

Here a father, who earns by his toil and his sweat,  
 For his wife and his little ones raiment and meat,  
 Implores "that the blessing of Heaven descend  
 On his darlings! may angels defend  
 And protect them from sin, and from shame, and from danger  
 May they never be forced to seek bread from the stranger!"  
 A lady there kneels, like a princess arrayed,  
 Rich plumage, silks, jewels, profusely displayed,  
 Deck her off as a queen, or a new-wedded bride,  
 Or a votary of fashion, or daughter of pride—  
 She pores o'er her book—'tis wet with a tear,  
 God's grace has prevailed, she is melted in prayer!  
 She thinks of His swaddling clothes—~~manger~~—straw bed—  
 Of His flight into Egypt—His thorned-crowned head!  
 Ah! she sees—she resolves! She'll henceforth lay aside  
 All the gew-gaws of vanity, baubles of pride!  
 Vain pomps of the world she'll renounce! Of her store  
 She'll distribute profusely to solace the poor!  
 Her life shall be spent in His service alone  
 Whose blood was poured forth for her sins to atone!

The Service proceeds. Now the celebrant stands  
 Erect at the altar. With uplifted hands,  
 Mien solemn, voice suppliant, eyes dimmed with a tear,  
 He pleads for his people, repeating the "prayer!"  
 Now the Missal's removed—while the Gospel's reciting,  
 All stand through respect, bright tapers are lighting,  
 When ended, with reverence he kisses the Word,  
 Which has just been announced as the voice of the Lord!

"*Orate Fratres*"—Brethren pray  
 That my offering and yours be accepted this day!  
 "*Sursum Corda*"—Our hearts let us raise  
 To the Lord God of hosts, in thanksgiving and praise!  
 Now tinkles the bell. Lo! the moment is nigh—  
 That moment so awful, when HE, THE MOST HIGH,  
 Will descend on the altar! ~~our~~ *Sacrifice, food!*—  
 "THIS IS MY BODY!"—"THIS IS MY BLOOD!"  
 The words are pronounced!—The Host's elevated!  
 The Chalice is raised! The people prostrated  
 In deep adoration! in homage profound!  
 Each heart glows in worship! each head meets the ground!  
 O wonder of wonders! O mystery! far  
 More mysterious than all other mysteries are!  
 O Sacrament hidden! O miracle grand!—  
 But, my soul, is it thus? What I can't understand  
 Must I believe?—Yes. Bow down, and adoring, believe!  
 Or say 'twas the wish of thy God to deceive!  
 No alternative's left. Words can't be more plain—  
 Words spoken by Jesus again and again!

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