

wearisome journeyings of his evangelical missions, who shared in the sufferings of his passion, and whose soul was transpierced with a sword of grief at the foot of the cross?

Is it not through the mediation of Mary, that God has visited and redeemed his people? *Quia visitavit et fecit redemptionem plebis suæ.* Is it not by her instrumentality that he gave a Saviour to the world? Is it not from her virginial womb that he appointed his mercy should flow with so much exuberance over all mankind? And having thus seen fit to give us once Jesus, through Mary, shall not this his established order subsist for ever? For the gifts of God are without repentance. It is, and therefore ever will be true, that having once received, through her, the universal principle of grace, we also receive, through her agency, its divers applications, according to the different exigencies of the Christian life. Her maternal charity having, to so great an extent contributed to our salvation in the mystery of the Incarnation, the universal principle of grace and Salvation, she must eternally contribute to it in all the operations of the same grace, which are nothing more than its results and consequences.

Wherefore we see that the church, in her infancy, firmly convinced that Mary, owing to her credit with God, is truly the gate of heaven, put herself under her powerful protection, manifested the greatest confidence in her, and constantly invoked her as her patroness and advocate with Jesus.

The primitive Christians and the faithful throughout all ages, who, from the bosom of the church had sucked in, with the faith and love of Jesus, the same sentiments of devotion towards his holy mother, and of confidence in her protection, deemed it their bounden duty to celebrate her power and her glory by the numerous festivals instituted in her honour, vied with one another in their zeal, to erect altars, to consecrate temples, under the invocation of her name, and were never wearied in praying to her, as the Mother of Mercy, *Mater misericordæ*, to intercede for them during life, and especially at the awful hour of death, *Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis nunc et in hora mortis nostræ.*

The Saints, from time immemorial, penetrated with filial love and the most tender devotion towards the blessed Virgin, gave the most constant proofs of zeal for Her service and perseverance in their supplications, that she would vouchsafe