

THE CHARITY OF THE POOR



VENRABLE and saintly priest, in charge of a parish so poor that he was at times almost without the necessities of life, obtained permission to make an appeal for help to a large and fashionable congregation at Paris. When the opportunity came, he spoke to his listeners of the value and sublimity of the virtue of charity, and then, casting his eyes around the magnificent church in which he was preaching, he told with great feeling and pathos that in his parish our sacramental Lord was in need of everything that there was not so much as a decent tabernacle in which to place His adorable body. "O hearken to my words, my brethren," said the zealous priest ; " make a sacrifice of something, I beseech you, for the honor of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, and I promise you that if you do so He will reward you a thousand fold for your gifts."

The offerings were generous in response to his appeal and the heart of the venerable priest was made glad.

The following day when he was about to leave the capital he was approached by an aged woman, whose dress and appearance denoted extreme poverty. She saluted him, and then said :

" Are you not the priest whose church lacks a decent tabernacle ? If so, I want to give you something."

" Thankfully shall I receive whatever you may give me," replied the *curé*.

With trembling hands the aged woman handed him a much-crumpled piece of paper, tied up in an old handkerchief. Opening these, what was the *curé's* astonishment to discover a one hundred franc gold piece.

" This is too much, my good woman," exclaimed the priest ; " we have to give only according to our means, and you do not seem to me to be in a position to sacrifice so large a sum as this."

" Thank God, I am both willing and able to give you this," the donor replied.