

father, held him closely bound in his arms for a half hour, watered him with his tears, urging and supplicating him with every tender prayer to spare his mother, and to allow him to make his First Communion. The father's rage was disarmed, but not his hate. Next morning he took his son with him to the work-shop, and obliged him to labor in his sight all day. He did not lose sight of him for an instant. Deep was the boy's disappointment. He wept night and day, and would not eat. The parish bell calling his companions to the retreat, filled him with sadness. Every stroke fell painfully on his heart.

The following day, the feast of St Joseph, was that appointed for the First Communion. The good curé arrived, and it was not without a sinking heart that he saw among the ranks of the happy little ones the still vacant place. "O Jesus," he said to himself, "wilt Thou let Thy lamb perish?"

But soon a movement of surprise rippled around him, a joyous whispering greeted his ears from all sides: "Look! Look!" The little comrade had returned, and all eyes were beaming upon him. It was plain that he had suffered, that he had wept much, but he looked happy to be there. He took his place at the Holy Table, and received his God like an angel. And now let us say what had happened to bring about such a change. They had prayed to St. Joseph, and the dear saint had taken the innocent heart under the protection of his lily sceptre. He had wrapped the young confessor in the folds of the same mantle that had protected Jesus from His wicked persecutors, and the child had returned free and happy.

And what about the father? Several of the neighbors had remonstrated with him on the subject of his unjust rage. At last, ashamed of his conduct toward the curé and his brutality toward his boy, he withdrew his opposition to the First Communion.

Our Beloved Deceased.

Westport, Ont. : Mrs Ellen McCarth.