

is to receive the baptism of penance from the hands of His precursor. Finally she takes us to the various scenes where the three last years of our Redeemer's life are passed ; there we shall assist at His fasting in the desert, His preachings, His miracles, His dolorous Passion, His ignominious death, His triumphant resurrection and glorious ascension.

Thus at the beginning of this blessed year, everything tells us of Jesus-Christ, everything shows us Jesus-Christ, makes us relish Jesus-Christ, everything leads us to make our lives conformable to that of Jesus-Christ. That is what our mother Holy Church wished, and that is what she has done. What human intelligence could have conceived such an idea ? Let us admire this truly divine conception of the Christian year and its most salutary distribution. But above all let us strive to profit by it. We must not let any of these liturgical epochs pass without gathering the fruits and riches they bring us.

The first of these epochs is the holy time of Advent, which is intended to prepare the faithful to worthily celebrate the festival of Christmas, the anniversary of the birth of Jesus-Christ. Advent includes the four Sundays that precede that great feast ; it is a time of penance and prayer. During many centuries abstinence and fasting were practised. Since a long time the Church has softened this rigorous discipline. In Canada the faithful fast and abstain on Wednesdays and Fridays only. Marriages can not be celebrated during this holy time as during Lent. The eyes of the people are informed of the sorrow that fills the heart of the Church by the color of the mourning with which she covers herself. Except on feast days she uses only violet, suspends the angels' canticle *Gloria in excelsis Deo* and the hymn of jubilation : *Te Deum laudamus*.

In humility she awaits the arrival of the Liberator promised to sinning humanity. During this waiting she can but ask, supplicate and hope. But her ardent desires find vent in lamentations. Yes, the liturgical prayers of the holy time of Advent are truly dictated by the Holy Ghost : « *Ipse enim postulat pro nobis gemitibus inenarrabilibus.* » These burning words are in a great measure taken from the inspired lyre of Isaias and the royal harp of David. Sublime prayers they are, replete with unction that penetrates the heart and sanctifies the soul. What abundant nourishment, light and consolation would our piety find in them ! What sweet tears they would cause you to shed, dear reader, were you to take the trouble to read them in your prayer-book and to meditate on them ! How easy it would then be for you to enter into the sentiments of your mother, the Holy Church and consequen-