

# THE MAGNIFICAT

## The Story of a Pretty Mexican Custom.

When we returned from our walk I heard a subdued but restrained humming that seemed to come from within the house.

"What is that?" I asked.

"The family," answered Don Pancho, "has just finished reciting the Rosary and begun the Litany."

"Why did you not tell me that before? I would have greatly enjoyed joining in the devotions."

"I will ask you to join us, then, some other time—I am afraid we are too late now; so we will have supper," said my host.

During supper I was exceedingly delighted by the interesting conversation of Don Pancho, and even more by the good manners and behaviour of his children, who had evidently been well trained, and to whom, my dear reader, I shall take this opportunity to introduce you.

The oldest, named for his father, was a young man about eighteen years old; then came Lola and Lupe, two charming girls fourteen and sixteen years of age respectively; and, finally, a baby girl.

Supper over, Pepe and Louis kissing their parents' hands, requested their permission to go to bed, respectfully shaking my hand before doing so, and gracefully bidding me good-night. I shook hands as well with the baby, who was in Lupe's arms. Lola accompanied the boys to see them safely tucked into bed, and Don Pancho's wife, excusing herself, left us for a few moments.

After a while Don Pancho said to me: "Come with me, and, without being seen ourselves, we will watch the boys preparing for bed."

Parting the curtains that draped a glass door, I gazed upon a beautiful picture. Pepe, robed in a long, silk nightgown, was kneeling upon his knees, his hands reverently joined, saying his prayers. During his devotions he made the sign of the cross several times, and, finally, before lying down, kissed the picture of Our Lady that hung upon the wall.

On the other bed knelt Louis, and Lola was beside the little fellow reciting the prayers, which he repeated after her. At last she took his hand, and guided him in making the sign of the cross, then gave him the picture of the Blessed Virgin to kiss. When both boys were tucked under the covers, the mother entered the room. Stopping at Pepe's bed, she leaned over him, whispered something to him, made the sign of the cross on his forehead and kissed him. These movements were all repeated at the bed of Louis.

"What is she whispering?" I asked with interest.

"Come," said Pancho, "and while we are enjoying a cigar I will tell you a charming story about this practice which we learned from our mothers."

When we had seated ourselves comfortably, my host began his tale.

What my wife whispered to the children was the Magnificat, the song of Our Lady. You recall the story I told you about "La Calle de Olmedo"—now let me tell you the sequel to my tale. When I went to bed that night listening to the legend recounted to me by aunt, I could not sleep. I was so frightened by the relation. To shut out the frightful visions she had conjured up, I buried my head under the bed-clothes, grasping my head in my left hand, while I blessed myself time and again with my right. Suddenly I felt a gentle pull at the pillow that covered my face, and, thoroughly frightened, I closed my eyes and crushed the beads in my hand! A second passed, and then a soft hand crossed my forehead. Opening my eyes, I saw, not the hobgoblin I expected to see, but the smiling face of my mother. Kissing me, she said: "Be quiet, my child, you must go to sleep at once. It is too late for you to be awake." And whispering the Magnificat, she made the sign of the cross on my forehead.

Before leaving, she gave me her hand to kiss, but grasping it between my own, I clung to it and did not release it until sleep overcame me.

During the night no ghosts appeared to disturb my slumber, but in their stead there came two angels as white as the driven snow, who showed me the most beautiful scenery in paradise—doubtless they were my mother's guardians angels and my own.

On the following day, when I returned from school, after kissing my mother's hand—a universal custom, by the way, among Mexican children—I asked her indignantly: "Mamma,

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body of the old woman, but lying in a crotche filled with snow they found the baby safe and uninjured—the protection of Our Lady had saved him!"

"This is the story my mother told me," concluded Don Pancho. "and now, my dear Faustus, you know why Mexican mothers do not forget to bless their children before retiring, and to murmur the Magnificat."—Faustus, in Benziger's Magazine.

### Struggling Infant Mission.

IN THE DIOCESE OF NORTHAMPTON, FAKENHAM, NORFOLK ENGLAND.

Where is Mass said and benediction given at present? IN A GARRET, the use of which I get for a rent of ONE SHILLING per week.

Average weekly Collection...3s 6d. No endowment whatever, except HOPE. Not a great kind of endowment, you will say, good reader. Ah, well! Who knows? Great things have, as a rule, very small beginnings. There was the stable of Bethlehem, and God's hand is not shortened, I HAVE hopes. I have GREAT hopes that this latest Mission, opened by the Bishop of Northampton, will, in due course, become a great mission.

Best outside help is, evidently, necessary. Will it be forthcoming?

I have noticed how willingly the CLIENTS OF ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA readily come to the assistance of poor, struggling Priests. May I not hope that they will, too, cast a sympathetic and pitying eye upon me in my struggle to establish an outpost of the Catholic Faith in this so far as the Catholic Faith is concerned—barren region? May I not hope, good reader, that you, in your zeal for the progress of that Faith, will extend a helping hand to me? I cry to you with all earnestness to come to my assistance. You may not be able to do much; but you CAN DO LITTLE. Do that little which is your power, for God's sake, and with the other "littles" that are done I shall be able to establish this new Mission firmly.

DON'T TURN A DEAF EAR TO MY URGENT APPEAL.

"May God bless and prosper your endeavors in establishing a Mission at Fakenham.

ARTHUR,  
Bishop of Northampton."

Address—Father H. W. Gray, Hampton Road, Fakenham, Norfolk, England.

P.S.—I will gratefully and promptly acknowledge the smallest donation, and send with my acknowledgment a beautiful picture of the Sacred Heart.

This new Mission will be dedicated to St. Anthony of Padua.

about football and school, and came completely out of the abstraction into which the lingering memory of cases in court sometimes plunged him during meals.

When angel-cake and colored ice-cream came in, the handsome lady across the table smiled and said: "Charles, Don Carlos,"—it was the name she had used playfully in their youthful courtship, and threw him back twenty-five years.—"Don Carlos, this is a birthday celebration."

"Oh, it isn't mine, mamma," came from the little girl. "I had two last winter."

"No, my dear, it is mamma's." "Mamma's!" cried Judge Edgell. Then, as his son would have said, he "tumbled." Everybody, he certainly, had forgotten the dear lady's birthday. The self-contained if not venerable justice left his seat, strode round to his wife and kissed her heartily. The woman glowed. The elder daughter brushed away a tear. Seeing the tear, the small daughter began to cry. Mr. Edgell looked distressed, and his more manly son pootch-pootched at the fuss. "That's a nice way to end a good dinner!"

"My boy," quoth the father, "it's a good way to end a dinner which has in it a little repentance, and it is a good way to begin now for other dinners, about one a year. No, we won't wait a year. This one does not count. To-morrow night we'll have a real birthday celebration for mother, and she shall not have to superintend it. We'll have a caterer to do the job. It is a poor stick of a husband who makes his wife get up her own birthday celebration."—Youth's Companion.

There can be a difference of opinion on most subjects, but there is only one opinion as to the reliability of Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator. It is safe, sure and effectual.

### A Reporter's Error.

The daily paper is very often unconsciously funny when it gets to reporting anything connected with the Church. Recently one of Boston's enterprising sheets had the following:

"Rev. Joseph Rathner, by his presence of mind at the 7.30 Mass last Sunday in St. Francis's Church, Trenton, N.J., averted a panic by throwing a blazing sacristsy, set fire by a candle, out of the church before the flames spread."

Now, a sacristsy, according to the Standard Dictionary, is "a room attached to a church or religious house in which the sacred vessels and vestments are kept, and in which the clergy robe." Hence it will be seen that the reporter who saw the priest throw a "blazing sacristsy" out of the church must have been "seeing things at night."—Sacred Heart Review.

### Many Happy Returns.

Judge Edgell hurried into his house as usual at half-past six, threw off his coat, washed his hands and hastened into the dining-room. At the threshold he recoiled in surprise. A blaze of light dazzled him. The best silver and glass were laid out. Candles burned at the four corners of the table. Cut flowers filled the room with a fragrance that extinguished the usual smell of cooked food.

At the table his wife bloomed like a young girl. Her best gown of white voile trimmed with lace—her mother's wedding lace—showed her fine throat and arms. His little daughter sat with the self-conscious smile of party correctness, wearing blue ribbons on her "pigtail," and his son beamed behind a great deal of glistening shirt-front. His older daughter was busy giving a last touch to things on the sideboard. She was the most serious of all in her grave officiousness.

"Goodness! Well! Well! Who's coming? Have I forgotten a dinner engagement?"—The Bryces aren't coming till next week."

"The week after next," corrected his daughter soberly.

"Then who? What? My, what a handsome spread!"

"Daddy," observed the youth in the white shirt, "I thought judges never got surprised at anything, and here you are like a minister at a slipper party."

"My son," said Mrs. Edgell, "you are not quite old enough to make comments of that sort on your parents. Charles," she said, turning to her husband with a cool but gentle smile, "you need not dress; there is not time. This is rather a special event, but I will not explain until dessert. Sit down, dear, and enjoy it with us."

Judge Edgell's training as a lawyer taught him not to ask futile questions of his wife. He sat down, ate one good thing after another, admired his wife, talked with his son

### DOCTORS USING PATENT MEDICINES

The Honest Physician is Anxious to Cure and Uses the Best Available Remedies.

The proposed legislation through the Dominion Parliament for the regulation of the manufacture and sale of patent or proprietary medicines is of the utmost importance, and it is receiving a great deal of attention, not only by the proprietary medicine manufacturers, but also by the leading doctors and druggists. Every manufacturer of reliable and high class remedies welcomes the bill as a step in the right direction. The discussion has brought out the fact that the best physicians in Canada and on the continent approve of and prescribe Psychine in cases of the most difficult character. In a recent instance of a very serious throat and lung trouble the patient had been using Psychine. Two leading United States specialists were consulted, in addition to two eminent Canadian physicians. Upon learning what the patient was using, a sample of Psychine was taken and analyzed, with the result that the physicians advised its continuance. They prescribed no other medicine but Psychine, with the result that the patient has fully recovered and is a splendid walking and talking advertisement for the wonderful curative power of a remedy that will "stand up" before the keenest professional criticism and analysis. As a builder up of the system and restorer of all wasted conditions, Psychine has no equal, and the best and most earnest physicians recognize this fact.

"At the age of 25 my lungs were in a terrible state. I had a gripe the year before; it settled on my lungs and I kept steadily growing worse till I got down so low I was in bed for six weeks. I had a consultation of doctors, and they said they could do nothing more for me. Then I started to use Psychine. I took the medicine for more than a year. It certainly did wonders for me. I am now as strong as I was before my sickness."

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when each had murmured an Our Father for the repose of the robber's soul and cast a stone upon his grave they proceeded on their way."

"What do those stones mean?" I interposed. "I have often wondered."

"Whenever you see a heap of stones surmounted by a cross," said Don Pancho, "you will know by the size of the pile of stones how many Our Fathers have been said for the repose of the soul of the one buried there, for each stone means a prayer. You, too, should say an Our Father and cast a stone."

"I will assuredly do so," I said; "but now, Don Pancho, pray continue your story."

"A few weeks after that adventure," he proceeded, "the wrinkled old widow of El Lobo appeared in the town where Josephine lived, and bought a hut there. She lived a strange life. She was never seen in public during the hours of daylight, though it was known that she was away from her cabin between midnight and dawn. Nobody knew the secret of her life, but instinctively every one avoided her and called her 'La Bruja,' because of her ugliness and the kind of life she led.

"In the course of some months it happened that John found it necessary on one occasion to remain in the city for a few days. Very early one of these mornings, while Josephine was alone in the house, she was awakened by a noise in her room. Jumping from her bed, she rushed to the baby's crib—the child was gone! Darting through the open door, the agonized mother was just in time to see La Bruja, mounted upon a horse, galloping away with baby John in her arms! It was December, and snow had fallen during the night, spreading a mantle of white over the ground. The poor, bare-footed woman, shrieking aloud and begging for mercy for her child, tried in vain to keep the witch in sight.

"Before long, completely exhausted,

ed, she fell upon the snow close to the edge of a deep ravine. As she lay there she remembered that for the first time in her life she had forgotten the night before to bless her son and say the Magnificat. Now she repeated the prayer with great fervor, making the sign of the cross, just as if her boy was with her. As she finished, she looked up, and beheld La Bruja on the other side of the ravine, holding the boy in her hands!

"In a mocking tone the hag called out: 'My dear Josephine, you remember how your beloved John killed my husband some time ago! Now it is my turn. I am merely going to drop your son over the precipice—I hope you will find him at the bottom!'

"As she spoke, the baby cried out, the horse upon which La Bruja rode became frightened, swerved—and pitched his burden headlong into the chasm!

"Josephine fainted. When she awoke she was at home. 'Where is my baby?' she cried, 'where is my boy?'

"'Calm yourself, Josephine,' said a woman of the neighborhood who was watching over her, 'the baby is asleep in his cradle!'

"'In his cradle!' cried the mother, as she leaped from the bed and rushed across the room.

"There, in truth, lay the little one calmly asleep, and, throwing herself upon her knees, Josephine exclaimed: 'O Virgin Mary, my sweet Mother, you have saved him!'

"That is what had happened. Some of the neighbors had heard Josephine's cries and had followed her. They reached the ravine in time to see La Bruja and the boy thrown over the side, and while some of them tenderly lifted the mother and carried her to her home, the others, with sadness in their hearts, made their way to the bottom of the chasm. Torn to pieces by the rocks she had struck, they found the