



*Resignation?*



## Quid Retribuam.

¶ *Lord, we bring Thee gifts already Thine!  
 Thy hands have stored each bending ear with grain,  
 And sent the rich, fruit-teeming juice amain  
 Through every branch and tendril of the vine;*

*Yet, when we offer Thee this Bread and Wine,  
 As gifts Thou takest Thy good things back again,  
 And in exchange, O what exchange! dost deign  
 To give us Thine own Flesh and Blood divine!*

*And so, though these our hearts belong to Thee—  
 Alas, Creator, injured in our care!—  
 Thou dost accept them and enkindle there  
 Faith that through every veil of sense can see,  
 And hope that meets its death in vision fair,  
 And love that lives and reigns eternally!*





## The Precious Blood.



to the mind of the Catholic who is able to grasp in some measure the meaning of the words of the great Apostle St. Paul, "*Jesus Christ yesterday, and to day and the same forever,*" there seems a grand continuity in the calendar of the Catholic Church, which, beginning with the Advent Season, preluding His Birth, brings us through all the periods of His Human Life to the Awful Day when He became indeed the Visible Central Point of all History, which appears really aimless if it do not tend upwards to that Crucified Form, and then go down through succeeding ages from It.

Not *there* does our calendar end ; it goes with Him into Heaven, even though like Him, still on earth with us. Do not our feasts on from Easter say this to us ?

Therefore, if He be really, *as He is*, "ever living to make intercession for us," by ever showing those Five Most Precious Wounds to His Eternal Father, — their voiceless pleading more powerful than words — for us, what then is more in unison with all that has preceded, but that the Most Precious Blood which flowed from those Five Divine Fountains when our ransom was paid, should find allotted to It a time of special honour, as it has in our calendar, delayed though it may seem to have been ?

Yet, it can never be too late : "*and the same forever.*"  
Now that the month of the Sacred Heart with its ma-

nifold sweet graces has gone by, we find the month of July with us — to what is it then dedicated ?

Our thoughts turn naturally to the Precious Blood of Christ — in this month dedicated to its honour. How little men think of it ! No wonder that the sad complaint, "What use is there in My Blood ?" is put upon the lips of Him who shed all His blood for men ! He shed His

blood, the infinite price of the redemption of all mankind, for He would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. But He does not *force* men's free will. He pleads, but does not compel. Man's co-operation is necessary for his salvation. In every way does Christ bring man to realize this, and the value of his soul. What is its redeeming price ? This will tell its value. But it is not to be estimated by corruptible things — gold and silver, filthy lucre — but by

the Precious Blood shed for its ransom, something incalculable by human valuation ; something divine and infinite. Nor was it only once that He shed it, but seven times. First, in His circumcision ; second, in the bloody sweat in the Garden of Olives ; third, in the cruel scourging ; fourth, in the crowning with thorns ; fifth, in carrying His cross and in the halls long the way to Calvary ; sixth, in the nailing to the cross ; seventh, in the wound of His Sacred Heart. Moreover. He applies His Precious Blood to our souls through the sacraments in





Baptism and Penance. It washes away the stains of sins ; in Holy Communion it courses through our veins, because we become one with Him in closest union. What grounds we have, then, for devotion to the Precious Blood ! We should try to win souls to Christ by making them realize their value and the infinite price that has been paid for them.

O Almighty and everlasting God, Who has appointed Thine only-begotten Son to be the Redeemer of the World, and hast been pleased to be reconciled unto us by His Blood, grant us, we beseech Thee, so to venerate with solemn worship the price of our Redemption, and to be on earth so defended by its power from the evils of this present life, that we may rejoice in its perpetual fruits in Heaven. Through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, etc. — Amen.

*(Collect, Feast of Precious Blood.)*

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## Mgr. Racicot Celebrates the 50th Anniversary of his First Communion.

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T Notre Dame Church, on Ascension Thursday, his Lordship Mgr. Racicot celebrated the 50th anniversary of his First Communion. In the course of his sermon the venerable Pastor informed the vast audience that in the year 1857, on this very day, this same church was the gala scene of the First Communion of the children of the parish. Among them was a bright little lad whom thirteen years afterwards, Mgr. Bourget sent as vicar to Father Lavallée, saying : " Receive Mr. Racicot. I am sending you as vicar a future bishop."

A pleasing feature of the ceremony was the distribution of gifts by Mgr. Racicot himself, to all those present who had made their First Communion with him. His Lordship's tender devotion to the Blessed Sacrament is too well known to need comment. His coat of-arms consists of a chalice of gold surmounted by a silver Host.



## Explanation of the Decree dispensing the Sick from the obligation of the Eucharistic Fast.

**R**EGARDING the decree relating to Communion of the sick we subjoin the explications just published (January 1907) in the *Canoniste Contemporain*, by the abbé Boudinhon.

"The decree is so clear it scarcely needs any explanation. Nevertheless for general use we specify its dispositions and facilities. It dispenses certain sick and for a certain number of communions from the Eucharistic fast.

"This dispensation allows the sick person to take nourishment before Communion but only, *per modum potus*, that is to say, in liquid form or drink. Such is the condition universally imposed by the Rescripts of the Holy Office. The clause does not limit the quantity taken as beverage, though it supposes a small amount, aliquid. It means that the sick person should not eat, only drink, although the drink may be substantial enough. And on this point we have the formal answer of the Holy Office dated September 7th 1897 (*Canoniste* 1898, p. 399): In saying: "*per modum potus*, we mean that it is allowed to take broth, coffee, or other liquid nourishment in which foreign substances have been mixed, as for example, semolina, toasted bread crumbs, etc., provided that the mixture does not lose its nature of liquid food."

There is then no need to ask ourselves scrupulously if we are within the authorized limits: the line of demarcation is very easy to determine. The draughts prescribed as medicine are also allowed with even more reason.

Those who may profit by this dispensation are chronic invalids, persons not sick enough to receive Communion as viaticum yet too weak to be able to keep the ordinary fast : Nothing is modified or changed for the sick who can keep the fast, nor for those who have a right to Communion as Viaticum.

It will be easy to decide if they come under the dispensation by the two conditions indicated : that they have been sick for a month and that their sickness is likely to last some time : *Infirmi qui jam a mense decumberent absque certa spe ut cito convalescant.* We must not translate two literally "decumbere" as confined to bed imagining one were not sick enough to profit by the indult only on condition of not being able to rise, the expression means sick, or being confined to one's room. Likewise it is not necessary that during this first month of sickness the invalid has not communicated fasting, it suffices to have been sick a month. And as to the cure if it does not seem near that circumstance entitles the sick person to profit by the indult. Moreover the recovery does not need to be definitive in order that we cease to have a right to use the indult ; it suffices evidently that the sick person can without difficulty keep the Eucharistic fast and retake his or her ordinary communions of devotion.

The rule to follow in this important matter does not rest with the sick person but with the Confessor, who will decide according to his conscience and the needs of each individual case.

Finally the decree fixes the number of communions allowed without fast. If in the house where the sick person resides there is a chapel or domestic oratory where the Blessed Sacrament is kept, or where mass only is authorized, he or she allowed one or two communions a week. As to the others who live at greater or lesser distances from the church they are allowed communion once or twice a month.

These communions differ in no way from the others as regards the ritual ceremonies. So for further information we can refer to the Ritual as the Decree advises.

A. BOUDINHON.



## The Private Audience.

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MISS Virginie Lampoïs was old and ungainly, with a complexion none of the best, a face deeply seamed with wrinkles, hair too thin and scant to be called her crowning glory, light grey eyes partly concealed by spectacles. Her general appearance was an indescribable mixture of awkwardness and shyness. She was evidently not made to please. It appears she was aware of her peculiarities and suffered acutely in consequence. Yet in spite of those apparent defects her soul was spotless and beautiful, she was a model of piety, constancy and fidelity.

Neither was she cross or ill tempered, yet when she returned from Church in the early morning conspicuously holding her big prayer-book in her work-worn hands, trotting through the streets in her nervous, anxious way, the small boys made fun of her, while their elders thought : " How cross those old devotees must be ! " It was not her fault if they thought so and besides it certainly was not true. How could it be ? since the greater

part of her life was spent in the peaceful calm atmosphere of presbyteries and sacristies. When God called her brother to the sacerdotal dignity, Virginie followed him, but stopped before it will be understood. on the threshold, that is to say at the kitchen of the little presbytery of X — a pretty village gracefully scattered over the side of a sloping valley on the banks of the Loire.

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Leo XIII had just died and Pius X, the former Curé of Salzano more simple and more like the Abbé Lambois, placed on his head the august tiara. Our heroine, Miss Virginie, had a profound respect and deep affection for the new Pope some of which she displayed by hanging his picture in every room in the presbytery, learning his first encyclical by heart and offering up all her prayers and good-works that God might bless him with a long and happy reign. Her devotion to Christ's Vicar was truly admirable and worthy of emulation.

"La Croix," brought its daily budget of news to the presbytery but the only interest it possessed for Virginie was the Roman news which she eagerly devoured. Today what rapture overcomes her as she reads of the organization of a National Pilgrimage! To go to Rome, to see the Pope and all for one hundred and forty francs! Her mind is made up. She has a new aim in life.

But to a poor person like herself one hundred and forty francs is a small fortune... Yet where there is a will there is a way and Virginie proves the truth of the old adage. Luckily, she has already saved up and carefully hidden away ninety-eight francs. Her brother, the Curé is poor but very kind-hearted and fond of his sister, so when she tells him of her plans he gives her twenty francs, all he can possibly spare. To make up the twenty-two still lacking she sets to work with a will and from early evening until midnight, as fast as she can make her needles go she knits socks. What matter if her poor tired eyes ache! She is steadily gaining her point. At last, the socks are all finished and sold, the one hundred and forty francs sent to the Secretary of the Pilgrimage and Virginie radiantly happy in her third-class compartment sets out for the Eternal City.

She counts the days, the hours, the minutes that must intervene between then and until the seventh of September at one o'clock in the afternoon, when His Holiness receives the French Pilgrimage. Soon, however, her glad serenity is clouded by the thought that she has no mantilla to wear at the reception. Before leaving home she had persuaded herself her old black shawl would serve the purpose, but now her pride rebels. She cannot wear it. If the Pope, who is so gracious and fatherly to all, should speak to her, or look at her !... No, the old black shawl will never do.

Like sunshine dispelling her anxiety come the consoling words :

" The Sisters of St. Charles are very kind : they will undoubtedly lend you a mantilla. Their Convent is only a step from here, where we shall remain for ten minutes. You have ample time. Go and ask them, my child."

The speaker was the spiritual head of the compartment. He had recognized Virginie and guessed the cause of her trouble.

She quickly returned, her head gracefully adorned with a lovely mantilla, and hastened after the Pilgrims who had already started. Unfortunately she did not overtake them before she reached the Vatican. The Swiss Guards let her pass through the big bronze door, and one of them divining her object points towards a wide staircase to the right which she mounts with the agility of a school girl. Her age, awkwardness, shyness, all is forgotten in her triumphant gladness. In the vestibule at the top of the stairs, one of the Guards unexpectedly bars her progress, saying :

" Madam, may I ask the object of your visit ? "

" National Pilgrimage," she breathlessly answered.

" They have already entered... You are too late ! "

" French Pilgrimage ! French Pilgrimage ! " repeated the dazed girl now imploring, now threatening — but neither her menaces nor her prayers could soften the stern Guard whose inexorable answer, " Too late ! Too late " seemed beyond her comprehension.

The minutes were like hours to poor Virginie, her eyes grew dim with tears, her heart seemed to stop beating ; she felt cold and faint with misery as the truth finally

dawned upon her mechanically ; like some poor wounded animal she turned and obeying the imperative sign of the unbending Guard slowly descended the great marble stairs completely overcome by the bitter disappointment. Wearily, with down — cast eyes, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, she leaves the Vatican crushed under the weight of her loneliness and abandonment and walks along heedless of the dangers to which she is exposing herself, doubting even the reality of her being in Rome. She is only sure of one thing and that is that her heart is full of anguish, disappointment and sorrow, and that it is always the same old story of her failure where others found success. Raising her hand to her aching head, it comes in contact with the obnoxious mantilla, the prime cause of all her misery and a flood of bitter thoughts sweeps over her... "Yes, the others are there in the Royal chamber ! It is beautiful, grand and consoling ! The Pope blesses them, they kiss his ring, they look into his eyes, they listen to his voice, and I here alone and forsaken, like a lost soul ! Why is it ? What have I done to deserve such a punishment ? Oh its cruel, cruel and hard and more than I can bear..."

Looking up she sees a Church the door of which is open. Instinctively she enters the humble little sanctuary, deserted save by an old couple deeply absorbed in their devotions. Through sheer force of habit she kneels and murmurs :

"Praise, love and adoration be to Our Lord Jesus Christ in the most holy and adorable Sacrament of the Altar, now and forever more. Amen..." The words were scarcely uttered when she raised her head astonished and disconcerted by their meaning. She repeats them and it seems to her she understands them for the first time...

She gazes on the humble tabernacle before which flickers the ever-faithful little lamp... She continues to gaze as one spell-bound... Her eyes go beyond the golden door... She recognizes Jesus... Her soul is flooded with infinite peace and happiness and before it all her grief melts away, while the happy tears course unheeded down her cheeks.



She remains thus absorbed in blissful colloquy a long time and when she leaves the Presence of the tender pitying Christ Pontiff her soul is as serene as an angel's and more beautiful than tongue can tell...

.....

Vanity, my dear children, will always make you suffer. If you don't believe me, ask Miss Virginie. She will con-



firm my words by her sad experience. And the worthy ecclesiastic evidently forgetting that Virginie had only followed his advice, kept on good-naturedly teasing her about how her vanity had made her miss the Pope's reception. Virginie held her peace, but had she wished she could have told him how the Eucharistic Pontiff's reception, which she did not miss, was fraught with unspeakable happiness and lasting joy.

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— HYMN —

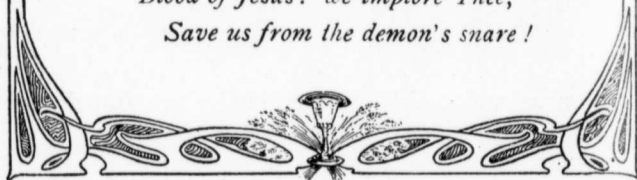
TO THE

Precious Blood of Our Lord.

BY ELEANOR C. DONNELLY.



**B**LOOD of Jesus, saving fountain,  
Whence all graces flow to men!  
Well-spring from the holy Mountain,  
Pure beyond all mortal ken!  
Help Thy servants, sweet Saviour,  
Ransomed by this Precious Blood!  
Wash their souls in this blest laver,  
Cleanse them in this healing flood!  
Blood of Jesus! we adore Thee;  
Hear and grant Thy children's prayer!  
Blood of Jesus! we implore Thee,  
Save us from the demon's snare!



*Glowing on the Church's annals,  
Like the sun's red rising beam ;  
Through the Sacramental channels  
Flowing in a crimson stream ;  
Crowning saint and cleansing sinners,  
Blessing ev'ry faithful soul ;  
In the race, victorious winners  
Bear It radiant to the goal !  
Blood of Jesus ! we adore Thee :  
Hear and grant Thy children's prayer !  
Blood of Jesus ! we implore Thee,  
Save us from the demon's snare !*

*Hither come, each guilty varlet,  
Hither come, ye slaves of woe !  
Though your sins may be as scarlet,  
Christ can wash them white as snow,  
Full of faith and warm devotion,  
Bathing in this Blood Divine,  
In the depths of that great ocean,  
Like the stars, your souls shall shine !  
Blood of Jesus ! we adore Thee ;  
Hear and grant Thy children's prayer !  
Blood of Jesus we implore Thee,  
Save us from the demon's snare !*





## HOUR OF ADORATION

### MARY'S VISITATION

#### I. — Adoration.

Adore in this mystery of Mary's visit to Elizabeth the Word Incarnate, living in Mary's womb. Adore therein His Divinity which deigns to remain nine months in that pure and silent sanctuary. Adore His soul which, from its creation, enjoying reason and grace in all their plenitude, rendered to God the perfect worship of adoration and love. Adore there His body, His blood, His Sacred Heart, His ineffable life!

Adore His love and the ardor which urged Him to go to sanctify, to give Himself!

Adore the most sweet mystery of His incomparable union with Mary. She is His sanctuary and His dwelling, His means and His instrument. She is, in fact, His sacrament, for is not a sacrament that which contains and gives the Author of all virtue. She is the sacrament of the Incarnate Word. It is from her, as from a unique source, that He springs forth in order to pour Himself out upon the world, and all His communications to souls will come from the first communication that she received. All the channels of the mysteries and the Sacraments will draw from this reservoir, which is fed from the eternal ocean of the bosom of the Father.

John and his mother are the first to receive the gift of God by Mary. In what abundant measure it is imparted to them!

Adore, then, with Elizabeth and St. John the presence, the life, and the communication of the Word in Mary.

But turn now toward the Eucharist. The Tabernacle that holds Jesus, the Sacrament that gives Him, as once did Mary, are the appearance of the bread, the Holy Species, the Sacred Host.

Adore under that white veil, as in Mary, the real and living Presence of Jesus. He is there, although hidden. The veil is impenetrable to the eye of reason, but He is there ! And to the gaze of faith, of purity, and love, how plainly He is there ! Do you not see that He makes this humble creature of bread very sacred, very venerable ? — Recognize Him, then. Rejoice Him by discovering Him and saluting Him in that retreat, to which His love has drawn Him !

Again, like Mary, the veil of the Sacred Species gives Him to you to sanctify you. It has no other reason of existence than that of communicating to you the Word, in a manner so sensible, so evident, that you cannot doubt of His coming.

Adore Jesus, then, present, living, acting, given in the Eucharist as in Mary. But adore Him as Mary, as John, as Elizabeth adored Him, with an adoration that salutes and proclaims Him in the joy of absolute certitude, in the gladness of a love that, at last, possesses Him.

## II. — Thanksgiving.

And whence is this to me, that the Mother of my God should come to me ?

Thanksgiving, with the train of virtues of which it is the queen, love, joy, peace, humility, embalms all this mystery.

John leaps with joy, Elizabeth is confounded in the humility born of gratitude, and Mary chants her *Magnificat*. It is because the Incarnate Word gives Himself with spontaneity so ardent, with endearments so tender, with eagerness so loving !

It is always in this way that He gives Himself. It is always He who makes the first advances, who has the first thought, who takes the first step, who seeks. Has He, then, need of us ? No ! — But He loves, He loves absolutely, and love waits not to receive before it gives. It is precipitated by its own weight, and borne along by its own impetuosity.

Did you not see it on the day of your First Communion ? Do you not see it every time that He renews His coming to you. O if the eye of our faith were sufficiently pure ! — How He comes down to us ! How He seizes us, embraces us, penetrates and absorbs us !

And whence is this to me ? Whence comes this honor ?

A Communion ! The Word Incarnate in our breast, His flesh united to our flesh, His blood flowing into our blood, His soul mingling with our soul, intelligence, will with will, love with love, in that perfection of union to which spirits alone can attain ; His whole Being, in fine, become our whole being !

But whence comes this honor ? From love, from nothing but love !

He comes, not for Himself, not for any self-interest, but for us, and to do us good. To do us good is for Him a passion, a need, a hunger and thirst. It is His pleasure and satisfaction, His recompense and His glory.

O love of Communion, in which God is animated by love for creatures miserable as we, even so far as to deliver Himself up entirely and without reserve!

O the measures, the labors, the efforts, the wonders, the sacrifices, the excesses! — Nothing is too much, provided that He may meet us in private, press us heart to heart, and love us personally.

O folly of tenderness! O blindness of love! O fascination of the Heart of Jesus!

And Mary, uniting herself to that love of her Son, solicits Him and urges Him incessantly to do us more good! — What will not these two hearts do, which unite all the energies of their love to love us more!

### III. — Reparation.

Both were just before God.

Elizabeth and Zachary tasted the happiness, and drew all the fruit from the visit of the Incarnate Word, because they were just. John profited by it, because he was innocent.

But the multitude in the villages through which they passed, but the inhabitants of Hebron? — They looked with indifference at that young maiden in the company of a poor workman. And Jesus in passing heard, perhaps, blasphemies against God His Father, and He certainly saw Him offended.

And today, how is received the visit which Jesus extends to all the cities, to all the villages, to all souls by the gift of His Eucharist?

The great number, the crowd, ignore or despise Him. They pass along, indifferent or incredulous, on their way to business or pleasure. Of the merciful visit which their Creator has prolonged for so many ages, which He announces in so loud a voice by His Church, they take no heed!

If sometimes they are even forced to remember it they revolt and blaspheme.

Ah! let us weep over the indifference of the world for Communion! Let us pity the great Abandoned One! It is contempt for the love and the torture of the Heart of Jesus!

But we ourselves, when He comes, do we experience on receiving Him the joy of Elizabeth, the thrills of John? — Alas! what are our Communions? our thanksgivings? — Dryness, tepidity, distractions, sometimes weariness and disgust. — Jesus is come, He is ours. Is it only we ourselves that doubt it?

Whence comes that ?

The hosts of Jesus at Hebron were faithful to the law, friends of retreat, assiduous in prayer, recollected and humble.

If we do not share in these sentiments, if, at least, we do not purify ourselves from sin with jealous care and an ardent love of justice, we shall never make but sad Communions.

Another lesson of this mystery is that charity is a disposition necessary to receive worthily and fruitfully the visit of Jesus. It is Jesus' love for John that attracts Him to Hebron, Mary's love for Elizabeth that urges her to make the painful journey, and Elizabeth and Zachary lived in perfect union.

Let us remember that love is the precept of the Last Supper, and, with its ardent flame, let us purify our heart from all rancor, our mind from every judgment, our tongue from every word contrary to that sweet, though rigorous, precept. — Never will the light of the eyes of Jesus, nor the sweetness of His word, nor the tenderness of His Heart embalm a soul to rejoice it, to make for it a festival, unless it shall have disposed and satisfied the claims of fraternal charity.

How sad not to be able to rejoice, at least in spirit, when the Joy of the angels, the Object of the delights of the Father, and Eternal Beatitude is in our soul !

Let us make reparation with Mary, so humbled by the manner in which we receive her Son ! Let us not for this abandon Communion, but let us more carefully purify ourselves, let us endeavor to love God above everything else, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.

#### IV. —Prayer.

Mary abode with Elizabeth about three months.

Mary stayed three months with Elizabeth. Jesus remained, also, in Mary, continuing His life of adoration and love for His Father in that cherished tabernacle, and sanctifying Elizabeth and John by that virginal sacrament of His first love.

A visit of three months ! The gifts of God are of their nature lasting, because they descend from the eternal heights where nothing is passing ; but once in our hands, their duration depends on our fidelity to keep them.

So it is with the gift of Communion. Its fruit is life, and life eternal. But, alas ! how many after receiving It, fall back immediately into languor and even into death !

What we ought to aim at in Communion, what we ought earnestly to beg of Jesus through Mary, is that He would render us such that He may be able to prolong His visit, be able to abide in us a long time.

In this prolonged and stable union, consist the vivifying reality of Communion. If, some instants after Communion, in consequence

of the dissolving of the Species, the Eucharistic Word loses in us His Sacramental Presence, it is because that Presence, though necessary to introduce Him into the soul by way of the senses, which demand a sensible sign, is no longer necessary for Him to remain therein, the soul being a spirit. He allows, therefore, the material envelope that contained Him to fall away; and, Food entirely spiritual, He enters into immediate contact with our soul, which inhales Him, penetrates itself with Him, nourishes itself with Him, and is sustained, strengthened, vivified, and rendered more energetic and active.

It is this spiritual union, the fruit and end of sacramental Communion, that must be entertained, protected, developed, by delivering one's self to its beneficent action, by acts of the virtues of faith, hope, desire, recollection, humility, and by love, above all by love!

It is for that reason, also, that thanksgiving after Communion is so important.

And if we wish that this union should extend its action still further, so that we may live a divine life, a truly Christian life, we must prolong our thanksgiving, we must force ourselves to make of each of the actions that make up our daily life a homage of gratitude to Him who gives Himself to us so mercifully. That is within the reach of all, and it is that Communion will render easy and, as it were, natural.

Incarnate Word, blessed Fruit of a blessed Mother, remain in me! that, combating sin and its temptations, forcing myself to act for love of Thee, I may remain with Thee in the strict union of thought, affection, interests, sufferings, and joys!

Mary, O thou whose every desire Jesus accomplished, whose every prayer He answered, protect and ripen in my soul the fruit of Communion!

Let us pray that the duty of thanksgiving after Communion may be better understood, more faithfully observed, and that the lamentable delusions in which we take refuge to dispense ourselves from it, may be dissipated!

Lastly, let us give to the poor sick, as a pledge of charity to the neighbor, a fervent prayer to obtain for them all the grace of the visit of the Word-Viaticum, who will brave distance, pass through contempt and indifference, penetrate into their dwellings, be they garrets or prisons.

Is not this last visit of a love that no ingratitude can lessen, the continuation of the visit to Hebron? It is not again Mary who procures it — the Mother of Mercy! — by her unceasing prayers?

May they with their Saviour, in the gladness of peace regarding the past, of hope for the future, and, with Mary, may they begin and continue in heaven the canticle of eternal gratitude! — He has filled the hungry with good things!



## The Mad Sacristan.

### I.



MORE picturesque location for a church I cannot imagine than that of the church of my story. The town, to whose Catholic hearts it affords such ineffable comfort, lies embowered on a Hudson River hill-top in a wealth of foliage which completely hides it from the steamboat traveller. Some dozen fisher-folks' cabins straggle round near the wharf, and a red, winding road-way leads up from their midst to the woodland. But the town itself nestles shyly away amid its perfumed trees and flowers, seeking no other attractions than its great cascade in the glen to the north, its famous pineries on the east, and its own un-failing solitude, romance and sweetness.

The church stands about in the heart of this town. It is small, scarcely able to seat two hundred worshippers, but quite a gem. It was built by a widow that the soul of her husband might rest in peace, and was built with that exquisite taste which the devout sex always bring to bear upon anything linked with the service of God.

The architecture is Gothic, the material red sandstone. The single aisle is laid in marble mosaics. The altar and the sanctuary-railing are of hard pine, heavily carved, while the sanctuary-lamp is of solid silver polished like a mirror. The widow wished that, when possible, a hundred candles should flame upon the altar at Benediction, so that the whole interior should be flooded with their light and no lamp or gas jet be needed. Outside, the church was covered with clambering ivy and shrouded by seven tall elm trees, and beyond the trees God's Acre lay enfolding its sleepers.

### II.

To this church there came the Mad Sacristan. Mad indeed the old man was, but his madness was almost heavenly. It had no repulsive features. It attracted the



very children of the town. It was this. No one ever heard him speak of earthly things, except in strict necessity, and to almost every query why he acted thus or thus, his solitary answer was: "For the sake of our dear Redeemer."

He slept in a loft above the sacristy, and never was known to leave the precincts of the church or the churchyard unless to get his meals at the pastor's house adjoining, or to make



his few and humble purchases at the store. He seemed devoid of the least curiosity. A newspaper was never seen in his hands, and he never inquired what was happening in the world beyond his church.

His whole being was absorbed in his work as a sacristan and his love of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. That work was done perfectly. That love was its secret.

No cobweb, dust or disarrangement of any sort could exist beneath his eye for more than a moment. Twice a day the little church was swept, and twice a day the little grave-yard raked and trimmed and watered. When evening came and there were no services, the old man knelt at the altar in prayer till exhausted nature bade him seek repose on his hard hair mattress.

No wonder they called him mad. Such detachment from earthly things, such absolute devotion to the Saviour Who laid down His life for us, is more than the world can understand.

By and by, strange stories got afloat concerning the church. Belated wayfarers heard peculiar sounds more than once from within it. Some of the altar-boys dared to say it was haunted. Drawing near it fearfully at night, they were sure the grave stones were lit with a lurid light, and they knew they saw dark shadows flit hither and thither.

The light on the grave stones might have come from the moon, and the shadows have come from the trees that swayed with the evening winds, but the boys preferred to think them caused by ghostly visitants.

The rocks on which the *Sunnyside* had foundered in the Hudson long ago were haunted still by the shades of the passengers drowned—so the fisherman told them—and why should not their buried friends come to visit the church they loved so well? Why not, indeed? And so the story grew apace, and the region of the church was held in dread after dark.

The story reached its height when once at midnight all the windows of the church were seen by a distant watcher through the trees ablaze with light. Such a light it must have been which had formerly lit up the tombstones, but the frightened boys had not tarried long enough to discover it. The watcher called others and they too, from afar, beheld the phenomenon. They lingered, watching yet fearful, till early dawn, when the light slowly vanished.

On the morrow, the boys reported the fact to the Mad Sacristan, protesting their belief that the church was haunted.

"Oh, no," he replied, with a smile, "no, no, no. Where is your faith, my children? What spirit would dare walk in the presence of our Blessed Redeemer? What ghost would dare appear in the shrine were the Blessed Sacrament is resting? You must seek some other explanation of the light."

The old man was wrong, of course, for many a soul departed has been known to appear in church, called thither by some wise design of Providence; but he was evidently anxious to avoid the subject.

The boys fancied a cloud of pain appeared on his forehead, and as he walked away, he seemed unusually

meditative. Could it be possible he knew the secret of the strange illumination? The bravest of the boys resolved to penetrate the secret. He won two more to his project, and night after night for a week they watched the church, but in vain. They made occasional watchings afterwards, but nothing unusual was heard or seen.

### III.

With the slow rolling away of another year, the story was almost forgotten. The Mad Sacristan pursued his strange ways and grew stranger. Finally, when winter came and God's Acre was covered with snow, he was rarely known to quit the church. If one spoke to him there, however, he made no answer for the moment but beckoned the speaker to follow him outside. Here he despatched the business as speedily and charitably as he could, and then returned to the church. Its sanctity he would not violate by so much as a whisper.

People noticed that the old man's steps were growing feebler. A trembling ague often seized him and forced him to hasten to his attic, lest his sufferings should prove a distraction to the worshippers. He graciously declined all proffers of assistance.

"For the sake of our dear Redeemer," he said, "let me bear it. It cannot last long. I have heard my summons, and I am going soon to behold my God face to face forever."

The end came on Christmas eve. The last penitent had left the church, and the Mad Sacristan had locked the door. Two hours later, a party of men passed near, loaded with presents for loved ones on the coming festival. To their amazement, the church was fairly aflame with light.

They quickly deposited their burdens on the door-step, and strove to enter, but the door held fast. They hurried to the sacristy. Its door was ajar and they entered noiselessly.

A low sobbing came to their ears from the church, and was followed by a sound as of a body falling heavily to the floor. In an instant they stood within the church. Then was the mystery of all the strange sounds and sights unfolded before them.

At least two hundred candles were burning on the altar, and vases of flowers were so charmingly set between, and wreaths of evergreen and myrtle hung round all the sanctuary with such a beauty, that the men were struck dumb with amazement. They had never beheld a sight so lovely. It was as if Angels had come down from heaven to adorn the spot where the Christ-Child should be born.

But whence had the sobbing come? What was the body that had fallen? One glance into the sanctuary told them.

There on the altar steps, with his face pressed to the floor, lay the Mad Sacristan. The church indeed had not been haunted. The love of the old man for the hidden God of the Eucharist was the secret of the strange illuminations. He was dying now amidst his last supreme act of homage. They raised him gently and found him still breathing. He opened his eyes and whispered :

“ Our dear Redeemer is calling me—I have prepared Him a great reception—I have done all things for His sake, and now He brings me my crown. Yes, O my Jesus, have mercy on my soul—receive me as Thy servant forever.”

The effort cost him his last breath. His eyes grew fixed and his gray head fell over on the arm that supported it. The Mad Sacristan was dead.

BY G. O'C., S. J.

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### A Shadow.

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*A shadow falls—I know a friend is near ;  
So when I see Thee, Sacred Host !  
I see the shadow of my Saviour dear,  
And heart and sense in joy are lost.*

M. S. PINE.

## Why do so many vain fears keep you away from frequent and daily communion ?

### FIRST DIFFICULTY THE FEAR OF COMMUNICATING UNWORTHILY.

#### I

(Continued.)

*I do not communicate daily nor even frequently, because I am afraid of communicating unworthily.*



PITY you, Christian Soul, who experience this difficulty. You feel the force of St. Paul's words : " Whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord" ... " He that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh judgment to himself."

I ask you, in the first place : Why do you fear communicating unworthily by receiving the Body of the Lord daily or frequently, when such fear is unknown to those who rarely communicate, and even by those that do so only at Easter ? Can it be that the Apostle has fulminated this sentence only against souls that approach frequently and daily to the Holy Table, and not against those, also, that communicate rarely and even only once a year ? It seems to me that it aims rather at the latter ; for one Communion being a preparation for the next, it is much less difficult for him who communicates rarely to render himself guilty, of sacrilege rather than for him who habitually approaches the Holy Table.

I add that this fear is vain and the effect of prejudice. Do you know clearly what is *necessary* in order not to make an unworthy and sacrilegious Communion ? To communicate worthily, even daily, behold what is necessary and sufficient — it is necessary and sufficient that, if you are *certain* of having committed a mortal sin since your last confession, you have not the hardihood to communicate without going again to confession, even if it seems to you that you have contrition.



To Jesus by Mary.

By E. Azambre.

This teaching is not mine, nor of such and such a theologian, but, indeed, of our Holy Mother Church. United in the holy Council of Trent, she manifested on one side her ardent desire to see all the Faithful who assisted at Holy Mass communicate sacramentally, and, on the other, she says ; " That so august a Sacrament must not be unworthily received, and thus cause the death and condemnation of him who receives It, the Council decides and declares that they who are certain of having committed a mortal sin, however repentant they may be, must necessarily recur to sacramental confession before approaching the Holy Table."

Behold, then, O Christian Soul, all that is *necessary* that you may not commit a sacrilege in communicating. And that only is *necessary*. Do you understand? Never communicate without confessing beforehand, if you are certain, that is, if you can *swear* to being in a state of mortal sin.

You ask me : " Is that alone sufficient not to make a sacrilegious Communion?" Yes, that is sufficient, because, as the learned Suarez observes : " Nothing more is imposed on us by any Council or Pope, nor by any of the Holy Fathers." Now, if this is so, why do you say : " I do not communicate daily, nor even frequently, because I fear to make unworthy and sacrilegious Communions?" Why not despise this fear as vain? " As you have no affection for mortal sin, or, having the certitude of having committed it, you have confessed and repented, nothing hinders you from communicating worthily every day." *(to be continued.)*

## A Heroïne under the Reign of Terror

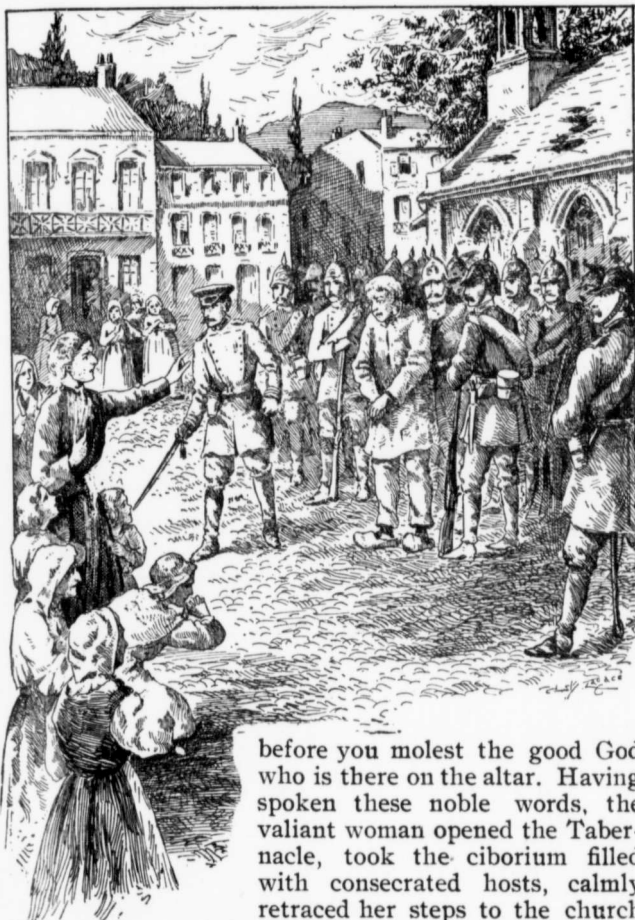


OR very long ago, at the hospital of St. Mandrier, near Toulon, died Earnest Jourdan, a young soldier of marine infantry, and the last descendant of the renowned heroïne Catherine Jourdan.

During the reign of terror a batallion, bent on pillage, entered the Collegiate Church of Sixfours. Catherine Jourdan undauntedly walked through their ranks, saying



without a tremor in her sweet womanly voice : " Citizens, if you are true French Soldiers, you will respect a woman ; if you are only cowards, you will cut my throat



before you molest the good God who is there on the altar. Having spoken these noble words, the valiant woman opened the Tabernacle, took the ciborium filled with consecrated hosts, calmly retraced her steps to the church door, bearing the living God to a place of safety : meanwhile the soldiers, fired with enthusiasm at her splendid courage, presented arms as she passed crying : " Long live the citizen of the good God ! "



# THE STREET SWEEPER

AND

## WEEKLY COMMUNION

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ONE Sunday, a poor young girl, very simple in her exterior asked to see one of the Fathers. She wanted to go to confession. It was eleven o'clock in the morning. The Father repaired to the sacred tribunal, and this is what he relates of his penitent :

"In my desire to help the soul that God had sent to me," he says. "I asked her a question upon her manner of living. 'Father,' she responded, 'I sweep the streets in the morning, and in the afternoon I make a little money by doing some coarse mending.'

"After hearing her confession, I was deeply moved seeing the great things God had done in her soul and, recalling the dangers that surrounded this treasure of grace and angelic purity, I asked :

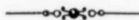
"How, my child, do you keep yourself pure for God, since you are incessantly thrown with people who have almost always the hatred of God and blasphemy on their lips?"

"*'I go to Holy Communion every Sunday.'* she answered. 'As to what is going on around me, I neither hear nor see it. I live in my own heart. *Jesus came to me, Jesus will come again,* this is my only thought.'

"Have you communicated this morning?" I asked.

"Not yet, Father. That I may be able to support my poor blind mother, I have to work even on Sunday. But I stop at eleven o'clock, and then I can communicate at the mid-day Mass. With this Divine Food, I am strengthened and ready to do whatever the good God wishes of me, and to accept the trials He may send me.'"

With the Eucharistic Jesus, one is capable of heroism !



## TO OUR AMERICAN SUBSCRIBERS.

On account of the new postal regulations between the United States and Canada we are obliged to raise your Sentinel subscription, ten cents. The new tariff went into effect the eighth of May.

In consequence, when renewing your subscription kindly add ten cents extra to cover this new postal requirement.

We trust this slight increase, totally independent of us, will not cause any of our patrons to cancel their subscription especially when they consider the excellence and need of the Eucharistic Apostolate carried on by the Sentinel and the valuable aid given to the cult of perpetual exposition by this small fee.

### Resignation.

#### PRAYER.

As a person in affliction naturally has recourse to a faithful friend for comfort, so, O Jesus, I am come to seek consolation from thee, my most tender and most faithful Friend. Thou seest how dejected my heart is, from what hath befallen me. O, grant me strength, I beseech thee, that I may be able to bear my affliction with fortitude, and receive it in thy spirit. I adore thy divine justice which has overtaken me; I receive with respect and submission all its chastisements; I return thanks for them, as for so many signal favors and testimonies of the love of God. I accept them in the spirit of homage, and with the view of honoring thy labors and sufferings. I offer them through thy hand, and in union with thy sufferings, to my heavenly Father, in satisfaction for my sins, sincerely acknowledging that I have deserved much greater. I praise his goodness for having treated me with so much lenity, and readily submit to whatever other chastisements he may please to inflict on me hereafter. I only beg of him strength to bear them in the manner I ought, and the undeserved favor of not being punished during eternity. Amen.

*See frontispiece.*



## CHILDREN'S HOUR

A School-Child's  
Prayer to  
The Blessed Sacrament.

*My God, I know that in this church  
Thou dwellest night and day;  
That on this altar for our sakes,  
Thou dost forever stay,*

*Thee only do I wish to serve,  
For Thee alone to live;  
My only hope in Thee I place,  
To Thee my love I give.*

*Each thing I do, I offer Thee,  
My duties, work, and play,  
My efforts bless, and make me, Lord,  
Grow better day by day.*

*Bless all within my much-lov'd home,  
There let Thy peace abide;  
Make all who teach me Thee to know,  
Bless all the world beside.*

*For all my faults' now at Thy feet  
I humbly pardon seek;  
Make me a good submissive child,  
Obedient, pure, and meek.*

*I'm going now, but ere I leave  
Thy lowly altar-throne,  
In spirit, dearest Jesus, come  
And make my heart Thy home.*

*All thanks and adoration be  
To Thee, "O God of Light,"  
Bless me once more, Thy little child—  
Good night, dear Lord, good night.*

*Amen, sweet Jesus!*

*(From the Irish Messenger.)*



## Shall I go to Communion?

A fervent young student on leaving college had taken the firm resolution to receive communion very often and to approach the holy table in his parish church in the country at least once a month in order to give good example to an indifferent, careless congregation, among whom frequentation of the sacraments had fallen into almost general disuse.

He tells us himself what a hard struggle he once had to carry out his resolution: "Noticing that every one was watching me with ill-concealed curiosity, I began to grow nervous and embarrassed and was getting from bad to worse when the gentle tinkling of the *Agnus Dei* bell slightly changed the current of my thoughts but still left the momentous question 'shall I go to communion' undecided. If at least some one else would only go first! I looked around anxiously, but no one stirred. Evidently I must face that crowd alone. Prostration was no longer possible. The priest had communicated. I tried to rise and go to the altar but an incomprehensible inertia nailed me to my bench, I began to tremble and beads of perspiration broke out on my forehead. Fortu-

nately the struggle was all over in a moment. Heartily ashamed of my cowardice and doubtless helped by my good angel, I conquered human respect, listened to the Eucharistic Christ's invitation and alone and before everyone knelt at the altar rail and received communion with unusual sentiments of joy which, doubtless, Our Saviour had showered on me to reward my poor efforts at self-conquest for His sake."

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## Communion given by a Child.

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**D**URING the month of May, 1871, the National Guards, entered the presbytery and forcibly expelled the priests. A youth, fifteen years of age, his aunt, and his two little cousins happened to be in the church of St. James of Haut-pas, situated quite close to the presbytery and heard what had just occurred. Like lightning flashed across the boy's mind the thought that the Blessed Sacrament would very soon be exposed to desecration by those same guards. He hurriedly opened the Tabernacle, grasped the Ciborium and pyx, confiding the former to the care of his pious aunt, reverently guarding the latter himself, but fear lest they should be captured coming out of the church with their precious treasures caused the boy to take an extreme resolution. He opened the ciborium, communicated himself and gave holy communion to his aunt and little cousins. Then, running into the garden adjoining the church, dug a hole and hid the sacred vases. To disarm suspicion, he remained near the spot where he had concealed them and began playing with his little cousins under the very eyes of the National Guard, who, foiled in their attempt in the church, came to search the garden.

Had it not been for the presence of mind, so full of piety and courage of this young boy, the Sacred Species would, undoubtedly, have been desecrated by those robbers posing as National Guards.

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