

➤ The Antidote of Death ➤



AKIND, loving heart has always made a strong appeal to even the most callous and embittered souls. All the world can appreciate an act done out of love, an act which is free from the taint of self-seeking. Ruth's filial solicitude for her lone and widowed mother-in-law, Naomi ; Jonathan's brotherly affection for the persecuted David ; the pious devotion of Eliseus to the prophet Elias ; the predilection of Christ for His virgin-disciple, St. John,--all these examples of disinterested love have a heart-gripping power even for souls that refuse to recognize the existence of God. Maternal love is made the theme of play and story. Even the cold-hearted world, which never cares to let an unfortunate one escape, condones much weakness when there is much love--forgives many sins because the culprit has loved much.

"Greater love than this no man hath that a man lay down his life for his friend." Our Lord died for you and me by a death the most cruel and ignominious, yet that did not satisfy the longings of His Sacred Heart to do us good. At the Last Supper, when the fair head of the Virgin-disciple was pillowed on the throbbing bosom of the Man-God, at that very moment the great loving Heart was filled with the plan which was to bring rest and peace to our souls, which was to build for us a rock of shelter in a weary land, which was to place in our spiritual world a planet, a sun, to be the source of all light and warmth.

Love took Christ to the garden of Gethsemane, where He endured the torture of the bloody sweat ; love tied Him to the pillar, and stripped off His garments, tied to robe Him in the royal scarlet of His own blood ; love put the crown of thorns upon His brow ; love's hand laid the heavy cross on His bruised, aching shoulder, and finally laid Him Himself upon that hard bed of death. And love, that same everlasting love, brings our