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Preface by Fr Joseph Lécuyer, C.S.Sp.

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PREFACE

Claude Francis Poullart des Places left very few writings. Apart from the *Regulations* he drew up for the community of 'poor scholars', they consist of personal notes never intended for wide circulation, and even less for publication. Nevertheless these writings throw light on the spiritual character of the founder of the Seminary and Congregation of the Holy Ghost and, for that reason, they deserve to be known. They were published for the first time in 1959 by Fr Henry Koren, C.S.Sp., as part of the Spiritan Series, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pa. In that edition the French text, transcribed from the manuscripts preserved in Paris, was printed side by side with an English translation, almost entirely the work of Fr Walter van de Putte, C.S.Sp. We can never be too grateful for this publication by Father Koren, to whom we also owe a history of the Holy Ghost Congregation, *The Spiritans*, Pittsburgh, 1958. A new and entirely revised edition, *To the Ends of the Earth*, has just been published in the U.S.A., of which a French translation, *Les Spiritains*, was published by Beauchesne, Paris 1982.

For many reasons which would not be worth enumerating the writings of Father Poullart des Places are still very little known. As 1979 was the tercentenary of his birth it seemed fitting to prepare a new but more modest edition comprising the texts themselves, revised from the manuscripts, together with short introductions and indispensable notes. It is worth while adding that this publication should not deter our readers from consulting the works of Henri Le Floch, Henry J. Koren and Joseph Michel mentioned in the bibliography. On the contrary the value of the writings of Claude des Places can only be fully understood when they are situated in their historical context so well described in these works.

The text has been carefully revised in relation to the manuscripts preserved in the archives of the Holy Ghost Congregation, 30 rue Lhomond, Paris 75005. On a number of points it

differs from the one published by Father Koren. As in the earlier edition we have used up-to-date spelling so as to make it easier for the modern reader. However it was felt necessary to retain the paragraphs as they appear in the original manuscripts without adding the subdivisions used in the previous edition. Moreover we are not publishing in their entirety the *General and Particular Regulations* composed by Father Poulart des Places for the community of 'poor scholars'. Although these are interesting for the historian, and in particular for the historian of early 18th-century seminaries, they are not so important for the understanding of the author's spiritual character. We give only a few rules which illustrate the spirit of the work and of its author.

Joseph Lécuyer, C.S.Sp.
Rome, 26th February 1983