



The Immaculate.
From a painting by Beatrix Parsons.



Particular Practice

For the month of December: Frequent Assistance at Holy Mass.

CHRISTIANS should be eager to assist as often as possible at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, even daily were it in their power. Many act through routine or profound ignorance concerning the Holy Sacrifice. In fact, we see them practically treating this August mystery as an ordinary ceremony which the priests perform every day, and at best, suited to them and to the old people.

Never abandon yourself to such unchristian appreciations of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Be always convinced of its sovereign efficaciousness. It is, in truth, the best of prayers, and the most abundant source of grace, because it is the sacrifice of Jesus: and assistance at Mass is better than all other prayers, or any other practice of devotion.

It is essentially the most perfect of prayers. Who prays at the altar? Is it the celebrant? Undoubtedly he unites his offering to that of the Holy Victim, but he who prays at Holy Mass, is Jesus Christ Himself, our Mediator, that is to say, the Christian's delegate before the merciful throne of His Father. Impossible for us to express how perfect that prayer is or with what benevolence God the Father receives the requests of His Well-Beloved Son.

When a man has acquired a reputation for sanctity his prayers are eagerly sought after ; and if the Blessed Virgin still lived on earth, her home would always be full of people soliciting her powerful intercession.

And behold our Lord Jesus is there in the Church, His earthly home, waiting until we disclose to Him the favours we wish to obtain from God, and yet His temple is almost deserted.

Let us realize the truth of those words of St Francis of Sales addressed to Saint Chantal : " My child it is much more profitable for you to assist at Mass every day, than to omit it under pretext of attending to your meditation ; because the corporeal presence and immolation of the Saviour, cannot be replaced by His spiritual presence."

However fervent our prayers offered in private may be, whatever power our supplications may possess, never will they attain to the sublimity or efficacy of the prayer of Jesus at Holy Mass.

Assistance at the Holy Sacrifice obtains for us more numerous graces. All Christians know that Mass, being the reproduction of the Sacrifice of the Cross, is the source of all grace in the Church. A cause acts with as much more power as it directly reaches the object on which it operates. The sun renders the plant coming under its rays more beautiful and vigorous, than that which grows in the shade.

When a king invests large sums for the improvement of his states, he works, undoubtedly, for the benefit of all his subjects ; nevertheless how much more favored are those who surround the prince himself and can thus directly address him concerning their wants.

Holy Mass is the application of the merits of the Passion, the solemn distribution of the infinite treasures of Redemption ; happy then, are the Christians who assist at those effusions of the goodness and mercy of Jesus, and who draw abundantly from the superabundant riches of His Heart.

When chivalry reigned in France : Fathers addressing their sons about to take up arms gave them this important advice : " My dear Son, be faithful in assisting at Mass every day." And M. Leo Gauthier who has

made a study of that interesting epoch tells us that this custom was universally observed in all families.

This pious habit does not interfere with our other duties. On the contrary, it renders our conscience more peaceful, our heart more joyous, and our will more determined to accomplish its duty. While stationed at Laghonnat, the famous General de Sonis, of whom Gallifert said : " No one knew better than he how to command and how to obey, " never missed his daily Mass. A member of his staff says : " Every morning at half-past-six or seven, the General goes to Mass, I always accompany him, but we go in silence."

Ozanam writes : " The best way to economize time, is to lose half-an-hour every morning at Mass. What sources of temptation does it not cut off from the rest of the day, this half-hour conscientiously lost.

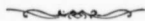
La Rochejaquelin expressing this same thought in his military language says : " When I do not assist at my daily Mass, I am always more or less unruly that day."

Rev. F. Eymard says : " If you assist at Mass every day, it will fill your life with happiness. All your duties will be better performed, and your soul stronger to carry your daily cross."

Ah ! if the souls in Purgatory could return. What sacrifices would they not make to assist at one Mass. If we really understood the excellence of the Holy Sacrifice, the advantages, the profit to be derived therefrom, we would not miss a single day without assisting at Holy Mass.

Seek to mingle gentleness in all your rebukes ; bear with the infirmities of others ; make allowances for constitutional frailties ; never say harsh things if kind things will do as well.

Were there anything better or fairer on earth than gentleness, Jesus Christ would have taught it to us ; and yet he has given us only two lessons to learn of him — meekness and humility of heart.





The Lily of "Mater Admirabilis"

THE lily gently swaying in the summer breeze, uplifted her graceful form and began her quaint and touching narrative in the following words :

I was born on one the beautiful plains surrounding the City of Nazareth, a City renowned for its lovely blossoms, its very name signifying "City of Flowers." A mild sunbeam had scarcely opened my Calix to the beneficent light of day when thousands of lilies blooming beside me unanimously and enthusiastically exclaimed, "How beautiful she is!" I did not feel any emotion of pride, but raised my heart in thanksgiving to God who had made me so beautiful; begging of Him always to preserve untarnished the whiteness of my petals, and never to allow one of my golden stamens to be snatched away; asking Him to accept and guard, for His greater honor and glory, the sweet perfume exhaled at this moment by my fresh corolla. After admiring, for an instant, the beautiful blue sky, I closed my calix scarcely opened, and my young and tender stem swayed with gladness at the same moment I felt myself uprooted from my bed among the lilies.

I raised my head and found I was under the wing of an angel. "Do not fear, lily of predilection," said he, your mission is admirable, and your life will be immortal. For long years, you will represent the purity of an Immaculate Virgin, and after her death she will cause you to bud in the hearts consecrated to her." At these

words my calix reopened, my stem became more beautiful and deep in my flower heart I felt a tender love for the little Virgin who was to answer to the name of Mary

The angel entered a humble home and placed me close to the crib of a little child, other angels in millions surrounding her and making the air resound with their joyous hymns. I united with them and drew as close as I could to the heart of the little Virgin, so young as yet, and already so agreeable to God...

The child grew and I grew with her. Having attained the age when her parents wished to place her in the Temple, I accompanied her thither and when in her musical voice she consecrated herself to God, she offered me to Him as pledge of her fidelity. Her youth passed calmly and all too quickly in the house of the Lord, where her time was devoted to prayer, to the study of the Scriptures and to unremitting work.

But the moment of sacrifice drew near. Mary was in her fourteenth year. In obedience to the law, she was obliged to leave her cherished solitude to wed the husband God had destined for her. Then she pressed me to her heart, saying: "Dazzling pure white lily remain with me always. You are a thousand times dear to me." I was only too happy to accede to her request, to me it was a noble mission.

One day while Mary was at prayer, I was beside her exhaling my sweetest perfume at the feet of the Eternal; the angel who had raised me up from the vile and despicable earth appeared to her announcing that she should be the Mother of Jesus, the Saviour of the world. Turning to me he went on "Fear not Mary; the lily will be more than ever the emblem of your stainless purity..."

After some months, Jesus was born in the middle of Winter in a cold stable, of which I was the sole ornament. Oh! how I bowed down with joy, with rapture before the Infinitely holy Being, wrapped in swaddling clothes!... The child grew, and His greatest happiness was to draw near often and inhale my sweet perfume, or to sleep under the shade of my white petals.

Alas! this happiness did not last long. Jesus had attained the age of manhood and His time was come to die on the cross for the salvation of men. Mary valiant and



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resigned, followed her Divine Son to Calvary and remained close to him plunged in sorrow, yet through her tears at sight of me she smiled faintly. I was standing also, and leaning on the sacred wood trying to catch some drops of the precious Blood, that I might hold them, since He had no tears, the divine roseate blood spilled for those who would profane my noble symbol...

After the Ascension, Mary retired to the house of St. John ; there, she prayed, living with Jesus in the Sacrament of His love. She had placed me close to the Tabernacle where I was becoming more beautiful, more transparent according as the flames of divine love consumed the Heart of the Mother Most Admirable.

Finally in an ecstasy of love she flew to the bosom of the Eternal. I followed her to the tomb where however, her precious remains did not long abide, for the angels came and took this Virginal body up to heaven " Mary " I cried, " O my Queen, I long to follow you in your glory ! Severed from you, my petals will fade and lose their celestial perfume ! " " My faithful lily, my dearest treasure," replied the Virgin Most Pure, " no, remain on earth for you will bud and blossom in the hearts of children and Virgins. May they guard you with care for the Heart of my Jesus finds Its joy among the lilies."

Thus spoke to me the sweet lily of our Mother Most Admirable, as I knelt beneath her hallowed image, and prayed to Mary to reveal to me one of her secrets of love.

To day, at the voice of Jesus, her divine Son, I understand your pure and simple language, O lily, cherished blossom of the Virgin of the Temple.

In the cup of thy dainty corolla
Sweet perfume to Mary I raise :
With thy fragrant aroma commingled
In Heaven 'twill breathe out her praise.





The Miraculous Crook

IN the grand duchy of Mecklemburg, to-day a protestant country, but formerly devoutly Catholic stood a famous old monastery, renowned for the learning and sanctity of its monks, but especially through the miracles wrought there, the fame of which attracted numerous pilgrims from all parts of the world : It was the abbey of Doberan, situated on the banks of the Baltic Sea, and in those days the burial place of the dukes and their descendants. We relate one of the miracles which caused this abbey to be so universally renowned.

A poor shepherd named Stephen had for some time been the victim of a most unfortunate fate. Every week he saw his flock decreasing in number, sometimes carried away and devoured by the wolves, sometimes by an epidemic disease breaking out and slaying his choicest lambs. Even the pasturage seemed to have lost its nutritive juices ; the grass on the hill-side no longer strengthened his sickly flock, the brook in the valley no longer quenched its thirst.

One day as Stephen was seated at some distance from his flock, sadly thinking of the ruin which threatened him, he saw a man coming towards him, whom he judged by his long black cloak and white cap to be a dignified sheriff, and who addressed him saying : " You do not know me Stephen, but I have known you for some time. I am aware of all the losses you have sustained those last years. I am sorry for you and come to inform you of a means by which you can put an end to the evils which pursue you. The first time you go to Communion, keep the Host the priest gives you and insert it in your crook ; then go and lead your flock into the valley, fearing no longer either wolf or epidemic."

The shepherd who was a good Christian trembled with horror at this proposition. He knew that to touch the Sacred Host with his profane hands, instead of piously receiving it on his tongue, according to the intention of the Saviour, and the custom of the Church, was to commit an awful sacrilege. Moreover the man who addressed him had a most peculiar bearing, and a look under which the poor shepherd felt himself shuddering. Summoning up his courage he repulsed him, as he would an evil spirit, by making the sign of the cross and invoking his patron saint.

That same night two of his fattest sheep died at his feet, the following day another was drowned and a fourth became the prey of wild beasts. In a word the devil seemed to have sworn the ruin of poor Stephen, as formerly that of the Patriarch Job in the pasturage of Idumee. But Stephen less patient than Job. could not bend his head under the trial which the Lord in his fathomless judgement permitted: Nor had he the resignation to say with Job: "The Lord has given! The Lord has taken away! Blessed be His Holy Will!" Stephen let himself be carried away by despair, and despair is not a cheerful companion.

The fatal idea which the devil had suggested took possession of him, tormenting him night and day until finally yielding, he went to the Church, and after receiving, kept the Sacred Host and inserted it in his crook as he had been advised. As if to verify this audacious advice, from that moment his trials all disappeared and his ill-luck turned into prosperity. His weak sheep became strong and vigorous, his lambs thrived wonderfully. Wherever he carried his crook the grass revived, the waters grew limpid and clear, the barren naked rocks were covered with moss and verdure, even the wolves in search of their prey on seeing Stephen with his crook took flight. All nature seemed to feel the impression of the mysterious and invisible presence which accompanied the shepherd's crook.

Alas! material goods are powerless to satisfy us when we possess them contrary to the Divine Will!

Stephen was not happy though he was quickly becoming one of the richest shepherds in the place. He was

continually pursued by remorse preventing him enjoying happiness or rest, and constantly picturing to him the awful crime by which he had gained his present wealth. His neighbors envied him and asked him to tell them the secret of his wonderful prosperity? Their questions only increased his unhappiness; but he hid all under a scornful bearing, and guarded his secret carefully. He could not maintain the same reserve with his wife, witness of



his nightly agony and of the avowals which escaped him in the delirium of his dreams. Her repeated questions had at last compelled him to intrust his secret to her safe keeping, she horrified beyond words, to unburden her mind confided the secret to a reliable friend, and that friend thinking she was in conscience bound disclosed the case to the abbot of the monastery of Doberan.

Filled with holy indignation, the abbot, immediately set out to deliver the August Captive from His unprecedented captivity : The God who for love of men has placed Himself at their mercy and exposed Himself to all kinds of ill-treatment in the Sacrament which hides and enchains His Divine Humanity. Clothed with aube and stole, the abbot followed by his monks went to the shepherd's home.

The moment the pious cortege crossed the threshold of that house profaned by a sacrilege, that house where



the living God was unlawfully detained, it was brilliantly illuminated, and in the midst of the brightness, shining even more brightly, was a heavenly halo, surrounding the crook containing the Sacred Host and resembling a luminous candelabre. The monks filled with admiration and respect carried back to its rightful Tabernacle this ciborium of unusual design. They guarded it with great love and veneration and from that day pilgrims in vast numbers thronged to Doberan to adore the Miraculous Host.

As to Stephen, filled with sorrow and remorse, he condemned himself to severe penance and spent the remaining days of his life in offering reparation by fasts and penitential works. At his last hour, the prior of the cloister, who had witnessed the sincerity of his repentance absolved him from his crime, in the name of the Lord whom he had so sorely wounded in the Sacrament of His love, but whose very love pardoned and pitied as no human love could.

The Immaculate Conception and Communion

IF God preserves Mary free from original sin in her Immaculate Conception it is because He wishes to live in her. He wishes to dwell in a pure, holy and perfect habitation. The Eternal Father, the Holy Ghost only purified Mary in order to make her a worthy tabernacle for the Verb of God. Mary must be Immaculate to receive the Verb in her. The Immaculate Conception is Mary's preparation for Communion. Oh! with what joy the Verb contemplated this dwelling He was preparing for Himself.

Jesus must do the same with us in regard to Holy Communion. He must long for the moment when He will come from His Tabernacle to us; He must come to us with joy as He did to Mary, and, it will be thus, if we are pure; He expects that preparation of purity from us; He exacts it, commands it, it is the only obligatory one.

A great purity as preparation for Communion, such should be for us, the fruit of the Immaculate Conception; without purity all our other virtues will be worthless; our Lord will come to us with reluctance, our hearts will only be a prison for Him: Ah! will He exclaim to the Priest, "where are you placing me? In a heart which is not Mine, which my enemy occupies. Leave Me, O leave Me in my Tabernacle!"

O Mary! lend us your mantle of purity, clothe us with the whiteness, the brilliancy of your Immaculate Conception; it is a Mother's duty, to clothe her children. Clothed by you, O Mary! Jesus will welcome us, He will come to us with gladness.

R. F. EYMARD.

Our Lady's Expectation

The musical score is written in G major and 3/4 time. It consists of four systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are as follows:


1. Like the dawn-ing of the morn-ing On the moun-tain's gold en heights, Like the
 break-ing of the moon-beams On the gloom of claud-y nights; Like the
 so-cret told by an-gels, Get-ting known up on the earth, Is the
 Moth-er's ex-pec-ta-tion Of Mes-si-ah's speed-y birth

2. Thou wert happy, blessed Mother,
 With the very bliss of heaven,
 Since the angel's salutation
 In thy raptured ear was given ;
 Since the Ave of that midnight,
 When thou wast anointed Queen,
 Like a river overflowing
 Hath the grace within thee been.
3. And what wonders have been in thee
 All the day and all the night,
 While the angels fell before thee,
 To adore the Light of Light ;
 While the glory of the Father
 Hath been in thee as a home,
 And the scepter of creation
 Hath been wielded in thy womb.

4. Thou hast waited, Child of David !
 And thy waiting now is o'er !
 Thou hast seen him Blessed Mother !
 And wilt see him evermore !
 Oh ! His Human Face and Features,
 They were passing sweet to see ;
 Thou beholdest them this moment ;
 Mother, show them now to me !

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Bethlehem and the Tabernacle

ONG months had passed since the Archangel Gabriel had announced to the Blessed Virgin the heavenly message.

She knew that the Saviour should be born at Bethlehem, and not at Nazareth where she resided. Without trying to understand how that could be accomplished, she awaited in loving calm the signal which should reveal God's will to her.

About the same time, the Emperor Augustus, prompted by pride, wished to ascertain the exact number of his subjects, and thus unwittingly served the designs of Providence.

Mary and Joseph both belonged to the tribe of Juda, and to the Royal family of David, and in consequence of the Emperor's edict were forced to leave their solitude at Nazareth to go and be inscribed at Bethlehem. It was a long tiresome journey and our travellers arrived footsore and weary.

They sought shelter everywhere, but in vain, and at last were obliged to take refuge in an abandoned stable. It was there, my child, that at midnight, the Incarnate Verb, the Son of God, the sweet Child Jesus was born. He appeared to the raptured gaze of His holy Mother, lying in the manger, on a little straw.

She took Him and held Him in her arms, and pressed Him to her heart, calling Him alternately : " My Son ;" " My God." When you hear this Gospel-story of the birth of the sweet Child Jesus, do you not often think, my child, and say to yourself how happy I would have been, if I could have come at that blessed moment, to


offer my homages to the child Jesus, through His blessed Mother. Jesus wishes to satisfy this natural desire, which He Himself has placed in your heart, and so the life of Jesus is continued and daily renewed among us, until the end of time.

The Church, where Jesus is born every day in the hands of the priest, is Bethlehem, for us.

And the Tabernacle — does it not at times resemble the stable of Bethlehem, in its poverty? Jesus, reposes there poor, without glory or pomp, with nothing to make us realize His power, His majesty. There also, as at Bethlehem, the angels are often alone in adoration before Him, with a small number of pious worshippers who try like Mary and Joseph to console Him, by their faith and love, for the forgetfulness of ungrateful men. Do you not wish, dear child, to be among those fervent worshippers?

Come then, and visit this Sacramental Crib, where the sweet Saviour, the child Jesus abides. Try and picture to yourself, the dear little Babe of Bethlehem, there, as He really is, not on straw but in His golden Ciborium, smiling at you, holding out His baby arms to win your love and confidence. He asks you, and surely, my child, you will not have the heart to refuse, He asks you to wipe away His tears, which your sins have caused Him to shed. Come nearer, do not fear, ask His dear Mother to place Him in your hands, and clasping Him close to your heart in holy respect and great love, say to Him with simplicity: My sweet Jesus, I wish to love You; guard me, so that I may never separate from You, do not allow me to offend You by the most trifling wilful fault. Let me be a pure white lily to perfume Your Tabernacle, draw me often to Your sacred Feet that I may keep close to you during life, and that after death, I may bring You to heaven my baptismal innocence.

O sweet Child Jesus! fond lover of children, listen to your child and make of her heart a dwelling-place less cold than the stable of Bethlehem.



SUBJECT OF ADORATION

An Hour of Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament

I am the Immaculate Conception.

Our Lady of Lourdes.

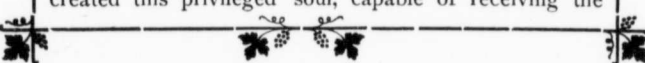
I. — Adoration.

FIRST QUARTER OF THE HOUR: — “I am the Immaculate Conception,” spoke the brilliant white vision, to the humble child, kneeling at her feet whose enraptured gaze betrayed confidence and fear.

“I am the Immaculate Conception” has been re-echoing ever since by the statue of the Immaculate Virgin with her celestial beauty, her clasped hands, her white veil, her golden diadem; by the Basilicas of stone, marble and gold erected in her honour; by the flags of cities and nations deposited in loving homage at her feet; by the pilgrims thronging in vast numbers to her favored shrine; by the sick cured, the sinners converted; by hearts consoled and souls sanctified: Lourdes is a mighty echo resounding throughout the world repeating incessantly: Mary is the Immaculate Conception.

This declaration of the Immaculate Conception brings me to Thy altar, O my God, to adore Thee, to acknowledge and praise Thee, as the author of that incomparable marvel, the Immaculate Conception of Mary; and of all the wonders which compose it, royal diamond set amid the most precious stones.

Thou alone, O God, the all powerful Father couldst, from all eternity, have chosen this pure child, in the glory of her virginity to be Thy Spouse. Thou alone, O loving Son, couldn't accept her for Thy Mother, preserve her from all stain by the preventive virtue of Thy precious Blood. Thou alone, O God the Holy Ghost couldn't have created this privileged soul, capable of receiving the



plenitude of every created grace, capable of bearing un-created Grace Himself.

I adore Thine infinite love inspirer of this masterpiece: Thy Wisdom which has conceived and ordained it; Thy Power which has wrought it. After the Divine Conception of the Verb in the pure womb of the Immaculate Virgin, nothing is more beautiful, nothing greater, nothing supposes so much love lavished, so many obstacles vanquished, so many foreseen favors, as Thy Immaculate Mother's Conception, O my God.

O Mary perfect adorer, without stain or imperfection; adoration of agreeable odor, always acceptable, infinitely meritorious compensate for the lack of purity, truth and fervor in our adorations. Adorer pleading for those who do not adore, obtain pardon and mercy for them, from the God and Saviour unknown by them.

II. — Thanksgiving

SECOND QUARTER OF THE HOUR: — "I am the Immaculate Conception!" With her pure countenance glowing with kindness, her eyes raised heavenwards, her hands joined, Mary stood as the image of thanksgiving to God, who had filled her with His grace; as the living thanksgiving, singing to Her Creator, the eternal hymn, "Magnificat," for all benefits received from His infinite goodness.

You are truly living thanksgiving, O Immaculate Virgin: for, by the privilege of your Immaculate Conception, seeing clearly the work accomplished in you by divine goodness, penetrating its abundance, its munificence, you were no sooner created, than without waiting like other children for the dawn of reason, which left them for years in ignorance of their duties to God, you were from the first moment full of supernatural light, swaying towards God on the wings of thanksgiving, to bless and praise Him, to give yourself to your Creator whom you embraced as your supreme end, and towards whom ascended in blessing, all the thoughts, affections, desires, all the actions of your life.

Sing then, O Immaculate Queen, your glorious triumphant hymn of thanksgiving, which neither heaven or earth could hear, before it was uttered by your soul.

Lord, hear and receive, this praise worthy of Thy love;

and we, O Lord, roused from our apathy by the burning accent's of Mary's voice, we thank Thee that Thou hast enriched Mary with the infinite treasures of her Immaculate Conception. "Blessed to the Holy and Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God."





III. — Reparation

THIRD QUARTER OF THE HOUR: — "I am the Immaculate Conception," and the gentle Virgin, with sweetly smiling lips, flowing veil as white as snow, cried out with the voice of a prophet announcing divine chastisements to sinner's refusing to be converted: Penance! Penance! Asking that reparation be offered by the just, without delay for poor sinners.—How can it be done asked Bernadette of the Virgin? Pray for sinners," replied the Blessed Virgin and she specified the works of penance, the humiliations which would touch the heart of her divine Son in favor of sinners: "Go and drink of the water of the fountain, and wash therein; kneel and kiss the floor!

Did this severe language seem consistent with the sweet vision? Yes, truly, when we judge things according to Redemption's plan and Christ's views. The Immaculate Conception borders on Calvary, it is the necessary preparation to Mary's immense dolors, and the condition which gives them their redemptive power; It is natural she should render Jesus, by her personal sufferings, inflamed with love for Him and thirst for His justice, what she received of His dolors.

The Immaculate Virgin can in justice invite sinners' to penance, the just to reparation and propitiation. Let us respond to her appeal. As the living symbol of Divine mercy. Let us approach the salutary fountain, the Sacramental fountain, where the priest purifies the soul by pouring on it the Blood of Jesus. Let us offer with Mary the sacred Chalice filled with the Blood of Jesus and offered by Him at His last supper for the remission of sin.

Pardon and mercy, we beg of Thee, O Christ our Redeemer! by the purity and tears of Thine Immaculate Mother! Pardon and mercy, for those who having known and loved Thee, now reject Thee through ingratitude or laxity!







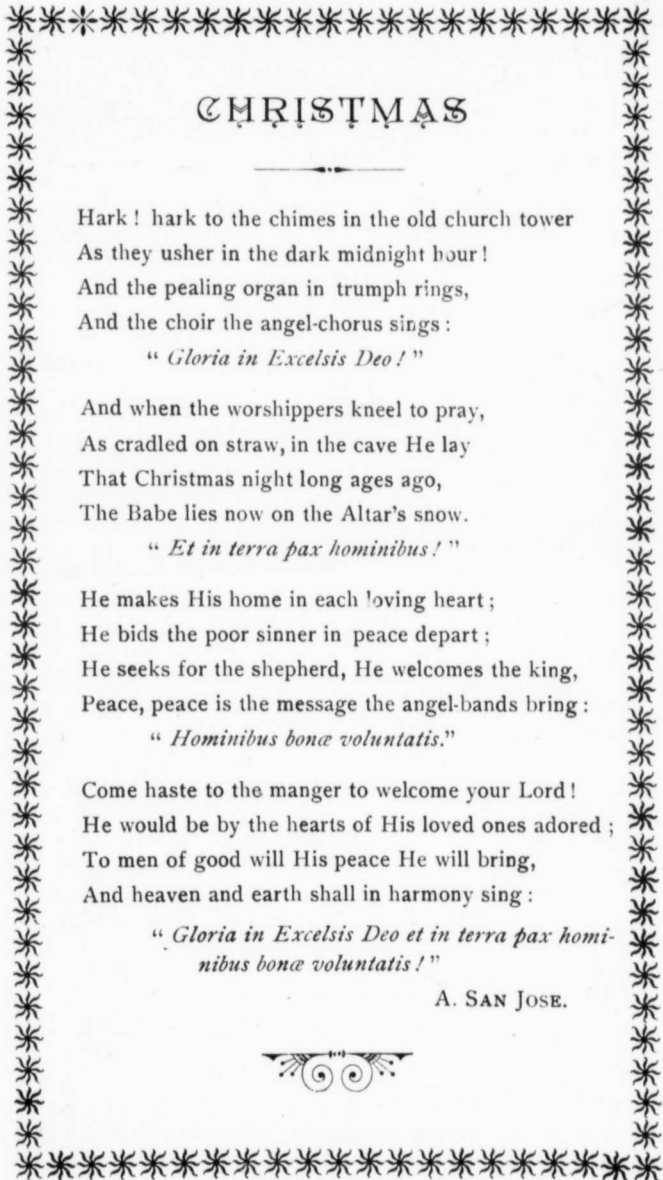
IV. — Prayer

FOURTH QUARTER OF THE HOUR :—“ I am the Immaculate Conception.” As such, I salute you, O Mary, all-powerful mediatrix, whose prayer is never unanswered. Your prayer is perfect because the light of your Immaculate Conception clearly exposed to you God, His Goodness, His Liberality. Your prayer is perfect, because it is not only a passing need, but the sincere oblation, the total surrender of your being. His all-powerful goodness ! Your prayer is perfect because the purity of your Immaculate Conception gives your divine maternity a sovereign authority over the Heart of your Son, and renders your dolors equally meritorious.

Your prayer is always granted. Owing to the blood which Jesus received from you, He places in your hands all he has acquired by its merits, and, as He owes you compensation for the poverty, humiliations and sufferings into which He brought you, during your earthly exile ; so will He bestow on you compensating riches, of eternal royalty.

There is a duty Mary teaches, it is the duty of prayer. To encourage Bernadette's confidence, the Blessed Virgin said : “ I promise to make you happy, not in this world but in the next.” She taught her respect in prayer, and of what importance, for the honor of God and the good of souls, are the exterior religious rites well observed, by showing her how to make the sign of the Cross regularly and piously. The Rosary hanging in the arm of the Immaculate Virgin, is the request, the appeal to pray more, to pray without ceasing. Mary takes the rosary, holds it in her hands, recites it aloud, thus giving the child an example and precept of active, persevering prayer. Is this sufficient ? No, this adept in prayer, knows that her Son and her God has the right and the desire to see all prostrate before His altars, offering Him public and solemn homage, this worship having its expression in the processions and solemn expositions of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament ; And Mary guiding the wills and the circumstances, processions are formed, solemn expositions are organized, and silent adoration day and night at the feet of the Blessed Sacrament, continues to give uninterrupted honor, glory and reparation to the Divine King of the Eucharist.





CHRISTMAS

Hark ! hark to the chimes in the old church tower
As they usher in the dark midnight hour !
And the pealing organ in triumph rings,
And the choir the angel-chorus sings :

“ Gloria in Excelsis Deo ! ”

And when the worshippers kneel to pray,
As cradled on straw, in the cave He lay
That Christmas night long ages ago,
The Babe lies now on the Altar's snow.

“ Et in terra pax hominibus ! ”

He makes His home in each loving heart ;
He bids the poor sinner in peace depart ;
He seeks for the shepherd, He welcomes the king,
Peace, peace is the message the angel-bands bring :

“ Hominibus bonæ voluntatis.”

Come haste to the manger to welcome your Lord !
He would be by the hearts of His loved ones adored ;
To men of good will His peace He will bring,
And heaven and earth shall in harmony sing :

*“ Gloria in Excelsis Deo et in terra pax homi-
nibus bonæ voluntatis ! ”*

A. SAN JOSE.





The Christmas Angel



PAPA, papa, I'm afraid ! Don't you hear the wind moaning, the snow lashing the windows ? ”

“ Sleep, darling, sleep ! To-morrow the weather will clear up, and the storm will be far away. ”

“ But I can't go to sleep, Papa : I am suffering. ”


The sorrowing father pressed the wasted little hand to his lips ; then, bowed his head, to hide his grief from her eyes. Alas ! for many nights now little Angela had been unable to sleep. A languishing sickness, which she inherited from her mother, kept her bound to bed. A distressing cough racked her breast almost continuously, while the sweat moistened her baby countenance.

Poor child ! and, especially, poor father ! He had none left to him in the world but Angela. How he loved her and surrounded her with his affectionate care ! The heart of the mother who had gone before seemed to have blended with his own, so dearly did he cherish this only child.

He had consulted men of science as to her malady ; had called in the most celebrated physicians, had said to one of them :

“ Save my little daughter, and half my fortune is yours. ” The Doctor promised to do his best, but he had been unable to cure the child.

For some days past the disease seemed to be making unusually rapid progress ; Angela's pallid cheeks showed at times a livid tinge, mysterious presage of death. Her father quitted her side no more. He had abandoned all



the other important cares of life, and thought now of one thing only — of retarding by a few hours the fatal moment that was to leave him supremely desolate. Yes, supremely so ; for the unfortunate man was without the counterbalancing consolation which divine goodness metes out to the miserable : he lacked faith.

Years ago he had forgotten the road to the Church. Given up entirely to the world and its baubles of fame and honor, he had glided from the condition of doubt to that of absolute negation. The political career to which he had devoted his talents had torn from his heart the last religious chords that still vibrated there. He was now in the prime of manhood. He had seen his young wife leave this world, full of faith and hope ; but her edifying death had not rekindled the extinguished sparks of the religious sentiments of other days. And now God once more forces Himself upon his memory by demanding of him the life of his idolized daughter.

There was a long silence. The clock struck eleven. Then a great sonorous voice rose above the bluster of the storm ; the bells of the neighbouring church pealed their loudest to announce the approach of earth's greatest festival. " Christmas " ! clanged the bells ; " Christ-mass " ! Christians, awake and throng to the foot of the altar ! Here comes the day blest above all others. The Child Jesus is about to be born. Awake, Christians, and hasten to greet Him."

And the appeal was heard. Lights appeared in the windows of the deserted streets ; dark shadows passed behind the curtains ; preparations were being made to attend Midnight Mass in the college Church.

Angela sighed, and regarded her father with ineffable tenderness.

" Do you hear, Papa ? "

" Yes, darling. Do those bells prevent you from sleeping ? "

" Oh, 'tis not that ! " and the child put her hand to her bosom, which an interior fire seemed to be consuming. Soon she went on : Last year I was not so sick, and the wind did not blow so fiercely. Mamma had not gone to heaven then. It was a beautiful day, Papa. I remember it so well ! " She closed her eyes for a moment

as if to see once more the events of the day that memory brought back to her "Mamma got up very early, and to'd Margaret to dress me for going out. And I was glad, so glad. But it was snowing too. Margaret took me up in her arms and carried me to the church. O papa how beautiful it was ! So many lights and flowers all around the crib. The bells were ringing just as they are now, and the singing was so grand ! The church was full of priests and people ; but mamma and Margaret went away up in front ; and then mamma showed me a little Baby lying on some straw. He was so pretty ! He looked at me and smiled and I loved Him at once. Oh, how I would like to see Him again ! "

" But it is impossible, dear. Don't you hear the wind whistling outside as it whirls the snow about ? "

" It was snowing last year too. "

" Yes, but you did not suffer then. "

The bells ceased. Outside could be heard the tread of passers—by on the craps snow, and now and then the slamming of a street door. Suddenly Angela began again :

" Papa, I'd like very much to know whether the Child Jesus is in the church again this year. "

" Certainly He is there again. "

" How do you know ? "

" Because without doubt, He is there every year. "

" Have you ever seen Him ? "

" Yes. but it was a long time ago. "

" Ah ! if you only would, " said Angela joining her little hands, — " if you only would, papa ! "

" Speak, dear ; speak ! If I would what ? "

" If you would go to the church, so as to tell me whether the little Baby is still there on the straw, and whether there are still pretty flowers all about, and lots of lights, oh so many lights ! "

" But I can not leave you now, darling. Who would watch over you like papa ? "

" You could call Margaret, " said the child beseechingly.

" And would that satisfy you ? "

" Ever so much. Mamma told me that the Infant Jesus was exposed only once a year — at christmas. "

“ And do you know, little one, that this is Christmas ? ”

“ Yes, yes, I know it. ”

“ Very well, ” said the father, with some hesitation. “ I ’ ll go in the morning. ”

Angela dropped her head, and a tear fell on her wasted cheek.

“ Spoiled darling that you are ! ” Said the father, covering her with kisses. “ Then you wish me to leave you at once ? “ Only to go to the church, ” she murmured through her tears.

The father touched a bell ; Margaret ran in, all anxious.

“ Stay with Angela, ” said he briefly. “ I will return shortly. ”

“ Oh ! how good you are ! ” said the child, joyously.

“ How good you are ! ”

Margaret seated herself by the bed, and Angela ’ s eyes gently closed. A quarter of an hour later, Mr. Knight entered the church. A pious and recollected multitude had already assembled. Hundreds of tapers surrounded the altar, which could only be seen through waving clouds of incense.

With head erect, Angela ’ s father made his way to the foot of the sanctuary, where the crib was arranged amid a profusion of rarest flowers.

“ Childish caprice ! ” he said to himself. “ To send me here at such an hour. ”

Mr. Knight threw a critical glance around him. He saw the faithful praying with unmistakable fervor, The August Sacrifice had begun. The voices of the singers blended with those of the angelic choirs, who in heaven above intoned the eternal Hosannas. And, lying upon a little straw, the sweet symbolical figure of the child Jesus smiled on everyone, while His outstretched arms seemed ready to clasp all humanity to His loving bosom.

Angela ’ s father looked long at the little figure on the straw. His glance wandered from the priest who was saying Mass to the Infant Jesus holding out His arms to him. He made an effort to tear himself from this species of fascination, and turned to go. But the way was blocked.

At that moment a priest left the altar and descended to the communion railing. Mr. Knight resumed his place.

The priest made the Sign of the Cross, and, in a voice vibrating with genuine emotion, began :

“ O all ye who suffer, come to Me. and I will console you ! ”

As long as the sermon lasted Angela's father remained motionless, tasting at leisure the solace which the speaker seemed to offer him on behalf of the Divine Infant. And when the echo of the final blessing died away, he buried his face in his hands.

The Mass drew to an end. Mr. Knight saw scores of the congregation approach the Holy Table ; and thought of the happy period long ago, when he too participated in that Sacred Banquet. He beheld in fancy his pious and devoted mother ; his young wife, whom he had loved so tenderly ; Angela whose lamp was slowly dying out ; and an immense sorrow took possession of him.

When he looked around again the church was all but deserted ; the gas was extinguished ; he approached the communion railing ; and, kneeling murmured :

“ O God ! my God, whom I have so long neglected to serve, restore to me my Angela, and I will return to Thee forever.”

For some time he knelt and wept silently but bitterly. At length he left the church. In the porch he met a beggar ; he gave a generous alms, and hurried homeward. Margaret opened the door to admit him.

“ Angela has been sleeping quietly ever since you left, and has only now awaked.”

The father went into the sick room, and having kissed his little daughter, said cheerfully :

“ Well, I stayed too long, did I not ? ”

“ No, no, papa ! ” replied Angela, whose face was radiant. “ It was so beautiful ! ”

“ Why, yes ; the little Infant was there.”

“ I know it, and He was even prettier than last year.” Mr. Knight looked at her in surprise, and could see her air of supreme joy.

“ How can you know it ? ” he asked.

“ Because, papa, I went to the church with you.”

"She is delirious," thought the father trying to quiet her."

"Now just listen, and tell me if it was not like this?"

"Calm yourself, dear, — calm yourself!"

"But I am calm," said the child with a wounded air.

"Yes — well, now?"

"Well, when we went in, the church was already pretty full; they were singing; the priests were at the altar; we went through the crowd and up to the railing to admire the Crib. What a lot of lights and of nice flowers there were! There was in particular one splendid tree that just dropped over the Infant Jesus."

"A palm-tree," said Mr. Knight, his surprise increasing.

"Yes, a palm-tree. We were going to leave the church, when a priest came down and stopped not far from us. He began to speak. You listened, Papa, and you seemed very sorry."

At this astounding recital, the father felt his heart bound in his bosom, and he gazed at Angela with a species of fear.

"And do you know what he said?"

"He said," replied Angela, drawing her father toward her — "he said that the Infant Jesus would console you."

Mr. Knight started, but she went on:

We stayed a long time after that — until they put out the lights; and then you approached the Infant Jesus; you knelt down, and said, with tears: "O God, restore my Angela to me and I will return to Thee forever!"

Mr. Knight uttered a cry of wonder, and grew pale as death.

"Yes, you said that," continued Angela triumphantly.

"But I saw that you did not hear the reply of the Infant Jesus."

"A reply!"

"Yes, dear papa; the Infant Jesus answered you."

"What could he have said to me asked the distracted father?"

"He said: Return to me first."

Mr. Knight dropped on his knees by the bed, quite overcome with emotion.

“ And when we came out of the church ” concluded Angela, “ you gave some money to an old woman, saying quite low : Pray for Angela and for her father.”

This time Mr. Knight could restrain himself no longer.

He clasped Angela in his arms, and wept the sweetest tears he had known during his life. Need it be added that he returned to the church that very morning and entered a confessional ? The following day he received Holy Communion with so much fervor and piety as to edify all the attendants.

As for Angela — or, as her father calls her now, his Christmas Angel, — she improved in health steadily. The physician's who had given her up visited her ; and in less than a month she accompanied her father, visibly this time, to the church, to thank the Divine Infant for her restoration.

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Babe of Bethlehem.

Holy Babe, so calmly lying
 In Thy manger, mid the straw,
 How Thy tiny hands are trying
 Unto Thee mankind to draw !
 “ Glory, Glory,” o'er Thee singing,
 White-robed angels, bright and fair,
 “ Peace to men,” o'er all earth bringing,
 Greet the shepherds standing there.

Holy Babe, a welcome manger
 Let each heart unto Thee prove ;
 And do Thou, from every danger
 Guard us by Thy holy love,
 Who, in adoration bending,
 Grateful hail Thee, priceless Gem !
 From Thy heavenly Home descending,
 Holy Babe of Bethlehem !

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## The three Christmas Masses

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TOWARDS the end of the eventful year 1871, in the castle of Bonrepos, preparations were being made to celebrate Christmas. It was the eve of the great day announced by the musical chiming of the village clock.

A huge log burned brightly in the grate, before which enjoying its warmth, and deeply interested in her book, sat Madam de Valrocher, widow of an officer, who was killed in the battle of Champagne ; in the same room but at some distance from the fire, her brother, a priest was entertaining her only child, a boy of five or six years, whose angelic face, golden curls and lovely blue eyes made him resemble one of Murillo's angels ; but unlike the angels his chief delight was to listen to story after story, related so pleasingly by his uncle, an adept in the art of story-telling, cleverly contriving the moral should be spiritual as well as interesting. Henry as the child was called, was very anxious to attend midnight mass, more especially as his uncle, a missionary, just returned and a hero in the boy's eyes, was to be the celebrant.

The missionary had travelled many miles in order to reach home for Christmas. His first thought on landing in France had been to try and mitigate in some slight degree by the consolations of religion, the grief of his sister, whom the war had so recently and so cruelly bereaved ; and to offer mass for his unfortunate brother-in-law, cut off in his youth, in the middle of a brilliant military career.

It had been arranged during the day that the missionary's first mass would be offered for the officer killed on the battle-field, the second for the poor little orphan boy, and the third for his native land, so sorely in need of prayer. The big snow flakes had been falling continuously for two days covering the earth with a pure white garb lovely to admire, but, without charms for mammas anxious for their children's health.

The sky was beautiful, studded with brilliant stars, yet the north east wind was bitter and piercing, indicating a storm, and Henry's mother under the circumstances would not allow him to go to Midnight Mass fearing his delicate health.

The village was situated at some distance from the castle, at least twenty minutes walk to the church, and much as he desired it, it would have been imprudent to allow the child to go. Resignation being the best part of valor, he accepted his mother's decision, but not without shedding a few tears. He went to bed at his usual hour nine o'clock.

By way of consoling him, his mamma said :

"What will I ask the child Jesus to give you, when in a few hours I will assist at the midnight-mass offered by uncle for Papa? What do you want the child Jesus to put in your stocking, to-morrow morning?" Baby reflected, but did not answer.

"Do you want a sword"? his mother asked. Widow of an officer she was naturally desirous her son should follow a military career, perpetuating in the family the traditional courage and bravery which had distinguished its members for the last half century.

"Do you want a cross of honor to wear on Sundays?"

"No," replied Henry.

"What, then?" A toy horse to march through the parlor?

"No, not that either."

"A cannon you can discharge and frighten everybody?"

"No..."

"Well, what then"? Do tell me quickly and I promise you the Child Jesus won't refuse your request."

"Well," replied the child, "I want a chalice and vestments."

"And why, dear child?"

"To celebrate mass."

"And for whom will you offer it"?

"For Papa."

The mother touched to the heart's core, burst into sobs, and clasping her baby boy in her arms, covered him with loving kisses.

"You wish then, to be a Priest, like your uncle, the abbot?"

"Yes, dear Mamma."

"Then like him you will offer three masses on Christmas?"

"Yes Mamma, that is what I desire."

"And for whom will you offer the first?"

"For Papa."

"And the second?"

"For Papa."

"And the third?"

"For Papa."

"And for me, will you not offer one?"

"No, Mamma."

"And, why my boy, no mass for Mamma?"

"Because Mamma should not die; because Mamma must not die."

### A CHRISTMAS LEGEND

ONE Christmas night St. Jerome was in the Grotto of Bethlehem all absorbed in the mysteries of the birth of our Saviour, when the Infant Jesus suddenly appeared to him resplendent with light, and said:

"Jerome, what dost thou give me for my birthday?"

"Divine Infant, I give you my heart."

"That is well, but give me something more?"

"I give you all the prayers, all the affections of my heart."

"That is better, but give me something more."

"I give thee all that I have, and all that I am."

"There is still something more I desire you to give me."

"Divine Infant, I have nothing; what is it that you still wish I should give you?"

"Jerome, give me thy sins!"

"What will you do with them?"

"Give me thy sins that I may pardon them all."

"Divine Infant, you make me weep."

And Jerome began to sob, filled with love for the Divine Child.



“GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO.”

BY JOHN W. WOLFE.

Gloria in excelsis Deo,  
 Lord of hosts the angels pealed ;  
 Saviour of Thy Father's fold,  
 Loving heart of God revealed.

Gloria in excelsis Deo,  
 To the new-born Christ we sing ;  
 Gloria in excelsis Deo,  
 Through the world the chorus rings.

Gloria in excelsis Deo,  
 Loudly with the rest of men,  
 Sing the praises by angels told,  
 Of the Babe in Bethlehem.

**A New Bethlehem.**

Make of thy heart a little Crib,  
 Far from the world's Jerusalem,  
 With Mary and with Joseph hid  
 In some sweet, lowly Bethlehem.

Line it with straw — the golden straw,  
 Of selfless Love's humility ;  
 And let those beasts, thy passions, draw  
 Around in mute captivity.

Then, in the darkness and the cold,  
 Alone with angels not with men,  
 In thy heart's manger (as of old)  
 The Christ-Child shall be born again.

ELEANOR C. DONNELLY.



## THE EUCHARISTIC REIGN

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Scarcely a few weeks have elapsed since the closing of the General Chapter of the Congregation of the Most Blessed Sacrament, held in Brussels, Belgium. Never perhaps had Chapter been more numerously attended or more fraternally united. The Capitularies coming from all parts of Europe and America, saw, with unutterable happiness themselves gathered together around the same Eucharistic throne, to work in harmony for the reign of the King Jesus, always present through love in the midst of subjects who do not know Him sufficiently.

"It was:" said one of the members, "a great consolation to see the ardour evinced by the vast assembly to infuse into, and revive in all hearts and lives the love of the Sacred Host."

But the greatest consolation of all, was to witness the many wonderful blessings crowning the efforts of those devoting themselves exclusively to the Eucharistic Reign.

In several parts of Europe piety towards the Blessed Sacrament has taken an impetus truly worthy of admiration. Priests and faithful rivalling each their in zeal and devotedness, in the maintenance of altars, in the practice of adoration, and in frequent and fervent participation in the Sacred Mysteries. We consider it as a special grace that despite the persecutions in France, the Blessed Sacrament has remained exposed in our churches there. From His throne Jesus seems to say to His enemies: "I will love you more than you hate me, and I will bless you, you and your families, even though you should prevent my adorers blessing me and remaining before me."

It gives us much pleasure to note that, the most abundant graces and blessings of "Jesus-Hostie" have been showered on America. Since the last Chapter was con



vened in 1899 two regular houses have been established there, and a third, will, we hope, very soon offer its contingent of constant adorers to the Eucharistic King.

Our Montreal house, for its part, has seen two prolific centres of adoration founded around it, one of which attracted at various times during the Summer more than 70,000 worshippers. The expansion of works devoted to the Blessed Sacrament, the liberal diffusion of Eucharistic reviews, the extraordinary pomp of worship, are to us so many visible proofs of the special love which Jesus bears our Country.

We cannot pass over in silence the noticeable progress of Eucharistic devotion in the United States. Already Confraternities of men and youths have been formed, destined to spread the practice of Adoration and frequent Communion. We quote a few words of a letter recently received, from a fervent worker in the Masters Vineyard: "I have organized a body of one hundred and forty-nine working men, as members of adoration, and hope soon with God's grace to make them Apostle of the Eucharist as well."

These consoling facts fill our hearts with unutterable joy and gratitude. We wished to communicate the glad news to our dear readers, and to ask them to unite their thanksgiving to ours.

Nevertheless we must acknowledge, this progress expresses nothing else in our eyes, than the possibility of obtaining more abundant results. If the God of the Sacred Host has done so much already, despite our unworthiness and the defectuousity of the workers, what would He not accomplish, if, Priest and laity, together we knew how to unite our hearts and voices in propagating His Eucharistic Reign.

Let past success inflame our ardour! Let us be Apostles! Let us realize by our works and our prayers this wish of Venerable Father Eymard: "May we be the incendiaries of this sacred fire which Jesus Himself has brought to the world."

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SAINT JOHN'S VISION.

