

Several Fathers of the Church have written admirable things concerning the glorious Mother of the Virgin, and pious souls have no trouble in believing them. According to their writings and to respectable traditions, she must have succeeded, in union with her holy partner, in regaining the primitive state of innocence of Adam and Eve before their fall, in extinguishing irrevocably all the revolts and lustful desires which were its punishment; she must have led for many years with Joachim a life more angelic than human, proportionally devoted to the labors of a pastoral life, the assistance of the poor, and the meditation of divine truths. During many a long year, she must have begged by her prayers and tears the fulfilment of the prophecies and of the promises made to her nation, bearing with admirable patience the shame that her sterility had brought upon her house, for such was the prejudice of Israel, and she must, likewise, never have ceased entreating for the redemption of mankind. At last, God took pity on her tears, and after so long a preparation, granted to her a miraculous fecundity. The Archangel Gabriel came to announce unto her the Immaculate Conception of Mary.

Oh! who may tell us now of the angelic joys of Saint Anne, of the heart-felt thanksgiving of Saint Joachim, of the threefold concert of praise and blessing which, from the midst of that family, thenceforth consoled, will ascend to the Most High! Hail, worthy Daughter of such parents, reward of their holy desires! Hail, miraculous Daughter of old age fertilized by the influence of the Ho'y Ghost! Hail, o Mary Immaculate!

O Saint Anne! O all-gracious! to-day at last thy credit with the heavenly Father has been revealed unto us: what mayest thou not obtain for us, since thou hast obtained Mary from His infinite bounty?

Thus, dear reader, when heaven differs the fulfilment of our wishes, it is often for the purpose of rendering