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SECOND SERMON BY HIS EMINENCE THE CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER,

Delivered in St. Mary's Church, Moorfields, on the Evening of Sunday, Jan. 30th, 1853.

SUBJECT:—DEVOTION TO THE HOLY EUCHARIST. (From the Catholic Standard.)

"And I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me."—Gal. ii., 20.

When God, on bringing His first-born into the world, commanded His angels to adore Him, those sublime intelligences could not but understand that there was constituted a new presence of God upon earth which was not comprised in His ubiquity and universal providence. They understood that there was an individuality, a person towards whom they were now to direct that adoration which, until that moment, had been only presented to the awful majesty of a spiritual God. They had been frequently sent from above to bear messages of peace and love to earth: they had flown downwards on their rapid pinions in obedience to the behests of their Lord; they had descended by that ladder which Jacob had seen as a path between heaven and earth; but, while their looks, in that form which they had assumed, might be directed towards this lower earth, their own simple intelligence, their spiritual being, true as the magnet to the pole, was ever turned towards that light inaccessible which God inhabited. But now, they may turn that face to earth; and an object that is on earth, they may distinctly adore, apart from that general worship which they paid to God existing in the whole of creation.

That homage, once begun, to the person of the Incarnate Word, cannot be interrupted so long as He remains upon earth. If angels were commanded to adore Him in the first instant of His earthly existence, the command continued so long as the object remained unchanged; and the Son of God is necessarily an object of adoration to angels wherever and however He may be found upon earth. They adore Him through that long night of His nativity in His cold and His poverty; they adore Him when in the desert in His flight to Egypt; they adore Him when He is in His retreat in the humble cottage of Nazareth; they adore Him in the synagogue, in the temple, and in the public place; they adore Him when alone on the mountain He prays; they adore Him on Thabor and Olivet; they adore Him when His Father glorifies Him, and declares Him to be His well-beloved Son; they adore Him when the sun is darkened at His awful doom on the cross. Adoration follows the Incarnate Word; and angels flock wherever He may be, and cast themselves before Him, and worship and proclaim their Lord.

And now, my brethren, let me ask you,—Of what character is this adoration which the angels pay?—We may well say that it is the adoration of disinterested love. It is the adoration of boundless amazement at the wonderful things of which His mercy is capable. It is the adoration of admiration at the marvellous ways in which He lavishes His graces, His bounties, Himself, for the sake, not of them, but of us. For what has He done for the angels which can be compared with what He has done for us?—He has loved them indeed; He has made them beautiful and glorious creatures; He has given them joy and bliss, and there are other mysterious gifts which angels owe to Him in His Incarnation of which we have but dark hints, and into which it is not our present province to dive. But from the angels God has taken nothing; to the angels, it may be said, He has given nothing peculiar. He assumed not their nature; He took not upon Himself their form. He entered not into their choirs to sing in the midst of them, or lead their anthems. He kept them ever at the distance of ministering servants. He received them never into companionship or familiarity. He made them His angels in the dispensations of an older law which He came to supersede and to abrogate.—He made them the shadows only of that ministry which He took upon Himself. From them He received nothing; to them, it may be said, He communicated nothing by that wonderful mystery in which they were summoned to adore Him. He gave them no accession of that essential bliss or those gifts they had received from the first moment of their being.—He gave them not, that we can learn, a higher place than they possessed. Rather, it may be said, that by that wonderful mystery for which they praise and worship Him, He sunk them lower. For He took man above them, and placed His poor humanity above all dominations, and powers at the very right hand of God.—Then, my brethren, if angels are to worship thus the Incarnate Word, although they have received nothing from Him, and He has taken nothing from them, in what way shall we contemplate that mystery and its consequences, the very essence of which, the very praise whereof, as regards us, may be said to consist in communion, communication between man and God?

It is the wonderful mystery which rules throughout those great dispensations—perhaps that which confounds us most, that which makes reason the most powerless,—that God should have taken, should have received anything from man. Yet this was, in a manner, the necessary preliminary of what He had entirely in view; and that was, the giving to man that which He alone could bestow. For, my brethren, it is that He might give to us everything that we require, everything which we had not, and could not of ourselves possess, that He first began by receiving from our hands a most humble gift which He ennobled and perfected that He might return it. In order to bestow something upon man which he could, so to speak, comprehend, of the consciousness whereof he could be made fully aware, it was necessary that it should be, on the one hand, appreciable, intelligible, tangible to him, and, at the same time, worthy of God.

And what is worthy of God? Naught but Himself. If God wishes to bestow that which is His alone, and which none other can give: if He really designs a gift that may be really said to be divine, then it is only Himself, in some form or other, that He can bestow upon us. And how shall this be given to us which in itself is invisible, is removed as far as the heavens are from the earth from our apprehension, that which is eternal, that which is incomprehensible,—how shall He bestow this, unless united in some way to that which we can appreciate, and in some sort understand? Then, do we mean by this that God could not bestow an infinite gift upon man unless He bestowed Himself in such ties as man could receive Him? Such is the primary idea of the Incarnation, considered as a gift of man to God. As that benign Divinity could not be united to what was irrational or insensible, it was only to man that it could so unite itself as that at once the gift would be perfect, infinite, and Divine; and yet, at the same time, come within the cognisance of our imperfect modes of apprehension. It is as though a Sovereign wished to honor perfectly, and, at the same time, show his love to one of most humble degree; and were to say, "Give me a pebble, worthless in itself, from your land;" and then were to set it in gold, and encrust it with jewels, and return again that gift the same as he had received it, but a truly royal and splendid gift. Thus, our Blessed Lord takes a body which, though exempt from corruption, is yet made up of the same frail material as ours, lives by the same laws, is sustained by the same nourishment, is subject to the same sufferings, is exposed to cold and to pain. The hands are rent, the heart is torn up to prove that it truly was the body of man. He takes a soul likewise to Himself, united to that body; a soul which, though it has not tasted of the original taint, and, therefore, is not only pure and holy, but is endowed with incomparable wisdom as its own right and inheritance, is still a soul circumscribed in its action, in limit and in space, animating no more than the soul of the humblest of His creatures does the body into which it has been infused.

When thus he has framed for Himself this humanity, O what a gift does he unite to it? To what a dignity does he raise it? The second person of the Blessed Trinity united in the fulness of His Godhead, with all the attributes of the Divine nature, to this nature of man, forming only one inseparable person, not merely clothed in humanity as angels were who cast aside that frail and perishable garb when their mission was ended, but so incorporated and combined, as that never again by an imaginable, though impossible, Divine decree, can separation ensue! And this human nature of ours, thus made sublimer indeed than the nature of angels, thus made of a price beyond all calculation, thus uniting in itself the very prerogatives of the Godhead, so that the person of the Lord Jesus, true God and true man, is adored and worshipped as completely as the true God in His third heavens,—this wonderful, most sublime of the works of God's power and goodness, He gives to man. He bestows it upon him. It is our gift. He has taken from us what He did not take from angels. He has given to us what he could not give to angels. The whole of our Blessed Saviour's existence on earth may be said to be concentrated in this one thought, in this one Act of His love—the giving of Himself to us perfectly and most completely.

The manner in which He effects this gift, the mode in which He makes over to us this wonderful condition and form of being which He has assumed, forms the second of those motives which the Catholic heart feels for devotion and love towards that institution in which this great work of making Himself over to us was accomplished, and is owned in His Church.

I ask you, my brethren, when you contemplate your Blessed Redeemer first appearing in the world, to whom do you consider that He belongs? It had been said before by the prophet, not merely that a child was to be born, but that A SON WAS TO

BE GIVEN to us (Is. ix. 6). He is a gift which His heavenly Father sends down to mankind. He is a gift which He Himself in His inexpressible love makes to us all. When you contemplate Him, when you meditate upon him, do you consider Him as belonging to the nation of the Jews; as connected with them by the ties of some peculiar consanguinity? Do you contemplate Him as of the seed of Abraham or of David, and as if they who belonged to that line had some peculiar glory or interest in Him? Do you consider Him even as the Son of Mary, given to her for her sake, as the children of women are given to parents that they may be their individual joy; that they may live for their comfort; that they may continue ever under their guidance, and provide merely for them in their old age?

No; you consider Him as belonging to neither Jew nor Gentile, Greek or barbarian. You believe Him not to have come to save those of the race of Abraham who had a special promise, but you always consider Him as sent to all the children of men, although they form no direct part in the covenant of that first father. And although you may indeed feel how great was the privilege of His Blessed Mother in being the chosen instrument of bringing him into the world, and administering to Him that humanity in which He has been presented to us, yet you hold that she was but the honored vessel of bearing Him, not for her individual happiness and comfort, but for that of all the world. He came to this earth for your sake and for mine. He belongs, from the first instant, not to any one individually; He belongs to us all. He came to give Himself for all.

And, my brethren, for whom is it that He breathes? For whom is it that His soul, even from the first moment, offers prayers to God? For whom is it that that Divine intelligence that already sparkles in His eye, is constantly engaged in contemplations of wonderful depth? For whom is it that that heart, which is beating from the first instant with love, is moved? Is it for one; or, is it not for all? He gave Himself, then, to all of us; and in that first instant, He became our own, a gift bestowed by His Father and Himself upon every soul. And so, my brethren, you consider that whatever merit there was in Him, whatever of virtue, whatever of excellence, whatever of Divinity,—all that was a common prize, and belonged to every one of us in proportion as we shall choose to make the whole our own.

As He grows up and goes forth into the world, what are His actions, His words? Do you not believe that when He addressed those wonderful lessons of wisdom to the crowds that surrounded Him, His thoughts and voice did not fly over their heads, and reach across to the bounds of earth, and, sweeping over centuries, were intended to be directed to our hearts as immediately as they were to the hard-hearted generation that heard Him? When He stretched forth His hands in power, when He healed the sick and raised the dead was it for Lazarus or for Jairus, or for any other alone, that He manifested His wonderful works? Do you not feel that there is encouragement and instruction and promise and assurance given to every one of us in all that He did primarily and directly, for others? And do we not thus naturally, believing in that ever-wonderful mystery of our Lord's Incarnation, appropriate to ourselves the whole of His being, and all that flows from Him as essentially, and by a thousand titles, our own?

This is based upon the principle, then, that the Son of God took our nature from us, that He might present it to us again, that the Word of God Himself should be a gift of which we should all partake. Communion, then, is the very basis of this principle,—the desire to take, and the willingness again to give.

But when you come, my brethren, to the close of that wonderful life, when you begin to contemplate that last scene in which was more fully accomplished the end and object for which He came into the world, you understand fully that it was an act of surrender or of sacrifice of Himself; that, according to the strong expression of Scripture, *He gave Himself up*. He delivered Himself up, not merely in the sense that He allowed Himself to be the sport of his persecutors, and the object of every cruelty; but that He willingly made a surrender of Himself for our sakes,—that He ceased to take any part or interest in Himself,—that whatever He had of life or health, and bodily beauty and vigor, whatever He had of enjoyment, by freedom habitually from pain or even affliction, nay, still more, by that higher privilege of being exempt from sin and incapable of staining that, even through the acceptance of imputation,—He was pleased to despoil Himself of, and, in His first appearance amongst us, He may be said to have emptied Himself of His own accord, in order that He might humble Himself to be like us. Much more in the promised cross and in the passion, we may say that He truly cast aside all interest and right of His

own in whatever he had, that even all these might be given up to man, and that man might have the full benefit of them. Nay, He went further than this. Who would have believed that, for a single instant, it would have been possible for love itself, though strong as death, to rob Him of the consciousness of the grace, and acceptance, and good will, and of His own Divine Father? Who would have thought that affection for us, however strong, would have prevailed to the extent of inducing Him to cast aside that highest and divinest privilege of His, of seeing ever in the midst of persecution and suffering, of calumny and abandonment, the smiling countenance of His own Father beaming upon His soul, and there keeping eternal peace?

Thus far He made a surrender and sacrifice of whatever was His, that all this might show His love to be more complete. He made over for us, He delivered up for our sakes all these things, that so He might retain nothing more. And what did remain? Even that which did remain must go. There must not be anything which love will not surrender. That body must be in every possible way tormented, rent, disfigured, put to shame, and, at length, struck with death.

Now, contemplate that solemn moment; and contrast first all that has preceded, and tell me what is your share, your personal, individual share, in that your dying Saviour? Will you say that He has divided Himself for love? Will each of you put in a claim, one to a gash, another to a rent, another to an awful blow of the executioner, and another to a blasphemy of the Jew, as the perfect portion of redemption which was given to you? O no; your hearts shrink from the idea of dividing your Saviour or His love, which is as awful and as repugnant to a loving and Christian heart as the scene at the foot of the cross, that of men dividing His garments amongst them, and soldiers casting dice for His undivided coat. We must have all, or nothing. Although there was not a tear shed in the garden of Gethsemani, although there was not a drop of blood upon the pavement of Pilate, although there was not a single drop of that mysterious water which issued from His heart, trickling down the cross, which was not enough to cancel the iniquities of the world and ransom all men, yet would He not divide these His treasures although there was enough to be given to each, and for each to reach; but He would give the whole price to every one, and He would not allow that one, though the most beloved, had the least part, the smallest share in that inheritance which, dying on the cross, He gave to all, than others which might appear to be the choicer souls or more predestined friends. To Mary who, in perfect sympathy, loves and suffers with Him on the cross, He gave no more than He gave to Judas who had denied Him, or to the wretch who wielded the hammer above His sacred frame. No; the price of redemption is one, and the whole must be given to all. Each of us have received that gift from the Son of God than which nothing could be greater; *i. e.*, the whole of Himself sacrificed, surrendered, and given up for the least of us the least worthy of His love. We were captives in the enemy's hands; we were slaves in the oppressor's chains, and He came to rescue us, not by the strong hand of Moses, but in the humble guise of the ransomed. He came to offer the price, and the justice which held us bound exacted that terrible condition which required an infinite price only to accomplish it,—that that which was perfect, that which was unbounded, that which was infinite should be paid for all. For all it was given, but for each one also. So that no matter whether there shall come generation after generation when we are gone, and claim a share in that redemption,—no matter that the world shall be peopled for thousands of years with millions more of souls than it now possesses, for every one of those there will have been the same measure of redemption and atonement paid, as there was for the thief who first snatched the prize of salvation and applied it to himself upon his cross!

This is the wonderful way, then, in which God gives Himself to us. You all feel that so true is this, that there is not one amongst us to whom our Blessed Redeemer has not doubly made Himself a gift. You feel that He came to give Himself for you when He entered into the world. You feel that He gave Himself entirely for you when He left the world for a time by expiring upon the cross. Surely, the measure of His love is accomplished. Surely, we can desire nothing more. He has given all that He had,—in what way more can He give Himself to us? Or, if He can, what claim shall we presume to make to more than this?

I answer, my brethren, that we do ask for much more. And I answer confidently, that our claim will be granted. It is of the very nature of love that it cannot be satisfied without completeness. It will not have a half-heart. It will not allow of an affection