LEAGUE OF THE SACRED HEART.

General Intention for May.

DEVOTION TO THE MOTHER OF GOI

AND OF CHRISTIANS.

Messenger of the Sacred Heart. Every year with the coming of May all are busy with the thought of how to honor during her month in a special manner their Queen in heaven, and how increase in their hearts their de-This year the votion towards her. General Intention of the month will add a new zest to the endeavors of Associates, and they will with more confidence approach their task of love, knowing that throughout the whole Christian world all their fellow-mem bers of the League are, every morn ing, offering their prayers for their suc-

"Second alone to the worship we owe to our Saviour," said Mgr. Bishop of Poitiers, "is our veneration for Her through whom we have a Saviour ; nor can the motive of this veneration be better expressed than in the words of the youthful Saint, her ever faithful child: "Mater Dei, Mater Mea." ("The Mother of God, My own Mother.")

No creature could be raised to higher dignity than that of Mother of God, because there is naught more exalted than God nor more perfect than the Infinite. It is in view of the divine maternity that we owe Mary the greatest veneration: "Ratione hujus dignitatis deberi Virgini excellentioren adorationem," in the words of the Angel of the Schools. Having conceived and given birth to a God, the God Man, Mary contracted a relationship with God unattainable for all other creatures : Fines divinitatis propinquius attingit, approaching nearesthe confines of the divine.

For this reason the Blessed Virgin holds in the divine economy an exceptional rank, incomparably above a that is not God, as if the God of all power had wished, in the production of this masterpiece, to display all the resources of what the Holy Doctor has termed His craft: ad ostentationem

suæ artis. Now, this very greatness of Mary, which would seem to have no other limit save the omnipotence of God, besides that loveable obligation of honor ing her with a super-eminent cult, imon us that other duty of frequently having recourse to the efficacy of her assistance, both for the rearing of the edifice of every virtue in our souls and for insuring the fulfilment of all our duties, the aim of our daily endeavors.

Indeed, our devotion to the Blessed Virgin must not consist solely of veneration and homage, but should be in stinct also with love and confidence, for the Mother of God is also the Mother of Christians. From the moment she yielded her consent to the Incarnation by that decisive fiat, she, as St. Bernard assures us, bore us all in her But it was especially at the foot of the Cross, when her soul was rent with maternal anguish and compassion, that the mystery of our adop-tion and of our assimilation with the members of God's Family was accomplished.

The Divine Master, when He taught His Apostles how they should pray, bade them address God by that loving name of Father : Pater noster. It was an appellation full of tenderness, and breathing all the confidence He intended they should feel; and when He determined to enlist our affections for Mary, with His own lips, and just about He called her our Mother: Ecce Mater tua, for He knew well that after God's own name there was no name dearer and more sacred than the name

Jesus hung there on the cross for love for us, fastened there with the cruel "a Man of Sorrows," overwhelmed with bodily suffering and mental anguish: at the foot of the cross were all that was then left of His - two faithful souls, but two souls burning with love for Him and loyal to Him in His supreme humiliation-His Mother and the Disciple He loved. At that solemn moment when mortals, weakened in the throes of death, find voice only to manifest their last will and testament, Jesus, glancing at His Mother first, said : "Woman, behold thy Son!" and then at St. John: "Son, behold thy Mother !"

It would be impossible to explain the full effect which the words of Jesus produced in the heart of His Blessed Mother. They awakened there a deep commiseration and an intense love for mankind. A something took place there not unlike what passes within us when we receive a sacrament, are bap tized or shriven at the tribunal of penance. The sacramental words "I bap-tize thee," "I absolve thee," produce in reality the effect they announce. children of wrath, they make us children of God; of sinners they make us righteous; so in virtue of the words "Woman, behold thy Son," Mary became truly the Mother of mankind. Surely, before that moment she loved mankind, but that love had not yet increases and expands: it bursts into a great flame within the heart of the tender and merciful Virgin; her soul is stirred to its innermost depths, and she becomes for the second time a mother, the Mother of mankind.

And now that she reigns in heaven as Queen of Angels and of God's elect. her heart still yearns for us and her hand is ever raised to bless and protect Safe within the haven of a blissful eternity, she knows that she has left behind her, tossed about on a tempestuous sea, children whom she cher-

ishes. She will shelter them from the storm and guide their frail barque though the billows threaten to engulf it. She will shine out brightly there above as the Star of the Sea

Home, with her own in happiness, she has not forgotten how many she has begotten in grief who are yet mourning and weeping in the valley of tears, poor exiles, exposed to the heat of the day, toiling painfully on, their daily bread moistened with their tears Should they meet a stray flower in their path, let them know that it was their Mother that set it there; should they sometimes find the cup of life less bitter, the sweetness comes from her : and when in their moments of despond ency they hear whispered in their ear Peto, nate, ut adspicias ad cælum t is the Mother's voice reminding hem of the crown and the joy, and the endless love that awaits them near her

wn throne. May Mary not count upon an in crease of filial confidence on the part f our associates during this month of May? Will they not be more faithful than ever before in reciting their daily decade for the intentions of the Apostleship of the Sacred Heart, and in repeating these words of the Angelic Salutation, which are for the Blessed Virgin the most acceptable praise, and for us the grounds of our most unshaken hope: " Holy Mary, Mother of

God, pray for us sinners?"
We say that they contain the most acceptable praise for Mary, for they remind her of the origin of all her greatness; they are for us the grounds of all our hope, for they remind her also that she is, in a certain way, indebted to us for her signal privileges, since our glorious Queen was raised to the dignity of Mother of God that she become our Mother, the Mother might of Sinners. O Mary! show thyself then our Mother, "monstra te esse matrem," our Mother here below, but after and beyond, our Mother in eter-

PRAYER. Oh Jesus! through the most pure Heart of Mary, I offer Thee all the prayers, works and sufferings of this lay, for all the intentions of Thy Divine Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in reparation of all sins, and for all requests presented through the Apostleship of Prayer; in particular that my devotion to the Mother of God and of all mankind may be strengthened within me, and as beseech her to show herself a Mother. so also may I ever show myself a worthy child of hers. Amen.

AGES OF FAITH.

Decay of Faith Amongst Those of the Present Generation.

The Psalmist says: "Save me Lord, for there is now no saint; truth are decayed from amongst the children Diminutae sunt veritates a filius hominum. (Ps. xi. 2.) These words, says the Bombay Catholic Ex aminer, seem especially applicable to our times. It is true the Psalmist wrote them of his own; yet are they like so many others, also prophetic ipplying to any epoch of history whe he facts of the case were or are the But of no time are they, it may same. be said, spoken so truly as of our own For where are now the saints, who once adorned the Church and illumined the world by their powerful words and vonderful works? How much of "the Faith once delivered to the saint," (St. Jude 1, 3,) do we still find amongst the children of men? Has it not all more or less decayed, vanished, disappeared? If there ever was an age that the Catholic at the end of the fifteenth the opposite epithet applies, it is the present age of materialism and unbe lief. Faith, supernatural Faith, has disappeared from our governments from our legislature, from our science, from our arts, from our law courts from our schools, from our universities, nay, even from our fam ilies. Faith is no longer the col lective property of any one of these institutions but only lingers on amongst individuals. Public life and the public spirit are destitute of faith, 'secularized," to use a modern term. Perhaps some may object to these assertions as being altogether too sweeping; but we only repeat and reecho what has been spoken and written on this very same subject by such eminent men as the late Cardinal Man ning, Kenelm Digby, Donoso Cortes, and many others. "Truths are indeed decayed from amongst the children of men;" where are the symbols of these truths, the emblems of Faith to be found? Anywhere in public? No. In the court-house? No. In the school-room? No. In the family? In but rare instances. In the Middle Ages, those Ages of Faith, the symbols of faith were met with everywhere and at every step, in the palaces of kings and princes, as well as in the cottages of the peasants, in the public courts, as well as in the market place, in private houses, as well as on the public roads and by the wayside in the country, in fields and forests: wherever one might reached the limits of the sublime. But direct his steps, he found those symnow that Jesus has spoken, that love bols of his Faith. People were not ashamed of them but publicly venerated them. Take up any book, any treatise, any document, any poem of the Middle Ages, and you will find great missionary preacher, St. Vincent herein the expression of this Faith. Ferrer. family; a traveller or pilgrim might were then sometimes and in some

go far beyond the boundary lines of his own native land and yet find himself at home everywhere; for where-ever he went, he was welcomed as a friend and treated as a brother. Alas what a change has come over the world since the bond of Faith has been broken asunder and thereby the bond of union too and of charity? Reformation destroyed supernatural Faith and sapped the foundation of all religion, and thereby destroyed Christian charity as well. From thence forth Faith gradually disappeared from our public institutions, from the law courts from the school. It is true there are still countries where the old Christian spirit is still found and where charity still reigns, but this is rather the exception than the rule, and although faith has not vet been forced to hide itself underground and in catacombs as in the days of pagan persecution, nevertheless the state of affairs in this regard is such as to make the contrast between our age and the Ages of Faith, to say the least of it, very striking. Surely we need not dwell here upon the great advantages of Faith, which is the very root and foundation of salvation and of all supernatural life. There may have been sinners, and great sinners too, in the Middle Ages, but then they kept their faith, and on their death-bed at least they did penance, were reconciled with God and with the Church, died a perfectly happy death. There are very few instances on ecord of men dying in despair in the Middle Ages, because very few had lost their Faith altogether. Such exceptions were, for instance, the impious Emperor Frederick II., and his not much better Chancellor, Peter de Vineis; the end of both of them was a wretched one. As a rule even the greatest public sinners did public penance, founded and endowed churches and monasteries as a reparation for wrongs inflicted on the public at large, and for the benefit of their own souls after their death. Some object, that there were many unholy wars in the Middle Ages ; such were, for instance, the invasion of Ireland under Henry II., the invasion of France under Edward III. and Henry V., the expe dition of the Black Prince into Spain in support of that unworthy sovereign Peter the Cruel, King of Arragon, when that brave and noble minded knight, Du Guesclin, Connetable of France, was taken prisoner by the prospered after that unholy expedition.

wars, there were also many wars un dertaken for a noble and holy cause that of country and religion. Such the wars of the Franks under Duke Eudes of Aquitaine and Charles Martel against the invading Saracens, whom they defeated on the fields of Tours and Poiters; such the wars of Charlemagne against the Pagan Sax onsinGermany and against the Saracens n Spain, whom he drove beyond the Ebro, such, too, his wars against the Pagan Avars in Hungary. Such the wars of the Emperor Otto the Great against the Magyars whom he routed under the walls of Agusburg; such the wars of the Crusades, which lasted for nearly two centuries and enlisted all western Christendom against the enemies of Christian civilization, the Turks. Such the wars of the Spaniards against the invaders of their country and the enemies of their faith, the Moors, which wars lasted from the days of King Pelayo in the eighth, until the capture of Granada and the expulsion of the Moors from Spain by Ferdinand could strictly and truly be called "the Age of Faith," it was the Middle Age, and if there ever was a time to which are times of the ever was a time to which and if there ever was a time to which and if there ever was a time to which a time times of the ever was a time to which a time time time time. Saracens and Turks. "But for the Popes," says Herder, with special reference to these wars, "Europe would long ago have been turned into a howling wilderness. came a flourishing garden instead to whom is the credit due? Talk about the anti-Popes set up by a few German Emperors, as an argument against the union of Christendom in the Middle Ages; why those very anti-Popes are a proof of the authority and power of the Popes. The Emperor who had quarrelled with the Pope of Rome, could not do without a Pope; so he created an anti-Pope, who was, how ver, a mere puppet and tool in his hands, altogether depending on his own whims. It was, however, reserved for the golden age of the glor ious Reformation, to have the Poutifi cal power joined with the Royal in the person of a king, and that king was Henry VIII. of glorious memory, declared himself supreme head of the Church of England. He set the ex ample of apostasy, which in due course of time was followed by all Protestant kings and princes who usurped the Pontifical powers, that is, were supreme in matters both spiritual and temporal like the Pagan Casars of ancient Rome As to the great Western schism is

However, if there were a few unholy

was the result of the peculiar political situation of the times and of the proloned residence of the Popes at Avig No one then denied the author non. ity of the Popes; on the contrary, all asserted it, only the people were divided in their allegiance to this or that Pope. There were at that time great saints in each so-called "obedience." witness St. Collette and the

It was this ubiquitous, all-pervading As to the wars amongst Christian spirit of faith, expressed in outward princes, the Popes always did their As to the wars amongst Christian symbols too, that made the Middle Ages utmost to prevent them; or, if not what they were, Ages of Faith. One able to do that, to mitigate them as holy will. then felt everywhere at home in matters of Faith; there was but one Faith History of England under Edward III., in Christendom and one expression of as one example out of many others on the same. Christendom was one large record.) If it is objected that there

places risings of the peasantry against the time of the English invasion, or rebellions of the lower orders the people against the authority as in England of kings, as in England under Richard II., one must consider the peculiar circumstances of the times when these things happened and the political situation of the countries in which they occurred. They were never general; the poorer classes, especially the peasants, always found in the Church—Pope, Bishop or Abbot a patron and protector against tyran-nical kings and nobles. Moreover, no one has ever asserted that there was uninterrupted peace during those one housand years in every part of Chris tendom, and complete contentedness in every province. safely assert, that, taken all in all, and comparing that period of history with any other epoch, and especially if we sum up all the good and balance it against all the evils of those times, the good will far outbalance the evil. Besides, an age which produced a Gregory the Great, a Charlemagne, an Otto the Great, Henry the saint, a Gregory VII., a Bernard, a St. Dominic, a St. Francis of Assisi, a St. Louis of France, a St. Thomas Aquinas, a Dante, a St. Vincent Ferrer, St. Bernardine of Sienna, St. Hildegard, a St. Catherine of Siena, and many others of the same stamp, must command the respect even of the bitterest enemies of the Church. Even Voltaire speaks with admiration of Pope Leo IV., who built the so-called Leonine city and provided Rome with walls and ramparts as a protection against the inroads of the Saracens, and these men and women were in touch with the people of their times, were listened to and wielded an immense power and influence for good. both social, and religious, both moral and scientific. No wonder, then, tha all true lovers of truth and all diligent and unprejudiced students of history have ever looked upon the Middle Ages as the golden age of the Churchan age which was to the Church what the heroic age was to the ancient world. We would never end were we even only to mention the leading features of that age, its gloriou chivalry, its poesy and romance, its science and its arts. Are not our venerable old universities legacie of the Middle Ages? Does not Pope Leo XIII. in his famous Encyclical or the Condition of Labor refer to these very ages and to their institutions, especially the "Guilds," as subjects which should be imitated in our own times? Has not he reinstated St. Thomas Aquinas in his ancient place of honor as the "Angel of the Schools?" Has he not given a new impulse to the Third Order of St. Francis, which dates back to the Middle Ages as a most powerful remedy against the innumerable ills of our

We may conclude by observing that the greatest boon a man can possess is the true faith, and the greatest treasare a nation can own is the knowledge and the worship of the one true God all this was possessed and owned by the people and by the nations of the Middle Ages, and, therefore they were happy in the judgment of the Psalmist. "They have called the people happy that hath these things, (viz., sons and daughters rich store-houses, plenty of sheep and oxen, etc.); but happy is that people whose God is the Lord." (Ps. cxliii.,

Practical Prayer.

Jesus Christ has said: "Pray al-vays, and faint not." Saint Paul ways, and faint not." Saint Paul recommended the first Christians "to or, if you will, this counsel? And how is it possible to accomplish it? At the first glance it is evident that

it does not relate to vocal prayer which can take place only at certain times. Nor can we be always employed in the exercise of mental prayer. It is still more impossible to occupy our mind continually with the thought of God and the things of God. An uninte rupted attention to the presence of God is beyond human strength, and is not is beyond numan strength, and is not compatible with the business of life. How, then, and by what other kind of prayer, may we fulfil the intentions of Jesus Christ? By the prayer of the heart which consists in an habitual and constant disposition of the love of God, of confidence in God of submission to His will in all the events of life; in a continual attention to the voice of God, which makes itself heard in the depths of conscience and incessantly suggests to us means of doing good and becoming perfect. Let the love of God predominate in a heart let it become, as it were, natural to it let it suffer absolutely nothing that may be contrary to it; let it constantly endeavor to augment it by seeking to please God in all things, and in refusing nothing that He asks: let it receive from His hand everything that happens to it; let it have an unshaken determination of never wilfully and with reflection committing a fault, and if it be so unfortunate as to commit one, let it humble itself and rise immediately: then it will be in the practice of constant prayer. This prayer will continue amidst our occupations, entertainments, and even our amusements, provided they be innocent. We do not incessantly make acts, we do not pray without interruption, but the heart is ever turned toward God, at all times attentive to

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A NO THAT MEANS NO.

A fine young fellow was Tom Jeffreys, strong, pleasant and good look-ing. He was but eighteen when he first began "railroading," but could set a brake with the best. When his clear, deep voice announced the stations, people listened and made no mistake. Old ladies caught the gleam of his pleasant eye, and let him help hem on and off with grateful surprise Mothers with more children than they could manage, tired women bundleladen, and old men, recognized friend and made use of him. were the railroad officials blind to the young man's helpfulness and popularty, and although Tom did not dream of it, he was on a list that meant pro-

The young brakeman's easy going good nature, however, was a draw-back in one direction. He disliked to When the train reached - he always had two hours to In that time some of the boys spare. were sure to say: "Come, Tom, let's go to the barber's. Now, this sounded very innocent.

but in the barber's back room was a green door which opened on a stair way leading into a drinking bar Here the men used to gather, a few at the time, to have a little something.

Tom usually said his good-humored 'no," that meant a reluctant "yes and ended by going. He never felt wholly at ease when taking his beer. He would not have gone for it alone Over and over again he acknowledged to himself that it was the laughter of his chums that took his courage away, and so things went on. A year slipped by, and beer had become almost an every-day drink with him, when one afternoon he was summoned from the barber's shop to the office.

"Jeffreys," said the superintendent, when he entered, "I have been very much pleased with the way in which our duties have been performed on the road in the past, and I find we need another conductor." The gentleman stopped, and the pleasant smile was gone. "Mr. Jeffreys, your breath tells me that you have been drinking." "Only a little beer, sir," said poor

Tom, flushing crimson. "I am very sorry," replied the superintendent, "but that will be all

o day. You may go. The young man left the office downeast, disheartened. What he had been wishing for, what he had so nearly gained, had been lost through his own misconduct. As he thought of it his

The next day one of the boys said, 'Comin' over to the barber's?' "No!" replied Tom. "Oh, come on, what's struck you?"

good-natured lips took a firmer curve.

"That barber has shaved me all he ever will!" was the answer. Although Tom's "no" seemed very determined in its sound, there was something wanting in it. He felt it.

and when after a few days, the real longing for a glass of liquor began to make itse!f felt, it seemed as if the "no would be "yes" in spite of himself. "No use in lockin' the barn door now," said his chum; "the horse i the 'super' know you've taken a 'smile' now and then, and he'll never

forget it. Better be young while you Tom still said "no," but the little negative grew weaker and weaker, the next thing it would be "yes."

When this was almost accomplished, spurred by his danger and remember ing his early training in the right, he said an earnest prayer for strength. "And then," he said, "I learned to

speak a 'no 'that all men on the road couldn't turn into a 'yes.'"-Sacred Heart Review

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