

hem, the House of Bread. Behold Him upon the straw. That straw is trodden under foot, and bruised — it is poor humanity. By itself it bears no fruit. Jesus will restore it, He will give it life, He will render it fruitful: *Nisi granum frumenti cadens in terram*, "unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground, die." — Behold the Divine Grain sown in the ground! His tears are the ground! His tears are the moisture that will make it germinate. It will become beautiful. Bethlehem stands upon a hill overlooking Jerusalem. When the Ear of Wheat shall have ripened, It will incline toward Calvary, where It will be ground, where It will be baked in the fire of suffering in order to become Living Bread.

Kings will come to eat of It, and It will make their delights: *Panis Aser, deliciae regum*. They come to the royal nuptials of the Lamb: *Current Magi ad regales nuptias*. The Magi here represent royal souls, masters over self, who to-day feed on the Blessed Sacrament.

The relations of the Saviour's Birth at Bethlehem with the Eucharist viewed as a Sacrament, are reproduced in the Eucharist taben as a Sacrifice.

It is truly a little Lambkin that is born at Bethlehem. Like a lamb, Jesus is born in a stable, and like the lamb, He knows only His Mother. He already offers Himself in sacrifice. His first cry is: *Hostias et oblationes noluisti, corpus autem aptasti mihi*, "Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldst not, but a body thou hast fitted to me, O Father. Behold I come!" — This body is the condition for immolation. Jesus offers it to His Father. He grows, the little Lambkin, by the side of His Mother, and in forty days she will possess the secret of His immolation. She will feed Him with her pure and virginal milk, she will protect Him for the day of sacrifice. His character of victim will be so marked that, happening to see Him one day of His public life, St. John will designate Him by no other name than that of the Divine Lamb: *Ecce Agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccata mundi*.

The Sacrifice commenced at Bethlehem, is consummated on the altar at Holy Mass. O how touching is Midnight Mass in the Christian world! We hail it long in advance, we always see it return with joy. What is it that gives to our Feast of Christmas its charms, to our