

our treatise, and be satisfied now, with, as it were, following in His footsteps, to the sound of His miracles and His benefits; but in order to keep more in touch with the Church we shall be obliged to classify together and examine several at the same time.

1. The first act of Jesus in this new phase of His life is His Baptism. John was on the banks of the Jordan, exhorting and baptizing the Jews who came to confess their sins. This spontaneous avowal already proving how natural confession is to the heart of man. The Precursor was speaking to them about the Messiah, announcing His advent and added: "I am not worthy to loose the latchet of His shoes."

Suddenly, he sees Jesus coming towards Him. He recognizes Him and cries out: Behold the Lamb of God! Behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world! Jesus draws nearer and asks for Baptism. John expostulates: "I ought to be baptized by Thee, and comest Thou to me?" Jesus reassures him, saying: "Suffer it to be so now. For so it becometh us to fulfil all justice." Then he bent His sacred head, St. John baptized Him, the heavens opened and the Holy Ghost under the form of a dove descended on Him, while the Eternal Father's voice proclaimed aloud: "This is my well-beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

This mystery is clearly discernible in the life of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. On the Altar, as on the banks of the Jordan, the Son of God is humiliated and glorified in about the same circumstances. The priest, another John the Baptist, preaches, baptizes, hears confessions, discharges the duties of His sacred ministry, and during Mass sees the Son of God coming to Him at the moment of consecration. Oh! who can tell what emotions stir his heart, how he trembles, how he would fain plead his unworthiness, but, God ordains, and by this means fulfils all justice: because the real property of the Eucharist is to complete, to consummate all. This gives the priest courage to raise his hand over his Creator and bless Him, to touch the Sacred Species, to eat the flesh of the Son of God and to drink His Blood, and in his ecstasy to turn towards the faithful kneeling at the holy table and repeat like John the Baptist: "Behold the Lamb of God!"