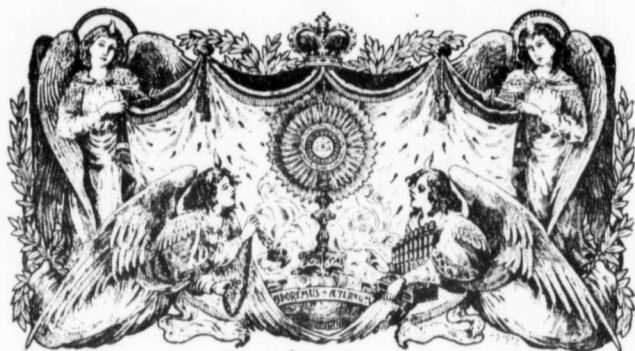




INNOCENCE

After a painting by Bouguereau.



AVE MARIS STELLA

A HYMN OF THE SOUL

By B. F. De Costa

The stream runs fast, the spent sun hides
 Behind the hills, and beams pale,
While ocean-ward our light barque glides,
 Afar to voyage, alone to sail :
Blest Virgin, hear the Vesper prayer
 The voyager lifts to Thee,
And tender show a Mother's care,
 Mary, Star of the Sea.

No more we drift where green banks tell,
 Beneath the fragrant forest trees,
Of violet and asphodel ;
 The Rocks ! Chill blows the mist-born breeze :
Blest Virgin, hear the Vesper prayer
 The voyager lifts to Thee,
As on, mid twilight shade we fare,
 Mary, Star of the Sea.

And now new strength the current knows,
 Round unseen reefs wild eddies whirl,
And' gainst the tide that sullen flows
 The foaming surges angry curl :

Blest Virgin, hear the Vesper prayer
 The voyager lifts to Thee,
 When tempests rise and lightnings glare,
 Mary, Star of the Sea.

Soon we shall pass the sheltered port,
 The harbor bar and outer light,
 Then, wide abroad the ocean brought,
 Sail on in gloom through rayless night :
 Blest Virgin, hear the Vesper prayer
 The voyager lifts to Thee,
 The goal awaits us, bring us there,
 Mary, Star of the Sea.

We need not fear to launch away,
 And breast, the solemn, untried deep,
 Our barque will surely find the way,
 And true the course mid darkness keep :
 Blest Virgin, Thou wilt hear the prayer
 The voyager lifts to Thee
 And make the night God's morning fair,
 Mary, Star of the Sea.

THE love of the Blessed Sacrament is the grand and royal devotion of faith ; it is faith multiplied, faith intensified, faith glorified, and yet remaining faith still, while it is glory also. — *Faber.*

THE Blessed Eucharist, which strengthens faith, is also the source and the gage of hope. Far above all earthly blessings does it appease man's natural thirst for happiness, both of soul and body, for time and for eternity. With the superabundance of Celestial gifts, this Great Sacrament bestows upon the soul a peace which the world cannot give. It upholds it in the struggle, is its support in adversity, the safeguard of its salvation, and the viaticum of its passage from this land of exile to the heavenly country. To the body, even after death, the Blessed Eucharist, a germ of immortality, ensures resurrection. ' He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life ; and I will raise him up in the last day.'



The Holy Eucharist AND THE BLESSED VIRGIN

By Father Eymard.



It does not follow because it is our special office to honor the Eucharist that we should lessen our devotion to the Blessed Virgin. Far from it. He would be truly displeasing to Jesus, who should say : ' The Eucharist is enough for me ; I do not need Mary. ' Where do we find Jesus upon earth ? Is it not in the arms of Mary ? Is it not she who has given us the Blessed Eucharist ? It was her acquiescence in the Incarnation of the Son of God — the Divine Word — that began the great mystery of reparation to God and of the union with us that Jesus accomplished during His mortal life, and that He continues in the Eucharist. The more we love the Eucharist, the more we shall love Mary. We love what our friend loves, and where is creature so loved by God, mother so tenderly loved by son, as Mary was by Jesus ? If we owe reverence to Jesus, we owe it to Mary also. If we adore Him, we must honor her, and to correspond to, as well as to enter fully into, the graces of our vocation, we owe to Mary a special devotion as to Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament. When we honor Our Lord on the cross, we pray to Our Lady of Sorrows ; in the life at Nazareth, it is Our Lady of the Hidden Life who is our model. What was the occupation of Mary in the Cenaculum ? She was in almost constant adoration. She was the model and queen and mother of all adorers ; she was, in a word, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament. Jesus left

her, so to say, fifteen years or more on earth after His ascension in order that we might learn from her how to adore and serve Him perfectly. Oh, how beautiful must have been those years spent in adoration !

At Bethlehem, Mary was first to adore her divine Son lying in the manger. After her came St. Joseph and the shepherds and kings, but it was Mary who first laid this train of fire, the fire of divine love that should encircle the earth. She continued to adore Him in His hidden life, in His apostolic life, and in His suffering life, on Calvary. Study the character of Mary's adoration. She adores Him in all the states of His life, and not in a sterile and monotonous adoration. She adores Him poor at Bethlehem, toiling at Nazareth, and later, teaching and converting sinners. She has adored Him upon Calvary and suffered with Him. Her love follows all the sentiments of Our Lord, which were known and divined by her, and into which her sympathetic love made her enter in entire conformity.

To you, also, adorers of the Blessed Sacrament, I say, adore always, but vary your adoration as Mary varied hers. Enter into and revive all these mysteries in the Eucharist. Without this, you will fall into routine, and if your adoration is not regulated and varied by some new thought or motive, you will become weary and stupid in your prayers.

It was thus Mary recalled, on the anniversaries of these mysteries that had been accomplished before her eyes, their circumstances, their lessons, and their graces. She reminded Jesus by them of His great love for us. We do not always speak to a friend of the present, we recall pleasing souvenirs of the past and we contemplate the future. The Eucharist is the compendium of all these mysteries, and renews their graces and their love.

Mary had such a love for the Blessed Sacrament that she could scarcely bear to separate herself from it ; she lived in the Blessed Sacrament and passed days and nights before the altar. She must certainly have lent herself to the needs of the apostles and the faithful who sought her aid, but her love for her hidden God shone out upon her countenance and communicated this ardor to those, who approached her.



The Virgin and the Viaticum.

IN the first ages of the Church kings and queens considered it an honor to accompany the Blessed Sacrament, whether carried privately as Viaticum, or publicly in solemn procession; and in order to incite christians to follow their noble exemple, we will relate a wonderful instance in which the Queen of Angels, came down from heaven to accompany the Blessed Eucharist. We select, from among the most admirable prodigies of this nature, one which happened to Blessed Oderic of Port-Mahon, of the seraphic order of St. Francis.

A young girl lay dying, to her great regret deprived of the consolation of receiving Holy Viaticum; though poor in the world's goods, she was very rich in virtue; and noted for a special tender loving devotion to our Blessed Lady; a devotion which won for her, a wonderful grace, in her hour of need.

This good mother seeing the sorrow of her devoted child, came down from heaven accompanied by a number of Blessed spirits and Virgins, and appeared to Blessed Oderic, who was travelling alone in a forest, saying to him: "Near here a faithful child of mine is dying, she ardently desires to receive the Blessed Sacrament, the priest is absent, I wish you to replace him; I will guide you myself, first to the church, where you will take the Blessed Sacrament, then, to the sick girl's home, as I wish to be present at her last communion."

The priest astonished at the apparition and still more so at the given command acknowledged himself unworthy of such an honor, if one the one hand he rejoiced to strengthen and fortify a soul, a client of our Blessed Lady on her last journey; on the other he confessed his unworthiness to be guided by the Queen of angels, and

the heavenly spirits, nevertheless he obeyed with truest humility,

He followed in the footsteps of Our Lady, who advanced as if clothed in ravishing glory, but with an expression of sweetest majesty. On the way our Blessed



Lady spoke familiarly with the priest, she told him of the admirable virtues of the dying girl, of the perfection with which for a number of years, she had served her Divine Son ; she entertained him with numerous instances of her devotion to the mother of Jesus, and the thousand

inventions of her piety to show that mother love and honor — and lastly she told him the young girl's soul was like a spotless lily in God's sight, she having always preserved her baptismal innocence. Having reached the Church, the priest took the Sacred Host, and went to the home of the dying girl.

Imagine, if you can, dear reader, the sentiments of the priest, as he carried the Sacred Host, escorted by the Blessed Virgin and the celestial inhabitants; but what human language can describe the emotions, the hosannas of the heart of Mary as she accompanied her Divine Son, and the worship of love and veneration offered to the Sacred Host by the guard of angels.

When the wonderful procession entered the home of the sick girl, and her eyes rested on our Blessed Lady and those glorious spirits accompanying the Blessed Sacrament in order to visit her, to console her, and to strengthen her, — her humility was unbounded, "Lord, I am not worthy;" but it was almost surpassed by her gratitude, her joyous thanksgiving for such a singular favor, and sweet, unspeakably sweet, was the consolation she felt, in receiving the Bread of Life from the hands of a saint, and in presence of the heavenly attendants.

What is most remarkable in this wonderful fact, is not simply that the Queen of heaven came down to earth to offer her homages to the Blessed Sacrament, she had granted the same favor to St. André Corsini while he was celebrating mass, neither was it, that by a miracle, she obtained the grace of Holy Viaticum for her devoted child, Blessed Dorothy of Prussia, had been similarly favored when she was dying; but without precedent was the fact that the Blessed Virgin walked a long distance, first to the Church, and then to the sick girl's home. She could have sent an angel as guide, or taken any other means to indicate where the sick girl lived, but no, she wished to show us by coming herself how much she loves and favors those who love and honor her.

Happy the soul that is faithful to Jesus, devoted to Mary. Blessed those who have the happiness of accompanying the Blessed Sacrament, whether carried solemnly in procession, or quietly in Viaticum. "It is a glorious privilege to follow the Lord."



Why our Lord is given to us veiled in the Holy Sacrament

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS.

BECAUSE the sense of man is at a loss in this mystery, and wonders when it seems to be something else, there is a fourfold reason for this veiling of our Lord : the unworthiness of the wicked ; the faith of the good ; moral instruction ; our weakness.

Our Lord must thus be veiled because of the unworthiness of the wicked ; as the sun, or indeed any light, must be veiled from a weak eye. In this the mercy of our Saviour deals most gently with them ; for if the wicked could see Him unveiled, and so received by the faithful, they would be scandalized by the very sight, and would perish wretchedly by a threefold destruction, namely : by horror in the heart ; by detraction in the lips ; by spiritual death in the soul.

When our Lord told the disciples of this mystery, many of them went back and walked no more with Him, because they turned away from the words that He spoke about His Flesh. St. Ambrose says, ' Perhaps you may say, How is it true blood ? for you do not see the likeness of flesh. Listen to the words of Christ. When they heard that He would give them His Flesh to eat they went back. Only Peter said, To whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life. Lest, therefore, more might be scandalized, and lest any one should shrink back from this food, and that, on the other hand, the glory of the Redeemer may be more seen, you receive this Sacrament

in a similitude, but you gain the glory and virtue of His true nature.

When the Jews murmured against Him and strove among themselves, their sin was detraction. For this also it is right that He should be veiled.

Once God smote many for looking on the ark ; but that ark signifies the Body of Christ. This Body must be veiled from the wicked, lest they should die spiritually for ever if they were to see it. In many works of God you should not be curious ; for it is not needful for you that your eyes should look on things that are hidden.

He is also veiled because of the faith of the good. This reason may be divided into three, which require Him to be thus veiled : the reality of faith ; the healing of unbelief ; the merit of faith.

The nature of faith requires that the Body of Christ should be hidden when it is given to us. Faith has to do with things that are not seen, and, as St. Augustin says, ' Faith is to believe what you do not see, or to trust words about a hidden thing which truly exists, though you cannot see it with your eyes. About the things that we see have knowledge, and not faith.'

The healing of unbelief requires this veiling of our Lord, in order that a fitting manner of satisfaction may answer the guilt of unbelief. The unbelief of our first parents began from listening to the words of the devil, when he was persuading them to take food that had in it veiled death. Then their senses took a false delight in his words. So it is fitting that the faith of those to whom salvation is offered should begin from the words of the Redeemer, leading them to take food that has in it veiled life. It is also fitting that only by the hearing, from among our senses, we should know truly what that food is. Thus faith comes from hearing, and our hearing by the words of Christ. If you were to say of the Blessed Sacrament, ' This is the substance of bread,' or, ' This is the substance of wine,' nothing could be more untrue ; but if you listen to the words of Jesus, ' This is My Blood,' nothing can be truer : you are listening to God, who cannot lie. Thus the faithful soul is not deceived. The hands are the hands of Esau ; we touch the accidents of bread and wine : but the voice is the voice of the true

Jacob, the prince of the Israel of God.

The veiling of the Incarnate Word is necessary for the merit of faith. St. Gregory says, ' Faith has no merit if human reason give us a convincing proof. Our Lord willed to give us His Body veiled, because it is great merit to trust His words rather than our own senses. They who have not seen, and yet have believed, are blessed.'

In this merit of faith there is a threefold fruit : the fulness of spiritual good ; abundance of earthly good ; overflowing of eternal good. The dew of Heaven in the blessing that Isaac gave Jacob is the grace of God ; the fatness of the earth is our daily bread, and all that God chooses to give us ; the abundance of corn and wine is joy in God's presence for evermore.

Jesus, Our True Friend.

There's naught on earth to rest on,
 All things are changing here :
 The smiles of joy we gaze on,
 The friend we count most dear.

One friend alone is changeless.
 The One too oft forgot,
 Whose love hath stood for ages ;
 Our Jesus changeth not.

E'en friendship's smiles avail not.
 To cheer us here below,
 For smiles are too deceitful,
 They quickly ebb and flow.

One smile alone can gladden
 Whate'er the pilgrim's lot ;
 It is the smile of Jesus.
 For Jesus changeth not.

When we partake of the body and blood of the Lord, by eating His bread and drinking His chalice, we are taught to die to the world, to have our life hidden in Christ with God, and to crucify our flesh with its vices and concupiscences.

ST. FULGENTIUS.



The Child and the Blessed Sacrament

"If bells were silent," says Chateaubriand, "it is the voice of an angel or of a child that should summon the faithful to religious worship," which beautiful idea we find carried out in the case of the Blessed Sacrament during the Franco-Prussian War. The inhabitants of — hearing of the approach of a body of soldiers, and fearing for their church, gathered round it to defend it as best they could. The priest was absent, and no one daring to remove the Blessed Sacrament, a little child was brought to perform this sacred duty, the circumstances of which the following lines will show.

Thank God for all the good we know
 Of sweet and generous deeds,
 That, like celestial blossoms, grow
 Among our earthly weeds.
 Thank God for every tender thought
 That faith and fervor feeds.

The sound of strife, like funeral knell,
 Was heard anear and far ;
 Nor pity's voice, nor prayers could quell
 The demon of the war ;
 Rage, terror, fury, urging on,
 The devastating car.

And none with calm, determined air,
 At duty's holiest call,
 The faithful hearts assembled are,
 One impulse quickening all,
 To guard the hallow'd House of Prayer,
 Till, man by man, they'd fall.

Fear-bound, they pause ! Is courage spent ?
 Ah ! whence that sore dismay ?
 'Tis for the Blessed Sacrament,
 Who'll bear It safe away ?
 The Priest on sacred duty is,
 'Mid battle's dread array !

Comes inspiration, swift as thought,
To meet the anxious hour :
And lo ! a little child is brought,
Fair as an Eden flower ;
Into the mystic maze she's caught,
As 'twere with priestly power :

The clean of heart, the free from sin,
May such dread task assume !
The angels fold their pinions in,
To give her white hand room
Her baby fingers, while they search,
The tabernacle's gloom.

The Pyx beams light and gladness up
Into her wond'ring eyes !
As gold gleams in a lily's cup,
Within her hand it lies ;
No tenderer vision could enhance
The joys of Paradise.

A hush comes o'er the crowd, a hush,
How still the shadows seem !
They heed no more the onset's rush,
Nor the war fire's lurid gleam ;
They heed not these, but move along,
And move as if in dream.

The peril's past, the danger braved,
Faith strengthened, fervor warm'd,
The Blessed Sacrament is saved,
Their church, their homes, unharm'd.
The fearful foe is turned aside,
By unseen power disarmed.

When all that earthly power hath lent,
Into oblivion's roll'd,
When fame's fleet day is all but spent,
Its star burn'd dead and cold,
Of the Child and the Blessed Sacrament,
Will the tender tale be told.



For Thee

By M. B. C.

THE Heart of Jesus waits for thee :
For thee His loving choice.
And, while the Angels sweetest sing,
He longs to hear thy voice.

For love of thee on Calv'ry's Cross
He suffered, bled and died.
Ah! canst thou, then, refuse His wish?
He calls thee to His side!

Within the lonely church He dwells,
A prisoner for thy sake.
How seldom has He prayed—" Oh, give !"
How often cried—" Oh, take !"

He fain would ease thy suffering heart,
He fain would grant thee peace.
Oh, tell thy anguish out to Him,
And he will bid it cease.

Kind hearts are more than coronets.
And simple faith than Norman blood.—*Tennyson.*

Money and time are the heaviest burdens of life, and the unhappiest of all mortals are those who have more of either than they know how to use.—*Johnson.*

" O to pray believingly! it does away with the necessity of faith, for at once we touch God, we feel Him, we lay hold of Him, His arm is wound round us with a pressure which, when we have once felt it, we can never mistake for anything else.—*Faber.*"

The more humble we are the more kindly we shall talk, the more kindly we talk the more humble we shall grow.—*Faber.*

“ Behold the Mother ! ”

BY EDMUND OF THE HEART OF MARY, PASSIONIST.

BEHOLD thy Mother !” Words He might have said
 At Bethlehem, from the Crib; for She was then
 New Eve, and Mother of our Life: or when—
 He rose, the deathless first-fruits of the dead;
 Or forth to Bethany His lov'd ones led.
 To watch the heavens receive Him out of ken.
 But no: He chose this hour, and caused the pen
 Of him who heard to write what we have read.
 Yes, dearest Lord! Our Mother was to be
 By Thy gift doubly ours. And Thou didst wait
 Till She had shared Thy Passion — seen Thee prove
 Thy love for us, and proved Her own for Thee,
 To last excess: then solemnly instate
 The Queen of Mercy in Her realm of love.

“ The practice of kind thoughts is our main help to that complete government of the tongue which we all so much covet and without which the apostle says that all our religion is vain ”—*Faber*.

The gem cannot be polished without friction, nor the man perfected without trials.

Sunshine broken in the rill,
 Though turned astray is sunshine still. — *Moore*.

My burden every day is new.
 But every day my God is true. — *Anton Ulrich*.

O bearer of hope unto land and sea.
 Sunbeam! what gift hath the world like thee.
 —*Mrs. Hemans*.

The mathematician Euclid once had a bitter quarrel with his brother, who went to him and said: “ I am so angry with you that I shall die if I cannot be revenged.”—“ And I,” answered Euclid, “ am so sorrowful to hear you say that, that I believe I shall die if you will not forgive me.” So the brothers were once more reconciled

“ Happiness is a great power of holiness. Thus, kind words, by their power of producing happiness, have also a power of producing holiness, and so of **winning** men to God.”— *Faber*.



SUBJECT OF ADORATION

Mary in the Temple, Mother and Model
of Adorers



I. — Adoration

AFTER our Lord's Ascension into heaven the Blessed Virgin lived on earth for many years, twenty-four of which she passed in the Temple where Jesus had instituted the Blessed Eucharist, and consecrated His first tabernacle. Her time was occupied in honoring her Divine Son in His Eucharistic life, her days and the greater part of her nights in prayer at the foot of the tabernacle where abode her Jesus, her Son, and her God.

She worshipped, her hidden God, her annihilated Son, with most submissive faith, love penetrated the veil and lead her to the Feet of Jesus, which she venerated with most profound respect; His holy and sacred Hands which had consecrated and carried the Bread of Life, the sacred Lips which had uttered those adorable words "This is my Body." "This is my Blood." She adored His Heart so filled with love whence issued the Blessed Eucharist. Our Blessed Lady wished to abase herself before His annihilated majesty, in order to render Him due honor and worship. Mary's adoration was interior, intense, profound, the gift of herself, she gave herself to the loving service of the Eucharistic God, unreservedly, unconditionally; she neither lived for nor thought of self, her life's attraction, her first, her last, and only object of her love was the Blessed Eucharist, a continual flow of grace

and love was thus established between the heart of Jesus in the Sacred Host, and His Mother in adoration, two flames merging into one, God being worthily worshipped by his creature.

Dear Mother, with you we kneel to adore Jesus, with your profound respect, your fervor, your interior and exterior recollection : we adore your Son Jesus under the Eucharistic veil which hides His Sacred humanity : we adore with you as if we saw and heard, because faith sees and hears and touches with more certitude than sense. " Hail O Body born of the Virgin Mary, and present for us in the Blessed Eucharist.

II. — Thanksgiving

To adoration of humble lively faith, to adoration of annihilation, Mary joined adoration of thanksgiving. After bowing down before the grandeur and majesty of Jesus hidden in the Eucharist, she raised her eyes and gazed on that " Thabor of Love," to contemplate its beauty and enjoy its infinite sweetness. Mary offered thanksgiving for His love in the gift of the Eucharist thanksgiving for this sovereign act of His infinite goodness. Her thanksgiving was perfect as was her realization of the gift.

How good Thou art, O my Son, she exclaimed, how could'st Thou love man to such an extent, giving him more than he can receive, loving him more than he can comprehend, inventing what his heart can never fully understand. For love of him Thou has't exhausted all Thy power and the treasures of Thy heart.

O Jesus, with our Blessed Lady, we offer thanksgiving to the powers of Thy Soul, to the members of Thy Body co-operating in the institution of the Eucharist. We offer thanksgiving with Thy Blessed Mother's heart and sentiments.

With what happiness and complacency Jesus must have received those homages of His Blessed Mother, the first offered to Him in His Sacrament of love.

Jesus would have instituted the Blessed Eucharist for His Mother alone, as her adoration, her thanksgiving were more precious in His sight, than the united homages of the angels and saints.

Jesus with Thy blessed Mother, we offer Thee thanksgiving, for all the love Thou dost shower on us in the Blessed Eucharist, united with hers our thanksgiving will

be meritorious and pleasing to Thee. "*Magnificat anima mea Dominum.*" Lord, my soul doth magnify Thee, for the gift surpassing all others, the gift of Thy love in the Blessed Eucharist.

III. - Reparation

Mary adored her Divine Son as a victim, perpetually immolated, on our altars, pleading for grace and mercy for all sinners through the merits of His mystic death.



Mary adored her Divine Son on this Calvary, where His love crucified Him anew, she offered Him to God for the salvation of sinners, His children: the sight of Jesus on the cross, with His bleeding wounds, renewed the martyrdom of her compassion. She contemplated her Son Jesus crucified, shedding His Blood in the midst of anguish sorrow and insults, abandoned by men, and by His Father, and dying in the sublime act of His love.

Mary adored her Son present on the altar by the words of consecration, and shed abundant tears of reparation, for sinners who were indifferent to this awful mystery of redemption, thereby rendering it unpropitious for themselves: tears of reparation for those who offended, who despised the Sacred Victim offered before their eyes and for their salvation.

Mary would have suffered a thousand deaths in reparation for those outrages, especially as those who offended, were her children, Jesus legacy to her when dying on the cross: poor mother, is not one Calvary enough! Why daily renew your sorrows! Why pierce your heart over and over again! Instead of spurning and rejecting the sinner, like the kindest of mothers, Mary assumes the burden of their crimes, expiates them by her sufferings, offering herself as a victim at the foot of the altar to obtain pardon and mercy for her guilty children

Jesus we kneel at Thy feet with our Blessed Lady to console Thee for the abandonment the indifference of man, we unite our unworthy reparation to the generosity of hers, for her sake, hearken to us, we beseech Thee. Mary, my mother, and mother of all adorers console Jesus for us, offer Him for us your heart-felt reparation, and all the tears you shed for the salvation of the world.

Practice. Assist at Mass in union with our Blessed Lady in reparation for those who neglect that obligation. Recite the *Stabat Mater*.



IV. — Prayer

Mary's life in the temple was a continual penance and prayer at the foot of the Tabernacle. In her zeal she embraced the wants of the faithful of all times and places, who should inherit and serve the Blessed Sacrament. She knew it was the Eternal Father's wish that the Blessed Eucharist should be known, loved and served by all, that the desire of the Heart of Jesus was to communicate to man, His gifts and graces through His sacrament of love : that the mission of the Holy Ghost was to extend and perfect in all hearts, the reign of our Lord Jesus-Christ, that the Church was only established to give Jesus to the world ; hence, all her desires, wishes and prayers were to make Him known in His sacrament of love, to devote herself, to sacrifice herself in compensation for our coldness and unresponsiveness.

Adorers share the Blessed Virgin's mission of prayer and loving sacrifice it is the most sublime of all missions, it is also the most holy, because in it, is contained the exercise of all others. It is the most necessary, for today, as of old the Church requires more devout souls than preachers, more mortified than eloquent men. Today more than ever people are required, who by their own immolation shall disarm God's anger irritated by the ever increasing crimes of the world. Souls are needed who by the fervor of their prayers, will reopen the treasures of grace, closed by the general indifference of man. True adorers are needed, that is to say, men full of zeal and of spirit of sacrifice. When they throng around their Divine Master, God will be praised and glorified, Jesus will be loved and served, and society will be regenerated, won over to Jesus-Christ, by the apostleship of Eucharistic prayer.

Practice. Pray for First Communicants, for those who catechize them.

Aspiration. O Jesus, through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, we beg of Thee, Thy Eucharistic reign.





The Sweetness of our Blessed Lady

THE tender care with which our Blessed Mother guards her devout clients is aptly illustrated by the two following legends taken from an old volume.

I. — How our Lady saved her servant's life

In that part of France which looks towards the west there is a tongue of earth running out into the ocean, and this tongue of earth with the surrounding country is known as Brittany. It is a good country, and the people who inhabit it are good.

But just here, where land and water separate, there are many rocks, towering on high and broken into fantastic forms, some resembling gigantic needles, others like enormous bones, and others again like the open blades of a huge scissors. Thousands of these rocks show themselves above the water, while other thousands lie hidden, treacherously, beneath the surface.

The sea is very deep at this place, and when a gale comes up, woe to the unfortunate vessel that is found on this coast, for once tossed on the cruel rocks by wind and wave, her fate is sealed.

Many a good ship and her cargo had been lost there, and many a precious life perished, when a pious man, known far and near as "Roger the good" looked about for means to prevent further disaster.

At last he found them. There on a high embankment where the danger was greatest, on account of the sharp pointed, rocks the sandy bar, the hidden reef, he erected a little church or chapel, which he dedicated to Our Lady, who is so justly called "Star of the Sea." "Besides" said Roger to himself "I will constitute myself the guardian

of this chapel, and build near by a little hut wherein I may live for the remainder of my days. Then when the tempests are let loose and danger threatens on the sea, I shall be on watch, and should I see a vessel in peril, I will clang the great bell in the chapel tower, and so call help to the poor sailors ; and save them from death."

When the chapel was finished and gathering clouds a foretold storm or when wind and water raged, threatening vessels to destruction, the good Roger, clad in a hermits robe, which he always wore, mounted to the chapel tower, and tolled the bell. Then would the fishermen, pilots, and other brave men hasten to the aid of those in peril. And many were there who were saved, and many were the costly gifts they offered at this coast side shrine.

One day, when the air was mild and balmy, and the sea seemed placid as the waters of a lake, the good Roger left his hermitage to cull some flowers for Our Lady's altar. Scarcely had he left the chapel, when three ruffians sprang upon him. " If you would not die at once " they cried, as they seized him, deliver up to us without delay the treasures of the chapel, with all the gold and silver it contains. " In no way frightened, the good Roger answered courageously, " my good men and friends, that which you ask I cannot do, for the treasures of the chapel belong not to me but to God and our Blessed Lady, to whom the donors gave them, and it were better to die than to prove false to my trust. But again the rascals said : " Open the treasure-house at once if you would not die like a dog." At this lifting up his voice Roger cried out : Help thy servant, in his need, O blessed mother of God, and save thy belongings. Not heeding his cry, the miscreants seized the holy man, and dragging him towards the chapel, they drew their knives and threatened him with instant death if he did not comply with their demands.

Then happened a stupendous miracle. Suddenly, and without being touched by human hands, the chapel bell clanged loudly. Clearly, but with a sad and wailing tone, its notes were borne upon the still air.

The neighboring people, startled at the unwonted sound knowing no vessel could be in danger on such a day, and seized with a feeling of impending danger went

in all haste to the chapel, and when they reached the door found the good Roger in the hands of his would be murderers. To rescue him was but the work of a moment. The punishment of his assailants soon followed.

Thus was the good Roger, who for love of many, had saved so many of his fellows, saved through the intercession of that Blessed Virgin whose faithful servant he had proved himself, and so has the chapel bell rung this time not to bring aid to others, but for his own succor and deliverance.

II. -- How a sick man was comforted by our Lady

There was once a poor peasant who lived in a little mud cabin on the slope of a mountain, beside a forest of beautiful beech trees and stately firs. In the midst of this forest was a chapel dedicated to the assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The peasant was a pious man, a faithful servant of God, and a devoted child of Mary. His family, two sons and daughters, were equally pious, especially little John. He was a lovely child, of an amiable joyous disposition, with eyes of blue and hair of golden hue. Every morning this little fellow was accustomed to visit our Lady in the forest chapel, and even when he has late in rising he always found time for this devotion, and for his morning salutation : " I wish you a good day, blessed Mary, mother of God."

Just as he was when a child, so was he when he grew to man's estate, and he knew no relaxation, no rest, no zest for his day's work if he did not pay his visit to Our Lady to pray before her blessed image.

When John had grown old it happened one day that after a morning prayer of unusual fervor before the image in the chapel he was seized with a chill followed by profuse perspiration, so that the poor man was at one moment freezing and the next burning with fever. So John was very ill and took to bed, thinking he would die that day. He received the last Sacraments with great devotion and calmly awaited the end.

But God did not ordain it should come that morning ; John lived out the day and the following night. On the morning of the next day he was sad and disappointed because in his weak state he was unable to make his

usual visit to our Blessed Lady in her chapel and in his grief he almost forgot his sickness.

But Our Lady did not forget to console him in a marvellous way. Suddenly, while John was grieving and thinking of the Blessed virgin, his room was flooded with a golden roseate light resembling the dawn of day, and in the centre of this light appeared an incomparably beautiful lady ; her face and form were those of the image in the forest chapel, but were more beautiful than we could imagine human creature to be.

Going up to the sick man's bed she took him by the hand and said " Do not grieve John, my faithful servant. For inasmuch as thou hast been true to me during thy life, and daily visited my chapel, so, by the grace and love of God, do I wish to be faithful to thee, and visit thee and with maternal care attend thee at the hour of thy death. Saying this our gracious Lady touched the sick man's fevered brow with her saintly hand and instantly a delicious sense of refreshment pervaded his whole system, and though unable to speak, his soul was filled with a holy and unutterable Joy.

After this the ever pure sweet and gracious Virgin Mary kissed John on his forehead and disappeared. The sick man's face took on the look of one beatified and when shortly after, his friends went to his bedside they found him dead. He had passed away when the gracious mother of God kissed him on the forehead, and the belief is that his gracious mistress carried his soul to heaven.


Beautiful, touching, edifying as these stories or legends may be, dear reader, whatever pleasure you may have experienced in reading them, they will have availed nothing if they convey no lesson. Imitate then, in the one case the example of the good Roger : Be compassionate and merciful to your fellow man, especially to the poor and needy. Not through any vanity or love of praise, but solely for love of our Blessed Lady. Thus you will find peace in life and in death, for the Mother of God will repay your love for her tenfold, and will aid and protect you in time of trouble and of danger.

In the other case imitate the example of the man John. Lift your heart to the Blessed Virgin as soon as you

awake, and every day say with love and fidelity a short prayer in her honor. If nothing more than a hail Mary. Then will death come to you calmly and peacefully ; the Blessed Mother will wait by your bedside, and bearing your soul in her loving arms will carry it before God, and recommend it to His Mercy.



MIRACLE IN THE CHAPEL OF THE GRAY PENITENTS

T is well known that the godless sect of the Albigenses denied the Real Presence of the Redeemer in the Blessed Eucharist, and committed a thousand sacrilegious acts to show their contempt of the Most Holy Sacrament. Now after Louis VIII., King of France, had obtained a glorious victory over these heretics, he bethought himself to offer to the Saviour of the world public satisfaction in reparation of these sacrileges.

The 14th September 1226 was the day chosen to carry out this solemn act, in which he would cease to be king. The King bade adieu to his capital and his beloved family, whom he should never more behold ; and the city of Avignon, where he halted, saw with astonishment an affecting spectacle. Bishop Peter of Corbie bore the Most Holy Sacrament to a chapel which had been built in honour of the Holy Cross, and which stood outside the walls of the city of Avignon. In a garment of sackcloth, a rope round his loins, and with a taper in his hand, the King, accompanied by the Cardinal-Legate and his whole court, together with an innumerable company of people, awaited the arrival of the procession.

The Holy Sacrament was left in this chapel, and so long as this pious prince tarried at Avignon he brought daily to it some new token of fealty. So high and noble an example did not fail to be imitated, and the great con-

course of the people gave rise to a pious confraternity which is known by the name of the 'Gray Penitents,' whose members to this very day wear a gray penitent's dress.

The Most Holy Sacrament remained in the chapel of the Holy Cross, but, after the custom of the time, it was veiled. On the day when it was carried there in



triumph, the crowd which hastened to the adoration was so great that it was necessary that the Blessed Sacrament should be exposed all night. Zeal could go no further, and since the chapel was filled with worshippers, the Bishop thought good that the Blessed Sacrament should remain exposed day and night; a custom which was continued by his successors, and which received the approbation of the Holy See. Thus this chapel enjoyed the unexampled privilege of being chosen for the perpetual

adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. For two hundred years this pious custom continued in the chapel of the Gray Penitents. Then was it the good pleasure of God to make this His sanctuary yet more famous by renewing in it the miracle of the Jordan and of the Red Sea. Now the situation of Avignon is well known. Lying upon the Rhone, the district round this city is also watered by the Durance and by an arm of the Vaucluse. But this advantage has its dangers, and more than once the city has suffered from fearful inundations. In the year 1433, after heavy rains, the rivers overflowed their boundaries, and soon every quarter of the city was inundated. On the 29th November the water began to rise also in the chapel of the Gray Penitents, which was on the Sargue. The inundation during the course of the night became so considerable that the directors of the brethren, fearing that the water would rise to the stone niche where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed, resolved, in order to avoid this calamity, that as soon as the smallest danger became apparent the Blessed Sacrament should be carried away elsewhere. They then rowed in a boat to the chapel, opened it, and beheld with astonishment that the waters stood right and left four feet high against the walls, but, parting in the middle, an alley was left open leading up to the altar. After the two witnesses had remained long in prayer they hastened to carry information thereof to the other brethren. Let us hear how the record, from which the following is an extract, speaks of it :

‘ Great was the miracle in this chapel when the water entered it in the year 2433. Very strong, on the morning of Monday, the 29th November, began the waters to rise. They pressed into the chapel as high as the super-altar. Under the altar were placed all paper and parchment books, clothes, towels, and reliquaries, none of which were the least damp, although on the following day, which was a Tuesday, the water had not ceased to rise. On the next day, Wednesday, the waters began to abate, so that on Thursday at Prime, when many people came to the church, all the water had passed away. ’

The waters abated on the 1st of December ; in crowds the people streamed into the chapel, and every one was witness that books, papers, napkins, and all else which

lay under the altar, were not wet.

Such a veritable and palpable miracle gave rise to great zeal amongst the faithful and the brethren. As an everlasting memorial of this occurrence the brethren determined in future years to keep a special feast on the 30th November with great solemnity. All the members communicate on this day, taking off their shoes in the antechapel, and so advancing on their knees to the holy table. In the year 1793 this chapel shared the fate of other churches during the French Revolution — it was destroyed. But at the close of that disastrous period it was rebuilt by a noble family. Some time after the Archbishop of Avignon renewed the privilege which it had possessed of being a chapel of Perpetual Adoration — which privilege it retains to the present day.

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O Jesus ! King most wonderful !

Thou Conqueror renowned !

Thou sweetness most ineffable !

In whom all Joys are found !

When once Thou visitest the heart,

Then truth begins to shine ;

Then earthly vanities depart ;

Then kindles love divine.

O Jesus, Light of all below !

Thou Fount of life and fire !

Surpassing all the Joys we know,

All that we can desire !

May every heart confess Thy name,

And ever Thee adore ;

And seeking Thee, itself inflame

To seek Thee more and more.

Thee may our tongues forever bless ;

Thee may we love alone ;

And ever in our lives express

The image of Thine own.

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The manner most pleasing to God for keeping ourselves in His holy presence is to enter into the heart of Jesus, and confide to Him all care of ourselves.

BLESSED MARGARET MARY.



The Mother's Lesson

Rev. George Bamphfield.



THE Benediction was just over in the Church of Our Lady of Victories in Paris. The church was crowded — it was some fifty years ago — with men, but close to the door stood a young mother with her first-born son, her only-born as yet, in arms. She had been queen of that little treasure for now nearly three years, and how dear they were to each other it was clear to see. The little hand was stretched out for some holy water from that most sacred of sprinklers, a mother's hand, and then the Mother held up her child, so that he could see above the crowd towards the tabernacle. "Say good-night to Jesus, Michael," she said; and the little thing put its tiny hand to its lips and flung kiss after kiss towards its hidden Lord: "Good-night, Jesus; dear Jesus!" and then turning to the mother put its baby arms round her neck. He did not quite know, he seemed to say, why he loved the Friend in the Tabernacle, but he did love and loved much, and it was reason enough for him that his mother loved.

Surely those kisses flung up the church, though there is yet but the dawn of reason in the soul and on the face, were not the least lovely nor the least pleasing of the gifts that were being gathered into the open Heart within the Tabernacle.

The act struck me as, long years ago when I was as yet outside the Church of God. I stood and watched it, it was so full of faith, of the faith which saw the unseen Dweller in the Tabernacle, which looked into His Heart, with power to feel pleasure, like other hearts of men, at

a fellow man's "good-night," or a baby's innocent "ta-ta." The clothes of the boy were the common Sunday clothing of a mechanic's child, but for the soul, washed clean by baptism, the mother was weaving a dainty robe with more than human skill.

"Good-night! dear Lord." He is a boy now. Years have passed on and he has begun to learn that wrong can be done, even by hearts which think they love, and tonight he has been to his first confession, and he has gone back to his mother's side with a more serious look than the little dimpled cheeks mostly wear. They have stayed to Benediction, and before they pass through the door he is still not to old to turn and kiss the little hand towards the Tabernacle — "Good-night, dear Lord" — and then as he slides his hand into his mother's, "Mother, I'm so sorry for being naughty to you."

The mother's lesson is doing its work; the dainty robe she wove is still dainty; it was because Michael's soul was still so white, his eyes still so clear, that he could see spots at all. "Naughty!" The mother knew only a little saint whose lips were still fit to fling a kiss to God.

Kneeling a few years older now, in the early morning, and other boys about him, with his body robed to-day in such comeliest dress as her poverty and labor could provide, he is to receive for the first time within himself the Lord to whom he has so often kissed his hand, to whom he has so often said the "Good-night" of an adoring, loving brother. He has been preparing for months; he has known all his Christian Doctrine well; but it is not the priest nor the good Brother of the Christian Doctrine who has been his real teacher or his real preparer. They have been preparing him for months; his mother has been preparing him for years; it is that baby kiss flung up the church to a real living Person who shall receive the kiss; it is that "Good-night, dear Jesus," lisped as often as "Good-night, dear Mother;" it is that love of our Lord made part and parcel of his love for his mother; it is that near presence of our Lord, which has made the priest's and masters's teaching come so easy to him, as if they taught him only what he knew before. He had learned it at his mother's breast; he had lived the Truth and loved it before he knew how to think it, or put it

into words : for others may teach, a mother only can teach without teaching, give knowledge, as she gives life, the child not knowing. It had been to him, this Presence of our Lord, like the rising and setting of the sun, part of the every-day truth that had been about him always.

And now, on the day of his Communion, the mother's lesson is still doing its work. With full and entire surrender of self the youth flings his soul into the open wound of the Heart, as of old he flung his baby kisses up the church. He does not dream as yet that his heart could be given elsewhere, and warm with a new warmth was the "good-night, dear Lord," which he whispered as he bowed his forehead to the floor before he left the church on that happy night after his first Communion.

"Good-night, dear Lord, — perhaps the last," added the young soldier to himself, as he went slowly down the church of a small town on the coast of Africa after his confession. It was the evening before, all expected, his first battle. The mother's lesson still lived ; the soldier's heart was still true. As often as his soldier life would let him he paid an evening visit to his Lord, and still if the words were not spoken aloud, nor the kiss flung from the lips, the kiss was given, and the "Good-night," with as loyal a love as ever. "What am I to do, mother," he had asked, "on board of the ship, or under tent in the desert ? I cannot go and say Good-night."

"Turn your thoughts towards the Tabernacle at home," she answered, "and bid your Guardian Angel to pay the visit for you. Our Lord can see and hear from afar, and He will see your heart turn and hear your words in your breast. He looks for them every night. And I will wish Him good-night for you as well as for myself, and a mother has a right to speak for her boy."

"You have a right to speak for me if ever mother had," he answers as he kisses her with grateful love ; "and Saint Michael too, he will go for me. I am glad you called me Michael, Mother ; he's the Angel of the Mass, isn't he ?"

"Some good men have thought so, Michael."

And he loves the Tabernacle ; was it not he who cheered our Lord in His agony ? — so the Brother taught

us one day in church. "

" Yes ; and he was captain of the first army that fought for God, and as you must go to the wars, Michael, you could have no better friend to help you. " " Then my Guardian Angel and St Michael shall carry my " Good-night " home into our church every night, Mother, when you are saying yours.

A wounded soldier sending his " Good-nights " home by his Guardian Angel as he had promised ; and yet perhaps, could we have seen as the Angel saw who bore them, not quick winged and silver-winged, those " good-nights, " as of yore. What made them heavier burdens for the Angel to bear ?

He had done bravely ; he had fought his first fight with a dash, an utter contempt for life, a skill moreover and a coolness, rarely seen even in the ranks of France. All tongues rang with his praises — praises wholly without jealousy, but mixed with sorrow, for he had been left for dead upon the battle-field. He woke up among a heap of dead and gave himself up for lost, and sent home from that terrible death-bed a loving " Good-night, " which he thought indeed to be his last. And the church of our Lady of Victories came back to him, with his mother's lesson and the long-loved Tabernacle, the great happiness of childhood's days ; and his thoughts were very full of all that makes man's heart the grandest of gifts that can be given to God. Would it have been better if the search party that came out to look for others had not found him, and if he had died, still flinging pure kisses to the Tabernacle at home.

They bore him — so carefully, to the hospital, and they took care of him, and those noble Sisters of charity of course were there — where are they not ? — to nurse and watch and keep the flickering life from going out. And then, as he grew better, they praised him, and the praise entered into him, and the mother's lesson began to lose its power, and the " Good-nights " flew with weight upon their wings. The wounds of the first battle had passed into his soul.

An officer who had risen from the ranks in high command, of far and wide fame for courage and skill in leading, still in the prime of life, but dying in part from

exposure in peril, but in part also from carelessness and luxury of life. A gallant soldier, a skilful chieftain, and no more. Climbing upwards in the world — this is his one thought. By and by to be a marshal of France, who knows? Is then the mother forgotten and her lesson lost? Nay : she has said the " Good-night " for him always : and he ! — he has kept a heart not altogether hardened for her : he has thought of their poor home, and sent somewhat of his wealth to cheer them, and now and again, weary of pleasure, weary even of glory, he has wandered back in thought to the church of Victories in Paris, and said over again the " Good-night " of his childhood. Those kisses flung up the Church still live to plead for him, perchance ; perchance, too, the mother is still praying this moment with that strong prayer which is prayed after many sufferings borne, many good works done.

He is dying : the days left him are few, but he may still go about a little, carefully tended and watched by no unloving eyes. To day he is cheered by an old friend from Europe who talks of family scenes still dear, and carries back his mind to home. They are passing the cathedral in Algiers, and his friend would go in, and the officer cannot choose but go with him. A Cathedral in which there are many worshippers, of many nations and strangely varied dresses different by form of face and color of skin ; but all bowed in the one worship at the Benediction and singing the one tongue.

It was a scene to touch the heart, to awaken devotion. It is over and the crowd is leaving the church, but the sick officer stays on. He has gone up near to the altar, he is prostrate on the floor, his head is bowed to the ground. His friend is anxious ; the sick man must not be out too late, nor too long. Still the officer lies there. Is he dead ? No, not dead, but alive again. It is the hour at which in those old days he has flung his kisses up the church by his mother's side. She this moment is saying " Good night " for him in the Church of Victories. The mother's lesson has burst, seedlike, through the hard soil. Up to the Tabernacle once more are going the repentant kisses, to the Sacred Heart once more the loving " Good night." The long bad dream is past and he is awake again, and

and before he leaves the church the priest has promised to call the next morning and hear the confession delayed for years.

"Where am I, François? I thought I was home at Our Lady of Victories. Send for a priest, send quickly. I have not long to live." The thought of his babyhood and of his many "Good-nights" has been with him since he left the Cathedral, the memory of that First Communion and his whole offering of himself, the promise to his mother as he left her always to send home his "Good-night" to the Dweller in the Tabernacle. No: he must not wait till morning. Send for a priest; what have I been doing? — I have wasted my life on baubles.

And that night a true confession and a true communion, and for a few nights after the old "Good-night" of his childhood said with a hot heart of love, at the hour at which he used to kneel in Paris flinging his baby kisses up the church. A few days spent in patient suffering and in so leaving the riches that had come to him that the Dweller in the Tabernacle shall be honored, till the end of time, if so it may be, in Algiers, where he had strayed from the Tabernacle, and in Paris, where he had learned to love it. And then, after a few days, the last "Good-night," spoken when the lips could scarcely speak — the baby lesson lisped painfully again — and a last kiss flung to the dear church at home when the lips could speak no more.

And the mother has triumphed — when do good mothers not triumph? — and her lesson has outlived lesson of priest and teacher, and Our Lady of Victories has won still another victory, and the soul of the child, so early trained to love, has gone to offer repentant kisses which will not be refused to the very wounded Heart, no more in a Tabernacle, Itself.

For a mother's early lesson, strong with a mother's love, can hardly die.





AVE MARIA