

tively observed a lily? The leaves nearest to the ground are of dark green; they are large, thick and somewhat coarse. Nothing in them announces the glorious flower that will surmount them. But, in proportion as the leaves grow higher on the stem, they become smaller, finer and are of a lighter and more delicate hue, as if nature were striving to form that balmy masterpiece which, in the words of the Gospel, surpasses all the magnificence of Solomon. Even thus, on the royal stem of David, whence the Messiah was to spring, there were some disfiguring shoots, I mean to say some souls but little worthy of Him who is called the Lily of the valleys, there were sinners, such as Joram, Ozias, Manasses, Amon. But it was fitting that the more immediate ancestors of Jesus, should be Saints, especially the two last, Joachim and Anne. Otherwise, the Jews, who had known the parents of Mary, might have said to Jesus, what they said to the man who had been born blind: "Thou wast born in sins and dost thou teach us?" There is no doubt then that these two holy persons merited the eulogium pronounced by the Holy Spirit on Zacharias and Elizabeth, the parents of John the Baptist: "Both were just in the eyes of the Lord, and walked in all the commandments of the Lord without blame."

This eminent sanctity had also been fostered by the circumstances in which our Saint had found himself, for, though of royal race, his family had lost much of their former importance and wealth.

St-Joachim was of the root of Jesse and lineally descended from King David through that king's son Nathan. His position in life seems to have been that of an owner of flocks of sheep, and it is said of him that he served God in the simplicity and goodness of his heart. Occupied with the care of his flocks, he distributed large alms to the poor that feared God and were faithful to His law. He divided his wool, lambs, and other profits into three equal parts, of which he devoted one part to the widows and orphans, to the