

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.

(First Sunday of July.)

What distinguishes our age is a love for pleasure, and, consequently, unfaithfulness to God. Devotion towards the Precious Blood serves as a remedy against indifference and infidelity, for it causes to shine before our eyes, with a supernatural splendor, the marvels of the Church and the virtues of the Sacraments, and instils into our heart a love for the divine sovereignty. It keeps always present to our mind, the principle of sacrifice. Sacrifice is the Christian element of holiness, and there is nothing that nature shrinks more from than sacrifice, nothing which it repels with more energy. Mortification is the distinguishing mark of spirituality.

Worldly pleasures, domestic comfort, choice food, the daily habit of always indulging one's will in the details of life, are so many things which are incompatible with holiness; one must suffer to become a saint, suffer also to destroy self-love. Everything in the devotion towards the Precious Blood savors of sacrifice, and its mission is to inspire in our souls the love of sacrifice and to destroy the dull placidity of earthly comfort.

One of the priceless advantages of this devotion is to place no obstacle in the way of other devotions, but to favor them, on the contrary, in their development. It harmonizes most intimately with devotion to the Blessed Virgin; it is a variety of the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament: it is most closely united with the devotion of the Sacred Heart; in fine, it links together the different lives of Jesus so as to form one only. It enjoys a mighty power of intercession, for the special office of the Blood of Jesus is to intercede in our favor. That Blood is the power by means of which man obtains everything from God.

The first fruit of the devotion to the Precious Blood is to inspire us with a lively confidence in God. Love