

# Le Vulnérable du Christ (The Vulnerary of Christ): La Mystérieuse Emblématique des Plaies du Corps et du Coeur de Jésus-Christ (The Mysterious Symbolism of the Wounds of the Body and Heart of Jesus Christ)



*By Louis Charbonneau-Lassay*

*Preface by Gauthier Pierozak*

*Foreword by PierLuigi Zoccatelli*

*359 Woodcuts, and 32 Plates, 544 pages*

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*Reviewed by Nigel Jackson*

**A**n informed appreciation of the unfolding of René Guénon's metaphysical exposition cannot fail to note the deep importance of the period of his association with certain Catholic journals during the 1920s. It was at the invitation and encouragement of Louis Charbonneau-Lassay that Guénon made many valuable contributions to the periodical *Regnabit*, particularly upon the topics of symbolism of the Holy Grail and of the Sacred Heart. Charbonneau-Lassay, in addition to his work for *Regnabit* and *Le Rayonnement Intellectuel* also authored his comprehensive text upon medieval Christian emblems, *Le Bestiaire du Christ* ('The Bestiary of Christ'), which continues to be revered as one of the rare masterly treatises upon the sacred science of symbolism in Western Christendom.

Long-awaited, this magnificent volume represents the fruition (along with other works which I understand are in preparation by the custodians of his archives) of Charbonneau Lassay's life-work:

a comprehensive explication of the symbolic quest of Christian esoterism in the Catholic Middle Ages. A *Vulnerary* is a treatise upon the mystical Wounds of Christ, emblemized in the Signaculum-jewel of the *Estoile Internelle*, emblazoned upon the cover, a seal whose five carbuncles represent the droplets of the Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

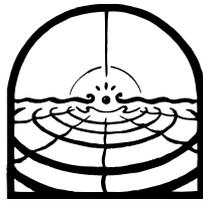
We are indebted to the incredible and exacting editorial work of Gauthier Pierozak who has produced an immaculate and elegant book which constitutes an encyclopaedic resource for students of mediaeval Christian esoterism, sacred art and symbolic sciences. The pages are adorned with a multitude of Charbonneau Lassay's deft and crisp woodcuts illustrating motifs and images of the Sacred Heart and divers emblemata of occidental Christendom. The *Vulnerary* is a beautiful and enriching work of enduring value which, like the celebrated *Bestiaire du Christ*, one returns to again and again for the profound knowledge and inspiration that only the power of the symbol can transmit.

The text and illustrations of the *Vulneraire* introduced me to some specific symbolisms which I had not previously appreciated or known: such as the astonishing imagery of the 'Pressoir Mystique' with its symbolic Wine-Blood equivalence and Sacred Heart theme. The symbolic device called the 'Signaculum Domini' representing the five droplets of the Precious Blood is another motif which pervades the sacred and ecclesial art of the Middle Ages.

Charbonneau Lassay had a magisterial grasp of the true nature of the ancient science of symbolism, rooted in St Dionysius the Areopagite's mystical theology, and his work goes a long way to addressing the 'crisis of the imagination' that has impoverished 'modern Christianity'. His work restores the living legacy of the Christian symbolists and hermetic schools, guilds, 'confréries' of old Europe, and the immense treasures of Western Christendom. The *Vulneraire* is a truly precious work and a resource that will be treasured by artists and students of these recondite sciences of Tradition. Many remarkable photographs, plates and biographical data regarding Charbonneau Lassay himself also add to the extraordinary interest and value of this substantial tome.

One is grateful indeed for the appearance of this incredible resource and one awaits with greatest anticipation the rumoured treasures of the *Floratre* and *Lapidaire du Christ* which Charbonneau-Lassay had prepared prior to his death.

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