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The Sentinel of the Blessed Sacrament,

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HOLY COMMUNION IN CATACOMBS

By Olivier Merson.



THE TABERNACLE DOOR.

Sister M. Agnes, O. P.

*The soft, gray twilight ne'er doth rest
On yonder gleaming door,
But in my weary, trembling breast
I feel the joy of yore.*

*As when a guileless child I knelt
When day began to die,
And felt my heart with rapture melt
Beneath His watchful eye.*

*He whispered, or I thought it so—
And held me closely to His breast,
While tears adown my cheeks did flow,
That I should be thus blest.*

*My eyes still seek that gleaming door,
Though years have passed away,
And every joy and burden sore,
Is laid there, day by day.*

*Then was my brow with roses bound,
But now there's many a thorn—
The portion, as 'twas ever found,
Of man, a sinner born.*



Particular Practice for the Month of August.

To Communicate as often as possible.



THAT Our Lord Jesus Christ is really and substantially present in the Blessed Eucharist is an article of faith always believed and cherished by Christians. His glorified heavenly body manifests Itself to us under the appearance of the Sacred Host, reposing perpetually on our altars to be the center of divine worship, to impart to our souls by Communion the strength of persevering in union with God. Communion does not, strictly speaking, place us in relation with Jesus Christ as we already possess Him by His grace, abiding in us, as every page of Sacred Scripture teaches.

Neither is the aim of Communion to give us the life of grace, that is to say spiritual life emanating from our union with God, for, in order to receive Communion worthily, we must already possess this life, be united to Jesus Christ by grace without which Communion would be a sacrilege.

What then is the real end and object of Communion? It is to nourish and maintain the sanctifying and living union of our soul with God, to entertain and strengthen in us the interior and spiritual life, to prevent discouragement in the inevitable warfare of life, to preserve the spotless innocence conferred on us by Baptism and Confirmation.

Thus the particular grace of the Blessed Eucharist is a grace of nutriment and perseverance. Our Lord declares in speaking of the Blessed Eucharist, that only through its aid can we lead a truly Christian life. "Amen, I say

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unto you, unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you”.

To be a good Christian, to remain united to God we must have recourse to the Blessed Eucharist. We cannot live without eating. Though food does not impart life, it sustains it, giving the strength we call health. And thus it is with the soul. Though the soul already possesses life resulting from its union with God by Jesus Christ, this union is called grace and requires food to preserve it ; this food is Jesus in the Eucharist, who says : “ I am the Bread of Life. My Flesh, is meat indeed and My Blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me and I in him ”. The soul can no more persevere in grace without communicating than the body can subsist without eating. Bodily health and vigor depend on proper nourishment ; likewise, the innocence and strength of the soul depend on Communion.

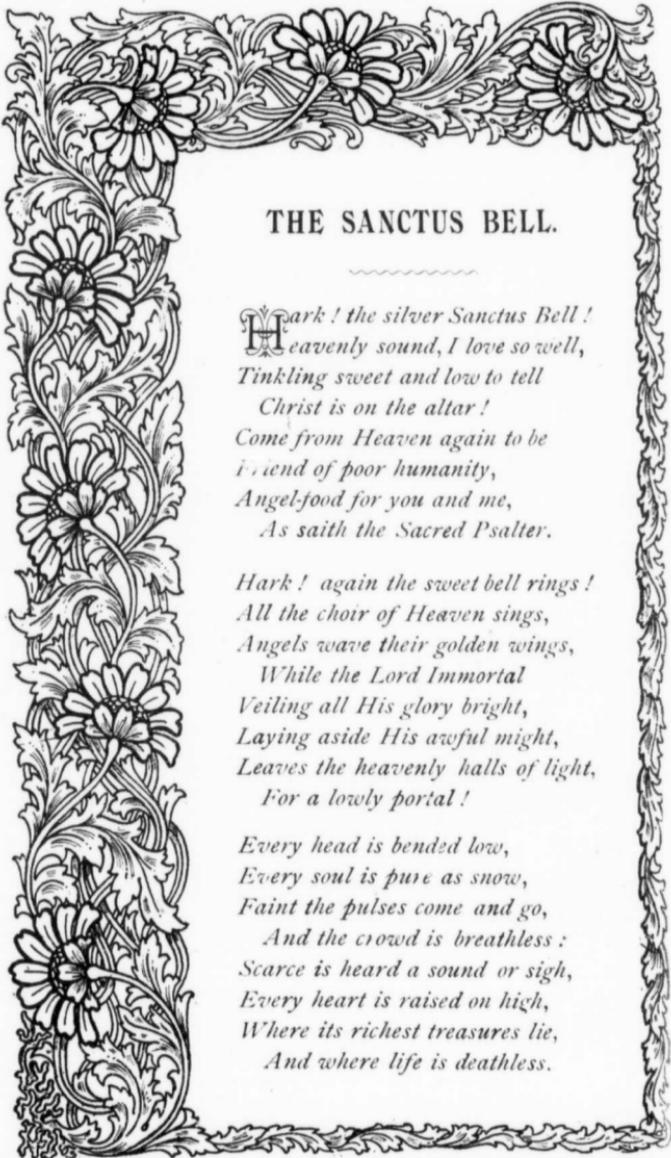
Be well convinced of this fundamental truth, Communion is not a reward of sanctity, but a mean and always but a mean of preserving grace, of increasing and arriving at sanctity. Caporal nourishment has the same character. We do not partake of food because we are strong, but in order to become strong or to retain our strength.

And as physical alimentation is a frequent and necessary act of our bodily life, so Communion must be a frequent and necessary act of our spiritual life.

Such is the definition the Catholic Church gives of the Blessed Eucharist. The Council of Trent, relying on the testimony of Christian centuries and of the Fathers of the Church, formally expresses the wish to see the faithful communicate sacramentally every time they assist at Mass in order to draw more abundantly of the merits of the Holy sacrifice.

Behold the truth ! Behold the will of God ! Behold the rule He gives by the infallible mouth of His Church ! May each be submissive to it and, if necessary, correct his particular idea by this unerring teaching.



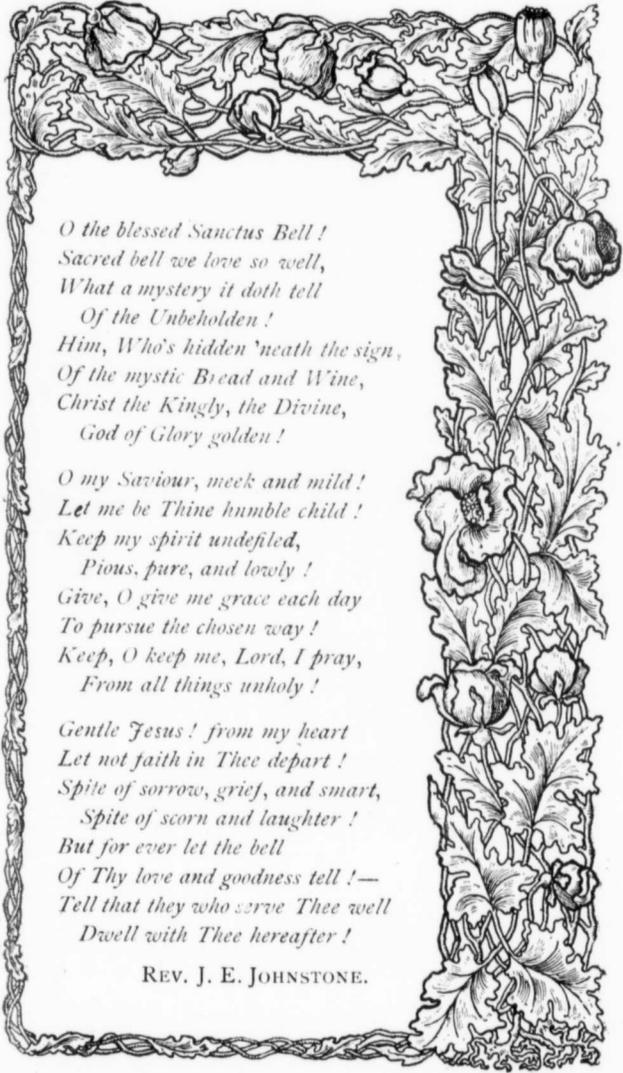


THE SANCTUS BELL.

*Hark ! the silver Sanctus Bell !
 Heavenly sound, I love so well,
 Tinkling sweet and low to tell
 Christ is on the altar !
 Come from Heaven again to be
 Friend of poor humanity,
 Angel-food for you and me,
 As saith the Sacred Psalter.*

*Hark ! again the sweet bell rings !
 All the choir of Heaven sings,
 Angels wave their golden wings,
 While the Lord Immortal
 Veiling all His glory bright,
 Laying aside His awful might,
 Leaves the heavenly halls of light,
 For a lowly portal !*

*Every head is bended low,
 Every soul is pure as snow,
 Faint the pulses come and go,
 And the crowd is breathless :
 Scarce is heard a sound or sigh,
 Every heart is raised on high,
 Where its richest treasures lie,
 And where life is deathless.*



*O the blessed Sanctus Bell !
Sacred bell we love so well,
What a mystery it doth tell
Of the Unbeholden !
Him, Who's hidden 'neath the sign,
Of the mystic Bread and Wine,
Christ the Kingly, the Divine,
God of Glory golden !*

*O my Saviour, meek and mild !
Let me be Thine humble child !
Keep my spirit undefiled,
Pious, pure, and lowly !
Give, O give me grace each day
To pursue the chosen way !
Keep, O keep me, Lord, I pray,
From all things unholy !*

*Gentle Jesus ! from my heart
Let not faith in Thee depart !
Spite of sorrow, grief, and smart,
Spite of scorn and laughter !
But for ever let the bell
Of Thy love and goodness tell !—
Tell that they who serve Thee well
Dwell with Thee hereafter !*

REV. J. E. JOHNSTONE.

The Grain of Mustard Seed



YOUNG priest was complaining to an old pastor of the apparent failure of all his efforts to quicken the piety and improve the morals of his charge. "Ah, yes, I know you have a great deal to contend with," said the elder man; "but you must not be so easily discouraged. The conditions are about the same I encountered here over forty years ago. I, too, was on the point of despairing, when suddenly the clouds opened, the sun appeared, and gradually things took shape in which you now see them." "And what good shape it is," rejoined the younger priest. "You have the model congregation of the diocese, for its size. We all know that."

The good old priest folded his hands meditatively for a moment then lifted the biretta from his white hairs looking upward unanswerd.

"Thank God, my labors have been singularly blessed! But tell me: do you pray a great deal and with confidence in God's promises? Are you a devout client of His Blessed Mother?"

"Yes, Father," he replied, "I do pray, of course; but latterly, I fear, in great discouragement. My people are utterly indifferent, it seems to me."

So much the more need for constant, persistent, unswerving prayer. We must take heaven by storm. It is only the violent who bear it away. When I came here many years ago, the Catholics of the place were just as you have described your parishioners, utterly indifferent.

"Well, I labored for months without avail. Mass was but slimly attended; the children went to the public school—or district school, as it was then called. I never had more than two or three Communion on Sunday; and so like yourself, I began to grow discouraged. Soon after Christmas I organized a Sunday-school, which was also poorly attended. There were, perhaps, twelve child-

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ren. The time for preparation for First Communion drew nigh. There were six children eligible — four boys and two girls. These I took daily for instruction. Among the six were two boys great friends, bright little fellows, and very attentive to my teachings. There were not much over ten, and were the youngest of the group ; still innocent, — I could see it in their eyes.

“ One day the thought suddenly took possession of me, — suddenly, I say, after I had knelt long in thanksgiving after Mass — that I would ask the prayers of these good children for my particular intention. Our Lord can not resist the entreaties of a pure fervent child. I did so ; they promised to pray with all their hearts. The day after First Communion they came to me.

“ Father,” said one, “ we want to be very good boys after this, and we are going to ask you if we may come every Sunday afternoon and tell you about what we have done during the week, good and bad.” “ Who put this idea in your head boys ? ” I asked, in surprise.

“ No one replied the spokesman.” We just thought it would please Almighty God and make you glad, Father, who have taken such pains with us, if we would keep on trying to be very good, now that we have made our First Communion ”.

“ The permission was gladly given. The boys came regularly. They told their little tales ; and in turn, I gave them further instructions, and related inspiring incidents in the lives of the Saints, which they later repeated to their young companions and in their homes. After a while one of the mothers came to thank me for the care I was taking of her boy and offered to take charge of the altar. The next week the other mother made her appearance, and not to be outdone by her neighbor in good offices, kindly volunteered to sweep the church once a fortnight and wash the altar linens. Soon came other mothers, asking that I take their boys under my wing for special instructions, the good conduct of my little missionaries had so edified them.

It was then that I reorganized the Sunday-school, which had after the First Communion days become a thing of the past. The children did really well, and very soon a proposition was made to introduce the Sisters for

the girls, I offering to teach the older boys in a day-school. The people came forward with alacrity ; land was given, an abandoned but excellent house bought and moved for the accommodation of the Sisters, one half of which was devoted to school purposes. With the advent of the Sisters, piety increased. Men and women returned to their religious duties ; the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart was established ; every Catholic child in the parish and many Protestants came to the school.

“ And thus you see, Father, how wonderful and admirable are the ways of God. At the very moment when, humanly speaking, we are ready to give up the struggle, when we can see no rift in the dark clouds, suddenly it appears. He has been listening to us all the time ; He has been gauging our faith, measuring our hope. He knows how long our poor weak human heart can stand the strain ; He is ready at the proper moment ; the whole prospect is changed, and in so simple a manner. To day I am the pastor of a truly Catholic people ; I love them and am beloved by them ; they are among the most respected and honorable of the whole community. And it all came, I truly believe, from the earnest prayers of two little uncorrupted hearts ; all from the Grain of Mustard Seed planted by those innocent souls in the wonderful grace of their First Holy Communion. ”

The young priest looked at the venerable man before him, sublimely unconscious in his childlike humility, that his own had been the hand which had really sown the prolific Grain of Mustard Seed, watered and increased by the piety of the two children upon whose pure souls he had once gently laid part of his burthen. But it would have been cruel to disturb that humility, and the young priest said :

“ Yes, it is a wonderful story of the providence of God. It has given me strength to begin anew. And what became of the two boys' Father ? ”

“ One is the head of a fine family ;— the other has long been a zealous Franciscan. I wanted him for my own aid and successor, but God has ordained otherwise. The religious life claimed him ; he is one of the most successful missionaries of the Order in America. ”

The Ave Maria.



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Ven. Jean-Baptiste Marie Vianney
Cure of Ars.

The Mass at Ars

St Alphonsus says, "A Mass in the act of offering it is as great as the death of Christ on the Cross. Believing this, enlightened and fervent Christians have always shown great eagerness to assist thereat. The faithful of the Apostolic ages deemed it an honor to attend Mass every day, whereas those of the first centuries surrounded with their adorations the holy victim of Calvary offered in the Catacombs asking of Him by His precious Blood the grace to shed theirs without flinching for His sake. In the dark days of the French revolution large numbers willingly braved death to obtain the happiness of being present at the immolation of the Lamb offered in some secret place, some obscure cave or unused barn and the Curé of Ars, then in his boyhood, begged, as an inestimable favor, to be admitted with his elders to those consoling yet dangerous ceremonies.

To-day in cities where faith is preserved in its integrity, daily attendance at Mass is almost general, In Bavaria, for example, in certain districts of Sweden, in parts of Canada, it is customary for the laity to begin their day by assisting at Mass, this practice coming naturally to a soul whom the breath of materialism has not frozen, or whom ignorance has not rendered indifferent to religious observance. After his ordination, the dearest

wish of the Curé of Ars was to establish this pious practice in his parish. His tender piety could not bear to see the divine Redeemer descend each morning among His own and not be welcomed by numerous grateful worshippers, while his priestly heart sorrowed at thinking of the many precious graces his parishoners deprived themselves of, so close to the source yet neglecting to draw therefrom. So, he used all his persuasive eloquence to show them this source flowing every morning at Mass in order to induce them to drink of its waters, while explaining to them in burning words the numerous graces to be derived from the Mass, in order to induce them to prize and gather them.

Graces of Conversion. — “Do you wish,” said he, “to change your life, that is to say renounce sin and return to God? Then hear Masses for that intention and you are sure, if you hear them devoutly, that God will help you to cast off your sin, even were you more obdurate than the Jews, blinder than the Gentiles, harder than the rocks which were rent at the death of Jesus Christ. Let me illustrate by an example. A young girl, beautiful and accomplished, had the misfortune to fall into a sinful life which she led remorselessly for a number of years. One practice of piety she clung to tenaciously more on account of the promise given to her dying mother, whom she tenderly loved, than through any religious sentiment; this was to hear Mass every Saturday. While fulfilling her promise she was suddenly seized with uncontrollable, fear at her guilty state. Immediately after Mass, she went and asked the priest to intercede for her that she might be converted. He, having heard of her evil life, asked her what had brought about this wonderful change. “Father,” she replied, “My mother on her death-bed made me promise to hear mass every Saturday. This morning while fulfilling her request the thought of my guilt overwhelmed me with such horror, that I could bear the agony no longer and I have come to ask you to help me.” — “O my God,” exclaimed the priest, “behold a soul converted by the merits of holy Mass.” The Council of Trent asserts with reason that Mass appeases the anger of God and converts sinners.

Multiplied graces of Salvation. — St. Thomas tell us that, one day during Mass, Our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him with His hands full of treasures which He sought to distribute typifying the numerous spiritual and temporal graces devout and frequent assistance at Mass would obtain for us. According to St John Chrysostom, there is no time so precious to treat with God of our eternal salvation as during Mass, since Jesus Christ then offers Himself in sacrifice to God His Father to obtain all graces and blessings for us. "If we are in affliction," says this great saint, "we will find abundant consolation in the Mass, if we are harassed by temptations, Mass is a sure mean of overcoming them." Pope Pius II relates that a nobleman of Ostia was continually tormented by a temptation to despair. He disclosed the state of his soul to a holy priest who, after consoling and comforting him as much as he could advised him as a sure remedy to have Mass offered daily in his home. The nobleman retired to his castle and there Mass, at which he assisted with great fervor, was celebrated every day and through its efficacy, he in a short time recovered perfect tranquillity of mind; moreover, at his death he acknowledged that since he had had the happiness of assisting daily at Mass his former temptation to despair had never returned. If we have sufficient faith, Mass will be a remedy for all our ills; in fact, is not Jesus Christ, the victim there immolated, our physician of soul and body.

Grace of a Happy Death. — Our Lord vouchsafed to give this consoling assurance to St. Mechtild that the saints will assist at the death-bed of those who while living shall have heard Mass devoutly, to help them in their last hour, to protect them against the temptations of the devil and to conduct their souls to His Eternal Father. What happiness for us to be assisted at our last hour by as many saints as we shall have heard Masses!

Graces of Deliverance from Purgatory. — After the consecration God looks with ineffable love on the altar saying, "Behold my well-beloved Son in whom I have put all my complacence and to whose merits there can be no refusal." Son remember the story I told you about the

priest who was praying for his friend. Apparently, God had made known to him that his friend was in purgatory. So, he thought he could do nothing more efficacious than to offer Mass for his release. At the consecration, he took the sacred Host between his fingers and said "Holy and Eternal Father, let us exchange. You hold the soul of my friend who is in purgatory ; I hold the body of your Son who is in my hands, deliver my friend and I will deliver Thee Thy Son with all the merits of His passion and death." In fact, at the elevation, the priest saw the soul of his friend, radiant with glory, ascending into heaven.

The Venerable Curé then refuted the objection commonly pleaded to excuse neglect in attending daily Mass. " You fear," says he, " Mass will retard your business ? On the contrary, be convinced that through its efficacy all will run more smoothly and your business will be more succesful. To exemplify this I will give you an instance that came under my own observation. I knew two men, one of whom, though the father of a large family, finding time to hear Mass every morning lived in comparative ease ; whereas the other toiled day and night not sparing time for Mass, yet never succeeding in even gaining a moderate living for himself and wife. Discouraged, he asked the former, who was his neighbor, how he managed to succeed so well. For answer he induced him to accompany him to Mass on three consecutive days saying, that is my secret, I do not know of any other means of living in comfort than to hear Mass daily, it is the only one I have employed to acquire the ease which you envy ; moreover, do you not believe what Jesus Christ says in the Gospel, seek he first the Kingdom of God and all the rest shall be given to you in abundance ? These words deeply impressed his listener. " I will follow your example," he replied, and I hope God will bless me ! " In effect he grew richer not through working more but by hearing Mass every day. Does this surprise you, my brethren, concluded the Curé of Ars. It does not surprise me, besides it is what you will generally see in homes where piety reigns. Those who assist frequently at Mass manage their affairs much better than those whom lack of piety persuade they have not time to do so. If we placed all our confidence in God alone, how much happier we

should be ! But, you rejoin, if we possess nothing, nothing is given to us. What do you wish God to give you when you depend solely on your work, not even taking time to say your morning and night prayer, and being satisfied with hearing Mass on Sunday. Truly you do not know the resources of the Providence of God towards those who lovingly confide in Him. Do you wish for a striking proof thereof. Look upon me, your pastor, and examine the case before God. Oh, you will reply, it is we who give it to you. But who gives it to me if not Divine Providence ? There I find my treasures and not elsewhere. How blind man is to torment himself so only to gain unhappiness in this world and eternal damnation in the next ! Do the one thing necessary, think seriously of your salvation, assist as often as possible at Mass and you will soon learn to trust solely in the loving Providence of God.

But if I go to Mass on week days people will ridicule me and say : daily Mass is only for those who have nothing to do, or who live on their income.

You are ashamed, my friend to serve the good God through fear of being ridiculed ! Look at your crucified Saviour, ask Him if He was ashamed to die in so humiliating a manner. O cursed human respect, causing us to lose the graces the good God purchased for us by His passion and death ! Who will ridicule you ? Poor senseless, blind, unfortunate creatures. Do not fear them, they only hurt themselves without injuring you ; pity them, but above all, do not let their ridicule prevent you from amassing the precious graces and blessings daily Mass bestows. If there were only one Church where the Holy Sacrifice was celebrated, we should envy those at the door of that Church. My brethren, we are this chosen people, we are at the door of that holy place where God immolates Himself each day. Do we appreciate our privilege ? Do we profit by it ? Alas ! to gain a few *frances* we will walk miles, but to hear Mass on week days we will not take a few extra steps. Where is our faith ? Graces of predilection lie at our hand, yet we do not stretch out to gather them. Let us take care lest God withdraw them from us to give them to those who would appreciate them more.

When the thought comes to you to go to mass on week days, it is an inspiration from God which you should follow. The saints sanctified themselves by great fidelity to the good inspirations God gave them ; and the wicked lost themselves by rejecting them. You will be judged on those inspirations you have not responded to ; on those Masses you could have heard had you wished. Ah ! great God, the flames of purgatory will be the punishment of our sloth, of our worldly views.

The result of this sermon, so convincing and eloquent, was that every morning about sixty women and twenty men assisted at Mass, the attendance averaged about one fifth of the little parish to begin with, and increased in numbers each day. Certain families were invariably represented by one of their members. I have had the happiness of meeting some of those last survivors. Their faces bore an expression of sanctity, I have elsewhere seldom seen so forcibly marked, while peace, serenity, a kind of joyous beatitude made them recognizable among thousands. On Sundays and feast-days, the Church was crowded from early morning and in this privileged little parish of Ars, the beautiful ages of Christianity seemed revived.



How carefully we should cherish the little virtues which spring up at the foot of the Cross : humility, patience, weakness, benignity, bearing one another's burdens, condescension, softness of heart, cheerfulness, cordiality, compassion, forgiving injuries, simplicity, candor ! They, like violets, love the shade ; like them, are sustained by dew ; and though, like them, they make little show, they shed a sweet odor on all around.

St. Francis of Sales.



SUBJECT OF ADORATION

An Hour of Adoration before the
Blessed Sacrament.

The Lord's Prayer

The Lord's prayer according to St. Thomas is the most perfect prayer, containing all we can desire, in the order in which we should desire it and being in consequence the guide of all our sentiments. It is undoubtedly, the most holy and efficacious of prayers because Our Lord Himself has composed it and taught it to us. It comprises all the dispositions of a good christian with regard to God and his fellow-men, all he should petition for his spiritual and temporal needs and is particularly the assured means of obtaining pardon of his sins. It is at the grasp of the ignorant as well as the learned, while at the same time of a sublimity to which the greatest geniuses cannot attain, and of a depth which all their profound reflexions cannot exhaust. It is adapted to all ages, all conditions, all states, to sinners who wish to return to God, to penitents, to pure and innocent souls, to souls having attained the highest degree of sanctity. But in order that this prayer may really sanctify us, we must thoroughly understand its meaning, and hold in our hearts, the sentiments it expresses. Moreover, we must put it into practice conforming our thoughts, our words, our actions to it. That is why it is so important to meditate on it and to weigh each word of which it is composed. Let us do it here at the feet of Him who taught it to us and who alone can give us the grace to translate it into our lives. This was doubtless St. Teresa's idea when she said to her children. "I desire you to know that in order to say the Our Father well, you must not go away from its Divine Author."

I. — Adoration.

O my God ! we can and we should call Thee Our Father, because we are Thy creatures, Thy privileged creatures, whom Thou hast drawn from nothingness and on whom Thou hast imprinted Thine adorable image saying : " Let us make man to our image and likeness." We can truthfully say we are of the race of God. We are Thy children because we hold from Thee all we have and all we are ; Thou dost keep us, preserve us, sustain our life with such paternal providence, with such maternal care that we realize Thou art our benign Father. Moreover, we are Thy children through a still more precious prerogative, having received from Thee another life incomparably greater, the life of grace or supernatural life, making us participants in the very life Thou dost lead eternally in the mystery of Thy Most Holy Trinity. To implant this germ in us it was obligatory that Thy Divine Son came down upon this earth, that He suffer and die on the Cross.

Yes, the word was made flesh, the Son of God became the Son of man, in order that the sons of men might become the sons of God. By Baptism we have been purified and regenerated through the blood of the Immaculate Lamb, and the Holy Ghost, the spirit of Jesus, dwelling in us causes us to cry out with confidence towards heaven : Father ! Father ! Thus we have not only the permission but the strict obligation to call God, our Father. Besides, can we doubt our participation in Thy divine nature, when we reflect, O Jesus, that Thou art there, close to us on this altar, in that tabernacle, and that Thou remainest there to communicate to us abundantly and superabundantly Thy adorable life ?

O Jesus, only Son of the Father, with whom we are one at the holy table, we understand now by the light of the Eucharist, why, speaking to Thy chosen disciples, Thou didst say : " My God and thy God, My Father and your Father." We understand why in praying we should say to the Creator of heaven and earth, to the Sovereign Master of all things : Our Father, who art in heaven !

Thou hast loved and honored us too much, O Jesus, benign Father, grant that we may respond by rendering Thee love for love, honor for honor.

II. — Thanksgiving.

A saintly priest was so touched by this appellation : Our Father, that whenever he recited the Lord's prayer he was obliged to stop at those first words : Our Father ; and his soul, transported with admiration at the remembrance of the condescension and infinite tenderness which the divine paternity supposes, could only repeat : God is my Father ! God is my Father ! Is it possible ?...

The sentiments of this man of God responded admirably to those of St. Teresa who was astonished that from the very first instant of prayer God deigns to enter into such close relations with sinful man.

St. John Chrysostom says : " When holy Scripture speaks to us of the love of a father, of a mother, of a spouse, in order to illustrate God's love, do not think it is a just comparison : it only uses what is least defective on earth to give us an idea of the ardor, the sincerity, the violence, the flame of divine love... The love of God surpasses all other love, in as much as goodness surpasses malice."

It is more especially in the Blessed Eucharist that Jesus desires to make us taste the sweetness of His paternal love. His Churches are our houses, His tabernacles our houses, His divine table our table, in the presence of the God of all goodness we are truly at home. How graciously He welcomes us ! Never tired of receiving us, listening to us, forgiving us, blessing us in a thousand different ways.

Let us profit more abundantly by His extraordinary condescension and confide unreservedly in His divine Providence.

III. — Reparation.

" Noblesse oblige " : From God's prerogatives as Our Father devolve our obligation to honor Him, our imperative duty to show ourselves invariably worthy of our noble origin, our constant endeavor to live up to its standard. Alas ! how many daily forget these fundamental truths ! They call God Father, yet live like sons of Belial ! How can a Christian living in the habitual practice of vice, sinning daily and in a grievous manner against justice, truth, purity and charity, how can he justly call himself a son of God. I understand, O Lord,

the sad reproach Thy paternal heart addresses them : " The son honors his father, the servant honors his Master, If I am your father where is the honor you owe me ? if I am your Master where is the respect you show me ". And again, " I have raised up children but they have despised Me. " " The ox knows its master, Israel more blind did not know Me and My people has been without understanding. ". If these unnatural children at least admit their guilt, if they shed tears of repentance, they may return to the paternal home and meet another Father not less admirable than the first whose paternity even completes the first in as much as it shows up with greater brilliancy the most touching quality of His heart, His tender inexhaustible mercy. This Thou hast taught us to say in the most consoling parable of the prodigal son. " Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee, I am not worthy to be called thy child ". The avowal is humbly made, then, the sacred arms stretch out with paternal love to embrace the repentant child, pardoning and forgetting his sins and ingratitude, offering him a choice seat at the family banquet and calling on the angels and saints to rejoice that the lost sheep has been found.

Let us pray earnestly for those poor unfortunates who have renounced their Father, by abandoning the table whereon He served them a delicious substantial bread, and who to-day are satisfied with the husks of wine.

IV. — Prayer.

Prayer derives its principal virtue, virtue of impetration from confidence. Can we imagine anything more favorable to inspire such a sentiment than this consoling truth : when I pray to God I am praying to my Father, to the best of Fathers ? The true definition of prayer is the Father's interview with His child. Listen to the logical reasoning deduced by the divine Master from the prayer itself : " What Father, who when his child asks for bread will give him a stone ? If you being evil nevertheless know how to be kind to your own, with how much more reason will not your heavenly Father know to give good things to those who ask. "

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An Apostle of the Eucharist,

Reverend Peter Julian Eymard.

(Continued.)



ALL for Jesus in the Eucharist !

In order to advance the Eucharistic reign, Père Eymard resolved to place the classes of the Congregation under the direct influence of the Sun of love.

By the association of the First Communion of poor adults he brought back to our Lord those whom, in His inscrutable designs, he had deprived of wordly goods only to lavish on them more loving kindness.

The object of this association which Mgr. Sibour of venerated memory welcomed so enthusiastically into his diocese, is to seek out, in-struct and prepare for First Communion adults beyond the age of attendance at parochial catechism and also those whose daily occupations prevent them assisting at the ordinary *preparatory classes. The number of young men who have not made their First Communion is great ; in Paris they may be counted by thousands, many among them are not even baptised. Naturally speaking, a young man who has not received the primary Christian education of First Communion is lost ; because, generally, he follows the bent of his unruly passions and develops from a bad son into a bad husband, a bad father and nearly always into a dangerous citizen. He knows neither God nor Jesus Christ His Saviour, he is a savage with the vices of civilization, whose only ambition is to gain a living.

The recruiting of the association is done by the children themselves who, grateful for the kindness shown them, bring on the Sunday following the great day their substitute. How often they return with their father or mother, their brothers or sisters, asking that they also be admitted to the happiness of First Communion. Even when the parents did not present themselves, Father Eymard obtained easy access to them through their children, at whose feast they generally assisted with a certain laudable pride. Not one of these parents was ever stricken with serious sickness that the children of the association did not succeed in inducing him to see God's minister and make his peace with God. Moreover, only the rejoicing angels could tell how many marriages were reinstated by the innocent intervention of the children's First Communion. They were truly the apostles of their homes. Père Eymard was himself their first catechiste. It was a beautiful sight to see him seated among those poor sons of toil, speaking to them kindly and encouragingly and afterwards distributing to them the bread of Christian truth. They knew neither God nor themselves and very soon the height of their intelligence was reached and the resources of their memory surpassed; consequently, Père Eymard won their heart by simple direct and original teaching. When First Communion had dawned they knew the mysteries of Christianity, the duties of a child of God, the obligations of a good son, the exigencies of an honest citizen towards his fellowmen. Those candidates often surpassed what might have been expected from intelligences darkened by a life of precious unremitting toil. Two days before First Communion, they generally obtained leave of absence and entered on retreat, during which three times a day with untiring energy and devotion Père Eymard instructed them, explaining the sacrament of Confession and endeavoring to enkindle in their hearts ardent desires for Holy Communion by speaking to them of the love and power and tender kindness of Jesus in the Eucharist. The happy day has come at last. They gather around the altar clothed in festal garments provided by the generous liberality of Père Eymard. A lighted candle in hand, a lovely medal of the Blessed Virgin on their breast, they

tremble with joy in which all share, especially their parents, who felt their children must be loved since they are so honored. After Communion a joyous banquet, to which they did ample justice, awaited them. The rest of the never-to-be forgotten day passes all too quickly between prayer, the imposing ceremony of Confirmation, the renewal of their baptismal vows and the solemn consecration to the Blessed Virgin.

This work was very dear to Father Eymard who, to use his own expression, would not abandon it for a princely one. When obliged to substitute another as instructor, he still reserved to himself the right to hear the Confessions, preach the retreat and preside at the First Communion. Apart from this self-imposed task, he had always some old man to prepare, some guilty couple to instruct and all this work he accomplished at night after laborious, tiresome days with a devotion full of graciousness towards those poor unfortunates. When ready, he baptized them admitted them to the Holy Table or re-married them.

In 1868, one rainy afternoon in February, despite the inclement weather, he walked some distance to a suburban parish to bless the union of his neophytes and, in consequence, contracted a severe cold, which resulted in inflammation of the lungs. When upbraided for his imprudence, his only excuse was, "but my going made these poor people so happy!"

To this special ministry, the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament in compliance with the wish of its pious founder, has from its very inception joined that of private retreats for priests receiving them at all times with great affection, retreats and juvenile and adult seminaries, in religious communities, diocesan ecclesiastical retreats and pascal retreats.

They have also founded an association for priests which to-day is universally spread throughout the world and numbers thousands. This association of "Prêtres-Adorateurs" is destined to entertain in the secular clergy the spirit of Eucharistic prayer so necessary to their sanctification and the fecundity of their apostleship. The laity may participate in the same precious benefits by

being members of either the confraternity of Parish Monthly Exposition, or the Arch-confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament.

Through its reviews and other publications, the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament endeavors to spread the knowledge and the worship of the Divine King of the Eucharist.

Lastly, she offers her concurrence as devoted as disinterested, concurrence of spiritual direction and apostleship to the various numerous Eucharistic works and associations. Works of day and night adoration. Confraternity of female adorers, Parochial League of Holy Viaticum, of poor Churches, Library and Eucharistic propaganda, etc., etc. The more these holy works are multiplied under divers names and different ministry yet all belonging to the Eucharist the more necessary is the existence of a body of religious who, living their life and sharing their labors, know and appreciate their sublimity, their duties and difficulties and consequently, can thus help them more efficaciously ; a body of priests whose studies and apostleship may be solely consecrated to maintain, develop, enlighten and preserve in conformity to the spirit of the Church, all this fruitful, vigorous product of Eucharistic works which expands daily with the approbation of the Holy See and of the Bishops and as the consolation of those troublesome times. It is thus we have seen at stated periods all great Catholic movements, all urgent wants of souls, all universal tendencies take birth be personified and expressed by religious communities for God's greater honor and glory and to produce more abundant fruits of salvation.



The Mass for the subscribers' benefit will be celebrated Thursday August 18th at 6 o'clock, in the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament.

O House of Gold.



HOUSE of Gold ! In temple dim
 Whose peace draws weary souls to Him,
 The thorn-crowned Christ, thou hast a home
 Beneath the Tabernacle's dome ;
 Around the spot, their love outpouring,
 Angelic hosts are now adoring.

O House of Gold ! Before thee sways
 The crimson light, its quiv'ring rays
 E'er pierce the gloom, like Bethl'em's star
 That led the Wise Men from afar ;
 With longing deep beyond earth's measure
 My soul cries out : " Show me thy Treasure ! "

O House of Gold ! My fervent prayer
 Is heard and granted,—opens there
 The little door, unveiled, behold !
 The Mystery thou dost enfold ;
 In answer to my heart's appealing
 To me Christ is Himself revealing.

O House of Gold ! How sweet and clear
 His words fall on enraptured ear :
 " My child beloved come to Me
 That I may give myself to Thee ;
 My heart with love of Thee is burning,
 To dwell in Thee, its fondest yearning. "

O House of Gold, what wonder this !
 My spirit thrilled with perfect bliss
 Can find no voice wherewith to say
 A welcome meet for Him to day ;
 And yet He comes ! His love caressing
 My trembling soul with every blessing.

O House of Gold, He is all mine !
 A palace for the King divine
 This heart unworthy,—may it be
 A home for Him, always, like thee
 Through life till death, my sweetest pleasure
 To guard thy Sacramental Treasure.,



THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

In a Cavern.

By MARY AGNES FINN.



T was a quiet little bush township, with quaint, old-fashioned houses, nestling among the picturesque mountain heights. The Angelus bell was sweetly, softly tolling from the tower of a grey old church, and on the verandah of the adjoining presbytery a priest, who was diligently reciting his office, paused in his walk to murmur the heaven-sent prayer. It was the close of a sultry mid-summer day, and the Father had been more than usually busy superintending the rustic decorations that had transformed the bare walls of the little church into a bower of beauty. A band of happy children who had toiled cheerfully and unceasingly since early morn, gathering evergreens, weaving garlands, arranging a wealth of flowers in every nook and corner, still lingered around the church door, their merry chatter and joyous laughter every now and then reaching the ears of the tired priest, as he snatched a few moments' respite from the arduous duties of the day.

"Who is this coming in the gate?" exclaimed a voice, and a chorus of thoughtless laughter accompanied the remark, as a small ill-clad, weary boy advanced timidly to the group, and asked :

"Does the priest live here?"

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"There is the presbytery, if you want him," said another, and the boy looked around in a bewildered manner as no one attempted to direct him to the house half hidden by shady trees.

"Children, I am ashamed of you!" said the priest, coming quietly forward. "Are none of you kind enough



to assist this forlorn little boy!" And the good Father glanced reproachfully at the thoughtless group, who had evidently been excited to laughter by the ragged appearance of the child.

"What is it, my boy?" continued the kind-hearted priest, stretching out his hand to the tired little traveller.

"Katie, my sister, sent me," he said timidly; "she is very ill — perhaps dying."

"And where do you live?" asked the priest.

"Oh, far over the mountains," was the reply. The Father looked serious. "How did you come, my boy?"

"I walked; but it is a very long way. Do you know a place called Fletcher's Crossing? Well, we live some distance from there. Our name is Donovan. I must go back now, but I will meet you at the crossing. Oh, please come! Katie begged so hard for a priest."

"Of course I'll go, my child; but you must have something to eat before you set out again," and the Father looked pitifully at the unkempt, ragged, tired boy who had braved the trying heat of a mid-summer day, and a long, weary bush tramp to bring aid to his suffering sister. But the name and the place were alike strange to him, for he had been but a very short time in the parish, though rumors had reached him that a gang of lawless men, whose object was plunder, infested the locality, though the place of their concealment could not be detected, as they moved about from one district to another, and so well laid were their plans that it was difficult to trace home their crimes to them.

The priest led the boy to the kitchen, where an appetising meal was placed before him, and then he withdrew to make his plans. He would hear as many confessions as possible, and would then start out on his journey at moon-rise, with the hope of getting back towards midnight, or at least sometime before morning.

"I will go now," said the lad, after giving the priest directions which were somewhat difficult to follow, "for Katie is alone."

"Are your parents living?" asked the Father, as he accompanied the boy to the gate.

"Mother has been dead many years; father is living, but he has not been home for days. I do not know where he is; he often stops away for weeks."

The sun was settling like a great globe of fire when the boy set out on his homeward journey across the mountains, but it was moon-rise ere the priest, bearing the Blessed Sacrament, mounted his horse to seek out the lonely bush home of the dying girl. Soon he had left the

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township far behind, and was trying to follow the mountain track, seeking out the landmarks indicated by the lad. All was hushed and still, there was no sound but the cicada," or the gentle rustling of the forest leaves. No thought of danger disturbed the heart of the priest, as he quietly murmured loving words of praise and adoration to the God of Love who accompanied him on his lonely ride ; but, as the hours wore on, and he seemed no nearer his destination, he grew uneasy.

But the thought of the dying girl urged him onward, and a fervent prayer for guidance issued from his heart. Was that a light gleaming at a distance ? or only the dying embers of a bushman's fire ? The priest directed his horse's head towards the light, and found that it proceeded from a half-burnt log, and he was about to ride away, when he was suddenly stopped by a rough-looking man who seemed to have risen up from behind the log.

" I am afraid I am bushed," said the Father, " can you help me ? "

" Who are you ? " said the man in gruff tones.

" I am a Catholic priest on my way to visit a sick person," was the answer.

A jeering laugh broke from the man, who said : " Come with me ; I will see." He laid his hand on the horse's bridle, and in a few minutes led the priest to the entrance of a kind of cavern, which was closed by a rude wooden door. He gave a peculiar low whistle which was immediately answered from within, then the door was cautiously opened.

" Come in side," said the man ; " I will look after your horse."

" But," protested the priest, " I must continue my journey without delay." Then, thinking it wiser to humor the man, he did as desired, and entered the hut, which seemed to be enveloped in smoke. For a moment he could not see, but somewhere out of the dense cloud came sounds of laughter, and when the Father was able to discern anything at all, he discovered that it proceeded from some men seated round a rude deal table in the centre of the hut. Great rough bearded fellows they were, and they looked at the poor tired priest with a kind of amused curiosity.

"I am in want, of a guide," said the priest: "will one of you come with me?"

"Not until you have handed over your valuables, my good friend," was the reply.

Then it suddenly dawned upon the Father that he had fallen into the clutches of the lawless mountain gang, and with no thought in his mind but that of saving the



Adorable Sacrament from outrage, he made a rush for the door.

"Stop!" thundered a voice, and turning he saw a revolver pointed at him a sudden thought occurred to him to tell these desperadoes the whole truth, and to throw himself upon their generosity.

"My men," he said, "you are welcome to the little money I have; also my watch. You shall have them freely

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if you will give me your word to spare the other treasure I bear with me. I am taking the Blessed Sacrament to a dying girl" — "And," interrupted one of the gang, "you carry it in a golden box — jewelled, too, perhaps — so you needn't think we shall let a prize like that escape us."

The priests heart was filled with anxiety, but he determined to make another effort. "Remember, the Holy of holies that I carry with me I will defend to my dying breath, and if you lay sacrilegious hands upon It, it will be only when mine are clasp in death. So, my men, reflect a moment before you commit so terrible a crime."

A coarse burst of laughter followed the pleading words of the priest, and then a rough voice shouted: "You may talk as you please, but the golden box is ours."

On hearing these words a fierce-looking man, whom the priest had not noticed before, came from the further end of the hut, revolver in hand. He was of immense stature; the others were lambs in appearance compared with the newcomer, whose eyes gleamed like live coals in the semi-darkness.

"You must let this man go free!" he thundered out in fierce tones.

"We have a word to say in the matter as well as you," said another.

"I say you will not harm him," and he interposed his giant form between the priest and his companions. The hard heart of the man had suddenly been touched with remorse when he heard the Father pleading for the Blessed Sacrament. He saw again the little thatch-covered cottage, and the mother with her children around her, reciting at even-tide the Rosary of Our Lady. He saw the ivy-covered church, half hidden by trees, noon and night, and the long-forgotten "Angelus" was sounding again in his ears. He saw the venerable village priest with a flock of bright-eyed children around him, to whom he was imparting the Divine truths of religion, and then came their First Communion Day, one happy Christmas morn. Could it be true that he had been one of that happy band, that for him a tender-hearted mother had carefully brushed and made ready his best garments, the knot of white ribbon so long and lovingly treasured, and the candle laid aside with reverent care!

There had been silence in the hut since his last remark, but the ominous looks of the rest of the gang plainly said that he was not going to have his own way.

At this crisis the door was pushed open and the boy who had visited the priest stood in their midst. His face was very pale, and bore traces of tears. "Have any of you seen a priest passing this way?" he asked imploringly. Then catching sight of the burly form holding the revolver, and the priest who stood with his hands firmly clasped over his breast as if guarding the Blessed Sacrament from harm! "Father," burst from the lips of the boy, "what are you doing here? Let him go free! Poor Katie is dying."

"God, forgive me," exclaimed the man, "Katie dying! Oh, my child, my child!" Then Donovan turned to the others, saying, "You must let him go in peace! My child is dying!" Evidently they were somewhat afraid of him, for he turned to the priest and said "Go at once, I will defend you."

The Father-needed no second bidding. He rushed out and mounted his horse, which was tethered outside. Donovan the while guarding the door. The horse his son had ridden was there also, and in a moment he was on its back with the boy on the saddle before him.

"Ride on now, for your life," he shouted. But the words had scarcely left his lips, when the report of a pistol shot was heard, and Donovan reeled in the saddle.

"Are you hurt?" anxiously shouted the priest.

"Never mind me," was the reply, "hasten on to the child."

When they reached the cottage they found the poor girl very ill, and suffering from want of proper care. Her father's remorse was pitiful to see. She was the creature that he loved best on earth, his affection for the girl who seemed far too fair and gentle to be the daughter of such a man.

But time passed. Poor and hasty were the preparations made for the Heavenly Visitor, but the sick girl's heart was comforted when on his knees by her bedside her father promised to return to God, who had, by a miracle of the Blessed Sacrament, subdued in a single moment a heart hardened by years of sin.

Then, and only then, did the priest discover that Donovan had been wounded in the side, but with all the strength of his rugged nature had concealed his suffering until his child's wishes had been gratified. The priest after carefully bandaging the wound, left on his return journey, promising to return as soon as he could.

It was just day-break when he entered the presbytery, and when a little later he stood at the foot of the altar to celebrate his heart was filled with joy, for he knew that the Angels in Heaven were rejoicing over the sinner who had resolved to do penance.

Many weeks of suffering ensued for both Donovan and Katie, but in the end they both recovered, and he was true to his resolve to lead an honest life. He removed from the mountains to the township and so thorough was his reformation that in a short time there was not in the parish a more exemplary Catholic than he. His conversion was truly a miracle of the Blessed Sacrament, and love and devotedness to It was now the mainspring of all his actions. Every evening at the close of his day's work he repaired to the church to pour out his thanks at the foot of the altar for the wondrous mercy vouchsafed him, and tears of repentance flowed from his eyes when he oftentimes recalled with a shudder how near to insult and outrage was our Blessed Lord when He, in His mercy, subdued the heart of the sinner by His tenderness and love.

HOVING SOUL.

SWEET JESUS, since Thy will ordains
These daily cares of mine,
And since I may not break the chains
That keep me from Thy shrine,
Oh, grant that this may be my part :
A touch of charity
To kindle in each selfish heart
A tender love for Thee.



Our tabernacle is holier than the Holy of Holies, yea than the Ark itself, for it contains the most Sacred and Life-giving flesh of our Saviour Jesus-Christ.
S. Nicephorus.

Thy who frequently receive their God hidden under the eucharistic veils and who at the same time do not endeavor to reproduce Him in their own lives by making then conformable to His divine life, do not fulfil the end our Lord had in view when He instituted the Sacrament of union and love.

Tender Jesus, faithful Lover
Still among us ? Can it be ?
Yes, the Host is Jesus ever
What a favored race are we !

In order that human reason may the more willingly pay its homage to this great mystery, there have not been wanting, as an aid to faith, certain prodigies wrought in His honor, both in ancient times and in our own, of which in more than one place there exist public and notable records and memorials.

Pope Leo.

All should strive to press, urge on, even force guests to the marriage feast of the king. But this beautiful apostolate calls for men of courage, men disposed to embrace the folly of the Cross, men ready for the contempt of the prudent of this world. To Thee, my Lord, be love, praise and glory ! To me forgetfulness and humiliation.

Père Eymard.

My dearest God ! Who dost so bind
My heart with countless chains to Thee.
O Sweetest Love ! My Soul shall find
In Thy dear bonds true liberty.
Thyself Thou hast betowed in me,
Thine, Thine for ever will I be.

Published with the Approbation of the Archbishop of Montreal.



ANNUNCIATION TO THE VIRGIN

After a painting by Albertinelli.

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