

Not that he desired that they should resist. What, then did he desire that they should do? What, to bring the matter nearer home, did he, himself, intend to do? To neither of which questions was there, so far as he could see, any answer forthcoming. Perhaps, on that very account, it was nearer than he thought; for him, at least, if for no other soul of those among whom he had labored so patiently and so devotedly.

So he preached a Christmas sermon on the text, "God was manifest in the flesh," and made no allusion to the events of the morrow. Rather, he preached, as never before, on the office and work of our Lady in God's scheme of redemption: on the honor paid to her by the Most High, on the honor due to her by those for whom her Son was born, for whom He lived, and died, and rose again. "We are accused," he said, "of paying her too much honor; yet an archangel called her 'blessed among women'; Saint Elizabeth greeted her as 'Mother of my Lord' that is, of God Himself, and when God 'sent forth His Son, made of woman,' He chose her, that, of her, the word should be made Flesh, and dwell among us. Lastly, the word, the God-man 'went down to Nazareth and was subject unto them,' to Mary, that is, and to Joseph, her husband, the creatures whom He had made. We cannot honor her as He did, but we may honor her according to the example that He has given us, 'that we should follow in His steps.'"

Never, yet, had he spoken so plainly, so fully, so straight from his heart to theirs. They believed him; yes; but, were he to leave them, they would, in time, believe his successor, whatever he might chance to teach them. His faith and theirs, then, rested on — what? The Church? But his bishop, as he knew, "differed" from him in regard to this and to many another "fundamental" doctrine; brother "priests," this "apostate" now present, for example, would teach the exact contrary of this "truth" that he was