

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS' DEVOTION TO THE HOLY FACE.



AS devotion to the Holy Face is so characteristic of Carmel, our readers may welcome a little suggestion on this subject, namely to imitate the example of St. Thomas, the "Angelic Doctor," in the practice of this act of religion. The well-known prayer, "Anima Christi," generally called "The Prayer of St. Ignatius," because he loved and used it frequently, is, in reality, an out-pouring of the glorious Dominican's love. We quote the following extract from his life, recently published in *The Saints of the Rosary*, an interesting series of short lives, written by members of the Order:

"To the pen of St. Thomas, we are also indebted for the 'Adoro Te,' for beautiful devotions before and after Holy Communion, and many other prayers solid in doctrine and beautiful in expression. It is a tradition that he composed the well-known prayer, "Soul of Christ sanctify me!" which was a favorite with St. Ignatius, who introduced it into his book of Spiritual Exercises, though leaving out the lovely petition, 'Light of the sacred countenance of Jesus, shine down upon me,' ('Lumen vultus sacri Jesu, me illumina,') which is found in the old forms of the prayer. This petition occurs in the version of the 'Anima Christi,' found in an old prayer-book called the 'York Hours,' where it is stated to have been indulged by Pope John XXII., when said after the elevation at Mass.

"This prayer-book was published in

1517, four years before the conversion of St. Ignatius."

This is not the only time we hear this great saint sighing after the light of God's Face. In the "Adoro Te" we find these beautiful words:

"Jesu quem velatum nunc aspicio," etc.

"Jesus, whom at present veiled I see," etc.

Now that he is gazing on its unveiled beauty, will not a new thrill of joy be added to his bliss, when these words, breathed forth lovingly on earth, are echoed above? Will he not pray that in all vicissitudes of life the "Light of the Sacred Countenance" may "shine down upon us," and that we may, hereafter, see Jesus "Face to face?"—E. D. M.

The Catholic Church is indestructible. It cannot be conquered. For twenty centuries states, rulers and societies have tried to crush it. If it had been human, they would have obliterated it. But it is Divine. It is the work of God. It has the promise of perpetuity, let nations or individuals rage as they please against it, for Christ Himself declared that He would abide with it forever. It, therefore, fears no man and no combination of men. It will last until the end of the world.—*Catholic Columbian*.

"Prayer for the dead is more acceptable than for the living, because the dead are in the greatest need of it, and unable to help themselves as the living are.—ST. THOMAS.