

of her daughter, since it is true to say that the flesh of Jesus-Christ is a part of the flesh that St. Anne gave to Mary. Jesus is the flower of all virtues, the stem of the flower is Mary, and St. Anne is the root of that stem. Now, as the influence of the root ascends from the stem to the flower, likewise that which St. Anne communicated immediately to Mary passes from Mary to Jesus, and the Son of Mary is the grand-son of St. Anne. O happy Mother, how your twenty years of barrenness were advantageously rewarded by a fruitfulness which has brought unto you immortal glory! "For behold all nations will call you blessed."

To understand such excellence and merit, we must also consider the virtues which St. Anne practised to render herself worthy of such a daughter and by her of such a Son.

In truth, her life was nothing but a continual performance of prayer, fasting, almsgiving and of all kinds of good works. Foremost among others, let us admire the great act she accomplished when consecrating to God the Blessed Virgin when three years old. Let us judge, if we can, of the price of that offering, by which she gave a Daughter to the Eternal Father, a Mother to the Incarnate Word, a Spouse to the Holy Ghost, a Queen to Angels, an Advocate to sinners, a Mediatrix to the Souls in Purgatory, a most merciful Mother to all men.

After so rich a gift, what can she refuse to you if you pray to her with due respect and humility? Trust then in her protection, and strive to imitate her in the practice of her virtues, and especially in her union and familiarity with Jesus and Mary. Happy they who watch, and lead, like she did, a life sober and chaste in the presence of the Lord; He will protect them on the day of judgment, they will follow Him everywhere and will behold Him with sovereign joy as the companions and friends of the Bridegroom.