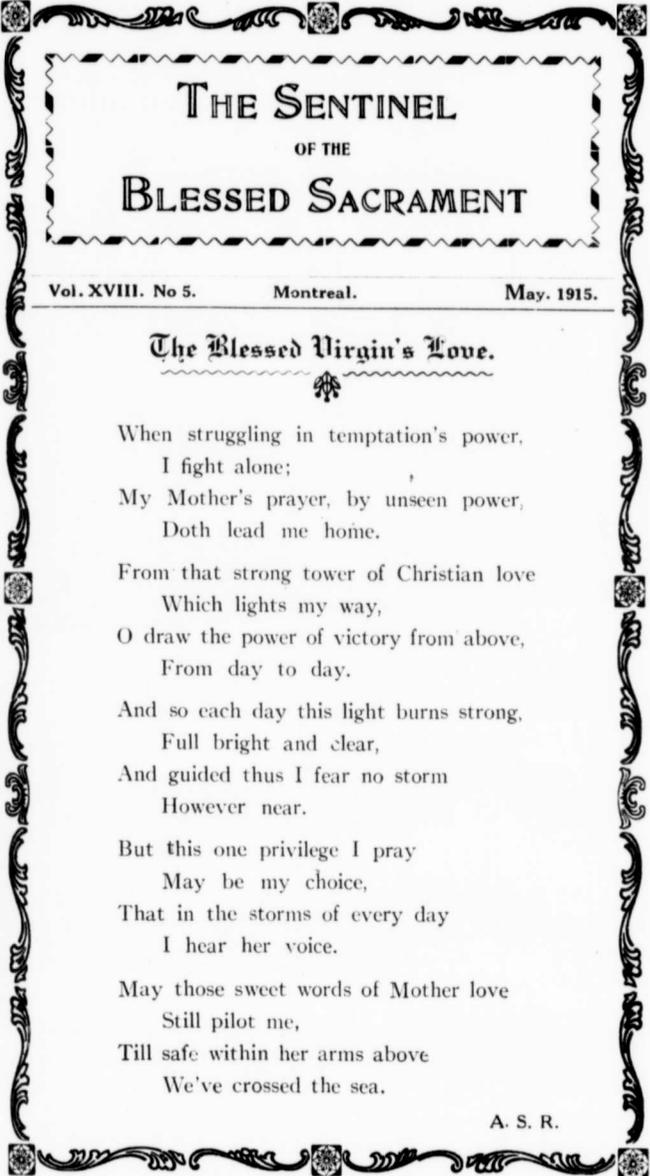


Curing the Blind Man.



THE SENTINEL
OF THE
BLESSED SACRAMENT

Vol. XVIII. No 5.

Montreal.

May, 1915.

The Blessed Virgin's Love.



When struggling in temptation's power,

I fight alone;

My Mother's prayer, by unseen power,

Doth lead me home.

From that strong tower of Christian love

Which lights my way,

O draw the power of victory from above,

From day to day.

And so each day this light burns strong,

Full bright and clear,

And guided thus I fear no storm

However near.

But this one privilege I pray

May be my choice,

That in the storms of every day

I hear her voice.

May those sweet words of Mother love

Still pilot me,

Till safe within her arms above

We've crossed the sea.

A. S. R.

The Moment of Holy Communion

THERE is an instinct in us all, no matter how unaccustomed we may be to pray, which seems to tell us that if ever our prayer should be real and from the depth of the soul it should be at the moment of Holy Communion. If the Blessed Sacrament is that which, on the authority of our Lord's own words, we believe it to be, His own true Body and His own true Blood, then there must be no imitation, there must be no mere playing at devotion, there must be a strong soul's genuine expression of itself, whenever we receive it into ourselves. Hence the universal custom of regular preparation for Communion, and regular thanksgiving after it, which in practice are made of almost as much account as the receiving of the Sacrament itself; hence, too, the further common custom of spending the first moments after Communion in intent contemplation, as if one feared that the use of a book, or any other help to prayer, might be almost a desecration of a moment so solemn.

Undoubtedly the instinct is a good one, and both the resulting practices are good. At the same time, as with all things good, the importance of both can be exaggerated; preparation and thanksgiving are very far from being the Sacrament itself, while to one who is wholly unaccustomed to contemplation a book may help to prayer when without it the soul will be wholly distracted. But not on that account should one decline to make the effort. Rightly understood contemplation is less beyond our range than is sometimes assumed, and there are none but may attain to it in some degree.

If you do not take as resolution to communicate often, daily, the devil laughs at you. The more you Communicate the better Catholic you are.

A True Spiritual Resurrection

Ah, how many are there, who have risen, with the help of God from a career of sin, and who at this moment feel within them the lusty life of grace, but who will again, through human frailty, through neglect of prayer, through the strength of their own sinful passions and bad habits; above all, through their imprudently thrusting themselves into the occasion of sin, fall again into a state of spiritual death never again, perhaps, to be awakened to a life of grace by the quickening voice of God; but to be abandoned to eternal reprobation. These are the abortions of the Church's spiritual life and the victims of their own insane folly.

But, give me a spiritual uprisal, modeled truly on the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Give me a spiritual life analogous to His during the Easter days. Give me a resurrection, I say, modeled on that of Jesus Christ, and an after-life like to His, of whom the Gospel tells us that to show that He was truly risen from the dead He performed the functions of a living man by daily conversing with the Disciples, by eating with them, and by the performance of other vital actions. So you, I say, show forth to the world that your resurrection to the spiritual life is one effected by the help of grace and destined to be perpetual, by speaking, aye, thundering in the ears of God the voice of prayer and of contrition for your past sins; by eating, yes, sharing in the ineffable banquet of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ by frequent Communion, and by doing the works of Christ; that is by the practice of Christian virtues. Give me such a resurrection and such a subsequent life. Of such a one it can be said what was said of Jesus Christ — that being risen from the dead "He dieth no more: death hath no longer dominion over Him;" but the supernatural life begun here by grace is destined to be perfected hereafter in glory.



Cling to Her!

—

“Why are we so passionately fond of Her, men even more than women? Not because of her humility, not because She is ‘Ark of the Covenant, Refuge of Sinners, or Comforter of the Afflicted,’ but because before all things She is the Mother of Our Saviour. If She can give us a Saviour She can give us anything. So, get wild about Her at once! Go stark mad with devotion to Her! Scream it out in the street! Lay hold of Her picture! Bring Her your candles, your resolutions and your kisses! Love Her with your whole being! Be at home with Her! Stick onto Her rosary! Cling to Her! Help everybody to become a little dearer to this dear, darling Mother of Our Saviour! I believe there is not a man, woman, or child, no matter with or without religion, but may obtain salvation by putting his or her hand into Our Lady’s. She will see you through.”

The Abandoned Sibirium.

The little Lorrain village of Belemerey near the frontier is deserted. And well it may be, for it lies right in the danger zone, between the French and Bavarian outposts.

To a neutral observer nothing is so sad as the silence of these abandoned homesteads, with their wide-open doors; if the doors were closed the reconnoitering enemy would force them open and sack and pillage all, so the peasants when compelled to flee for safety leave them open.

Notwithstanding this precaution ruin and desolation are everywhere, bare-walls riddled with shot, shattered and broken windows, furniture and household effects of any and every description thrown pell-mell in pro-

miscuous heaps; even the Church is not exempt as its wide open flapping doors, broken benches, overthrown statuary testify. No living soul is seen, only a few stray cats run wild amid the ruins and render the sadness more lugubrious with their plaintive cries.

Hark! a sound breaks the deadly stillness, nearer and nearer it comes, louder and louder it grows and in the distance a troop of soldiers appear. The closer they advance the more cautiously they tread, for the German trenches are only a few yards away, and snipers on the watch likely to surprise them with the welcome they are most anxious to avoid.

They are Southern Hussars, the gayest of the gay (6th of Marseilles). Not like the dandy little Cavaliers we were accustomed to see but fine big broad-shouldered, men shivering in the cold despite their heavy great coats, heavy knapsacks, and even heavily covered helmets. They certainly deserved their name of heavy cavalry. Even their mounts are heavy draught-horses more accustomed to work than war. Still they seem a lot of good-natured men, heedless of danger, and smoke and jest as if the horrors of war affected them not, or more likely as if they would fain forget its blight—at least for a brief spell.

At the "halt" of their commanding officer Lieutenant B.—all dismount. He gives his orders in a clear loud voice, accentuating the final: no one must enter any empty house except the church. Many of those brave Southerners come from good old Catholic families, and after leaving their horses in shelter, hasten to the Church with a feverish longing, an overmastering desire to pray. The Lieutenant also wends his way to the church and stands in the desecrated sanctuary sadly contemplating the awful havoc. With a deep sigh he lifts his eyes in mute supplication to the Tabernacle and sees through the partly torn drape a Ciborium apparently forgotten.

He salutes, beckons to his men who by this time, are nearly all assembled there; he knows he can trust them, not even the most reckless would be disrespectful under such circumstances.

Turning to an orderly he says: "George, please wrap up carefully that sacred vase and put it in my saddle-bag. Get couriers, you know what for, I want to send that chalice to a priest.—Depend on me Lieutenant. It's not so long ago since I made my First Communion and its happy memory shall help me to carry out your command to the letter."

Extending his hand to take the Ciborium and give it to the orderly, he drawn back in speechless amazement for therein is a pure white Host, a consecrated Host.

The soldiers have been mute spectators of what was taking place and now respectfully stand, at attention. Fortunately the Lieutenant was a good practical Catholic, and the thought of yesterday's Communion helps him now. Instinctively he kneels labouring under strong emotion and tries to decide what to do : Dare he entrust the Sacred Host to one of his Hussars? Dare he carry It on his person with his revolver? . . . Rising up, calmly, profoundly with unspeakable reverence he salutes the Sacred Host with full military honors, then taking It in his trembling fingers gives himself Communion... Had he not been to Communion the eve... Had he not been fasting since midnight... Had he not the attention, in so doing, to save His Lord from greater indignity.

For some moments he remains prostrate in adoration, his Hussars to a man follow his example and kneel with eyes rivited on him.

When he rises, all do likewise and with one accord salute their brave young Commander who had won a battle over self and human respect as great, if not greater, than any he may ever win on the field of honor, and which shall certainly win for him eternal honors, where battles never rage — in heaven.

The Value of a Friend.

How much we poor mortals need friendship! How valuable a true friend! He consoles in sorrow, he rejoices in joy, he is with us in sickness, he is our companion in health. We all need such a one to help us along the road.

I saw a beautiful picture the other day. It was most touching. It was our Divine Lord leaning on St John, and under it was written, "Even Jesus Needed a Friend." What words more significant! If He needed one, He whose human nature was always supported by His Divine nature, how much more must not our weak human hearts need the gentle kindness of another friendly heart.

I remember when I was a child I had a playmate who was the dearest friend I ever had. I thought the world and all of him and he of me. We were inseparable, except for the time of sleep and meals, and these latter we often took together. He had a good, sweet mother; she was as kind to me as ever my own dear mother could be. Our childlike companionship begot a similar one between our mothers. They never fretted about us, as long as they knew we were together. One day I met with an accident that kept me indoors for a long time. I had broken my ankle. That poor companion child felt the pain more than myself, and when the doctor came to set the bone, he came too. He watched every move, and when he saw that they were hurting me, he pulled a little bag out of his pocket, and put a piece of candy into my mouth.

Sweet thought! How kind! At last school days came for us. We were to enter the kindergarten. Off we went, happy as the day was long. We sat together in school, we shared our lunch, and after school went home together. And yet there were times when other boys would try to cloud my happiness. I was delicate, he was strong, and he always took my part. And so our school days passed.

We graduated together, and the following October entered College. Happy days again, even more so than our school days. From the College we went to the Seminary, then to Ordination, being together all that time.

I was appointed to a Church, and to my surprise when I got there, my friend was waiting to welcome me. Again we were together. But there was one day every year that I did not see him; he went away on that day. It was in memory of an event in his life that he sacredly kept this day each year. However, were I sick, he would come to see me, even on that day. So you see how great was that friendship for me; it made me what I am, a priest. Now, I have told you the whole story, but I have not told you my friend's name. It was Jesus. He was with me all through life, He is with me now and I am sure He will be with me when I am dying. The one day on which He used to leave me was Good Friday. So it is that friendship, the friendship of Christ that we are to seek in this life, and once acquired to keep in life, in death, and in eternity. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." Many a door has been slammed in His Sacred Face, many a heart has closed itself tight to His grace, and many a soul has gone into the valley of death without Him.

There He is to-day looking at us from His throne, arms outstretched, welcoming us in word and in gesture to His Sacred Heart. No heart ever loved like His Heart, no mouth ever spoke words like His, no friend ever loved as this Friend. And yet we do not all receive Him!

Hours and hours, days and days, weeks and years we have kept Him standing at the gate. "Behold, I stand at the gate and knock, and no one has answered." We have done that, yes, you and I, and more than once. Are we to continue so?

Are we above friendship? Are we different from the rest of men? No, indeed. We need a friend just like every one else. "It is not good for man to be alone." Almighty God realized that when He created Eve to be a companion to Adam. There are plenty who will be our friends, but we can not trust them. To-day they are with us, to-morrow against us. "Jesus Christ yesterday, to-day and forever." No change in Him. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." His word is enough. If He calls you friend, then you need worry no longer. He is yours, and yours forever, unless you change it yourself. Will every one who is here this month be here next month? Can our Sacramental Friend look for us

every morning at Mass or Holy Communion? Am I going to meet Him only once a year, at Easter? These and hundreds of other questions we might ask ourselves, and listen to the answers with faces blushing with shame. But let us do it anyway. Let us turn our shame into joy by a good act of contrition, and a firm purpose to value more the friendship of our Sacramental Friend.

AMONG THE LILIES.

If we are "clean of heart," our faith will be vivid, especially our faith in the Blessed Sacrament; as was the case with St. Thomas Aquinas, the angel of the Eucharist. But it is precisely the reception of the Body of Christ that keeps us pure, or restores to us once again our personal purity, so much so, indeed, that it would almost seem as if the white species of the Sacrament had some immediate effect upon our bodies, as He has upon our souls who is hidden beneath those appearances. The origin of the Eucharist accounts for the efficacy of its effect. It is the virginal flesh of God made Man, conceived and born of a Virgin Mother, and consecrated and administered to us by a celibate priest. "It is the boast of the Catholic religion, that it has the gift of making the young heart chaste; and why is this but that it gives us Jesus for our food and Mary for our nursing mother?" It has "the gift of making the young heart chaste;" for Christian chastity is not a mere negative virtue of youth and innocence, but a positive purity according to one's state in life; and having once made pure the youthful heart, of course, the Holy Eucharist can keep it so. It is his daily intimacy with the Blessed Sacrament that helps the priest to keep unsullied "the whiteness of his soul." In sooth, we may say of Holy Communion what a poet of today has said of the dewy kiss of a little child—

"It makes the sudden lilies push
Between the loosening fibers of the heart."
And the Lamb of God "feedeth among the lilies."

Was he not a Martyr?

A young English nobleman was touring through the principal cities of poetic Italy, and happened to be at Leghorn on the feast of *Corpus Christi*, a feast that is always celebrated with unparalleled magnificence in that beautiful Tuscan city.

A brilliant sun flooded the earth with its rays that day: the air was alive with the majestic concert of church-bells; palaces and houses were adorned with rich and varied colors; splendid repositories, hidden in a wealth of flowers, were raised here and there along the principal streets.

The multitude of worshippers, silent, recollected and prayerful, dropped on their knees when the Eucharistic God, carried by the Archbishop, under a golden baldachino, and escorted by the clergy and nobility of the city, made His progress through the streets.

The young nobleman stood erect in the midst of the people bent in adoration, and refused to kneel. He held his head up high and laughed ironically at what seemed to him the superstition of the papists. Suddenly the irony disappeared from his countenance. A deathlike paleness succeeded to it, while the young stranger fell to his knees and torrents of tears sprang from his eyes.

What had happened?

The Protestant young man is going to tell us.

"While I was looking at the monstrosity with incredulous eyes, it appeared to me as if the Savior Jesus cast on me a glance of unutterable sweetness, sorrow and reproach. Something that is impossible for me to describe passed within me.

I fell on my knees. I believed, and I adored."

Another Saul was stricken on the road to Damascus.

The young Englishman abjured his errors and entered the Society of Jesus, of which he, in latter years, became a distinguished member.

His love for the august Sacrament of the Altar was admirable. He consecrated to its praises a fluent pen

and a burning eloquence. He passed many long hours in adoration at the foot of the Tabernacle, and offered his life every morning in expiation for the outrages committed against Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament.

One year—it was at Easter time—his superiors sent him to help an old parish priest, whose parish lay amid the Sabine Hills, a spot particularly infected at that time with bands of robbers.

Rather late one evening the parish priest was called away to the bedside of a sick man, and Father . . . while awaiting his return, stood at his window, contemplating the starry Italian sky whose majestic silence and peacefulness his soul drank in generous draughts.

He turned his eyes towards the little church which lay a few yards off. As priest and 'apostle, his heart lovingly adored the Divine Prisoner and envied with a holy envy the tiny red lamp which stood guard in the sanctuary so close to the object of his love.

While following the rays of the lamp that came to him through the stained glass windows, he thought he saw a shadow moving about in the holy place, and drawn as if by some dire presentiment, he left the house and went directly to the church.

The door was wide open. One look at the altar sent a chill through him.

Two daring and ruffianly looking robbers were standing before the opened tabernacle preparing to seize the precious ciborium containing the Sacred Species.

What was he to do? He knew that in the tower of the church there were picks and axes. His thought, on the spur of the moment, was to seize a weapon and kill the sacrilegious robbers.

"No," said he, "the hand that consecrated the Bread of Life shall not be raised against those unhappy men!"

He approached them rapidly and noiselessly, and before the malefactors were aware of his presence, he was behind them. His lofty stature aiding him, he leaned over and snatched the ciborium from the altar.

Frightened beyond measure, the robbers tried at once to make their escape. But seeing that they had to do

with only one adversary, they did not wish to lose their precious booty. They laid violent hands on the priest and tried to snatch the sacred vessel from him. Father.. leaned against the altar, and holding his hands pressed against his bosom, stood immovable. Notwithstanding the violence of the aggressors he did not loosen his hold, but succeeded in keeping the robbers at bay.

In their impotent rage against this superhuman strength, they at last levelled a loaded pistol at his head and fired, and the generous priest fell mortally wounded. But by another supreme effort his hands continued to hold tightly the sacred treasure which he had snatched from the tabernacle.

"Help. Lord, help!" he cried out.

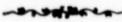
"My strength is leaving me!"

At that moment the parish priest entered the church, accompanied by the sacristan and two other men who had been with him on his nightly journey through the mountains.

The robbers fled in great haste when they saw reinforcements coming and made good their escape. But a sad spectacle presented itself to the eyes of the old priest and his companions. At the foot of the altar lay stretched, almost lifeless, he whom they had left full of life a few hours before. A ghastly wound was seen in his head whence the blood flowed copiously, but his two hands held to his breast the ciborium covered with his blood. A heavenly smile passed over his lips when he handed the old priest the precious treasure.

Help was quickly brought, but the features of the holy man changed so rapidly, that those who knelt by him knew that death was near:

At the foot of the altar he received the last unction and Holy Viaticum. The God who became a victim for the love of men came to him. And in the early hours of the morning, before the sun had tinted the Eastern sky with its full brightness, the heroic servant of God had gone to adore face to face, Him whom he had served so well on earth.



The Children At Communion

“God bless the children; they do come to Our Lord,”
Yes, they are coming today to the Lord’s table by the
hundreds and thousands, the little lambs of Christ’s
flock, coming to the Good Shepherd whose loving, yearn-
ing Heart must be moved with indescribable tenderness
in beholding the willing response of the little ones to
His desire. “Suffer little children to come to Me and
forbid them not.”

Something in the faces of these young children as they
come from the altar after Holy Communion fills the adult
worshipper with awe. Note a little girl Communicant at
a week-day Mass. She is eight or nine years old; her
clothing is plain, often poor; there is nothing strikingly
attractive about her—save that youth and innocence are
always lovely—nothing, at first, but see her as she comes
back from the altar, her little hands folded together, her
eyes meekly downcast, entirely absorbed in the sublime
mystery of which her lily soul is at this moment the taber-
nacle. An unearthly beauty has transfigured the child
face; it reflects for the moment the light “that never
shone on land or sea.” Calm joy, heavenly peace, purity
enfold the person of the little Communicant. The Holy
of Holies has found His Heart’s delight in this human
tabernacle. Well might the poet say:

Ah, faith! simple faith of the children!
You still shame the faith of the old!
Ah! love, simple love of the little,
You still warm the love of the cold!
And the beautiful God who is wandering
Far out in the world’s dreary wold,
Finds a home in the hearts of the children,
And a rest with the lambs of the fold.



Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament

As wooing winds of May unclose
 The blushing beauty of the rose,
 And free its petals long in prison pent:
 So, Rose of Sharon, we unfold
 In new-coined names thy glories old:
 Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament.



The faith of ages deftly wrought
 In words,—new shrines of ancient thought,—
 By holy hands with Mother Church's consent:
 It crowns thy starry diadem
 Of glittering names— this peerless gem —
 Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament.



From out thy soul, unfathomed well
 Of grace, whose depth no soundings tell
 We draw incessant, to our heart's content,
 Cool crystal waters, draughts of bliss,
 But none so sparkling clear as this:
 Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament.

Thou didst in sacred Host adore,
Close veiled by love, that long-drawn score
Of exile years in heavenly yearnings spent,
Thy Son, Thy God, whose Flesh was thine
Ere changed to His by power divine
Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament.



His Flesh was made thy daily food,
Thy quickening drink His chaliced Blood,
Thy simple home became His Royal Tent;
No vain regret of Nazareth
Now mingles with thy prayerful breath,
Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament.



O true Adorer of thy Lord,
Teach us what wealth of grace is stored
Within this Manna, Food from heaven sent;
That we may here thy Son adore,
To praise with thee in bliss e'ermore,
Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament.

D.F. S.

S. S. S.



SUBJECT of ADORATION

The Blessed Virgin and the Eucharist.

ADORATION

Mary's whole life may be summed up in one word, *Adoration*, for adoration is the perfect service of God. It comprises all the duties of a creature toward the Creator.

But what words can express the intensity that her adoration drew from her humble *Ecce* and her burning *Fiat*, by which she gave herself up entirely to the Divine Will and its operations. Jesus was inclosed in her bosom, but no one knew it. Mary was the first adorer of the Word Incarnate. Never was ciborium purer and more precious than the bosom of Mary!

Jesus was born at Bethlehem. Mary adored Him, and her maternal arms became, as it were, the first ostensorium in which He received the adorations of humanity. She continued to adore Him. She adored Him unceasingly up to the moment of sacrifice when, standing on Calvary, she offered as a Victim the Son of her love.

But Mary's adoration did not cease there. Jesus remained on earth in His Eucharist, and it was near the tabernacle that the Blessed Virgin was to consume her life. She could not live away from it, her whole being tended toward it as to her centre and end. The Host was for her, her Jesus. He lived again in this mystery in which was comprised her whole life. She believed, she adored, she sacrificed, she devoted, she annihilated herself. She herself became a sacrifice with the Sacred Host. She offered herself entirely to the loving service of her Jesus in the Eucharist, for love lays down no conditions, knows no reserve. It thinks not of self, lives not for self. It is a stranger to itself, and lives but for the God whom it loves. In this state, Mary, forgetful of earth, concentrated herself, and rested in her only treasure, Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

O Mary, teach us the life of adoration! Teach us to find, as you did, all mysteries, all graces in the Eucharist, to fix on It our heart, to live of It and for It, and to repeat with thee that word of self-surrender, that word of self-annihilation: *Ecce ancilla Domini!*

THANKSGIVING

Mary lived on gratitude. Every day, every instant of her life, was a hymn of praise to Jesus. She knew that all the divine liberality to herself, all the effusions of grace and love all the wonders wrought in her, were for Him whom she was to bring into the world And when the Incarnation was accomplished; when, by Jesus humanity had been instructed, transformed, purchased, Satan vanquished; when God had received glory worthy of Him; when Jesus, the glorious Conqueror, had ascended to heaven, it was before the Eucharist and of the Eucharist, which continues Jesus' life on earth, that Mary was to constitute herself the victim of praise.

Mary knew the grandeur of the Eucharistic Gift, and her thanksgiving was perfect. She had intoned the strains of this new canticle at the hour of the Last Supper, when Jesus revealed to her the Eucharist. She then adored, in the outpouring of her gratitude, the love that had now reached its term. She had consented to defer the moment of her own heavenly reward, in order to remain on earth an adorer, commissioned to guard to serve the Holy Eucharist, happy to die at the foot of the altar. Daily she renewed her thanksgiving, and offered to Jesus the flames of love that consumed her heart.

O with what complacency Jesus received these first homages of His holy Mother, the first offered to His Sacrament! Let us unite in these thanksgivings of the Blessed Virgin, we who like her, participate in the benefit, the ineffable love, in the adorable presence of the Eucharist.

REPARATION.

Love seeks for likeness; consequently Mary was in union with Jesus a true victim of propitiation. We may say of her as of Our Lord that she was created to suffer; and as she was all for Jesus, it was His torments, His sufferings, His martyrdom that made of Mary the Mother of Sorrows.

But it was those very sorrows that enabled her to offer to the Victim sacrificed on the altar the homage of reparation that It claims, because only Mary measured, comprehended, and suffered in her soul the whole Passion of her Jesus. The altar, also, showed her, revealed to her in all its breadth and depth the Passion and Death of her Divine Son. It seemed to her that she still saw in the Holy

Mass Jesus crucified, shedding His Blood in suffering and opprobrium, abandoned by men and even by His Father, and dying in the very exercise of supreme love.

Mary would then have wished to endure a thousand deaths to spare Jesus all the treason, abandonment and profanation to which the Eucharist will be exposed till the end of time. Who can enumerate Mary's acts of reparation and annihilation?—Let us offer them to Jesus, to console Him for the abandonment of men, for the loneliness of His tabernacles, for the contempt and injury to which He is subjected in the Blessed Sacrament. Let us take Mary's place before Him, and may He find in the compassion of our hearts an echo of that of His most holy and divine Mother.

PRAYER

O Mary, Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament, give to our poor hearts that love for the Eucharist, that burning thirst for its coming, for its reign in the world, and in our own souls. O Mother, be thou our model, and our instructress in the worship, in the praise, and above all in the love that we owe to Jesus in the Sacrament! Give us to Jesus, and give Jesus to us. O blessed stem, of which Jesus is the flower, the fragrant and delicious flower, incline toward us, that we may admire its beauty and inhale its perfume, but still more, that we may pluck it and feed upon it. Yes, give us, O that Mary, Jesus of yours, who has willed to be ours, also and after this our exile show Him to us in heaven!

A Eucharistic Congress for all Canada will be held in Montreal, July 13-15, according to the announcement of the Association of Priest-Adorers of Canada. The 3,500 members of this association have arranged this in the nature of a national congress of their order, following the example of the Priest-Adorers of Italy, who held a congress in Rome in 1913. His Eminence, Cardinal Begin has accepted the honorary presidency of the coming congress. His Grace, Most Rev. Paul Bruchesi, D.D., of Montreal, will be acting president.

The first Mass in Walkerville.

That was the first time Mass had been said out there in Walkerville. It seems strange, too, for it was a prosperous little town that had sprung up in the course of a few years, out there on the prairies, with the magical swiftness of the western life. It had a big department store, two or three Protestant churches, a bank, as well as a gambling saloon and half a dozen places where drink was sold. It had several streets, built up closely together, with houses of wood or of brick; but it had no Catholic church.

At first, there was not any priest within measurable distance, and even if he had come thither, there were no Catholics in the town, to whom he might minister. It was one very hot summer, the drought had been terrible and the heat unendurable, when some new people appeared in Walkerville. They were Irish. The father hailed from the country Tipperary, and his wife from the North. Their boy Tommy, who had just got into his teens, was the eldest of four children, and already a great help and "stand-by" to the pair. The little family had been drifting about some, since they arrived in the country, but at last, the father, Timothy O'Regan had been offered a good job in Walkerville, and had come to settle down there, in a small, frame house in one of the most thickly populated streets.

Then they drew breath, and began to look around.

"Timothy," said Mrs O'Regan, standing at the door, and looking out upon the prospect, "I don't see any cross, upon ere a wan of those churches — Mebbe, they don't put them in this country," suggested Timothy. — "Arrah, then, and why would't they?" Mrs O'Regan demanded, "Is it ashamed they'd be of the Cross of their Saviour?" "No," said Timothy. "but I thought mebbe there might be a reason for it. — Well, go you out, Tommy," said the mother "and see if you can find any place at all, that has a cross on the top of it." When Tommy returned with the disheartening information that there was no place, so consecrated in the whole of Walkerville, his father

suggested that as he and his wife were going over to the big store, that afternoon, for groceries, they might be able to get the desired information there.

At first the storekeeper directed them, when they inquired about a church, to the Methodist meeting house, which was square and plain, like a box, and then to the Presbyterian church, a large brick edifice, with a high steeple. He apparently could not grasp the idea, that they were looking for a Popish Mass house. — "Why," said he, staring at them, and twisting the gray goatee, that he wore, while he spoke, "there ain't no Romish church, within twenty miles of Walkerville."

"The Lord save us!" cried Mrs O'Regan, ignoring the storekeeper, and addressing her husband, in great perturbation, "what are we to do at all, at all! and what bad fortune was it, that brought us to such a God forsaken place."

"I never thought of askin," said the husband dejectedly, "I made sure there'd be a church, in a place, the size of this, or close at hand, at anny rate."

The storekeeper was disposed to be indignant at what he had heard, and that saying of Mrs O'Regan, went round like wild fire, and brought upon the family some ill will, at first, for Walkerville had been accustomed to consider itself so complete, and here in the estimation of these Irish, something important was lacking. It somehow made Walkerville uncomfortable.

On the homeward way, Mrs O'Regan, expressed herself thus to her husband: "Now I'll tell you what it is, Timothy, something has got to be done, God forbid, that we'd rear our little ones, not to speak of Tommy, that will be soon growing up to manhood, far from church or priest." And not yielding to despondency as her husband was disposed to do, she began to make farther inquiries, nothing daunted, — valiant little woman that she was — at the cold and uncivil answers she got, the covert sneers or the open contempt. And in all this Tommy was her valuable auxiliary for the quick witted boy could penetrate to places where his mother could not go, and moreover got into friendly communication with the boys of the town, who were able to tell a good deal more

than their elders. The two between them found out that though there was'n't a Catholic in Walkerville, there were some Italians in a little settlement, near at hand, "dagoes" as they were called, and one man whose antecedents were unknown, but who was suspected to have something about him, that was not altogether American.

Mrs O'Regan and Tommy set out to interview these people. They had some difficulty with the Italians, whose English was mostly imperfect; besides, two or three of the group were bad Catholics and to Mrs O'Regan fiery indignation, repeated about priest and the Church, some cant phrases, they had picked up from wicked and lying newspapers. But the others, were really devout and only too anxious to helper in her pious efforts. The man whose antecedents, to the mind of Walkerville, had been doubtful, turned out to be a real Irishman from Kerry, and though he had'nt been practicing his religion "this while back," since there was no means of so doing, he proved to be a host in himself.

With his help valiantly assisted by Tommy, and cheered and encouraged by the indomitable Mrs O'Regan, a surprising number of Catholics were found to be somewhere in the neighborhood. They were drummed up in the most obscure places, but within such a radius, that they could readily be collected, at, or within the vicinity of Walkerville. The Bishop of the diocese was communicated with; and it was agreed, that a priest should come, once a month, for the present — and if things went well, once a week — to say Mass, within convenient distance, of the felt, churchless town. The people there, regarded the innovation, with mixed feelings. Some like the storekeeper, that if the want of a "Romish meeting house," was a reflection on the commonwealth, that aspersion should be removed, and the want in question supplied. And he was the more willing to see matters in that light because "the dagoes" and others of the prospective congregation were his customers. There were others ready to rise up in righteous indignation, and who began to recall old fables that they heard, about the Scarlet Woman, and a good many other fabulous beings. But they could'nt well take any restrictive steps, since the poor little bit of land,

which the handful of people had clubbed together and bought, was outside of the town; and since, the men headed by Timothy O'Regan, and spurred by his valiant wife, had themselves erected on those premises, what might be called a shack, a square barn-like room, wherein Mass could be said.

And so it came about, that the first Mass was said, one morning in the Autumn of that unusually hot summer. Though it was well on in November, there was a lingering hint of the "fine weather," still in the atmosphere, though the brilliant light of the midsummer had fled, and there was a gray mistiness over all the landscape. It was an impressive scene; the little edifice, decorated with such loving care, withal so poorly, was crowded to the door with Catholics, who came from far and near. Many, who had never been known to be of that religion, heard the wondrous tidings and flocked thither. A number of worshipers had to kneel outside, where they were reinforced, by many of the non-Catholic inhabitants of Walkerville, who had come to look with curiosity on the Popish doings.

It was wondrously solemn, when the priest clad in vestments which were, even of those who had been born Catholics, had never seen before, advanced to the foot of the altar, with Tommy O'Regan, very proud and joyful in his cassock and surplice as acolyte. The lights upon the altar flickered in the Autumn breeze, and over all lay, like a benediction, the Autumn sunshine, creeping out from behind the grayness. It was at, or just after the Elevation, that there was a slight sensation, when Mrs O'Regan, in the pride and joy of her overcharged heart, cried aloud, unheeding of her surroundings: "Oh, my Lord! My Lord! Praise and thanksgiving be to your Holy Name, that I have seen you again, on your blessed altar."

And as her own tears fell like rain, there were few dry eyes in the assemblage, for she had but echoed the cry that went up from many a heart, at the realization of the hope that but lately had seemed impossible, and that was chiefly due to that one woman's faith and fervor. Curiously enough, the emotion had communicated itself to the non-Catholics grouped about. Those words of the Irishwoman, that had been heard distinctly by those who

had crowded as near as possible to the door, filled them with a strange awe, it seemed as if literally, like the Apostles of old, she had "seen the Lord."

There was another thrilling moment, when many within the enclosure, — save a few children who had not made their First Communion, — and some of those without, pressed forward to the altar, to receive the Bread of life; and the priest turning, administered Communion for the first time in all that section of the country. It was, then that some one who had been educated at a Convent, started the old and familiar hymn:

"Sweet Sacrament, we thee adore,
Oh make us love Thee more and more."

The effect was thrilling; half a score of voices, took up the refrain and sent its echoes, out over the prairies, and into the groups of non-Catholics, who marvelled more than ever.

Many an elaborate choir might have been proud of the effect produced. After the Post-Communion, the priest a somewhat worn and tired man, after years of strenuous service, turned and addressed the congregation. His words were few and well chosen, but they seemed inspiring as a trumpet call. To them, he said, it had been given to be the pioneers of the faith, in that corner of God's earth, and what greater privilege could be granted to the children of men. And though he did not directly name her, for he knew, her modesty would have keenly suffered thereby, his hearers well knew to whom he was referring, when he spoke of certain souls, who by their fidelity in overcoming obstacles, by the force and reality of their faith, become as a shining light in the waste places of the earth, and are born for the salvation of many.

So the first Mass at Walkerville, was in every way a great success, and ultimately led to the conversion of several non-Catholics, besides keep in the faith, those who might otherwise have lost it. There was no danger after that, that any of the dwellers in the neighborhood, would lose Mass whenever the priest could come.

And so the years went by, and a fine church, stood on that spot that had become a part of the rapidly growing

city. Timothy O'Regan himself was still alive, though bent with years; and Tommy had been long a priest serving like those other valiant missionaries upon the altar. But in the little cemetery hard by, in the shadow of the Cross, was still pointed out to the strangers visiting that part of the town, the grave of Mrs O'Regan, who was variously described as, "the Irishwoman who had brought the Romish superstition into that part of the country" and "the apostle of the faith," who had caused the first Mass to be said, and had almost visibly seen the Eucharistic God, on that auspicious occasion.

Anna T. Sadlier.

A Little Samoan's First and Last Communion

THE following touching story is taken from a letter written by a missionary from Falefa, on the island of Samoa.

I had a little boy of hardly seven years old, intelligent, docile, and pious. He roused hopes for his future, and I asked myself whether God had not in reserve for him, as for two others who had preceded him, the grace of the priesthood. But no, the good God wanted this little Oceanic flower for the heavenly parterres. *Kapeli* (Gabriel) all at once lost his gaiety and usual high spirits. It was pitiful to see him extended on his mat all day long,—he who had been so active, so full of life. I soon understood that consumption, which had carried off several of his brothers, had seized upon him also. His sickness was, indeed, not prolonged, for the medicines did not arrest the malady. I went frequently to see him, to comfort and encourage him to die. To prepare our natives for death is not difficult, for in general they have no fear of dying.

When I went to see him for the last time several of the principal men of the place were there before me. Seated in a circle, they were reciting the Rosary, for in Samoa our Catholics have the habit of assembling in this way to show their sympathy and to pray for the

dying. On approaching the child, I heard his father, an excellent Christian and most devoted to the missionary, saying to him; "Do you suffer much?" "Oh, yes! much!" "Are you going to die?" "Yes, I think so." "Does that trouble you?" "No."

I had promised the child that he should not die without having received the Holy Eucharist, and the thought of making his First Communion had become a great joy for him. Seeing that his strength was diminishing, I resolved not to defer. The relatives and friends went at once to the little church, only a few steps distant, and thither they carried the little dying child. While I was preparing at the altar, the catechist of the country, a venerable old man with a white beard, tried to say the prayers before Holy Communion, but his sobs frequently interrupted them, and many of the assistants were weeping with him. *Kapeli's* dying eyes were fixed with a burning gaze upon the tabernacle.

When I turned around with the Sacred Host in my hands, and saw his face, over which the shades of death were already stealing, my emotion overpowered me, and tears fell on the foot of the ciborium, my first tears as a missionary. After his Communion, the child was rapt in fervent thanksgiving, and they bore him back to his father's home.

That night I was just falling asleep, about ten o'clock, when loud cries and weeping arose in the village. *Kapeli* had just died. At the last moment he had raised himself up from his couch, exclaiming: "Take me with you! Take me with you!" and then tranquilly expired in his father's arms.

Next day they gave him a beautiful funeral, after which the whole village gathered together for a feast. In our islands an abundant feast is the natural conclusion of funerals as well as of marriages, and loud bursts of merriment are not prohibited. They think no more of the newly buried. At Samoa the dead are quickly forgotten, more quickly than elsewhere. As for myself, I have doubtless kept the heart that I brought from my own country, and that is the reason I faithfully preserve the remembrance of my little choir boy.

Religious Revival in France!

From a trench near at hand a little soldier,.... crawling like a worm, makes headway toward his neighbor. He gets on without being hit by the fire, at length, at the opening of the underground lodging of his Reverence the sergeant. Once there, with his nose in the ground, he calls in a whisper: "Are you there, Salvan?" "Yes," said the priest-sergeant. "What do you want?... If the Germans see you, you're done for."... "Could you hear my confession?" "Yes at once." "All right; but I cannot go to my knees, they would knock over my skittles." "It is not necessary; stay as you are." And right there, leaning over his trench, where the priest-sergeant stood, the little fellow received God's pardon, and then made off, crawling slowly, slowly until he reached his post.

"Irreligion decreases in direct ratio with the proximity of the firing line" is a truth formulated by a close observer of the French soldiers who are fighting in the present war.

Generals de Castelnau and Pau are, it has often been said and written, practical Catholics; so is General Foch, who, since the battle of the Marne, has become the right hand and second self of General Joffre. The latter, when the war broke out, was, it is well known, indifferent on religious matters, but I hear, on good authority, that a notable change has taken place in his convictions. At several crucial moments during the war he realized the necessity of appealing to One who alone can help when all else fails, and his sincere and straightforward nature obediently followed the new light vouchsafed to him.

The members of the French Government keep aloof from the impulse that casts France on her knees before the God of armies, but I can only repeat that these prejudiced politicians, narrow-minded and self-interested, do not represent the real soul of the nation. The soul of France is on the line of fire where her soldiers pray and

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

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



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



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The Lights of Home

Father Tom was almost in despair. Unpiloted a barque was slipping out into the dark. A soul was about to face its Maker, unshriven. And to his young heart, still burning with the sacramental grace of ordination, it seemed astoundingly terrible. The awful horror of it haunted him. He shivered at the thought, as when we touch a dead face in the dark. During the few short years since he had assumed the priestly office he had seen many pass through the portals of death, and although it was still awe-inspiring, familiarity had robbed it of many of its terrors. But this death was different from the rest. Never before had anyone refused his ministrations. On the contrary, they had sought them with eagerness. Eyes that had grown weary of the world shone brighter for the sight of him. Hands, empty of all else, sought the holy anointing. Aching heads bent low for the absolution. They had gone out across the bar unfearing, because there was a Hand at the helm that could keep the course. And he felt that even as he prayed for them they were in safe keeping. Such deaths were full of hope and consolation, whereas this death was horrible.

What more could he do for this soul that had defied him? How he prayed for this poor sinner, hoping against hope that grace would, even at the last moment, touch his heart. He had wearied heaven with his importunities, and yet there was no sign. The good Sisters had united their prayers with his. The little children had murmured their Aves for his "special intention." But the sick man only turned his face to the wall, and mocked them for their pains.

"You are dying," he had said to him. "You are going before God like this?"

"I am prepared to take the risk," was the invariable answer.

To-night, as he prayed here in the little hospital oratory it seemed as though he could do no more. But how could

he admit defeat? How could he face Jesus Christ and tell Him that of those He had entrusted to his care, he had lost even one? What evil had he done that this cross should be his?

How silent everything was! The light footfall of the Sister, passing on some errand of mercy whilst the world slept, could not penetrate here. And as he thus kept vigil for this soul that was even now poised above the abyss, the thought of another vigil, and of another Lonely Watcher flashed in upon his consciousness. The silent trees cast their black shadows upon the grass. The pale stars faded in the murky sky, "And He began to be sorrowful and to be afraid." But still the lonely Figure kept watch for the souls of men. And was he growing tired? With that picture before him how, whilst there was any hope, could he admit defeat? He stirred in the darkness. He lifted his tired eyes to the Tabernacle to supplicate forgiveness for his want of faith. Jesus was in there, waiting. He had waited now for nearly two thousand years. And for what? Was it not for the return of the Prodigal?

And then, again, the haunting terror took possession of him. Jesus must not wait in vain, and if this prodigal were to return it must be soon. There was not much time left for the journey. And as yet it had not begun.

The light of the sanctuary lamp shone blood-red on the tabernacle door. Blood-red? Was it a symbol? Blood-red were the hands that pleaded with the Father for this erring soul. The Blood of Jesus could not appeal in vain. A great sob broke from his weary heart. The Voice from the Tabernacle had spoken. He had found the way at last. God was very good to his priest, and this soul would not be lost after all.

. . .

In the subdued light of the shaded electric globe the priest saw that the dissolution could not now be long delayed. The Angel of Death hovered beyond in the shadows. There was no time to waste.

"May I sit with you a while?" he asked, softly.

The sick man nodded assent. The priest took out his brown beads and fingered it nervously. He then lifted the cross to his lips. He was going to win out this time.

"I am not going to preach to you to-night, my dear," he said. "But I would like to tell you a little story."

He waited, but there was no word of negation or assent from the bed.

"It was many years ago," began the priest, "in a plain thatched cottage nestling among the green valleys of Ireland. It was that most beautiful of all months in that land of haunting beauty — Mary's own sweet month of May. It was evening. The birds chirped drowsily in the hedge rows. The flowers veiled their faces and went to sleep. The warm summer breeze, heavy, with the scent of the hawthorn, lingered by the open door. For it had a duty to perform, this May-evening breeze in holy Ireland. Beyond the door, in the shadowy light of the turf-fire, several figure knelt upon the earthen floor."

The sick man stirred convulsively. He fixed his devouring gaze upon the priest. And the priest went on:

"They held, each one of them, a brown beads between their fingers," and as he spoke the priest held up his own, "for they were saying the rosary. 'Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art Thou amongst women. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death.' So they prayed on until the rosary was completed. It was for this that the May-breeze waited by the door. And when, at last, it went its way, it still bore with it the perfume of the hawthorn, only now it had, in addition, the incense of many Aves to offer at Mary's throne."

The listener was apparently ill at ease. He drew his hand across his forehead, as if to ward off some haunting memory. And still the priest went on:

"Years passed by, and once again it was May-time in Ireland. And once again the evening breeze waited beyond the door to receive its tribute for Mary. And this time, somehow, it waited a little longer. It seemed to be looking for something it could not find, and when at last it went its way, it did not croon joyfully as of yore.

Instead there was a sadness, a note of regret, in its song. For it had found a withered rose in Mary's wreath.

"And within, a grey-haired mother wept silently. And when, one by one, the others rose and went to seek repose, she still prayed on. She was saying an extra rosary for someone who had forgotten to say it for himself. And great blinding tears coursed down her aged cheeks as she besought the Desolate Mother to watch over her erring child. And then she pressed the well-worn beads to her quivering lips, and there was new hope in her broken heart, because she remembered that Mary, too, had lost her Son, and so would understand."

The priest's voice died away, but not into silence. The sound of weeping filled the room. The Lights of Home had conquered.

❖ *Ages of Faith.* ❖

Men talk of the "ages of faith" as belonging to the past. It is a mistake. In all its long history the Church has not seen such marvelous acts of faith and devotion on the part of united nations as the Eucharistic Congresses of the last few years. Each has gone beyond its predecessor in numbers and enthusiasm. Each is a more striking demonstration of the unity of Catholics of all nations in faith and worship, loyalty to the Holy See and devotion to the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar. Everything connected with the Eucharistic Congress is inspired by the supernatural. The little provincial gathering of more than thirty years ago at Lille has grown into these vast gatherings of tens of thousands of congressists and hundreds of thousands of worshipers at the closing procession. One must surely say "the finger of God is here."