



The Holy Old Man Simeon

CENTURIES ago, two holy old men died a blessed death which any Christian might envy: one of them, St. Joseph, expired in the arms of Jesus; the other, Simeon the just, departed, as it were, holding Jesus in his arms.

Death is naturally sad, nevertheless it becomes as sweet as happiness, when we are borne in the arms of Jesus from this earthly life to the bosom of God; or when we appear before God holding Jesus in our arms. If it is Jesus that presents us to His Father, we are confident of a favorable reception: if it is we that present Jesus our kind welcome is equally assured.

But who will give us Jesus to transform the sadness of death? To change the melancholy road leading to the tomb into the bright path leading to heaven, to eternal felicity?

Divine Eucharist, this is your work. After having been our joy, our strength, our consolation in life, you will likewise be our joy, our strength, our consolation in death. After having been the food of the traveller in his exile, You will be the Viaticum of his last journey and through you he will close his eyes in peace, in the Saviour's loving embrace.

It was a signal grace, that promise made to the holy old man Simeon, the assurance he received from the Holy Ghost, that he would not taste death until his eyes had seen Christ the Saviour. From that day forth he lived only for Jesus, sighing for His coming, desiring the promised meeting diligently preparing himself for its fulfilment. According to tradition, the promise was not fulfilled until he had attained his one hundred and thirteenth year.

The long waiting was painful on account of the intensity of his desires, but he was a just man, and the Gospel