

## BEGGING AS AN INSTITUTION -- THE PROFESSIONAL BEGGAR

### The Case of Juan Jiménez Aguilar

Juan Jiménez Aguilar; single; 26 years old; legitimate son of Juan Jiménez and Rosa Aguilar, both dead; born in Mexico City; lives at Consulado avenue 18.

This man is of medium height; has straight, thin hair, mustache, and beard. His eyes are large, quick, and alert. He is obviously intelligent, reasons thoroughly, expresses himself clearly, and understands quickly. On occasions, he is inclined to violent emotional outbursts. The most important fact about Jiménez is that he is an heroin addict and has been since he was 8 years old. He says that his body demands the drug and that when he does not take it he feels as if he were going to die.

Juan lives by begging, by what he earns by selling drugs, the interest on the money he lends, and the rent of the rooms he has built on his land in Consulado avenue.

Juan says his family was made up of his parents, himself -- the firstborn -- and six younger brothers and sisters. They lived in Puebla for a while about 1908 and then returned to live in Mexico City in Incas alley 10. There they stayed until Juan was 11, when he abandoned his home. Juan's father worked in Mexico City for the Ministry of Education as janitor in the Pedro Vallejo school, earning 3 pesos a day. Juan says that his parents got along very well except for occasional quarrels when his father would come home drunk.

Juan has an aunt, María Aguilar, who is at present in jail for selling illicit drugs. In 1926 she was put in Belen

prison for having been implicated in a robbery.

Of his childhood, Juan remembers little. He started to school at the age of 7 and went through four grades. He wanted to learn a trade or study for a profession, but when his parents would not encourage him in his ambition he ran away from home and school to become an apprentice in a tailorshop in San Lorenzo street. (Recently, Juan says he saw an old school friend, Manuel Pallares, but he hid from him because he did not want his friend to see him in his present condition. Pallares is now a mechanical engineer.)

Juan worked hard as an apprentice and soon began to receive 50 centavos a day wages. Later on, after he had learned his trade, he earned 4 and 5 pesos a day. Sometimes, he says, he grew tired of this work, but liked to earn the money.

He has never been married ~~but~~ has had several mistresses according to him, he has had sexual relations with women since he was 11 years old. He now lives with a woman named Guadalupe in Avenida Consulado 18. The house is her property. At present she is in jail for selling drugs. Another of his mistresses, Socorro, is a beggar. She is usually to be found practicing her "profession" on República de Salvador street, between 16 de Septiembre avenue and Uruguay, or on Isabel la Católica street. He has still another mistress named María, but this one he dresses well and sometimes he has paid hotel expenses of 4 pesos a day for her.

All his mistresses have been in jail at one time or another for dealing in drugs. Once they were all arrested in Juan's house in Consulado avenue. Juan, too, has been several times in Belen prison, the first time in 1923 for a robbery which he says

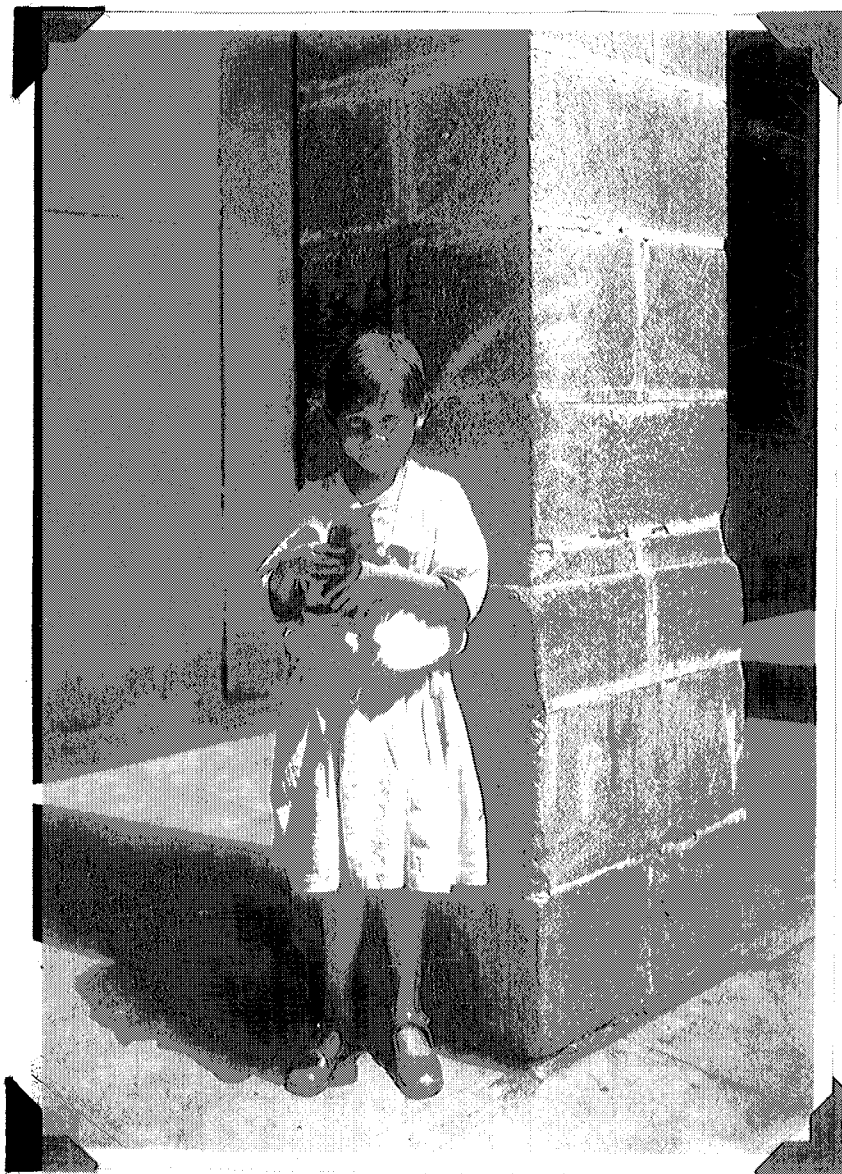
not he but an employee of the tailorshop committed. According to him, it was on this occasion (?) that he acquired the drug habit. When he went to jail his only feeling was of fear; and when he left he felt himself an outcast and decided not to go back to work but to beg. His subsequent arrests have been either for begging or for selling drugs.

Some of the people interviewed swear that Juan regularly sells drugs on the streets, but that, due to his intelligence, the police have been unable to prove this. Others say that he is a money lender, charging five to ten percent interest monthly and lending as much as 200 pesos at a time. He himself admits that he cannot live without heroin and that he uses 1-1/2 grams, worth 9 pesos, daily. Sometimes he has had to pay as much as 16 pesos a gram.

Unlike some beggars, Juan has plenty to eat. In the morning he has two eggs, bread, and milk; with his dinner, he always drinks two or three bottles of beer.

Juan's manner of begging is very effective. He manages to put on an expression of anguish, pain, and misery, and has trained himself so that he can make tears stream from his eyes at will. His legs are withered (probably a result of his drug-taking) and one knee is inflamed. He sits so as to show off these defects and throws his head back, showing from time to time the whites of his eyes. He claps his hands and says: "Lady, today is the day of the poor; an alms; succour me!" or "Lady, today's the 15; don't forget the unhappy poor!" If they give him nothing, he dares to catch hold of the skirts of women passing by.

In the morning, Juan is usually to be found in one of the markets, San Juan, Lagunilla, Peralvillo, or Merced; in the



GUADALUPE CASAS GONZALEZ

afternoon, in Tacuba, la Palma, 5 de Mayo, or San Francisco streets; in the evening, in front of the theatres or places of recreation. On Sunday and other important religious holidays, he generally goes to the Villa de Guadalupe.

#### The Case of Guadalupe Casas González

Guadalupe Casas González, 8 years old, born in Mexico City, lives on an empty lot adjacent to the wire factory of Otto Schmidt on Chapultepec avenue, 485.

This child is the illegitimate daughter of Leandra González and Enrique Casas. Since she was a very small child, Guadalupe has lived in an environment of vice and vagrancy. Her father was at one time a soldier, but now he collects rags and paper from the garbage cans and scrap heaps. Guadalupe begs on the streets with her mother, who pretends to be blind. When her mother is drunk, which is most of the time, she treats Guadalupe very badly. The father, too, is an alcoholic. The child says she doesn't like to beg and pick rags and paper; she would like to go to school and learn music. She has never gone to school and is illiterate. The parents have never bothered about her education. She has had few friends, mostly the daughters of rag-pickers, and her games consist in making dresses for her doll and playing at keeping a store or house. She has never gone to the theatre, the moving pictures, or any other place of amusement. The only times she has been out of the city were when the family went on pilgrimages to Our Lord of Chalma. On this trip (which is made on foot and takes three days) her mother carries salt, chile seeds, and cheap toys with her to exchange in Chalma for food.

The parents have been in the police stations, Belen prison, and the Penitentiary on various occasions for drunkenness, fighting, and assault. They get drunk on pulque and cheap brandy. When they go about the city begging, the child says they eat the leftovers given them from the houses and the fruit they find in the garbage cans; the money they get is spent for brandy.

The mother of the child has lived with various men and when the data for this case were being verified it was found that she has abandoned Guadalupe's father and now lives with a blind beggar named Lorenzo Cruz. Guadalupe's mother tried to take the child from the Juvenile Court in order that she might continue to exploit her by making her lead the blind beggar about.

The living quarters of the family consist of a rude hut put up on an empty lot and made of mud and tin cans. The "house" is less than two meters high, a meter and a half long, and a meter wide. There is no floor and the whole family sleeps on the bare ground.

At present, the child is under the care of the Juvenile Court and is in perfect health. She is learning to read and write and to do manual work. Her physical appearance has changed remarkably in the last few months and although at times she resumes the timid, pitiful expression which her mother taught her in order to attract attention on the streets, the rapidity of both her mental and physical improvement shows that if she is properly taken care of she will become a woman useful to society.

The few data that could be obtained reveal the parents and the environment the child has lived in as not only inadequate but positively harmful. The aspect of the parents is sickly. The

mother suffers from conjunctivitis and both show unmistakable signs of habitual alcoholism.

In the succeeding sections of this study, an attempt will be made to show that from the point of view of causal or determining factors begging is a very complicated type of phenomenon and that any attempt to explain the "why" of beggars must take into account such matters as poverty, sickness, unemployment, mental disorders, alcoholism, etc., etc. For the moment, however, it is desired to draw attention to the simple and fundamental fact that begging not only exists in Mexico but exists in a special form to which social scientists give the name institution.

The particular pattern of behavior here under consideration may be called an institution much in the same sense that the family or war are so designated. That is to say, the procedure of a person making a living by petitioning people in public places for money, food, clothing, etc. has achieved in Mexico a definite structure of generally accepted and recognized relationships involving a philosophy and a set of conscious social attitudes. Like other institutions, such as religion and marriage, begging is not only rooted deep in the customs and mores of the people, but it has attained the status of overt recognition and support in the written law of the country, in that the penal code makes definite provision for the licensing of beggars (see below p. 144).

The significance and importance of the fact that begging is institutionalized in Mexico cannot be overestimated for it is this fact which explains in large measure the *raison d'être* of one very important type of beggar -- the "professional."

In other words, to refer specifically to the two cases presented in the introduction to this section, the reason why it is possible for Jiménez Aguilar to cloak his selling of illicit drugs by begging, or why the mother of Guadalupe Casas can exploit the child by appealing to the sympathies of the people, is simply that begging is a recognized and a tacitly approved pattern of behavior. The professional beggar uses the institutional pattern of mendicancy for his own ends and to his own profit. As long as such an institution exists, no matter what "legitimate" purposes it may fulfill for those who are unable to gain their living in any other fashion, it will also be made to serve the illegitimate purposes of the lazy, the vicious, and the criminal.

## Historical Roots of the Institution of Begging in Mexico

Begging as a recognized and accepted method of making a living has apparently existed in Mexico at least since before the Conquest. Both Clavigero and Sahugún relate that when the Spaniards arrived in Mexico the Aztecs already had rather comprehensive laws relating to poverty and public charity (1). According to these laws, "necessitous parents were allowed to dispose of any one of their children in order to relieve their poverty, and any free man might sell himself /into slavery/ for the same purpose." The laws also charged the people with assisting "the poor, the sick, and the beggars wandering about the cities." Similar laws, according to Garcilaso de la Vega, were found at the time of the Conquest in Perú (2).

The general disorganization in the life of the people introduced by the Conquest undoubtedly led to an increase in the amount of poverty and apparently contributed large numbers to the ranks of the vagrants and beggars. As will be noted in a later section (see p. 101 ff), in the earliest days of the Colonial regime there developed a crying need for asylums for the poor and indigent -- a need which was met in part at least by the foundation of various charitable institutions by the Church. The first asylum specifically destined for old people, vagrants, and beggars was established by the Chanter of the Cathedral of Mexico, Dr. Ferdinand Ortíz Cortés in 1774. Previous to the founding of this asylum, several laws and decrees had been handed down prohibiting beggars to station themselves at the entrance of the churches or in other public places (see below p. 136 ff.). All of these laws, however,

soon became dead letters and the people continued "being exploited by subjects who were more lazy and vicious than needful and who found in begging the means of maintaining themselves in the easy life of vagrancy and idleness." (3)

In the last part of the Colonial regime, in the years just before Mexico gained her independence from Spain, the institution of begging not only existed but, if we may take as authority Mexico's greatest picaresque novelist, José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi, apparently had developed into a highly organized business. In his classic work, El Periquillo Sarniento, published in 1816, el Pensador Mexicano relates the following adventures of his hero Perico, who, fallen upon hard days, was forced to join the great fraternity of those who live by their wits.

"At 8 o'clock at night we arrived at the place, a little room in the disreputable, dirty, and stinking house of atole venders. In it there were only a little clay brazier, four or five straw mats rolled up and leaned against the wall, a wooden seat or bench, a picture of I don't know what saint with a split-wood shelf on one of the walls, two or three pots of urine, a little shoemaker's bench, many crutches in the corner, some baskets and a number of jars in another, a table of plasters, oils, and salves, and other odds and ends.

"As soon as I looked at the place and the miserable furnishings, I began to doubt the advisability of the plan which the ragged one had just suggested, and he, guessing my doubt by the wry expression on my face, said:

"Señor Perico, I know what I sell. These living quarters aren't so bad and these straw mats and furniture you see

aren't so worthless and useless as they seem to you. All this helps the plan, because....'

"Meanwhile, some eight or nine tramps, all of them broken-down, dirty, plaster-patched, abandoned-of-the-devil fellows, were arriving singly and in couples. To my surprise, as soon as they entered the room some began stacking their crutches in a corner and walking about without the slightest difficulty; others stripped away the plasters they wore and showed clean, healthy skin; some took off heavy, thick beards and grey wigs which made them appear as old men; still others stretched or straightened up when they entered. All of them left their sicknesses and afflictions in the doorway of the little room... Then, full of the most natural admiration, I said to my unlucky friend:

"'What's this? Are you some saint whose presence works the miracles I see? Here they come all lame, blind, without hands and arms, paralysed, leprous, decrepit, and crippled, all of them; and scarcely do they step inside this disgusting room when they are not only restored to their old health but even rejuvenated. These are marvels which I haven't heard attributed even to saints most prolific in miracles.'

"The ragged fellow laughed with such joy that the ends of his open mouth kissed the tips of his ears. His comrades followed suit, and when they had rested a bit, the fellow said to me:

"'Friend, neither I nor my comrades are saints, nor have we had anything to do with anyone who might be, and you may believe that without my swearing to it. These miracles which you marvel are not done by us but by the faithful Christians whose

charity we rely upon when we make ourselves sick in the morning and make ourselves well of all our troubles at night. You see, if the faithful weren't so pious, we would neither mutilate ourselves nor cure ourselves with such ease.

".....We are neither blind nor lame, nor stooped as we appear in the streets. We are poor beggars who, spouting stories, multiplying prayers, crying our misery, and persisting, and insisting to everyone, in the end get our handout. We eat, we drink (and not water, either), we enjoy ourselves, and some of us keep our women, like Anita.' (This Anita, the mistress of the chief beggar who was talking to me, was the chubby, ragged, and not very ugly woman who had just entered with a child in her arms.) 'The thing is," he went on saying, 'to pretend to be blind, crippled, limping, leprous, and miserable somehow or other; to cry, to beg, to supplicate, tell tales, talk blasphemy and confusion in the streets, and accost whoever turns up in any manner whatsoever so as to get a bit in the end, as we do. There, now, you have all the miracle there is about the trade and the grand plan I suggested to you so that you won't die of hunger. To do this, one cannot be a fool, for the fool is good for nothing, neither for good nor for evil. If you know how to take advantage of my advice, you'll eat, drink, and do what you want to, according to your ability, for the pay will be according to your work; but if you are a coward, ashamed, or a fool, you'll have nothing. These men you see owe their advancement to me; but they know how to hustle. You'll see.....

"Understand? I'm the one who told each one of these poor fellows how to go about getting a living, and not one of them

repents following my counsel. I content myself with what little they want to give me to live on, for I'm along in years and want to rest; I've worked a lot in my career. If you wish to follow the profession, tell me what's your vocation so that I can prepare you for it. If you want to be crippled, we'll give you crutches; if legless or paralysed, we'll give you a leather pad to sit on and drag yourself about on; if full of sores, plasters, and oily rags; if a decrepit old man, your beard and wig; if an idiot, you'll know yourself what's necessary -- in a word, for whatever you want to be, the necessary equipment will be found, baskets, jugs, staff, canes, or anything needed. You must understand that if you're to live with us, you must not be stupid about begging, nor quick to give up at the first refusal you meet with. You must remember that men do not always give alms for God's sake; that many times they give for their own sake or for the Devil's. They give for their own sake when they give in order to get rid of a man who pursues them for two blocks without fearing excuses or canes; and they give for the Devil's sake, especially before women, when they wish to be considered good or generous. I have grown old in this way of life, and I know by experience that there are men who never give a half-cent to a poor fellow unless they are with the girls they want to please, either because they wish the women to think them liberal or because they want to get out of sight those untimely witnesses, who in their persistence put obstacles in the way of their gallantry, or interrupt their seductive conversations. This I tell you so that you won't give up at the first "Excuse me, for the love of God" they say to you but go on and stick to anyone you know has money and not leave him until he

loosens up with your pittance. Learn to be importunate, for in that way you'll achieve your purpose. Go after those who are with women in preference to those who are alone. Don't beg of soldiers, monks, students, or badly dressed people, for all these profess holy poverty although not all of them have taken the vows. And, finally, don't fail to profit by your comrades' examples; they'll show you what to do and teach you the formula to be observed in begging from each person according to his class.....

"Now then, friend," he went on, "it's absolutely necessary that you know some hard-luck stories, because a blind man without stories is a title to property without rent, a poor man without hope, a body without soul. You must learn, for example, the "Prayer of the Just Judge", the "Parting of Body and Soul", and some samples of the stories false and true blindmen abound in, such as the ones you'll hear your comrades tell so that you may choose those you wish them to teach you.

"Also, you must know the order of begging, according to the time of year and day of the week. Thus on Monday you'll beg for the love of Divine Providence, St. Gaetan, and the souls in Purgatory; on Tuesday, for the love of St. Anthony of Padua; on Wednesday, Precious Blood; Thursday, for the Most Holy Sacrament; Friday, for the Sorrows of the Most Holy Mary; Saturday, the Purity of the Virgin; and on Sunday for the whole Heavenly Court.

"You mustn't forget to beg in the name of the saints who have the most devotees, especially on their saint's day. Thus you must study the almanac to know when St. John Nepomuceno, St. Joseph, St. Louis Gonzaga, St. Gertrude, etc. have their day, just as you must remember to beg according to the season, and beg

during Holy Week for the Passion of the Lord; on All Souls' for the blessed souls; in December for Our Lady of Guadalupe... These may seem frivolous things, but they aren't; they're the indispensable knowledge of the trade; with these prayers at the proper time the charity and piety of the Christians is stimulated and they loosen up with the pennies.'"

Thus initiated into the fraternity of beggars, Perico proved an apt pupil, for in concluding the story of this part of his life he adds:

".....At first it was difficult for me to beg, but little by little I gained courage and came to be so good a beggar that within fifteen days I was already eating and drinking my fill and at night I would bring back six or seven reales to the lodging house.

"For some time I lived at the expenses of and on the charity of my beloved, faithful brothers and comrades. In the daytime, I did my stint well enough, but better at night, for then I hadn't a touch of shame and pestered everybody with my cries, with such sorrowful prayers, that few escaped without paying me tribute of their pennies." (4)

After Mexico achieved her independence from Spain in 1821, although laws continued to be passed in an effort to control vagrancy and begging, they met with little success for one continues to find in almost every book written on the period after Independence some mention of the plague of beggars infesting the streets. For example, we may select the following paragraphs from the letters of Madame Calderón de la Barca written about 1840:

"Whilst I am writing a horrible lépero with great leary eyes is looking at me through the window and performing the most extraordinary series of groans, displaying at the same time a hand with two long fingers, probably the other three tied in, 'Señorita! Señorita! For the love of the most Holy Virgin! For the sake of the most pure blood of Christ! By the Miraculous Conception!'. . . . That is the worst of a house on the ground floor. . . . There come more of them! A paralytic woman mounted on the back of a man with a long beard. A sturdy-looking individual who looks as if, were it not for the iron bars, he would resort to more effective measures, is holding up a deformed foot which I verily believe is merely fastened back in some extraordinary way. What groans! what rags! what a chorus of whining! This concourse is probably owing to our having sent them some money yesterday. . . .

"The church was crowded with people of the village but especially with léperos counting their beads and suddenly in the midst of an 'Ave María Purísima' flinging themselves and their rags in our path with a 'Por el amor de la Santísima Virgen!' and if this does not serve their purpose they appeal to your domestic sympathies. From men they entreat relief "By the life of the señorita!" From women 'By the life of the little child!' From children it is 'By the life of your mother!' And a mixture of piety and superstitious feeling makes most people, women at least, draw out their purses." (5)

For references to begging in more recent time, one could quote from the newspapers of almost any day. In view of the statistical data presented in the first part of this study, however,



SAN JUAN DE DIOS CHURCH  
Avenida Hidalgo

such quotation will not be necessary. The point is clear: the institution of begging existed in Mexico before the Conquest; it became entrenched during the Colonial period; it grew and flourished in the first years of Independence; and it has continued to exist with undiminished vigor down to the present day.

#### The Relation of the Catholic Church to the Institution of Begging

For any reader of this study, it should be clear that the causes or reasons for the presence of beggars as a characteristic part of the social scene in Mexico are multiple and complicated. Begging is not a simple form of behavior which can be explained by referring it to a single agent. As has already been stated, sickness, poverty, family disorganization, unemployment, and old age are among the many significant factors operating to create beggars and to sustain begging as a recognized procedure for making a living.

There is, however, one other important factor which has not been mentioned and which it is appropriate to consider at this point in connection with the discussion of begging as an institution in Mexico -- namely, the Catholic Church.

It would obviously be both inaccurate and unjust to charge the Church with responsibility for the existence of the institution of begging in Mexico. As has just been pointed out, the causes of begging are multiple; beggars were found in Mexico before the coming of the Church and they are to be encountered in other lands where the Church has played only a minor role in the life of the people. However, it may be said with both justice and accuracy that the attitudes created in the minds of the people by the doctrines and teachings of the Church on the subject of charity

have contributed in a most significant fashion to making it easier for the institution of begging to continue to exist in Mexico.

The Church teaches as a cardinal principle that one of the best ways to gain favor in the eyes of God and to insure the happy repose of one's immortal soul is to give to the poor and indigent.

In the Old Testament we are told "For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land." (Deuteronomy XV, xi) And again "He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor." (Proverbs XXII, ix) Among the Hebrews of Old Testament times, the giving of money and food to the poor was commanded by sacred fiat. The Mosaic laws definitely specify certain occasions on which beggars have a right to alms and for the rich who refuse to give on these days punishments are provided.

In the New Testament, St. Matthew writes: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the

least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was a hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not."

The doctrines enunciated by St. Matthew have been incorporated into the official Catechism of Christian Doctrine of the Catholic Church, which every loyal member of the Church is required to know by heart. Thus, under the heading of works of charity we find the following list of corporal works which the faithful are admonished to perform:

"First, to visit the sick.  
Second, to give food to the hungry.  
Third, to give drink to the thirsty.  
Fourth, to clothe the naked.  
Fifth, to shelter the homeless.  
Sixth, to visit those in prison.  
Seventh, to bury the dead." (6)

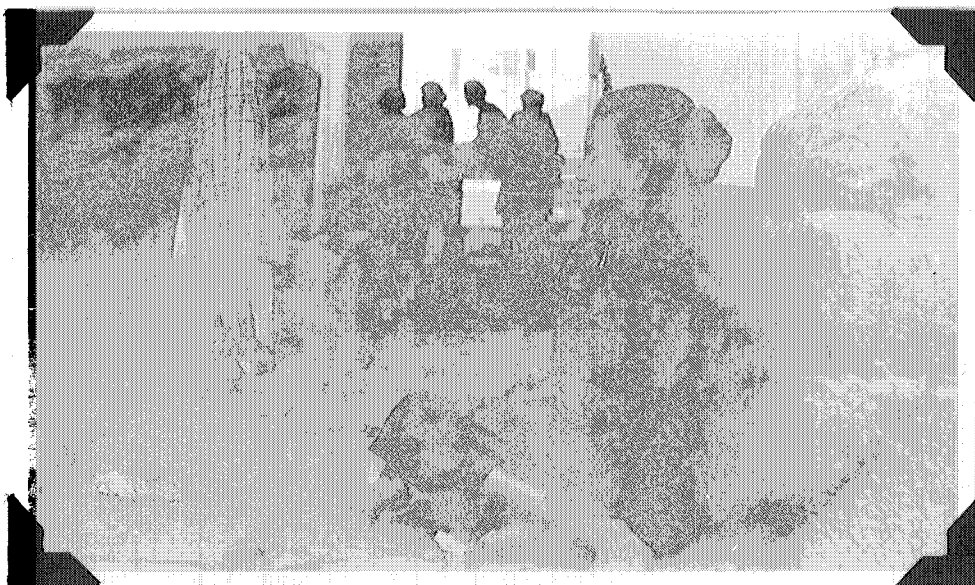
The admonitions of the Bible to give to the poor have been reaffirmed and amplified by the saints and the holy men of the Church. Thus, for example, St. Augustine wrote that "the giving of alms causes God to forget one's sins"; St. Cyprian established an arithmetical relation between the number of alms given and the number of sins pardoned; St. Leon the Elder stated that sustenance given to beggars is the key which opens the gates of Heaven; and St. Chrysostom held that salvation is bought with alms which are given to the poor. (7)

One of the most important ways in which the Church has put its stamp of approval upon begging as a meritorious form of

behavior both from the point of view of the one who gives and of the one who receives (albeit "It is more blessed to give than to receive") has been in the establishment of the so-called mendicant orders. The religious fraternities of this type have existed since the beginning of the thirteenth century. They are distinguished from other religious orders in that, as the name suggests, they are sustained by begging and the members do not live in retirement from the world. For the conception of this type of religious life, St. Francis is chiefly responsible. There are at least a dozen societies of the mendicant type -- the Barefoot Carmelites, the Capuchin Fathers, the Conventuals, the St. Augustine Hermits, the Lateran Prebendaries, etc., etc. In Mexico, the most important of the mendicant orders was that of the Franciscans. One Franciscan father (Pedro Melgarejo de Urrea) was present at the siege of Tenochtitlán. All of the mendicant orders were authorized to undertake religious work in America in May 1522, but the Franciscans were the first to arrive in New Spain under the Papal permission. The most famous of the Franciscan fathers in the early days was Father Toribio de Benavente, better known by the name of Motolinía. (8) Seventy-five years after the Conquest, the Franciscans had some 166 monasteries already established in Mexico. (9)

The clear indication in the foregoing paragraphs is that the Church has not only charged its loyal members with giving to the poor but has gone further and recognized specifically poor beggars as an especially deserving class worthy of the attention of the faithful. The question arises, then: Is the Church to be criticised for attempting to strengthen the charitable impulses of mankind? The answer obviously is no. The point under discussion, here, however, is not the question of the desirability or undesir-

ability of charity in general, for, concerning this, the world in which we live being what it is, there can be no argument. Rather, the question is: Has the Church in Mexico contributed to the maintenance of that type of uncritical, unorganized, and uncontrolled charity typified by the indiscriminate giving of money to beggars in the public streets? To this question, in the opinion of the writer, the answer must be in the affirmative. For, although the Church itself, by its actions in establishing numerous institutions of public charity, has tried to introduce a measure of organization and control into efforts to help the poor and the unfortunate, nevertheless, the net result of the teachings as these have been interpreted by the majority of the faithful has been to support just the type of uncritical and uncontrolled charity which modern investigation has proved to be most unwise and most harmful both to the recipient and to the giver. That this statement of the matter is true for Mexico, at least so far as giving to beggars is concerned, can be amply demonstrated by the simple method of showing the distribution and places of concentration of beggars. The reader is respectfully referred to map II given in the appendix to this monograph. It is believed that a careful study of this map will throw more light on the point here under discussion than any amount of further comment on the part of the present writer.



MARIA FELIX FLORES