

for poverty, chastity, solitude and penance.

She had hardly learned to smile at her father and to lisp his name, when he was cruelly torn from her, as we have seen. The enemies of the church call him a traitor, but, in our eyes, he was a noble martyr, for he who defends the church defends the cause of God. The real traitor was Raymond VI., that accursed heretic, who did not hesitate to imbrue his hands with the blood of his own brother, stifling at the same time not only the voice of his own blood, but also the voice of religion and of conscience.

No other protection was left to the poor orphan, but the loving arms of her bereft mother, the pious daughter of Manfred of Rabastens.

We can imagine how sad must have been the widowhood of this poor mother.

Living a solitary in her home, never showing herself at any worldly entertainment, repressing in her wounded heart all thoughts of revenge, she, as a true Christian, fully forgave the murderers of her husband.

In the midst of her isolation and sorrow, Heaven showered upon her spiritual graces in abundance. And when she heard the result of the battle of Muret in September, 1213, in which the army of the cross obtained a complete victory, she saw that the Lord was her avenger, as He is the avenger of His church.

Joanna, her daughter, grew up under her eyes, increasing in wisdom and piety day by day. She taught her from her earliest infancy to love God above all things. Joanna was her mother's only hope and joy. Carefully the pious mother formed the child's heart and mind until the result surpassed her fondest expectations.

The young saint, of delicate body,

although rather tall of stature, had a strong and heroic soul; in fact, she possessed the noble soul and chivalrous heart of her father.

During the year of her first communion, her progress on the road of perfection was marvellous. How can we describe the fervor with which this heavenly soul prepared herself for the reception of her God, hidden under the eucharistic veil? The angels alone could tell us what passed between her and her Redeemer during these happy days. Her whole countenance shone in seraphic beauty at the moment when the priest, for the first time, placed upon her virginal lips the consecrated Host.

This divine ardor manifested itself on her countenance ever after, whenever she was present at mass, or received Holy communion. Prayer and the divine office were her greatest delight. Strong was her faith, invincible her hope, perfect her charity.

To the Holy Ghost she consecrated her body and her soul, choosing Him as her guardian and master of all her faculties.

The fame of her beauty, of her intellect, and of her extraordinary virtue, enhanced by the supernatural loveliness of her disposition, soon became known in all parts of France.

The most powerful princes sought for her hand. But the saint, from her most tender years, had renounced all that the world can offer, and was filled with contempt for all worldly vanities.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

There are souls in the world who have the gift of finding joy, everywhere, and leaving it behind them when they go. Their influence is an inevitable gladdening of the heart. They give light without meaning to shine. Their bright hearts have a great work to do for God.