

LEAGUE OF THE SACRED HEART.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

GENERAL INTENTION FOR MAY, 1898.

Recommended to our Prayers by His Holiness, Leo XIII.

American Messenger of the Sacred Heart.

Devotion is not something to be described adequately by words. It is essentially so active that deeds alone are its proper expression.

It is the habit of the heart, and not the intellect, that is the seat of devotion. Many souls this alone would be a welcome answer to their prayers.

It is important to know, and for many souls this alone would be a welcome answer to their prayers, that all the things mentioned in the last paragraph may have something to do with true religious devotion.

Devotion is a special act of the will by which we give ourselves over to God's service promptly, unreservedly, disinterestedly; it withdraws us from all that is not God's, and makes us cling to Him, and to all that is His, in the measure in which it belongs or approaches to Him.

The Blessed Virgin Mary belongs to God, who is near and dear to Him in a singular way, and, therefore, it is proper that our devotion to Him should extend to her in a special way.

True devotion can always be unerringly distinguished by its simplicity. This is why Catholic piety asks no questions about the scriptural grounds for devotion to Our Lady.

The prayer, composed from the message which the archangel addressed to the Virgin Mary, has all that need be said to account for our devotion to her.

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The angel of the Lord called Mary "Blessed," and, when saluted as Elizabeth, she prophesied that all generations "shall call me blessed."

Before the angel appeared unto Mary, she was truly devoted to God, and to her neighbor. From the time of his message, her devotion to Him, and to all mankind, assumed the special and extraordinary character that entitles her in turn to a devotion on our part.

Mary was full of grace, immaculate in her conception, most holy in her life, a virgin most chaste, because she was the Mother of God, and, becoming Mother of God that He might, through her, assume our nature, and redeem it from its ruin and corruption.

Singular Vessel of Devotion, is one of the Litany's titles for Mary, because she was devoted to Almighty God and to her Divine Son, in a measure that we can never estimate.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is much needed in our day. We need to lift our hearts out of the despatch that grows upon us, at the sight of the iniquity that abounds everywhere.

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the strange, inert, occasional sentiment or experience that so many consider it. We need the mother of fair love, of fear, of knowledge and of holy hope.

The objects and the motives of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary are so numerous, and they are all so important, that it must necessarily assume many forms, and give rise to a variety of practices.

A love for the Blessed Virgin Mary, and a filial confidence in her intercession, enters naturally into the Catholic's heart. It is part of his faith, and, like the Church, he is ready to suffer, and if need be, die for devotion to the mother of Christ.

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SPIRITISM—AND OTHER THINGS.

1. Has the Church investigated spiritualism to the extent of being able to decide whether the manifestations, rappings, etc., giving at seances of this cult, are produced through the agency of the spirits, good or evil, or merely by the art of conjurers?

2. How is God justified in creating a soul whose environments preclude the possibility of its ever waking to moral consciousness? And how is He merciful if He, even after a life of crime, condemns such a soul?

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As to mediums and their trance performances, there is room for much fraud, trickery and deception. But it must be remembered that every fraud is a counterfeit of the real, as every error is a counterfeit of the truth.

with counterfeit notes; there are genuine ones. St. Paul recognized this fact in his dealings with a medium at Philippi. St. Luke, in his Acts of the Apostles, tells of it in this wise: "It came to pass as we went to prayer, a certain girl, having a pythonical spirit, met us, who brought to her masters much gain by divining."

But how distinguish a fraudulent from a real, superhuman manifestation? In every investigation the phenomena must be assumed to be the result of human or other natural forces until it becomes evident that they cannot be accounted for in that way.

A priest, now dead, told us of the following case: Kate Fox, one of the original Fox sisters, of Rochester knocking fame, who married Dr. Kane, the explorer, became a Catholic.

"What or who is that?" he asked. "It is the person or being that follows me," said Mrs. Kane. "I cannot deny its existence, and I was not required to when I became a Catholic."

"Does that thing or whatever it is know the name of my grandmother?" The reply was three strong, clear raps on the table.

"Very well let it go on." Mrs. Kane began to call out the alphabet. Let us suppose the name to be Bridget, as we have forgotten it.

"It is," said the priest. "And my advice to you is to have nothing more to do with that being. It knows more than you do; you admit it lies, and you have no way of knowing when it speaks the truth in those matters of which you are ignorant."

Another case is given by Father Gruener, in his most interesting book, "Spirits of Darkness." An ignorant country boy out in Wisconsin showed signs of being an enigmaman. Father Gruener heard of the case and went to investigate.

James Spence, Chatham, Ont., writes:—"I had been a sufferer from Catarrh for fifteen years. It became chronic and I had given up hopes of ever being cured when advised by a friend to try Dr. Chase's Catarrh Cure."

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own breast. In talking to Father Gruener he said: "You came near missing the boat last night," referring to an event that took place many miles away. "How did you know that?" "Er hat mir gesagt."

Modern spiritism, when it is not fraud and deception, is necromancy pure and simple, and is forbidden in Deuteronomy, 18-19 to 11: "Beware lest thou have a mind to imitate the abominations of those nations."

Where Specialists Failed Dr. Chase Cured Catarrh. James Spence, Chatham, Ont., writes:—"I had been a sufferer from Catarrh for fifteen years. It became chronic and I had given up hopes of ever being cured when advised by a friend to try Dr. Chase's Catarrh Cure."

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FIVE-MINUTE'S SERMON.

Third Sunday after Easter.

PLEASURE IN SERVING GOD.

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice." (Phil. iv. 4)

It has often been noticed, my dear brethren, and we every day come across examples of it, that when things are going well men think very little of their religious duties.

Now, this shows that the service of God is felt by a great many to be a heavy burden and yoke. And I am sorry to say that this feeling is not confined to those whose passions and low propensities are so strong as to hold them down for a great part of their lives in slavery and subjection to sin and vice.

Now, I am not going to say a word against the service of God which springs from "the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom." The fear of God is not merely good—it is necessary for salvation. But it is only the beginning, not the perfection of wisdom.

This is the teaching of the Holy Scripture, and especially of the great Apostle St. Paul. The text is but a sample of similar injunctions which might be found in every one of his Epistles.

Well, there are ten thousand reasons why the service of God should be delightful and satisfactory; but I can refer to one only this morning—one, however, of which I think that we can all feel the force.

It is no humility to aim low in the spiritual life. It is no pride to aim high, if we do it out of a desire to glorify God. Who knows what graces he has lost, and may be losing at this moment, from want of aspiration?

Consumptives Should Neglect No means of ameliorating their disease. Cod liver oil is acknowledged one of the most valuable remedies in pulmonary complaints.

Nature makes the cures after all. Now and then she gets into a tight place and needs helping out. Things get started in the wrong direction.

Something is needed to check disease and start the system in the right direction toward health. Scott's Emulsion of Cod-liver Oil with hypophosphites can do just this.