

the Father attended first, and when the clock struck eleven, he rose up and desired Mary to defer her confession till next day. But he treated her next day in exactly the same manner, and continued to do so for twenty days; however, she never murmured nor felt chagrined, though great her desire of the sacraments. Her virtue now deserved and obtained its crown, for the man of God admiring her obedience and docility gave her after this trial, permission to receive the holy Eucharist every day.

Among those who profess piety, how few are there who would willingly submit to such trials. Some would say the confessor was disgusted with them, and that they could not expect in future the same care and attention. Others would say, this priest is a respecter of persons; he would not treat us rudely if we were distinguished for birth, or wealth, or talents. While the more moderate would allege, that they could not penetrate the motives of such extraordinary conduct; and since frequent communion was their whole strength and consolation, it was strange to deprive them of it. But persons who would murmur and reason in this sort, have nothing of devotion, but the shell. If closely examined, they will be found full of self-love, fond of self-will, presumptuous, vain, slaves of their humours, inexorable and harsh towards others, easy and complying towards themselves, full of attachments inconsistent with true piety, and making devotion consist in long prayers and ceremonies, and frequent participation of the sacraments. What a gross illusion!

True, the holy communion is one of the most powerful means to support the weak, to cure the sick and imperfect,

and preserve the strong. But in its participation, we should be ever guided by humble obedience to our director; such was the sentiment of Mary Diaz.

The delay of her communion only served to purify her motives and inflame her love; in fact she became quite transported with amorous ecstasy, in expectation of her Beloved. It would be impossible to describe the glowing ardours and holy confidence with which she received her Lord. Her faith was so lively that he sometimes, in recompence, manifested himself visibly to her; and this happened so often that she imagined it was common to others, till one day as she mentioned it in all simplicity, some person expressed their amazement at a thing so unusual.

The principal fruit she drew from communion was an insatiable love of sufferings and humiliations. On these matters, so interesting to a follower of Christ crucified, she had a conversation with her confessor, which deserves to be narrated. Declaring to him her sentiments, she distinguished five species of suffering by which a person might glorify God: 1st, the inclemency of the seasons—heats, colds, wind, rain, storms, and tempests; however painful, she said persons should joyfully submit to sufferings of this kind, since it was God who made times and seasons. The winter is very cold at Avila, and as Mary was thinly clad, and dwelt in a room open on all sides, she suffered extremely. One day that she spoke to God of her suffering, he said, “Is it not I who made the seasons, how then can you complain?”

In the second class, she placed sickness, infirmity, hunger, thirst, labors, fatigues, poverty; all these should be