

more deeprooted in the heart of man than filial affection, and above all love for the mother whose arms entwined our childhood and whose hand rocked the cradle of our infancy.

Need we then be surprised if, like the love of Jesus for His Mother, in a proportionate degree, the love of Mary for her Mother was beyond all possible measure or weight? If, then, Mary is our most powerful advocate — on account of her affinity to Him — with our Lord, it stands to reason that her Mother — the good and holy St. Ann — must be the most powerful intercessor that we have with Mary in heaven. If Christ can refuse nothing to His Mother, neither can she refuse anything to her own Mother. In degrees, these bonds of love differ because that between Christ and Mary has its divine element, and that between Mary and St. Ann is purely human; yet this latter love is so far beyond the limits of our powers of conception, that all the affections of all the daughters of men for their mothers, combined, would not approach in intensity that of Mary for St. Ann. Consequently, it needs but a slight reasoning to prove how powerful St. Ann must be, what gifts she must possess, what privileges are accorded her, and what rights she enjoys in the domain of celestial glory. We have no need to appeal to the evidence of all the miracles that her shrine has witnessed; even had there never taken place any one of the unnumbered attested miracles that have drawn humanity in millions to her feet, still would our calm and cold reason impress upon us the necessity of a mighty power being vested in her. Then there is another consideration: the love of St. Ann for all men. When Christ, in the person of St. John, gave all the children of our race as sons and daughters to His Holy Mother, she actually became a mother for each one of us. We, therefore, being her children, must necessarily be the objects of an unbounded affection on the part of her own Mother. It is thus that a glorious consoling chain of intercession is forged. When we appeal to St. Ann, she appeals to her daughter; her daughter to Christ her Son; and the return in grace and benedictions comes from the hand of Christ, Our Lord, transmitted to the hand of Mary, His Mother, and, in turn, passed by her on to St. Ann, her Mother, and thence into our souls — the souls of the lovers of that Mother's Mother.