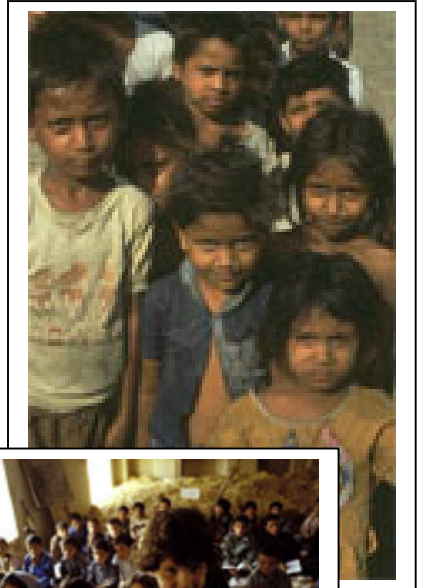


Day 6 October 18th

Although it is a good thing to fill one's mind with God and to desire to love God alone, it is not the whole of the Gospel. Jesus was not satisfied with this. He emptied himself, suffered, died to himself in his own death. He worked miracles, preached, taught, talked to and cured people. There was no limit to what he did for his neighbour whom he saw as another self. He went on working to the end.

(R.R. 10)

Do we love our neighbour as ourselves? Let us see as we reflect on the signs of this love. Do we feel sadness and distress when we hear that the salvation of the other is in danger? Do we rejoice at success of our neighbour's work for God and at the abundance of grace lavished by Jesus? Do we give as much thought to our neighbour's good and advantage as we do to our own? Do we do for the other what we do for ourselves? (M.A.P. 215)



Day 7 October 19th

Jesus said that whoever received a little child in his name would receive him and that whatever is done to one of the least, the poorest, the most despised, is done to himself. It follows that whoever receives a poor, abandoned child doubly welcomes the person of Jesus Christ. Herein lies the first and most important aim of the Institute. (S.R. 2)



Spiritual needs are of much greater importance than those of the body. Beggars are rarely at a loss when it comes to wheedling

a few shillings but they may die of spiritual hunger. People giving alms are often deeply moved by the poverty they can see, but often remain unaffected by the fact that the same beggars may be in danger of losing their souls. Admirable as it is to feed and clothe the body, it is better still to teach the poor the truths of salvation. The sign given in the Gospel to show that Jesus is the Messiah is that 'the poor have the Gospel preached to them'... When Jesus miraculously cured physical ailments, it was in order that he might cure the soul. (M.A.P. 219 + 222)

Day 8 October 20th

Damp wood must be sawed, dried out and then put into the fire. It burns and in the process it loses its substance of wood and is changed into fire. We dry out the dampness by renewing our faith, hope, good works and burning love and be transformed by God. (R.R. 9)



Yes, these souls, having become like their Saviour,
Sharing in his happiness
Are, like him, pure and unadorned.
Through his communication of himself
And even through his lesser blessings
They share in his essence
No longer caught by another milieu
In spite the great difference in nature
They are, in a sense, like God (Spiritual Canticle 42)



Day 9 October 21st

Let Jesus reign and let whatever happens happen, even with regard to eternity. This is Jesus' affair and not ours, since he knows the plans he has in mind for us. May God's will be done even in ways unknown to us and without having any assurance, idea, or sense of what may happen to us. (Letter 47)



On his death bed, Nicolas Barre was asked whether he would be there to receive the Holy Spirit with the community at Pentecost.

"I do not think so," he said, "but I will go to meet him."

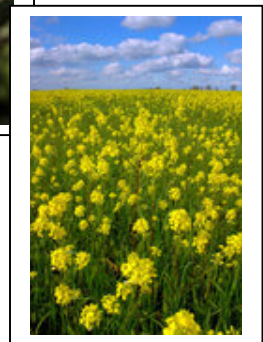


When they urged him to tell them what favours he would ask for the members of the Institute whom he had always held in such high esteem, he replied: "The Institute is a small body in the Church.



I shall tell the Holy Spirit to always be its source of life. It is a school.

I shall tell him he must always be its master. It is a small army which I am sending against its enemies. I shall tell the Spirit to always be at its head to lead it.



The Pentecost season which is now approaching is a time to be possessed by the Holy Spirit, so show them how the Holy Spirit must take possession of them and how they must take possession of the Holy Spirit." (A.D. 9 + 10)

NICOLAS BARRE

1621 October 21st. Birth of Nicolas Barre at Amiens, France.

1645 Ordained priest with the Order of Minims of St. Francis of Paola.

1686: May 31st. Dies in Paris.

1999: March 7th. Beatified in Rome.

Nicolas Barre was very concerned about those in his society who were "far from God" and very disadvantaged. He saw the need to make basic education more accessible to all. This gave rise to a new community whose members taught in "little schools" all over France. They were to offer human and spiritual support in a variety of ways depending on the needs of those they met. They were encouraged to go out to people in their surroundings; to find young women who had lost direction in their lives, and to look after people who were sick and abandoned.

Nicolas Barre led his followers in 'prayer of the heart' by contemplating the mystery of a God who out of love for humanity became 'even a little child'. This way of praying deepened their humility and their abandonment to the will of the Father in union with Christ.

The work of Nicolas Bane is carried on today by the international Institute of Infant Jesus Sisters and by lay women and men who continue to be inspired by his spirit.