

passions on awaking. The body rests and is renovated; but the soul remains the same, and thus sleep is a faithful image of death, which leaves man in the state in which it finds him, with his inclinations, virtues and vices. Yet, we must acknowledge it, the rest of the body during sleep reacts on the soul itself. On awaking, our judgment is surer, our passions calmer, our will more free, more independent of outward attractions, and we all have understood the truth of the adage: *The night gives counsel*. It is therefore wise to allow sleep to pass over a decision that troubles us, a sentiment that agitates the soul, or a violent resolve that we might later regret."

These reflections of a pious author relate to the sleep of man, but what should we say of the sleep of children? Is there a more charming sight on earth than that of a child sleeping in its cradle? Is there a sweeter enjoyment for a mother than to rest her eyes on that childish face, true mirror of innocence and purity? Such happiness was given to Mary, but no other mother has felt in presence of her son what Mary felt in presence of her sleeping child.

St. Basil thus renders the blending of maternal love and of adoration which divided the heart of Mary:

"What must I call thee?...A mortal?...But I have conceived thee by the operation of God...A God?... But thou hast a human body...Must I come to thee with incense, or offer thee my own substance? Must I lavish on thee all the care of a tender mother, or serve thee, with my brow in the dust? O marvellous contrast! Heaven is thy dwelling place, and I fondle thee on my knees! Thou art upon earth, and yet not separated from the inhabitants of the heavenly regions. The heavens are with thee!"

St. Alphonsus de Liguori has written a lovely Italian poem on the sleep of the divine Child. The following translation is far from rendering all the gracefulness and charm of the primitive composition.

"The heavens hushed their sweet harmony, when Mary sang to lull Jesus to sleep.