

Galilee. It is, that the spotless Mary, the pre-
elected daughter of heaven, though unknown to
men, having reached the ninth month from the
conception of her Son, should bring forth in Beth-
lehem that noble offspring of whom it was writ-
ten: *His going forth is from the days of eternity.*
And thou Bethlehem art not the least among the
Princes of Juda, for out of thee shall come the
Ruler to rule my people Israel!

O Divine Wisdom, how great is your *strength*,
when you thus invincibly accomplish your ends,
and in a mysterious manner concealed from men!
How great is your *sweetness* at the same time in
offering no violence to human liberty!

Shall we not adore your fatherly Providence in
choosing Bethlehem for the place of your birth?
For, Bethlehem signifies the *House of Bread*.
You thereby wished to shew us, that you were to
be our *Bread*, our nourishment and support.
With a God for our food, we shall die no more.
O Wisdom of the Father! Living Bread coming
down from Heaven! enter into us, in order that
we may approach you, and be enlightened with
your glory, and teach us this *Prudence* which
will guide us to life eternal.

—
DECEMBER 18.

O Adonai!

“O Adonai, and Leader of the House of Israel,
who didst appear to Moses in the fire of the burn-
ing bush, and didst give him the law on Sinai:
come and save us with outstretched arms.”

O Supreme Lord, Adonai! come and *redeem*
us, not in your power, but by your humility.
Heretofore you manifested yourself to your servant
Moses, in the midst of a divine flame; and amidst
thunders and lightnings you gave the law to your
people. Now; however, you are not coming to
terrify, but to save.

Hence, your immaculate Mother, Mary, having
heard the Emperor's edict which will oblige her to
undertake a journey to Bethlehem, is occupied
with the preparations for your happy birth.
She is preparing the humble linens to cover you,
and protect you from the cold, when, in the
silence of the night you will come into the world
you have made. It is thus you will deliver us
from the slavery of our pride, and that your arm
will be most powerful at the very moment that it

seems weakest in the eyes of men. All then is
ready, O Lord Jesus! The swaddling-clothes of
infancy are prepared for you. Come then without
delay, and *redeem* us from the hands of our enemy.

On this day is also solemnized the Feast of the
Expectation of the Delivery of the Blessed Virgin.
In Spain this festival is celebrated with great
devotion. During the eight days that it lasts a
High Mass is chaunted every morning, at which
pregnant women of all ranks think it a duty to be
present, both to honour Mary in her divine child-
bearing, and to invoke her powerful intercession
for themselves.

—
DECEMBER 19.

O Radix Jesse!

“O Root of Jesse who standest as a sign to the
people, before whom Kings shall be silent, and to
whom the Gentiles shall pray: come to deliver us,
and delay not now.”

Behold, you are therefore approaching O Root
of Jesse, to the city of your ancestors. The Ark
of the Lord has arisen, and is advancing, with the
Lord himself, who is in it, to the place of its
repose. *How beautiful are your steps, O*
Prince's daughter, in the splendor of your array,
as you come to bring salvation to the cities of
Juda! The Angels escort you, and all marks of
tenderness are shewn you by your faithful spouse.
The heavens take complacency in you, and the
earth leaps for joy under the weight of its Creator,
and its august Queen. Advance, O Mother of
God and men! All powerful propitiatory con-
taining the divine Manna which saves from death!
Our hearts follow, and attend you. Like your
Royal Ancestor we swear, *not to enter into our*
house, nor to give sleep to our eyes, nor rest to
our temples, until we find out, in our hearts, a
place for the Lord whom you bear, and a taberna-
cle for the God of Jacob.” Ps. cxxxi. 2. Come
then, O Root of Jesse, thus concealed in the pure
womb of the Ark of the Covenant, come, until
you be brought forth from thence to shine in the
eyes of the people, as a glorious sign and standard
of triumph. Vanquished kings will then be silent
in your presence, and the nations will offer you
their vows! Hasten, therefore, O Messiah! come,
destroy all our enemies, and *deliver us*.