

and fulfilment of the promise ; for not having attended, as they ought to have done, to the true spirit of the prophets and inspired writers, whose preachings and writings were first directed to them, but are now made over to the Gentiles.

The priest then recites the *Nicene Creed*, or profession of the Christian and Catholic belief, standing before the middle of the altar ; to shew that, in matters of faith, one is not to swerve to either side, but to have God alone in view, the center of truth and unity, who has revealed it. This circumstance indicates also that the faith is offered alike to Jew and Gentile. At the words; *Et homo factus est, And he was made man*, all present kneel, to shew that they adore him as God who had made himself Man. After kissing the altar, he turns round to the people, and repeats the *Dominius vobiscum*. Thereby wishing the Lord to be with them to confirm their faith ; and the same wish is expressed in the *Et cum spiritu tuo*.

He now proceeds to the Offertory, and dedicates to Almighty God the elements of the sacrifice, the bread and wine, which are thus set aside to be consecrated. After first offering up the bread, he prepares the cup for oblation in a manner that indicates a mystery ; as appears from the words of the prayer he recites on the occasion. He first pours the wine into the chalice, without previously blessing it. Then he blesses the water with the sign of the cross, a mere drop of which he mixes with the wine. The prayer recited at the same time is, as follows : *Deus, qui humanæ substantiæ dignitatem mirabiliter condidisti, et mirabilibus reformasti ; da nobis per hujus aquæ et vini mysterium ejus divinitatis esse consortes, qui humanitatis nostræ fieri dignatus est particeps, Jesus Christus filius tuus, qui tecum vivit et regnat in sæcula sæculorum. O God, who hast so wonderfully constituted the dignity of the human substance, and still more wonderfully reformed it ; grant us through the mystery of this water and wine to be partakers of the divinity of him, who deigned to become a partner in our humanity Jesus Christ thy Son, who lives and reigns with thee, world without end.*

From this prayer it would appear that by the union of the water with the wine is designated in the first place the union of the human nature with the divine, in the person of Jesus Christ ; and in the second place, the union of the blessed with the Deity in the kingdom of heaven. On this account the drop of water, which represents the humanity, is blessed before its union with the wine, which is not blessed, as it represents by its more valuable substance the Deity ; the source itself is all benediction, and does not therefore require, like the other substance to be presanctified. And as the drop of water is in a manner lost and swallowed up in the greater and more estimated substance the wine ; so in Jesus Christ the human person was so lost and totally absorbed or swallowed up, as we may say in the divine nature, as that only one person remained in this Man-God after the incarnation, namely the se-

cond person of the adorable Trinity : for in this mystery God made himself like unto man ; a Being, though but one person, consisting of two distinct substances, a body and a soul ; in order to restore him to his own image and likeness, to which he was first made ; but which sin had impaired. This little, and apparently trifling ceremony, in as far as it represents the union of mankind with the Deity in the kingdom of heaven, shews how little all creatures are, when compared with the Creator, and that as the prophet says, *All the nations are but like the drop of a bucket before him*. *Isaias xl. 15.* In Masses for the Dead, the drop of water is not, as in other Masses, presanctified with the sign of the Cross ; representing, as it does, that portion of human kind, whose sanctification is confirmed ; and such as secures for ever their final union with the Deity.

The prayers recited during the Offertory by the priest, as he bows down before the altar, are all expressive of the general ends, for which the sacrifice is offered up : that is, for the glory of God, to the honour of his saints, and as a propitiation for his own sins in particular, for those of the faithful present ; and for the sins of all mankind in general ; as also for the repose of the faithful departed. Then, turning round, he bids the brethren pray that their common sacrifice may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty : and these answer, or the clerk in their stead : *May the Lord receive the sacrifice from thy hands to the praise and glory of his own name ; for our good, and that of his whole holy Church.*

After the *Secreta*, which are prayers corresponding in number and meaning with the *Collects*, and which the priest recites in a low voice ; he calls aloud on the hearers to raise up their hearts and give thanks to God. They answer him that they have done so, and that to thank him is meet and just. Then he begins what is called the preface, or introduction to the *Canon of the Mass*, with these words : *It is truly meet and just, right and salutary, that we always and in all places give thanks to thee, O Lord ! holy Father, Almighty and eternal God ! &c.* then some particular reason, or mystery is assigned, for which we ought to praise him on the occasion ; after which he concludes in the following sublime strain : *Therefore together with the Angels and Archangels, with the Thrones and dominations, and with the whole host of heaven, do we sing unto thee without end, Holy ! holy ! holy ! Lord God of Sabaoth ! The heavens and the earth are filled with thy glory. Hosannah in the highest ! Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosannah in the highest !*

Next follows the *Canon*, the most sacred and invariable part of the Mass, in which the priest addresses himself in secret to God alone ; but which may be seen, with all the rest, translated *verbatim* in most Catholic prayer-books. The benediction is renewed over the elements, and the particular ends in behalf of the living, for which the Mass is offered up are commemorated in the *Memento*. The priest, now about to consecrate,

spreads his hands over the bread and wine, and beseeches God to receive our oblation, and grant us peace in our days ; to save us from perdition, and cause us to be reckoned among the chosen. Then, as our Lord did at the last supper, and commanded his apostles to do also, he takes first the bread, and blessing it, begs that God would now convert the oblation into the body and blood of his beloved Son. He repeats then over it the words of Christ : *HOC EST ENIM CORPUS MEUM, This is my body* ; immediately adores, and rising elevates the consecrated host.—In like manner he takes the cup, and blessing it pronounces over it these words of our Lord : *HIC EST ENIM CALIX SANGUINIS MEI NOVI TESTAMENTI, QUOD PRO VOBIS ET PRO MULTIS EFFUNDETUR IN REMISSIONEM PECCATORUM. This is the cup of my blood of the New Testament, which for you and for many shall be shed, for the remission of sins.* *Matt. 26, 26, 27, 28.* After which he adores also, and elevates the now consecrated species of wine : no ways doubting but that the same omnipotent word, that called up all things out of nothing, is fully able to perform whatever he has promised to do.

Here now, in the opinion of Catholics, is rendered present the immaculate Victim, so foretold by the prophets, and particularly by Malachy in these words : *From the rising of the sun to the going down thereof (that is, from one extremity of the earth to the other) great is my name among the Gentiles : and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered up my name a pure oblation ; for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts, &c.* *Mal. 1, 11.*

The Elevation denotes the raising up of our Saviour on the cross. It thus also exhibits to the faithful the object of their faith, hope, and love ; who is no longer exposed as on Mount Calvary, to the derision and blasphemy of the public, but to the adoration, praise, and invocation, of the grateful creatures, whom he has redeemed.

The apparently lifeless state in which this divine Victim lies on the altar, with his blood seemingly separated from his body, under the distinct species of the bread and wine, represents his state of death upon the cross, after having poured out the last drop of his sacred blood for our ransom.

The priest then beseeches Almighty God to look down with a propitious countenance on this our sacrifice, as he did on that of the just Abel, of Abraham and of his high priest Melchisedech. Then, bowing down, and kissing the altar, he prays that he, and all who participate with him in the body and blood of Jesus Christ, may be replenished with all heavenly grace and benediction.

Next follows the *Memento* for the dead, in which are recommended to the special mercy of God the souls of those, for whom the priest intends more particularly to intercede, and next the souls of all the faithful departed.

In the *Nobis quoque peccatoribus* he returns to