

and servants of God, whom we call Saints, differs only in degree, but not in kind, from our "invocation" of any holy person on earth; that is, from asking "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man", or woman, which their own Bible tells them, "availeth much"; that we attribute, to Our Lady and the Saints, neither omniscience nor omnipotence, but only that knowledge of the family concerns—to speak with all reverence—which all those "within the veil" enjoy in God, and only that power of intercession which those who are beyond sin and self-will must surely possess with the Beloved "First-Born among many brethren"; and one cause of misunderstanding, at least, will have been removed from between them and us.

There is Scriptural proof, and to spare, as to this power of merit and of intercession; let it suffice to refer to a few passages only. "My servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept." That is the intercessory prayer of a saint on earth. "Remember Abraham, Thy servant." That is the pleading of the merits of a saint passed beyond the veil that we call death: not dead, "for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Why should it be lawful for a Protestant to say, with the Psalmist, "For Thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of Thine anointed"; and unlawful for a Catholic to say: "For Thy Mother Mary's sake, turn not away my prayer"? Has David's prayer more efficacy than hers or will He listen more readily to the "man after His own heart" than to the Mother who fed Him at her Virgin breast? What does He say, Himself? "If any man minister unto Me, him will My Father honour." Of how much honour, then, shall She be deemed worthy of whom it is written that of Her "was born Jesus, Who is called Christ," that He was "subject" to Her; who ministered to Him, from the stable at Bethlehem to the Tomb by Calvary, as only a Mother can? Venerable Bede, indeed, in his homily on the text, "Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it," gives us the true secret of Her blessedness. She was more blessed,