



 Patrons of Parishes

 THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

WHEN expelling our first parents from the Garden of Eden He promised them a Savior and this Savior was to be His own Son, born of a woman. But where could a woman be found sufficiently pure and holy to clothe a God with her flesh, to carry Him in her arms, to clothe and rear Him, to treat Him with the familiarity of a mother towards her child, to console Him by pressing Him to her breast, covering Him with her caresses and kisses? The holiness of the celestial spirits could not have sufficed; now all the daughters of Adam came into the world with a stain, the stain of original sin; they were born with chains on their hands constituting them slaves of Satan. Could the Son of God be born of a creature, howsoever holy, whom the devil could have claimed to have had even for an instant, in chains? No. Thus the promise of the Redeemer dated 400 years back; the patriarchs and prophets prayed in vain, the Redeemer came not; heaven remained closed, earth remained a prey to hell's tyranny. Why? because no woman was born without stain, but all, even the holiest, had to exclaim with David: « Alas! I was conceived in iniquity! »

Finally, this holy woman appeared whom God had chosen from all eternity to be the mother of Mary Immaculate, the grandmother of His only Son, the glorious Anne, wife of Joachim. She herself had to yearn for many years for the birth of her whom humanity had expected for forty centuries. She offered her prayers to God; she importuned Him by her prayers, her fasts, her alms and her tears. For a long time she prayed the Lord to give her a child who would be the joy of Israel and the consolation of her people. St Anne's wishes were not refused. At the hour fixed by eternal decrees, God granted