

fight, and in the homes, where wives and mothers pray and suffer.

Another lad relates what took place in a certain trench, when he was on duty. Several soldiers having expressed a wish to have the visit of a priest, a military chaplain came to the trench and heard their confessions: "Stay here," they urged. "Monsieur l'Abbé, and after midnight you might say Mass for us." "My poor boys," replied the priest, "I must go, for I have given my word that long before midnight I shall be at X — I carry the Blessed Sacrament with me, and would gladly have remained had it been possible." A young soldier then came forward "I am," he said, "a deacon from the seminary of X —, in the diocese of X —; if we had the Blessed Sacrament with us, I might give Holy Communion to my comrades after midnight." I must here remind my readers that only the soldiers in the first line of trenches, who are in immediate danger of death, are allowed to receive Holy Communion without fasting. This particular trench was not in these conditions. The priest gladly fell in with the proposal and left the Blessed Sacrament in the deacon's hands. At the extremity of the trench the men then excavated a niche, lined it with leaves and within it placed the small silver box and its Treasure. Until midnight, each man, in turn knelt and prayed before the humble shrine; then when the time came, the deacon fulfilled his office. Incidents like these are frequent, and the soaked trenches of Flanders appear in many cases in the light of hidden sanctuaries, where our soldiers prepare by prayer for the death that awaits them.



St Thomas of Aquin reminds us that while in the other Sacrament we have a Divine efficacy, a supernatural grace given by God, in the Eucharist we have the grace of grace, the giver of them all, Christ Himself.



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