

A pathway with Jesus in apostolic readiness



The Apostleship of Prayer

Document 1

Rome, January 16, 2014

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1 Introduction

The Apostleship of Prayer (AP), founded in 1844 in France and later entrusted by the Pope to the Society of Jesus, has come into the present day with an uneven vitality but with renewed hope. As the AP now follows the Church in *New Evangelization*, it seeks to speak afresh to a world that has undergone great cultural changes that have affected all aspects of human life. Our society is very different from the one that saw the birth of the AP. We are aware that to speak in a significant manner to today's men and women requires *new methods, new languages, and especially a new fervor*, as Blessed John Paul II would say.

The Apostleship of Prayer wishes to be part of this Church renewal. Very useful and popular in the past, its formulas, prayers, and practices should be adapted to the new generations. During the last four years, in the Rome office of this apostolate, we have guided a worldwide effort that we have called the "Re-creation of the AP". We want to tell you here about the results of this long participative process. We do so aware that our language will still be provisional and incomplete. As the world changes, we will need to keep changing with it in an ongoing re-creation. We have made an effort to pinpoint the spiritual axes present in the foundational insight Father F.X. Gautrelet received in 1844. We think the spiritual principles he expressed maintain their value and utility for present times, and we focus on them in our new formulation of the AP. These principles are: apostolic readiness, collaboration in the mission of Jesus, a personal and affective relationship with him symbolized by his Heart, service to the Church in a worldwide network of prayer, and service to justice.

What will the new AP look like? It will be a spiritual pathway inspired in the symbol of the heart – the human heart and the Heart of Jesus – that in unison wish to respond to the needs of today's people. Primarily it will have an ecclesial face, being a network of hearts that pray with the Pope for the mission of the Church all around the world. The new AP will be a worldwide prayer network, with a digital element (especially through its new international website, now under construction). The new AP will also have a youthful character, inasmuch as we better integrate the formation proposal of our youth section, the Eucharistic Youth Movement. And it will have a missionary function, as our programs should be made available to train and renew the spiritual life of the laity in parishes and diocesan organizations. But above all, the AP will look like Jesus – we will strive to create an AP that will help us put Christ at the center of our lives and live with him an intimate friendship. We will be apostles invited to collaborate with him, available to his mission of compassion on behalf of our brothers and sisters.

The following documents propose guidelines that you, together with your people, will have to confirm through practice. You will tell us whether we have been successful in listening to the voice of the Spirit and you will help us keep our ears open. In this way, we can continue to help our people unite their lives to Jesus and put themselves at the service of others.

We have in our hands the first of a series of four documents. Eventually there could be more. This “Document 1,” meant to be inspirational, sets the bases for the re-creation of the AP and is the most important of the series. It is addressed to all who want to know or deepen their understanding of what the AP is. Document 2 is the history of the AP revisited in the light of the present re-creation. Document 3 contains instructions to National Secretaries. The fourth document, still in preparation, will offer theological and pastoral foundations for the proposals contained in the previous documents. We expect to issue further documents that will present AP re-creation to specific audiences, like bishops, parish priests, Jesuit provincials, etc.

Good reading, good prayer, good apostolate!

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2 What is the Apostleship of Prayer (AP)?

«After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go». (Luke 10:1)

«Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks». (John 4:23)

The Apostleship of Prayer is, primarily, a way of making ourselves inwardly ready for Christ's mission. The source and model for this readiness is Jesus Christ given to us and for us, constantly making himself present to us in the Eucharist. Receiving his life leads us, in gratitude, to offer our own lives daily to the Father.

The Apostleship of Prayer is a spiritual way which the Church offers to all Christians to help them to be friends and apostles of the Risen Jesus in their daily lives. It leads them to a covenant of personal love, symbolized by his Heart.

The Apostleship of Prayer is a worldwide prayer network responding to the challenges that confront humanity and the Church's mission as expressed in the Pope's monthly intentions.

- **T**he AP invites us to live with an inner attitude of apostolic readiness that is the fruit of love. It must come from a personal and intimate relationship with the Crucified and Risen Lord where I find myself loved and I offer my availability as a loving response.
- **T**o help us be ever more available to the mission of the Risen Lord, even in small, everyday matters, the AP invites us to follow some spiritual practices and a school of formation we have called *A way of the heart* (see below). These practices open us to the Holy Spirit who works towards uniting our life and our heart to the life and heart of Jesus. They invite us to offer to the Father, together with Jesus, simply but radically, all that we are and possess.
- **T**he AP invites us to live a Eucharistic life. In the Eucharist we encounter Jesus giving out his life for us, supreme source and inspiration for our apostolic readiness. When we celebrate the Eucharistic memorial we unite ourselves in a privileged way to Jesus, for we celebrate the Father's initiative to join our history to his own history in order to heal us. The encounter with Jesus reconciles us, frees us from the bonds that constrain us, and makes us capable of offering our lives to the service of his mission.
- **T**he AP invites us to join a worldwide network in which millions pray with the Pope for the challenges he points out to us in his monthly prayer intentions. These prayer intentions open us to the urgent needs of the Church and humanity. They lead us to commit our lives in favor of the justice of the Kingdom, in resonance with the theme of the monthly intention. The AP invites us also to collaborate with all who work for greater brotherhood and justice, even those from other religious traditions. The AP as a Church service entrusted by the Holy Father to the Society of Jesus is commended to spread these intentions, even while it remains a school of prayer and intercession.
- **T**he AP serves all in the Church, in individual or group basis. It can organize its own groups in a Church Movement manner, depending on the local cultural and ecclesial needs. In other contexts, it supports current Church groups or individuals, without creating its own structure or taking the structure of a Movement. The AP invites Christians to live their baptismal vocation in greater depth, forming them as apostles of the Crucified and Risen Lord.
- **F**or those who want to go further in their relationship with the Lord and live in greater readiness to his will, the AP invites them to give their whole lives to the Heart of Jesus, establishing an *Alliance* with him (a consecration). Through this

Alliance with Jesus the person is accepting the intimate friendship the Lord offers him. He also declares his own desire to be ever more available to the service of his mission as his apostle.

3 Spiritual pathway of the AP

What is the spiritual content of the Apostleship of Prayer?

We answer this question in two sections:

- *In the first, we present a roadmap for our faith we call **A Way of the heart** that will inspire us to be ever more ready to serve Jesus.*
- *The second section explains the current meaning of our mission to support the Pope and the Church, committing ourselves daily with the monthly prayer intentions.*



The Apostleship of Prayer

A way of the heart

Rome, January 16, 2014

The spiritual content of the Apostleship of Prayer (AP) and its formation program is presented as *a school of the heart*. In nine steps this pathway leads us to identify with the mind, heart and projects of Jesus. The Scripture and other quotations in each paragraph tell of God's unlimited love for each one of us and for all humankind. In prayerful silence and in awe should they be received, for they speak of our history with Him. We are invited to live a personal love covenant with the Risen One, and to offer daily our readiness to collaborate with Him in his mission, as his apostles. We are put to the service of the Church and sent out to make God's compassionate love present in the world. These pages intend to give a unified vision of the AP and of its interior pathway, inviting us to be part of this worldwide prayer network.

1 In the beginning there was Love

- I have loved you with everlasting love... (Jeremiah 31:3)
- Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands... (Isaiah 49:15)

- This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son... (1John 4:10)
- God chose us in Christ before the world was made. (Ephesians 1:4)
- Nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:39)

The first and most enduring word in our life of faith is the Father's everlasting love. This is what he is continuously saying to us and what we fathom in all he does for us each day: I love you. It is his essence, "God is love" (1 John 4:8); he cannot not love us. LOVE is the way in which the Lord looks at us always, regardless of the course our life has taken--even if we have strayed away from him because of our sin. His love is unconditional and notwithstanding. It is the principle and the foundation of our spiritual way. Our life starts by his love, is sustained by it, and one day will be received by that love. To acknowledge his love gives us the chance to love him in return.

2 The human heart, restless and needy

- God, you are my God, I pine for you; my heart thirsts for you, as a land parched, dreary and waterless. (Psalm 63:1)
- Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord; Lord, hear my voice. (Psalm 130:1)
- Blessed are the poor in heart, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:3)
- *Where have you hidden, beloved, and left me moaning? ... (Saint John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle)*
- *You made us for yourself, oh Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you. (Saint Augustine, Confessions)*

We yearn for happiness and seek it in a multitude of ways. God gave us the capacity to love and to live generously. But many times we feel poor and lost, burdened with frustrations and deep desires, unable to solve our personal crisis and find inner peace. A pathway of faith, prayer and life for seekers, for those in spiritual need and for all who desire to receive Jesus Christ in their hearts is proposed here. It is the way of the humble, where our weakness of heart will not be a hindrance, but rather, our greatest asset, for the encounter with a God who leans toward the poor.

3 In a broken world

- God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. (Genesis 1:31)

- My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water. (Jeremiah 2:13)
- People will stagger from sea to sea, will wander from the north to the east, searching for the Lord's word, but will not find it. (Amos 8:12)
- Wake, Lord! Why are you asleep? Awake! Do not abandon us for good. Why do you turn your face away, forgetting that we are poor and harassed? (Psalm 44:23-24)
- He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him. (John 1:11)

We contemplate in admiration the beauty of our world and the great deeds accomplished by the human mind throughout history. But the world we share is wounded by painful contradictions that cause death and suffering. Life and love are often suffocated by violence and selfishness. The weak and vulnerable are crushed by the boots of the powerful. Natural resources are depleted. There is too much sadness and loneliness. However, in the cry for peace and justice, we hear the Father's voice calling us to return to him. We have walked away from the paths of the Lord and from his project for humanity.

4 The Father sends his Son to save

- See, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? (Isaiah 43:19)
- I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians... (Exodus 7:3-8)
- I myself taught Ephraim to walk, I myself took them by the arm... I was leading them with human ties, with leading-strings of love. (Hosea 11:3-4)
- God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. (2 Corinthians 5:19)
- The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness. (Romans 8:26)
- This is how God loved the world: he gave his only Son. (John 3:16)
- The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. (Luke 19:10)

The Father has not forsaken us in this broken world. He has spoken of his love many times and in various ways through the prophets, and now, in these final times he has spoken to us by his Son made man, Jesus, the Christ (cf. Hebrews 1:1). In Him, the Father has joined our history to his own history in order to restore creation and heal our wounded humanity. In Him, who gave his life for us and whom the Father rose from the dead, he has forgiven our sins. In Him, God's passionate love comes forth, determined to save us. With Him we learn to recognize the Spirit of God working in this world, bringing forth something new, even in the midst of suffering and difficulties.

5 He calls us his friends

- I have called you by your name, you are mine. Do not be afraid... since I regard you as precious, since you are honored and I love you. (Isaiah 43: 1 and 4)
- Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach. These he called apostles... (Mark 3:13-14)
- I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. (John 15:15)
- Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper... (John 21:20)
- And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age. (Matthew 28:20)
- Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. (Hebrews 7:25)
- *Whoever wishes to come with me has to be content with the same food I eat, and the drink, and the clothing which I wear, and so forth. So too each one must labor with me during the day, and keep watch in the night... (Saint Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises 93)*

Jesus Christ calls us his friends and invites us to a personal and intimate covenant of love with him. He is alive to intercede for us, actively drawing us to him. He sees us as a precious treasure of his heart. Friendship with him will make us see the world with his eyes, we will be one with his joys and sufferings, and we will offer ourselves to work with him for our brothers and sisters. He is always with us and shall be until the end of age.

6 Christ abides in us

- On that day you will realize that I am in my Father and you are in me and I in you. (John 14:20)
- ... And we will come to him and make our dwelling with him. (John 14:23)
- Remain in me, as I remain in you... As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. (John 15: 4 and 9)
- ...Yet it is no longer I, but Christ living in me. (Galatians 2:20)
- Do you not realize that you are a temple of God with the Spirit of God living in you? (1Corinthians 3:16-17)

- As for you, see that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. (1 John 2:24)
- ...and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith (Ephesians 3:17)
- We are reflecting the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into his image (2Corinthians 3:18)

Out of his unlimited love for us, God desires to inhabit our hearts. Jesus left this surprising promise to his disciples before his death. He wants to dwell in each one of us. Saint Paul gives witness to this by saying it is no longer he, but Christ living in him. This is the ultimate horizon towards which the Spirit leads us in our life of faith. He seeks to conform the Christian to Christ in body, soul and spirit. We long for this, and we ask for this with a humble heart, knowing we will never accomplish it through our own efforts. We believe this conformation with Christ is given to us in a privileged way through the Eucharist. Christ gives himself to us through his Body and his Blood, molding our hearts to his own Heart, so we can be and act as Him.

7 We offer our lives along with Him

- The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness. (Romans 8:26)
- This poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury. ... She, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood. (Mark 12:43-44)
- And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19)
- I am the Lord's servant, let it happen to me as you have said. (Luke 1:38)
- I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. (Romans 12:1)
- Here I am, I have come to do your will (Hebrews 10:9)
- *Take, O Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. You have given all to me, to you oh Lord I return it. All is yours, dispose of it wholly, according to your will. Give me your love and your grace, for this is sufficient for me. (Saint Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises 234)*

To come closer to Christ leads us to give our lives for others, as He did. We learn that in spite of our weakness and limitations, our life is useful to others. Knowing ourselves loved, chosen, and inhabited by Him dignifies us, fills us with gratitude, and enables us to respond to so much good received by offering our own life in apostolic readiness. We offer it moving against our selfishness and laziness that make vain God's work in us. He invites us to comply generously to his call, as did Mary of Nazareth. He does not want to save us or change the world without us. Even if I may consider my offering meaningless, it will be made useful to others because the Father joins it to the life and Heart of his Son, who laid down his life for us on the cross. We come closer to the world's suffering as we are put with Jesus, and we will

strive to respond as He did. We tell the Father our readiness to collaborate with his Son through a prayer of self offering. We are at the same time humbly praying to the Holy Spirit that we may cease to obstruct his work in us. Through the Eucharist we are inspired and nourished in a special way, for there we find the perfect offering of Christ to the Father and a model for our own life-offering.

8 A mission of compassion

- He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the brokenhearted (Isaiah 61:1)
- Never turn your face from the poor, and God will never turn his from you. (Tobit 4:7)
- Make your own the heart of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2:5)
- Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean." (Mark 1:41)
- The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. (Luke 4:18)
- *Contemplate how the Three Divine Persons were looking upon the whole extent and space of the earth, filled with human beings. (Saint Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises 102) [...] The first Point is, to see the various persons: and first those on the surface of the earth, in such variety, in dress as in actions: some white and others black; some in peace and others in war; some weeping and others laughing; some well, others ill; some being born and others dying, etc. (ibid. 106)*

God, the Father of Jesus and our Father, wishes to make his compassion present in the world in and through us, his disciples. We are invited to make our own the Father's loving gaze upon humanity and to act with the Heart of Jesus Christ. We are sent out to the margins of human life in different ways, together with his Son. We are sent to the places where men and women are suffering injustice, to help heal and support the brokenhearted. Even if we are physically constrained or limited by illness, and even if we feel incapable of changing the unjust structures of society, we participate of this mission making ours God's gaze of compassion towards our brothers and sisters. We can convey it to others, since we ourselves have been graced by God's compassion. We go beyond the boundaries of the Church, for the Spirit of Jesus is where compassion is. Through both prayer and concrete actions, we can join people from different cultures and religious traditions, people open to this Spirit, and work to relieve the suffering of those most in need.

9 A world-wide network of prayer and service attentive to the needs of humanity

- No peace for you, as you keep the Lord's attention! And give him no peace either ... until saving justice dawns like a bright light, and salvation like a blazing torch. (Isaiah 62:1.6-7)
- Then Abraham approached him and said: "Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked? What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? [...] The Lord said, "If I find fifty [or forty, or thirty, or twenty, or ten] righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake." (Genesis 18,22-33)
- All these devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, together with some women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. (Acts 1:14)
- You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:5)
- After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. (Lk 10:1)
- Peace be with you! As the Father sent me, so am I sending you. (John 20:21)

The Apostleship of Prayer is a worldwide prayer network to the service of the Pope's monthly prayer intentions. These intentions are seen as actual challenges for humanity and for the Church, as they express the Holy Father's concerns in today's world. We want them to orient our action and our prayer during that month.

This network is formed by those who make themselves available to collaborate in Christ's mission through the daily offering of their lives, in any place or situation they may be. The call to the mission is the fire that makes us apostles sent from the heart of the Father to the heart of the world.

Among those first invited to be part of this network are Catholics from different countries and cultures, and from diverse spiritual families. The AP puts the richness of its diversity at the service of Church unity. Others are also invited to be in this network in different ways: the challenges implied in the Pope's intentions open us to collaboration with other Christians and with all the other who work for greater love and justice in this world.

Challenges that confront humanity and the mission of the Church

Each month the Holy Father entrusts to the Apostleship of Prayer two prayer intentions that express his big concerns for humanity and for the Church. Together with committing ourselves to pray for them, the AP is responsible of spreading these intentions throughout the world to make more people accompany the Pope in his prayer. Praying together with him is the first symbol or expression of the AP's commitment with the mission of the universal Church.

In these intentions we can see the Holy Father's wise and authoritative view that calls our attention to worldwide issues that preoccupy him. It is truly a universal gaze, sensitive to the joys and sufferings of today's men and women, given his position as head of the entire Church. We consider them true challenges that confront our prayer and that should move our lives. They are in the first place challenges for our personal lives, as we are called to be consistent with what we pray for. They are at the same time invitations to approach during that month other people or institutions that work for the issue we pray for, be they Church institutions or not, establishing a partnership in favor of what concerns us both.

There are two types of prayer intentions: one is called *Universal* and the other *Evangelization* intention. The *Universal* intentions are on issues that can concern all people of good will, not only Catholics. They are for sure concerns of the universal Church, but they go beyond its boundaries. Basically they regard our desire for peace and justice in the world and the commitment of the Church with the situations described. The Pope himself invites us to pray and work for those issues, sending us out as a praying Church in an attitude of humble service and dialogue with the world. We are open to collaboration with people from other religions or that think different than us.

The *Evangelization* intentions, on the other hand, regard challenges for the life of the Church, showing the desire to make of her a better instrument for evangelization.

In this way, the mission of the Church is not something that will happen only in faraway countries. Everything in the Church is missionary. Both lists of prayer intentions are missionary, as their objective is that the baptized may better serve the mission of Christ in today's world, focusing on certain concrete challenges. To pray for them will open our perspective to world dimension, taking on the joys and hopes, pains and sufferings of our brothers and sisters.

In some countries, the bishops add a third prayer intention that will also be part of AP prayer service in that particular place.

4) Practical guide

a) How can I *personally* live the pathway of the Apostleship of Prayer?

“Therefore every teacher of the law who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.” (Mathew 13:52)

The spiritual practices of the AP have been of different sorts along its almost 170 years. Today, in “creative fidelity” to the original charisma of the AP, we have looked into the treasure box of our tradition and would like to propose some old and some new practices. Together with the roadmap we have called A way of the heart, these will help form our hearts for apostolic readiness. National teams and each person may adopt and adapt them according to each one’s situation and spiritual need.

1. **Three moments of the day:** My daily prayer has at least three specific moments.

To practice them, I will choose the form which inspires me most and helps me become more available to the Risen Lord. I can have in front of me an image of Jesus or a Crucifix. It can be in a special place in my house. I can recite a particular prayer. I can use digital means, etc.

- **With Jesus in the morning:** As I begin my day, I will look for a moment of silence to become aware of the presence of the Risen Lord. I ask the Father to make me available to the mission of his Son, offering him what I am and possess. This offering can be done in my own words or following a written prayer. I ask the Holy Spirit to open my heart to the needs and challenges that confront humanity and the mission of the Church, and I pray for them following the Pope’s intentions for this month.
- **With Jesus during the day:** In different moments along the day, on the road or on a stop, at home or at work, I make myself aware of being in the presence of the Lord and I renew my availability to “to labor with him in the day and watch in the night” (Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius, 93).
- **With Jesus at night:** At the end of the day, in a moment of silence, I ask the Holy Spirit to show me in which ways the Jesus has been with me during this day, and I thank him. I ask

myself in which ways have I been available to his mission, and I also thank him. I look at how I have been an obstacle to his work in me and I ask that in his mercy he may come and transform my heart. I ask him that I may live the next day close to him. Jesus gives me his blessing.

NOTE: In Document 3 addressed to the National Teams we provide detailed proposals for these three moments – Appendix 1.

2. I participate in the AP network keeping a link with the National Office (the AP headquarters in my country) or that of the nearest country. I will ask to receive its leaflets, magazines, news and other materials that will help me deepen my relationship with Jesus and keep me in contact with the worldwide network. I will participate if possible in its groups, its formation activities or in its internet social networks. A symbol of my union to this worldwide prayer network will be to pray daily for the Pope's intentions, and especially the **First Friday** of each month. This is a traditional day to remember the revelation of God's love on the cross and the love of his Sacred Heart for humanity. If possible, on this day I will participate in the Eucharist. I follow the instructions I will receive from the National Office for all this.

Summarizing, which are the distinctive practices of an Apostle of Prayer?

- Lives the three moments of daily prayer to join his or her life to the Risen Jesus and offer it in apostolic readiness.
- Commits his or her life in prayer and service in response to the challenges that face humanity and the mission of the Church, as pointed out in the Pope's monthly intentions.
- "A way of the heart" is his or her spiritual roadmap and school of formation.
- Participates in the local and worldwide AP network.

He or she lives all this sustained by the faith-practices basic to all Christians:

- *The Eucharist*, which leads to inner experience of the Heart of Jesus. It teaches us to live with Jesus and as Jesus, to the service of the mission. In each Eucharist we make present Jesus' life laid down for humanity, the ultimate model of offering and availability.
- *Love and devotion to Mary*, model of apostolic readiness, whose heart was full of Jesus and his projects.
- *Participation in a life-group*, joining others who follow the AP, when that is possible.

- *On-going formation* that will give content to communion with Jesus and will consent to growth as an apostle. It should include formation on issues directly related with his AP participation (the Heart of Jesus, prayer of intercession, history of the AP, etc.) and on other areas that nourish his faith as a Christian (such as Scriptures, theology, spiritual life, the sacraments, etc.).

NOTE: The spiritual content and the practices of the re-created AP will guide formation programs in our youth branch, the Eucharistic Youth Movement, duly adapting them to the age of the members.

For a greater commitment: *An Alliance with Jesus*

A person who in the AP feels moved to a closer union with the Heart of Jesus and to be more available to his mission, can opt to a special pledge we call *Alliance with Jesus* (in some places it can be called “consecration”). Though this *Alliance* is not mandatory to be an Apostle of Prayer, it is the horizon towards which *The way of the heart* and our spiritual practices lead. It is an option some may choose freely to give their personal, family or community lives the seal of a greater belonging to Jesus Christ. It will also signify a greater responsibility with the AP itself and participation in its mission. The *Alliance with Jesus* will be done following the guidelines the National Office issues for this, adapted to their own cultural context. It can be renewed on special days, for example on First Fridays, birthdays or on other important dates.

b) AP Group program

Members of AP groups are inspired by our *Way of the Heart* and strive to live the personal practices above indicated.

Each group should contact the National AP Office and receive from them orientations and formation material, in some cases through the AP website or through its social network pages. We suggest the groups:

- Share the document *A way of the heart*, helping each other adopt it as a program for their prayer and their daily life. They can use working material provided by the National Team.
- Participate in national or regional gatherings, retreats or formation meetings promoted by the National Office.
- Decide how they will take part in the worldwide prayer network, especially in the First Friday initiative, according to the possibilities suggested by the National Office.
- Meditate on the meaning of the two challenges the Pope poses to us each month (his prayer intentions). Together in the group we may be able to find a certain commitment to be lived during that month in a personal way or in community, in line with what we are praying for (one of the two intentions). To spread these intentions and to have people pray for them, community prayer in the parish can be organized (such as adoration, vigils, holy hours, rosaries, and processions) and also take concrete action, maybe with other people.
- Establish contact with some institution connected with the issue concerned in a specific papal intention during the year and program some common action (for example, if the Pope is praying for the sick, coordinate that month with the hospital ministry).
- Spread the Pope's intentions in your own parish community.
- Prepare and do the *Alliance with Jesus* for each member or for the whole community.
- Schedule training sessions to deepen AP life – material for this can be found in AP re-creation Document 4, from the international office.
- Take part in training sessions in other topics needed to nourish faith, such as the Bible, theology, sacraments and spiritual life. These can be organized by the AP group itself or rather you can take part in formation initiatives offered by the parish or a spiritual center.

AP prayers

Proposal for a new offering prayer

Father, here I am.

I know you are always with me.

I place my heart in the Heart of your Son
Jesus, who gives himself to us in the Eucharist
each day.

May your Holy Spirit strengthen me to live the
Gospel in everything I do and say.

For my part I give you this day--all my prayers,
works, joys, and sufferings--all I am and
possess.

With Mary, mother of the Church, I pray for
the mission of the Church, for all Apostles of
Prayer, and for the intentions of the Pope this
month. Amen.

Offering of self

Lord, I give you
My hands to do your work,
My eyes to see as you do,
My tongue to speak your words
My mind that you may think in me
My spirit that you may pray in me
Above all I give you my heart
That you may love through me your Father
and all mankind
I give you my whole self,
That you may grow in me
So that it is you, Lord Jesus
Who lives and works and prays for me.

(Lancelot Andrew)

Prayer for the re-creation of the AP

Father, Lord of heaven and earth,
about 170 years ago
you started a fire
in the hearts of men and women
that has spread all over the world.

They burned to tell your Good News,
to spread your gospel of love to all
humanity.

Touching their hearts to the Heart of your
Son,
you made them Apostles through Prayer.

You put them to serve
the mission of your Church
in the heart of the world.

Today we men and women
of the Apostleship of Prayer
are still on fire with your love.
We still long to respond to the thirst
of our brothers and sisters throughout the
world.

Take, Lord, and receive our lives.
make us docile to your Spirit.
May the worldwide mission
you have entrusted to us
be today as yesterday
a global network of prayer
deep into the heart of humanity.