

THE SENTINEL
OF THE
BLESSED SACRAMENT

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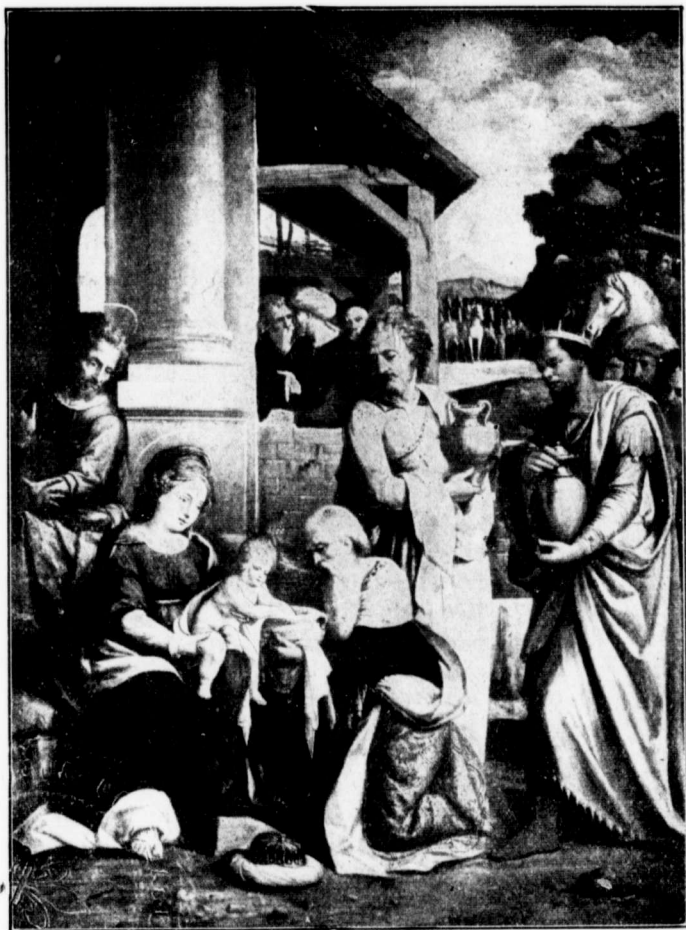
The Sentinel's Greeting

The Sentinel wishes its Readers,
A happy and blessed New Year,
Full of gifts and of graces from Heaven,
And of God's Holy Love and His Fear.
Not the vain wish that life would flow calmly,
Unruffled by tempest or rain,
But the wish that they bow to the Master
Alike both in comfort and pain.
For sorrow and joy are apportioned
By a Father both loving and just,
And we need but to accept them ever,
And then in His Mercy to trust.
May the year that has dawned bring to Jesus
Many hearts that will keep Him enshrined,
Many worshippers that will comfort Him
And joy in His Presence will find.
May the children whose hearts He will enter,
Keep Him with them evermore,
And may their white souls ne'er be sullied,
Nor chilled by sin's blast blowing o'er.
These few are the Sentinel's wishes
To its Readers both distant and near,
May the Christ-child e'er bless and protect You,
With a peaceful and bright happy Year.

S. M. F.

Vol. XIX

1916



Epiphany

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THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

The Blessed Sacrament is the sun and centre of our mysteries, the fountain of our doctrines, the inspiration of our art, the perfection of our worship, the food of our souls, and the resurrection of our bodies. It is God's greatest work and as it were the crown of all His works, the most full representation of the perfections of the Undivided Trinity, the epitome of all Jesus, His lives, Mysteries, characteristics, ends, and unions, the magnet of souls, and the real life of the whole Church, full to overflowing with a variety of touching manifestations, and rich and incessant in its graces to men. In what way should we expect that our Blessed Lord would give us this sublime institution? We might have thought He would have founded it with all the solemnities of a Divine Legislator, that it would have been given to us as a boon for which we could never sufficiently thank Him, as a trust the responsibility of which ought to weigh gravely upon our whole lives, as the reward of our faith in Him, over which we might triumph and rejoice perpetually. It would seem as if the Holy Eucharist rather than the Resurrection would be put forward as the reason for completing the number of the apostles, as the prime evidence of the mission and love of the Son of God, and as the glorious end of His merciful coming. We might suppose that the epistles of the New Testament would contain little more than the enforcing of the doctrine of the Eucharist, or the rubrics for its consecration, or the varieties of loving devotion with which it would be our duty to surround it. Yet if we fancied this, we should have shown how little we knew our Lord's way, or had caught the true spirit of the Incarnation. He came in the Blessed Sacrament as He came into the world. He says little of it, and makes no parade. He clings to His old silence, to His customary obscurity. He lets Himself be found out rather than displays Himself. He comes in that quiet, modest,

unassuming way which is His wont, with what I may call that bashfulness, which is the most amazing characteristic of all the Divine works.

He waits till He is standing on the very threshold of His Passion. Its shadows are already cast over His spirit, and their chief effect is to increase His love for His disciples. "Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end." The clouds of gloom had begun to encompass them also; and how much deeper would that darkness have been if they had known then, as He so terribly knew it at that hour, that they would all forsake Him and fly! It is then that He institutes the Blessed Sacrament, as if to give them His greatest consolation when they were in greatest need. And yet even then, so like Him, so like the spirit of His love, He does not put it to them as a gift or a consolation; He hardly bequeaths it as an affectionate legacy; but He makes as if He were the person obliged, not they, and begs of them, as a kindness in their power, a token of love which they could give and He should value, that they would do it always in remembrance of Him. It was a last dying wish, He did not claim it as a right, nor exact from them an acknowledgment of the magnitude of the blessing; but He put enough of precept into it to reassure their timid love and shrinking awe in celebrating mysteries so august and dreadful... O to what an art did not Jesus reduce the delicacy of love. He would persuade us that when we receive Holy Communion it is He who profits rather than we, His glory that is fed rather than our souls, His interests that we seek before our own; and all this that devotion to the Blessed Sacrament may be both a worship and a love, yet not so much a worship as a love. Our Lord has done everything to strip His sacramental Presence of the apparel of fear or the brightness of His proper regalia. Even the devotion to it is characterized by an affectionateness which enables us at once to see that the fountain of the Blessed Sacrament is the Sacred Heart of the Incarnate Word. It was its greatest effort, its richest effusion of itself, far more so than that love which even when it was dead made it court the spear to let out its last few drops of blood and water. Yet, for what end is it that men seem mainly to use the Blessed Sacrament?

Alas! only to make the wound of that dear Heart wider! For what is the life of the Blessed Sacrament but a life of eloquent sufferings? The Eucharistic sufferings are quite a mystery of themselves, a mystery apart, this Helpless Life, this Persevering Obedience, this Outraged Love, this Insulted Abjection, this mournful Unvisited Solitude, this Second Passion worse than that other one of Calvary.

FABER.

AT CHURCH.

When you enter the church remember that you enter the presence of God.

Those only who look to Him will find Him there.

Be very silent, never whisper, and if any one tries to whisper with you, seem not to hear them, but give your attention to God only.

Kneel upright and reverently, and pray with your whole heart.

Keep your eyes fixed on the altar, and do not look about you.

Wear modestly the best that you have in honor of our Lord's presence.

The "Bishop of the Blessed Sacrament."

(Bishop Maes of Covington.)

I — HOLY MASS.

It was always a grief to the saintly Bishop Maes that, comparatively speaking, so few attend Mass on week days; he fully appreciated that home duties and the demand of business are exacting, but he felt convinced that if people took as much trouble to hear Mass daily as they do to meet engagements materially beneficial to them, that the church would be crowded and the

world filled with happier, sweeter, and better people. He said:

"Thank God, few are the careless Catholics who neglect to assist at the holy Sacrifice of Mass on Sundays. This, the highest act of the Christian religion, is appreciated at its true value; ... but it is surprising to me that so few attend daily Mass. Of course, you have your household duties to care for, still I think you could manage to go to Mass from time to time on week days. Mass is the renewal of the Sacrifice of the Calvary. The half hour given to assisting at it daily will prove to be the golden half hour of the day, such an impression it will make upon your soul."

No more beautiful words ever fell from his lips than those when, in a course of instruction on the Holy Mass, he sketched the Mass of the Catacombs, the days of the early Church. Commenting upon the unrest, the unhappiness abroad in the world to-day, the Bishop showed how the root of all the evils lies in the fact that men have turned from God; that the sorrows and trials of their life are bitter and maddening, not because they are sufferings, but because they are sufferings apart from God. The life of the early Christians was a prolonged martyrdom. Persecuted, slandered, suspected by the pagans, for three hundred years they live in the Catacombs, a hidden and despised people. But they had with them God's supreme Gift, the holy Eucharist; they had the daily Sacrifice of the Mass, and daily they received the Body of the Lord. Naturally, they hid from the pagans their priceless Gift—strong proof of Its divinity, since had It been mere bread and wine they need not have made such a secret about It. And It was their daily food; hence, their happiness, their union of heart and mind, their constancy under all trials, their heroism even unto death, and the final triumph of their religion.

"Happy age, when Christians felt and professed their common brotherhood, and could be pointed out by the Gentiles with the remark, 'See how they love one another!' Whence sprang that warmth of union and love? From daily Mass, from daily Communion, the Eucharist being their daily Bread!"

The Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist

(From Wiseman.)

This doctrine of the Catholic Church is one which has been much misrepresented. It has been held up to scorn by many opponents of Catholicity, and therefore all non-Catholics should be glad to have an authentic statement of it, and of the reasons for believing in it.

The Council of Trent declares that the Catholic Church teaches, and always has taught, that in the Blessed Eucharist that which was originally bread and wine is, by the consecration, changed into the substance of the body and blood of our Lord together with his soul and divinity, in other words, his entire person; which change is properly called Transubstantiation. How incomprehensible, nay, how repugnant this doctrine seems to many! Yet to us it is the most consoling, the most cheering, and in every way the most blessed portion of our creed.

Let us open the Gospel of St. John at the sixth chapter. There we read of our Saviour multiplying the loaves and fishes by a stupendous miracle. Upon occasion of this, as was his wont, he teaches a doctrine, namely, that he is sent down from heaven to feed men's souls as well as their bodies, and that his teaching and his office are the bread of eternal life. Thus far he speaks figuratively. But at the forty-eighth verse he changes his subject, and from speaking of the gift of faith that he is to them as teacher, he affirms *himself*, personally and in his own substance, to be the bread of life. He declares that they are positively to possess himself by eating and drinking his flesh and blood. We use the Protestant version. "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews, therefore, strove among themselves saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then

Jesus said unto them, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me."

Now, the question between Catholics and others is whether our Saviour meant these words to be taken literally or figuratively; whether, by some new and astounding miracle, we are to actually eat his very flesh and drink his very blood, or only to be more closely united to him in spirit? At any rate this much is certain, the Jews took the literal meaning. They said, in effect, "The thing is impossible"; but it is plain that a closer spiritual union is not impossible. "How *can* this man give us his flesh to eat?" They must be considered as agreeing with Catholics in understanding our Saviour's words in the literal sense. And, therefore, so far as hearers are the proper witnesses of the meaning of words addressed to them, the testimony of the Jews is in favor of the literal meaning. The same may be said of our Saviour's own disciples; they also thought, and were by him left to think, that he meant to be understood literally.

Were the Jews right in thinking our Saviour meant the, to them, impossible promise of his literal flesh and blood? We have a very simple way of deciding: that is to say, by examining the cases where our Lord was *wrongly* understood to speak literally and how he acted on such occasions. We find that in all such instances without exception he corrects his hearers, and explains that he does not mean to be taken in the literal but in the figurative sense. Thus he explained to Nicodemus the words "unless a man be born again" (St. John III.) to mean, not a natural new birth but one "of water and the Holy Ghost." In the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew he explains that "the leaven of the Pharisees" was not literal bread but their corrupting influence. Again, in St. John IV; he corrects their literal acceptance of "I

have food to eat which you know not of." And when he said, as related in St. John XI; "Lazarus is dead"; and also in St. Matthew XIX; he sets them right about his expression of a camel passing through the eye of a needle. And in the other passages of a similar nature he acts in the same way.

In truth we may affirm, that it was his rule — and how reasonable that it should be so? — that if an objection were raised against his doctrine based on the literal meaning of his words, then in case he meant them to be taken figuratively, he said so and set his hearers right.

On the other hand, in those cases in which Jesus was rightly understood in the literal meaning, and yet objection was made to his doctrine, he repeated his statement and insisted on its exact meaning. It is thus in St. Matthew IX; when he claims the power of forgiving sins; in St. John VIII. his claim of being older than Abraham; and in earlier verses of this very chapter, St. John VI; his claim of having come down from heaven.

Thus we have two rules for ascertaining, on any given occasion, whether the Jews were right or wrong in taking our Lord's words to the letter; first, whenever they took them literally and he meant them figuratively he invariably explained his meaning, and told them that they were wrong in taking literally what he meant to be figurative; secondly, whenever the Jews understood him rightly in a literal sense, and objected to the doctrine proposed, he repeated the very phrases which had given offence.

(to be continued)

How great soever may be your desolation and your misery, your anxiety or your pains, your infidelities and your faults, in the presence of the altar and the Eucharist, be consoled, be calmed, be reassured! In the tabernacle Jesus Christ sleeps. He sleeps that this lowly slumber may soothe the terror that His majesty would excite; and in the tabernacle the Heart of Jesus watches, that this vigil may give you confidence. The Eucharist is a slumber. Weak, unhappy, sinful though you be, fear not, the Eucharist is the Heart of God which watches.

Prayer on a Violin

A chaplain to one of the divisions of the French Army, tells the following pretty story:—

On the eve of Whitsuntide, I went to the little church where I was to officiate the next day. It was after the dinner hour and I came with the intention of placing myself at the disposal of whomsoever might require my ministrations. As I was nearing the door, I heard the sound of a violin and I thought at once there was some rehearsal such as take place on the eve of a feast. I entered the church, cast a look around me and saw no one. The violinist was there alone. I let him finish his piece, to which I listened with a delight you will understand when I tell you that our "poilu" was first violin solo at the famous C--concerts in Paris. Then I advanced toward him and complimented him upon his execution: "It is a beautiful piece of music you have just been playing, what is it?" My question seemed to perplex our modest artist, who answered with some hesitation: "Oh, it is not much, just a little extempore voluntary." "An extempore production!" I exclaimed with astonishment, "If such be the case, it seems to me you have put all your heart and soul into it. One would have thought it was a prayer, the sweet prayer of a little child." "Your surmise is right, Monsieur l'aumonier," replied the violinist. "It certainly was a child's prayer I was playing — my own prayer. It happens to me now and then. When I am free, I come here alleging a rehearsal, and I never go away *without having played a piece to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin*. It seems to me that when I hold a bow in my hand is the time when I pray best. I think of all those I love and in the church, in front of Our Lady's image, all my past years as an altar boy, the day of my first Communion come back to my memory. Then, feeling the want of saying a fine prayer (which does not come to my lips) I begin to play and I feel I am more capable of praying with my violin than with words. Unfortunately, I have only a wretched instrument of the value of 30 francs; ah, if I had my own!...." As the chaplain excellently remarks, the soul of "Our Lady's Juggler" lives in the French people.

Fasting Before Communion

IS IT ONLY A PIOUS CUSTOM, OR ONE OF THE LAWS OF
THE CHURCH. ?

"The six commandments of the Church do not contain any injunction that I must not break my fast before receiving Holy Communion, and that I should keep this fast from the previous midnight," wrote a correspondent to Father Hull, the editor of the Bombay Examiner. "Am I to presume that this is only a pious custom, but in no sense obligatory? Anyhow, I do not see where it is laid down that I commit a mortal sin, if I break my fast before receiving Holy Communion."

THE REPLY

Here is the learned Jesuit's interesting reply:

There is an important Catholic principle which teaches that in matters of faith, morals and discipline an express official definition or decree of the authorities is not essential, but merely convenient, in order to close dispute. Originally the deposit of Christian truth was given to the Apostles by informal conversations, and afterwards by the assistance and inspiration of the Holy Ghost. This deposit was conveyed to the faithful by word of mouth in the form of daily teaching and instruction, and there existed no written formula either of the creed or the code.

Only on one occasion in the New Testament do we read of a formal and official decree; and that was in the Council of Jerusalem, which settled the points of Jewish observance to be imposed upon gentile converts, and the points to be omitted. And the only reason why this decree was officially made was because of much confusion which had risen on the subject. The so-called Apostle's Creed is the first formulated code of belief we know. It was popularly attributed to the Apostles, and was said to have been drawn up by them before they scattered into various

lands, so that they might have some uniform and systematic explanation of the main points of their message. It is quite possible, and even likely, that they did draw up such a creed; but, at the same time we cannot prove it. The Apostle's Creed first emerges in written history as the baptismal creed of the Roman Church in the second century, and quite possibly this may have been its origin. If the whole of the faithful had gone on believing the simple doctrine of the Church without getting involved in difficult speculations and disputes and heresies, no further formulation would have been necessary. But the spread of Arianism made a fresh and fuller definition necessary on the points under dispute. Hence arose what is popularly called the Nicene Creed. There were many things believed and practiced in the Church as belonging to faith and morals besides those contained in such creeds; but there was no necessity to define them because they were taken for granted. But as ages passed one point after another came to be disputed, and the Church had to step in and affirm the right doctrine in the form of an official decree or definition. By this means nearly the whole body of revealed truth has come to be defined; the last points being the Immaculate Conception and the infallibility of the Pope. These definitions were not a creation of new doctrines, but the formulation of old ones. They had already been believed, without a definition; and the definition made no difference except to put a close on all dispute or doubt.

PRACTICAL CUSTOMS AND USAGES.

The same is true of practical customs and usages. The Church never formulated a law as to how the Mass should be said. The essential parts were inherited from the Apostles, and other parts were added at discretion. This gave rise to a great variety of local usages, each of which came to be obligatory in a certain place, merely on the ground of ancient custom or tradition. When intercourse became wider, and local variations were found inconvenient, an authorised standard form was drawn up called the Roman Missal, which was gradually made obligatory

all over the western world, with a few interesting exceptions.

The same is true of the celibacy of the clergy. Nobody doubts that a priest is cut off from marriage by an implicit vow; and yet no one can point to any official decree which gave rise to this obligation, or which stands as the ground for it. The whole rests on the informal but effectual ground of administration rather than law — a usage gradually induced and enforced by the authorities. If there should ever rise a revolt against clerical celibacy the Church might find it necessary to issue an official decree; but till this happens, priests will go on accepting the obligation on the strength of practical tradition and administrative enforcement alone.

THE DUTY OF FASTING

The same is true of the duty of fasting before Communion. Christ Himself instituted the Holy Eucharist in the evening, at the end of the feast dinner. The early Christians used to celebrate regularly in the evening, and, therefore, of course, without fasting. At some obscure point in history the Mass came to be transferred to the early morning, and this became the invariable custom. Out of this arose the fact of receiving the Eucharist fasting from midnight, and this fact gradually came to be regarded as an obligation. Hence it got formulated into a law in theological text-books and instructions, on the strength of traditional usage, rather than any official decree. The custom is strictly obligatory all the same; and only if there ever should arise a party calling it into question, would the Church find it necessary to issue an official definition of the law in order to put an end to such a dispute.

Even the "six" Commandments of the Church are not, as they stand, official enactments. The hearing of Sunday Mass did not arise from any formulated decree of the Church, but merely from recognized and enforced custom. The holidays of obligation became obligatory in the same manner by local usage. The laws of fasting and abstinence were practiced out of

devotion with great variety of usage before any legislation was made about them. The duty of providing for the needs of our pastors is evident on the grounds of the common-sense, common justice and natural law, without requiring any ecclesiastical enactment. In short, the so-called Commandments of the Church, as given in our catechisms, are not laws in the sense of formulated, codified legal enactments, but only in the sense of obligatory Catholic customs, which the Church would formulate if circumstance required, but which she does not formulate because everybody recognizes them, and accepts them as binding. The only one which is the subject-matter of a formal decree is that about annual confession and Communion.

WE KNOW THAT THEY ARE OBLIGATORY

Moreover, the Church has never formulated or made officially its own any enumeration of the "Commandments of the Church" as put down in our catechisms. The list given has varied from time to time in various countries without making any difference to the obligation. The obligatory usages exist and would exist even if they were never called "Commandments of the Church" and never printed in catechisms. We know that they are obligatory simply from the fact that they are asserted in every book of theology and instruction, and that the official Church knows this, and approves of it, and backs it up, and therefore administratively gives force to it as law.

When we consider that the laws of good society, the things which every gentleman is bound to observe if he wishes to be counted as a gentleman at all, are all founded in the same way on unwritten and unformulated and universally accepted customs, this unformulated character of certain Catholic obligations will not seem strange or surprising. It is the way in which human nature works in general; and the Church in this respect follows the way of humanity so long as it is sufficient to secure the desired object. It is only when a doctrinal or disciplinary obligation is questioned that

the official formulation of a written law becomes necessary. Our practical test is this. Suppose, for instance, somebody sent to Rome a question whether fasting before Communion was a strict obligation, can anybody doubt what the answer would be? The answer would certainly be "It is of strict obligation." Knowing this, we have the common-sense to take it as an evident fact without demanding such an answer. We ought to add that the existence of the law is proved by the fact of the Holy See sometimes giving dispensations from its observance.

The obligation of fasting before Communion is therefore really a commandment of the Church, and might be added to the others as a seventh. It would also be possible to multiply the list indefinitely.—For instance: not to marry within forbidden decrees; not to marry outside the Church; not to be present at heretical services; not to join forbidden secret societies; not to take part in political movements against the temporal power; not to read books placed on the Index; not to take part in spiritistic seances; not to cremate the dead, etc. It just happens that these points of Christian duty have been scattered about over the different parts of our text-books and catechisms, while certain other points happen to have been left out and grouped in a heading by themselves as "Commandments of the Church." But the arrangement is quite haphazard and practical, not methodical or scientific."

"Be ready to sacrifice everything, to devote yourself to everything for one Communion. One Communion can make a saint in an instant since it is Jesus Christ Himself, the Author of all sanctity, who comes to you."

"By Communion, we receive Jesus Christ as God and Man, with the merits of His mortal life and all its states, the Redemption and all its fruits, the pledge itself of future glory."

EPIPHANY

Beneath the unclouded Orient sky
Three royal Wise Men nightly scanned
Earth's brooding dome, with tireless eye
Deep delving in that star-sown land.

On heavens high brow serenely fair
Lo! bursts a flash of flame, afar
Its sheen it flings and blinds the air:
The long besought Messiah's star.

On it they feed their hushed delight,
Their call it speaks, with leaping heart
And strong resolve, that starry night,
All three their native soil depart.

Nor mountain steep, nor scorching sands,
Nor foaming flood their progress stem;
Star-piloted they brave wild lands,
And startle proud Jerusalem.

The Seer is heard; anon their guide
Unveiled seeks Bethlehem wrapt in dreams,
And oe'r a cave in mountain side
Halts, earthward shedding silvery beams.

The Wise Men tread the hallowed sod
And lo! through haze of breath they see
'Mid bleating lambs the Lamb of God,
And fall awe-seized on bended knee.

What blissful worship! Heaven on earth,
Rehearsed. Each kingly heart uplifts
To Christ its love, and feasts His Birth
With royal spread of treasured gifts:

Gold nuggets, dug where Indus roars,
His Kingship own; blue incense breath
True God 'neath shivering Babe adores,
And myrrh forebodes His saving death.

With Faith's bright star to light your way,
Draw nigh His altar-crib, and bring
Your hearts full wealth, this festive day
To Jesus, God and Man and King.

Love, golden love, pain-cleansed of dross,
The frankincense of strong winged prayer,
The myrrh of patience 'neath the cross,
The daily cross God gives to bear.

D. F. S.

S. S. S.

SUBJECT OF ADORATION

The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us full of grace and truth.

I. ADORATION.

He loved me and delivered Himself for me.

The great work of our Redemption was inspired by Love, by a love at once gratuitous, desinterested and merciful. He loved me! Yes, me! Everyone of us may truthfully utter these consoling words, Jesus loved me.

For me He left the splendor of His heavenly home and dwelt amongst us. For me He lived on earth thirty years in poverty, humility and suffering.

And, in order to bring down to me all the benefits, the fruit of His life; to allow me to enjoy them all, He deigned to institute the Holy Eucharist, that wonderful source of grace and merits whence I may daily draw at will all the graces I need.

O wondrous Love of my God!

II. THANKSGIVING.

He delivered Himself for me.

God, in His eternal Wisdom, was pleased to choose sacrifice as the means of repairing the fall of mankind. Our Divine Saviour accepted this means. Of his own free will He offered Himself to His Father in expiation for our sins, and the justice of God heaped upon His innocent shoulders the woful burden of our iniquities.

Still, as if He considers His death upon the Cross as too slight a sacrifice for our sakes, He daily renews that immolation upon thousands of altars in every clime under heaven.

Because He loved me unto the end, even unto the end He sacrifices Himself for me. To understand the love He bears me, I have only to consider how generously He gives Himself to me in Holy Mass and Holy Communion.

O Love, who can doubt such love as this? Who can refrain from offering Thee a lifelong thanksgiving to repair the sad ingratitude of countless souls?

III. REPARATION.

Our Divine Saviour, by His bloody death on Calvary's height, wished to repair the twofold evil of sin, towards God and towards man; the glory of His Father, His truth, holiness and justice violated, outraged and scorned; the misfortune and ruin of wretched sinners.

To His Father He gave full satisfaction, to man complete pardon and forgiveness of his guilt: thus was His reparation perfect in every way.

On the altar, where He immolates Himself daily and forever, Jesus continues His great work. He never ceases to offer satisfaction to His Father, and to us salvation, if only we share in His sacrifice and cooperate with Him by our detesting our sins and by faithfully corresponding to His grace.

IV. PETITION.

O Divine Jesus, thou dost long to have cooperators in the sublime work of the Redemption, men who will unite their reparation to that of Thy Blessed Mother at the foot of the Cross.

It is my duty to take part in this work, my dignity as Christian and child of God requires it. I accept, O my Divine Saviour, Thy invitation. I will receive Thee frequently, daily if I can, that Thou mayst impress deeply in my heart Thy wounds and Thy death. I will offer Thee daily, in Holy Communion, my soul, my body, my heart, that in them Thou mayst reproduce and continue Thy sufferings and Thy death. O Divine Victim of the Altar, for me, for wretched me, Thou didst deign to live, suffer and die, behold, I offer Thee myself, all that I have and am, for Thee will I live and die for Thee whom I love above all others.

Gentlemen Raise Your Hats

The Archbishop of Dublin takes occasion in his recent pastoral letter to make known to the faithful of his diocese that a marked spiritual favor has been conferred upon them by the Holy Father, as a reward for habitual public manifestation of their devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, and as an encouragement to persevere in it. "On being recently informed by us," says His Grace, "of the edifying practice that has long been widespread among the faithful of the diocese, in both town and country, of piously saluting our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament by some external sign of reverence when passing a church or oratory in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, His Holiness felt himself moved to express in some special way the satisfaction with which he has heard of this and his desire to encourage our people to perseverance in so laudable a practice. He has now done so by issuing an extraordinary faculty authorizing us to grant in his name an indulgence of one hundred days, to be gained by the faithful of this city or diocese each time that, in passing a church or oratory in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, they manifest their devotion to our Lord by some external sign of reverence, as it has long been their pious and edifying practice to do."

The pious practice thus warmly approved and indulged by the Sovereign Pontiff is not confined, we are glad to say, to either Dublin or Ireland at large. It prevails in many portions of the United States, and still more generally, perhaps, in Canada, notably in the Province of Quebec. The practice, it need not be said, is thoroughly congruous: is indeed merely a consistent recognition of the Real Presence on the part of those who profess their belief therein.

HOLY COMMUNION

If we who receive Our Eucharistic God so often into our hearts, would only for a brief few minutes reflect on the solemnity of that great Act; on the goodness of the God of Heaven and earth who humbles Himself to such an extent, as to unite His Adorable Body with our sinful flesh, how different would be our preparation for receiving Our Heavenly Guest.

Oh! what a wonderful inexpressible proof of the love of Our Saviour is given us in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, that inexhaustible ocean of consolation that we can draw from every day of our lives and still never drain Its depths of grace and mercy.

But if God in His goodness has left us this great Gift of the Bread of Life, for the strength and nourishment of our souls, ought not we to co-operate with His graces and blessings, so that we may derive from It all the benefits Its reception imparts.

With what care should we prepare our souls for receiving that priceless Gift of Christ Himself. If Holy Mother the Church ordains that the Ciborium wherein the Sacred Host reposes should at least be lined with gold, and exacts the most scrupulous cleanliness in regard to all things pertaining to the Altar, how spotless should be our hearts, that are not only a short resting place for the Sacred Species, but a living Chalice where Jesus is united with us and we with Him.

If one Communion is enough to make us a saint, how is it that we are so little changed, that we so often fall back into our old sins, and discouraged find we have made no progress? It rests with us. If we prepared ourselves as worthily as possible for the reception of this great Sacrament, and after having received It, corresponded with the graces bestowed upon us by Our Divine Guest, we would soon perceive that It had indeed wrought a change in our hearts and that our hitherto

ineffectual desires to combat sin were strengthened by the firm conviction that with Jesus, and for His sake, no obstacle could deter us in the way of perfection.

Reflect for a moment, how nothing is considered too costly in the adornment of the Altar and Tabernacle, the earthly abode of the King of Kings. Precious gems stud the sacred vessels, fragrant flowers diffuse their sweet perfumes, and numerous lights tell of the homage rendered to the Prisoner of the Altar.

And we to whom He gives Himself so entirely, often welcome Him in a lukewarm manner, into a heart already filled with earthly thoughts and desires, and in a distracted thanksgiving heed not the beautiful lessons He comes to teach us. And then we wonder that we are no better after our Communions. Or perhaps we receive our Lord with love and fervor, with a firm desire to be more faithful in the future, and to never forsake Him again? Yes! but how soon are those ardent promises forgotten, how quickly does the memory of that Visit fade away, when the first occasion of sin presents itself, and we overthrow the reign of Our God and Redeemer. Once more is enacted the scenes of Bethlehem, as we close the door of our heart and the Son of God has to look elsewhere for shelter. Is it possible that we treat Our Saviour so? We who condemn the people of Bethlehem for refusing to receive the Holy Wanderers on that blessed Christmas night? But have we not done so every time we allowed sin to reign in our heart in Jesus' rightful place? If we paused to think over these things when tempted to commit sin, Our Eucharistic God would still remain supreme Master of our hearts. And would not one conquest over self give us more confidence in our will power, and spur us on to further efforts in the future.

Then let us make a fervent resolution to try and prepare ourselves henceforth as well as lies in our power for our Communions. Let nothing be considered too hard in preparing our souls, the last Repository wherein Jesus rests before uniting Himself to us. Thus our hearts after passing through the crucible of trial and tribulation and emerging free from all earthly dross,

shall become to Him as a costly throne of gold; precious gems may also adorn this throne, pearls of purity, rubies of love, diamonds of rarest beauty, purchased at great cost in battle with the three concupiscences. There too shall be engraven the cross, which we shall from now on carry, not murmuring, but with a ready spirit to do God's Will in all things, till in truth we can cry out to Him, "Thy cross in my heart, my heart in Thy cross." The violet of humility shall shed its sweet perfume, and who can say that in a heart thus prepared to receive its Guest, Jesus would not far sooner abide than on a Altar amid the richest splendor.

Then would our Communions be a source of joy, and a foretaste of the Eternal Paradise. The memory of each Communion lasting till it faded in the next loving union.

The Communion of to-day would be a thanksgiving for the previous, and a preparation for the coming One. And so continue till at length, when the darkness of night shall have passed away, and we behold the Beatific Vision, in the realms of that Haven of rest, whose beauty "eye has not seen, ear has not heard" pressed to the Heart of Our Beloved in a sweet embrace we shall enjoy the happiness of an endless union lasting throughout the countless ages of Eternity.

CARMEL.

We like the plan in use in some parishes, wherein the married men go to Holy Communion on the first Sunday of the month; the married women on the second Sunday; the boys and young men on the third Sunday; and the girls and young women on the fourth Sunday. It makes the practice of receiving the Blessed Sacrament regular. Moreover, it inevitably leads to more frequent Communion.

THOMAS MORE

On July 6, occurred the 380th anniversary of the execution of Blessed Thomas More. In his review of Von Ranke's "History of the Popes." Lord Macaulay gives us the following paragraph:

"When we reflect that Sir Thomas More was ready to die for the doctrine of Transubstantiation, we can not but feel some doubt whether the doctrine of Transubstantiation may not triumph over all opposition. More was a man of eminent talents. He had all information on the subject that we have, or that, while the world lasts, any human being will have. "This is my body," was in his New Testament as it is in ours. The absurdity of the literal interpretation was as great and as obvious in the sixteenth century as it is now. No progress that science has made, or will make, can add to what seems to us the overwhelming force of the argument against the Real Presence. We are, therefore, unable to understand why what Sir Thomas More believed respecting Transubstantiation may not be believed to the end of time by men equal in ability and honesty to Sir Thomas More. But Sir Thomas More is one of the choice specimens of human wisdom and virtue; and the doctrine of Transubstantiation is a kind of proof charge. A faith which stands that test will stand any test."

THE BATTLEFIELD, A FIELD OF PRAYER.—The following letter to a priest, friend of a sergeant at Nice, bears striking testimony to the movement of return to religion among French soldiers:

"Edifying little facts occur day by day. It is conversion, or rather the return *en masse* to the Faith, which will truly be the fruit of this war. One would think himself in an immense Retreat, during which every man purifies himself by penitence and enters into himself. The field of battle is becoming a field of

prayer where, as I said to a comrade yesterday, ejaculatory prayers are heard like bullets. I wish you knew how beautiful it is. One can now speak of God to any one, and find echoes where, five months ago, one got only a sceptical if not a mocking smile. Everybody is going to confession, and the Communions are no longer counted. On some days the chaplains can not hear all the confessions of these brave men, many of whom had not made one for twenty years."

THE PIETY OF THE IRISH SOLDIERS. — His Eminence Cardinal Logue says: "A consoling feature of the war is found in the reports which Chaplains in the field give of the earnestness with which our Irish soldiers avail themselves of the spiritual aids which have been secured for them after some trouble. The record of their conduct in action proves that devotion to religion has not damped their ardor, or robbed them of the dash which has so often carried Irish soldiers to the forefront in many a stricken field."

"IT GIVES COURAGE".—A French soldier writing to his sister says: "Last Sunday a bullet fell two yards from me; I was covered with dust, but did not receive a scratch. What one sees here forces one to believe in the Providence of God! You can be sure that at this moment there are neither pagans nor unbelievers to be found. Every man is pleased to have five minutes free in order to spend them in the church. Before the war many were ashamed to be seen kneeling down or making the sign of the Cross, but these men are not to be found now. On Sunday, when we are close to a church and can attend Mass in it, we find it difficult to secure a place so large is the attendance. After Mass one feels so happy; it gives courage; a man feels much braver."

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THE TABERNACLE

How beautiful is the silent patient life of that prison-house of love! Everything about our Lord has such endurance! It does not come and go like a transient flash of grand lightning, deepening the darkness of the night. It is not a visitation which is over before we have realized it. But just as he stood quietly among His apostles in the amazing beauty of His Resurrection, and said: "Handle Me and see," so does He abide with us in the Blessed Sacrament, that we may get to know Him, to outlive our tremulous agitation, and the novelty of our surprise, and to grow familiar with Him if we can, as our life long Guest. There we can bring our sorrows and cares and necessities at all hours when there is no ceremonial of the church. We can choose our own time, and our visit can be short or as long as duties permit or as love desires. There is an unction and a power in the mere silent companionship of the Blessed Sacrament which is beyond all words. Members of religious communities accustomed to sleep under the same roof with the Blessed Sacrament; know the feeling of anxious loneliness and the sense of some unsatisfied want when they are away from home. The feverishness of Good Friday passes upon their spirits, when they are staying where there is no Blessed Sacrament in the house. The ways of visiting the Blessed Sacrament must be as various as the souls of men. Some love to go there to listen; some to speak; some to confess to Him as if He were their priest; some to examine their consciences, as before their judge; some to do homage as to their King; some to study Him as their Doctor and Prophet: some to find shelter as with their Creator. Some rejoice in His Divinity, others in His Sacred Humanity, others in the mysteries of the season. Some visit Him on different days by His different titles, as God, Father, Brother, Shepherd, Head of the Church, and the like. Some visit to adore, some to intercede, some to petition, some to return thanks, some to get consolation; but all visit Him to love, and to all who visit Him in love He is a power of heavenly grace and a fountain of many goods, no single one of which the whole created universe could either merit or confer.

Jackie's Reward

Jackie had risen early that new Year's morning, and as Margaret, lying in the next room, heard him softly stirring about, she thought drearily of the misery that was steadily settling down upon the home which sheltered him, her only little son.

"It must be snowing", she thought, as the wind plaintively moaned round the cottage, its icy breath freezing the air and rising sometimes to a weird shriek making her shiver.

Ever since the day when John, her strong kind husband had fallen dead on the road, as he was coming home from work, misfortunes had crowded upon them, and now the worst of all had come — she was ill and helpless.

Margaret had borne her trouble courageously, but her stout heart failed her a little now, though not for herself. What would become of Jackie were she to die, was her only thought.

As she lay with half-closed eyes and white lips, oppressed with anxiety and suffering, the boy came to her bedside. His first words were of tender enquiry:

"Well, mother, have you had a good night? Have you slept well?"

"Very well, dearie, and I think I am a little better today. It is very cold though. Do get a fire lighted in the stove as quickly as you can." The poor woman had roused herself to speak cheerfully. "But, mother, there isn't a bit of wood left. I have looked in every corner of the shed."

Margaret's heart sank. Had it indeed come to this pass? What would become of them? Forcing a smile, she told the boy to "never mind" as after all she did not think it was really as cold as she had thought. But as she spoke she shivered involuntarily.

Jack was scarcely ten years old, but he was observant, and knew that, in spite of her brave words, his mother was cold. She could not hide her sufferings always from him, and this time they were plain to be seen. "There! another shiver!" The sight made a man of the little lad.

Without a word he went to the corner of the room where his cap hung on its nail. Taking it down, he placed it on

his head with a look of determination. Drawing the flaps over his ears, he returned to the bedside.

"I am going straight into the woods for some sticks, mother. I shan't be long," he said.

"God bless you for your thought, darling, but it will be no use for you to go; the keeper will not allow you to go inside the gates alone; and besides listen to the wind; the snow must be very thick on the ground."

Jack persisted:

"Don't hinder me from going mother. I'll get into the woods somehow." The boy was reaching for his pruning-knife and the string to tie his fagot, as he spoke.

"Jackie, dear I cannot let you go. Remember it is a day of obligation and you must not miss Mass," insisted Margaret.

"Do let me go, Mother," he pleaded. "I shall be back in time for Mass, if I hurry."

The poor sick woman could not argue any longer. With a sigh she motioned that he might go, for, she mused, miserably, "it is cold without a fire. I cannot bear it much longer."

Just then a blast of wind hurled itself round the cottage, making her tremble with apprehension. As Jack was about to open the door, she called him back.

Put on the old cloak, dear. Open the chest where I put your poor father's clothes. The cloak is on the top of them. Wrap it well round you so as to keep out the cold."

The boy did quickly as he was told, for he was eager to get away.

A gust of wind and snow rushed into the room as Jack opened the door, making poor Margaret cower lower among the bed-clothes, reproaching herself weakly for having given in to the boy's wish, yet knowing she must have warmth or die.

After a brief struggle to shut the door, the boy started on his mission of love and duty.

Margaret had caught a glimpse of the swirling snow through the opened door, and listening to the wild uproar, prayed for the little fellow who was out in all this tumult; and set herself to wait patiently for his return.

"Holy Mary, pray for us — pray for us— now— and at — the hour — of — our death. Jesus, mercy! Mary, help!"

Outside the boy was trudging bravely along. He wrapped his cloak round him, but it was cumbersome and hindered his progress. Stumbling along, often falling, but each time laughing merrily as he picked himself up, for at the end of the journey he could see a blazing fire as a reward. It was a difficult walk, though the distance was not long. The gallant boy at length accomplished it and entered the woods unobserved.

It did not take him long to lap off some dead branches and collect them into a little heap. After tying the sticks into a firm bundle he placed it round his shoulders again, but though his brow was wet with perspiration he was now feeling very cold. The snow had gathered on his shoulders and arms and on his cloak, but his heart was warm with the thought of the comfort he was taking to his mother.

"I'll soon be home now" he whispered.

There was one thing to do, however, that must not be forgotten. Near the entrance to the woods stood the crucifix of the "Fairies' Crossway." Neither his mother or he ever forgot that it was just at the foot of the pedestal that his father had been found dead, and they always in passing knelt and said a prayer for him. Jack must say his *Requiescat in pace*, even though he were in a hurry.

So as he came up to the crucifix, Jackie put his fagot of sticks down, took his cap off and reverently said the prayer for his father's soul, gazing meanwhile up at the statue.

Never, he thought, had the cross and all it stood for seemed so awful, so terrible, as it did today in this gloomy morning light. Pity rose up in his heart for the pain of Him who hung there. Those nails, hammered, he thought shudderingly, into His hands and feet. And that cruel crown of thorns! How it must have hurt for there were drops of blood falling from the brow! And the gaping wound in the side! Some little icicles formed on the eyelids looked like tears to the boy's fancy. But he must not stay; any way there was nothing he could do to comfort. He could only feel so sorry for Christ so lonely, so sad up there.

Hark! the first mass bell was ringing. He must hurry! His sturdy little legs shook as he rose. With one pitying

look at the agonized Face of the statue he trudged away. After a few steps he turned round to give one last look. Some snow was blown off the shoulders of the figure, and horrorstruck, Jackie thought he saw it shiver.

Letting his precious burden fall and forgetting everything in his pity, and with a wild desire to comfort the sufferer, he ran back.

"Poor, dear Jesus, how cold you must be!" he said, as he took off his cloak and throwing it over his arm, clambered up, helped by the projection made by the girdle until he could reach the shoulders, then threw the cloak round them and secured it as well as he could.

Descending and looking up, satisfied that he had done all that was in his power, he said: "You will not be quite so cold now, Jesus," and turned away happy.

This time he must go on; mother would be waiting and longing for him and the bright fire that he would soon have blazing in the stove.

But he was very weary and, as he once more lifted his burden, he felt stiff with cold and fatigue, but with a smile on his lips he groped his way slowly homeward.

He was not far from home (nearer than he knew.), but as he passed a bank which was a little sheltered by some fir-trees, he felt compelled to rest.

"Just for one moment," he murmured. He was very drowsy, but he knew he must not give way to sleep. He would struggle against that, but he must rest—rest—just—for—one—one.....

Weariness had conquered. Jack fell asleep!

Yes, he woke again and at home, though when he first opened his eyes, he wondered where he was! Where were the snow, the sheltered beauty of the woods, and the icy gusts of wind? A soft balmy breeze was blowing on him, laden with the scent of flowers. Where was the bundle of sticks? He heard music, too, such as he had never heard before. Wondering he rose and was amazed to see that he was clothed in white, and that round his shoulders he wore a blue mantle, blue as the summer's sky, exactly like the one the Mother of God, the

Blessed Virgin herself, wore in the picture over her altar in the church. Jack knew it by the border round the hem. He recognized the flowers worked in gold and colors!

The music was coming nearer, and he saw from all sides white-robed forms advancing towards him. Gladness was on all their faces as they sang:

"Glories upon glories hath Our God prepared for the souls who love Him." But they stopped their singing suddenly and knelt, adoring, as Some One passed through their midst and came straight to Jack.

Some One? Why it was the Christ of the "Fairies' Crossway!" No mistake about it, for round his shoulders was the old cloak which Jack had put there a little while ago!

So the boy was not afraid but ran to meet Him with the question: "Where am I, Jesus?"

Jesus smiled very lovingly as placing his hand on the boy's brow, he replied:

"In my Father's house, Jack, to live with Me, happily 'forever and forever!' because you loved Me; loved Me so much that you pitied My sufferings and comforted My Heart with your tenderness. You clothed Me with your own mantle and made reparation for the cruelty of those who stripped Me of mine. Of all the virtues the greatest and rarest is Charity. See, I have given you a new robe in exchange; henceforth you are the guest and friend of God. No sorrow, nor sickness can enter this home, nor weariness, nor cold."

Jesus knew why little Jackie's hand went up in supplication at the word "cold," for a deeper love glowed in His eyes as He said:

"Is there anything you wish for, my child? Ask Me what you will."

And as Jack whispered "Mother," He smiled and answered:

"Dear Child, your prayer is answered."

He who never forgets had many and many a time seen Margaret lying prostrate at His feet. He knew she loved Him and was living in the hope of one day seeing

Him. So, He had sent His angels and they were even now speeding their homeward way, and she was with them.

How can I tell of the rapture of gratitude which filled the hearts of Margaret and Jack, when kneeling beside them, also in white raiment, they saw him they had mourned and prayed for each day?

Together all three had entered into the joy of their Lord.

C. A. S.

© *Sacramental Love of God!*

Jesus, Thy people, when they meet,
 With joy behold Thy Mercy Seat;
 When here they seek Thee, Thou art found,
 Residing on most hallowed ground.
 Oh, Thou in Tabernacle Cell
 Upon thy Altar Throne dost dwell!
 Thy true friends find Thee, when they come
 To worship in Thy Temple Home.
 O Shepherd dear of all mankind,
 Thy grace and blessing here we find;
 And every loving soul is filled
 With sweetness from Thy heart instilled.
 Thou dost, in answer to our prayer,
 Give faith and strength, and sweeten care,
 And make our faint desires to rise
 To heaven, life's guerdon prize.
 By prayerful heart, Thy counseling word
 And sweet commands are clearly heard —
 O Sacramental God of love,
 Be with us till we meet above!

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