

*The Blessed Bartholomew
teaching the novices devotion to the Blessed Sacrament*



*Tate Glessa Gartnolmeu
teaching the novices devotion to the Blessed Sacrament*

THE SENTINEL

of the

BLESSED SACRAMENT

Vol. XV.

FEBRUARY 1912

No. 2

The Golden Door



It is not praise, it is scarcely prayer,
I only think of It dwelling there,
The Heart that is never strange nor cold,
The Beauty new, yet ever old :
Till cares and troubles can vex no more,
And I rest at the little Golden Door.

He, so strong, and calm, and still,
I, so tossed by my wayward will,
So often sinking, so prone to fall,
He, watching, knowing, pitying all ;
Give me, O Lord of Thy Wisdom's store,
While I wait at the little Golden Door.

Breathe but a whisper, to make me know
The way Thou wouldst have my footsteps go ;
Shed but a beam of Thy cheering light,
For the path grows dim — it will soon be night ;
And then, Lord, call me ! Oh, then no more
To be hid by the little Golden Door.



The Feast of the Purification and Holy Communion

Before Communion.

Represent vividly to yourself this scene in the Temple, note with what grace enters into it the Holy Virgin, Phoenix of Purity, bringing with her two spotless doves, whilst to meet her a swan glides softly forth, which, both by the streams flowing from its eyes, and by its voice, sings sweetly of its approaching death; nor is there wanting even a widowed turtle-dove who no longer laments her solitude, but prophesies her consolation. Consider how Holy Simeon prepared himself on that day for receiving into his arms the Lord. It is not said that he was aged, but *just* and *fearing* the Lord, for in His holy service age is not computed by the number of years, but of merits; and *fearing*, for he who is to receive Him must fear Him. His arms trembled not so much from age as from the diffidence proceeding from his delicate and sensitive conscience. Oh, great disposition! First replenishing with the Divine Spirit his soul, ere he takes into his arms the Incarnate Word, he hearkened to the answer of the One Divine Person, and thus obtained the favours of the other.

Reflect, my soul, that to-day you are to receive the same Child Jesus, no longer wrapped in swaddling clothes, but covered with the sacramental accidents. Should you not then prepare yourself the whole of your life! for if the Holy Simeon in order merely to press Him once to his breast so exercises himself in virtues for



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many years, how can you with so little preparation place Him within your heart? Simeon, to embrace Him once, prepared himself during many years, and you, who receive Him so often, scarcely prepare your soul during one single day.

Simeon's life was swiftly passing, but his hopes were strengthened day by day, for Heaven fulfils its promise better than does the world. He came to the Temple at the instant when the Aurora dawned, and opening those eyes weary of weeping, he recognised the Divine Son enclosed in the appearances of its humanity. He was not satisfied with looking once only upon Him for Whom he had so longed ; he gazed long and earnestly on that tender Humanity, while he adored the Divinity. He saw a little child, and adored an Infinite God, venerating in an infant a few days old the Prince of Eternity.

Soul! understand that you are seeking to-day in the Temple the same Child-God. Consider whether the Holy spirit is guiding you, or only custom ; open wide the eyes of faith, and you will see a treasure of wonders : in a small Host an immense God, an infinite substance covered with the accidents ; in a morsel the whole of Heaven ; and in daily bread an Eternal God—such will you receive,

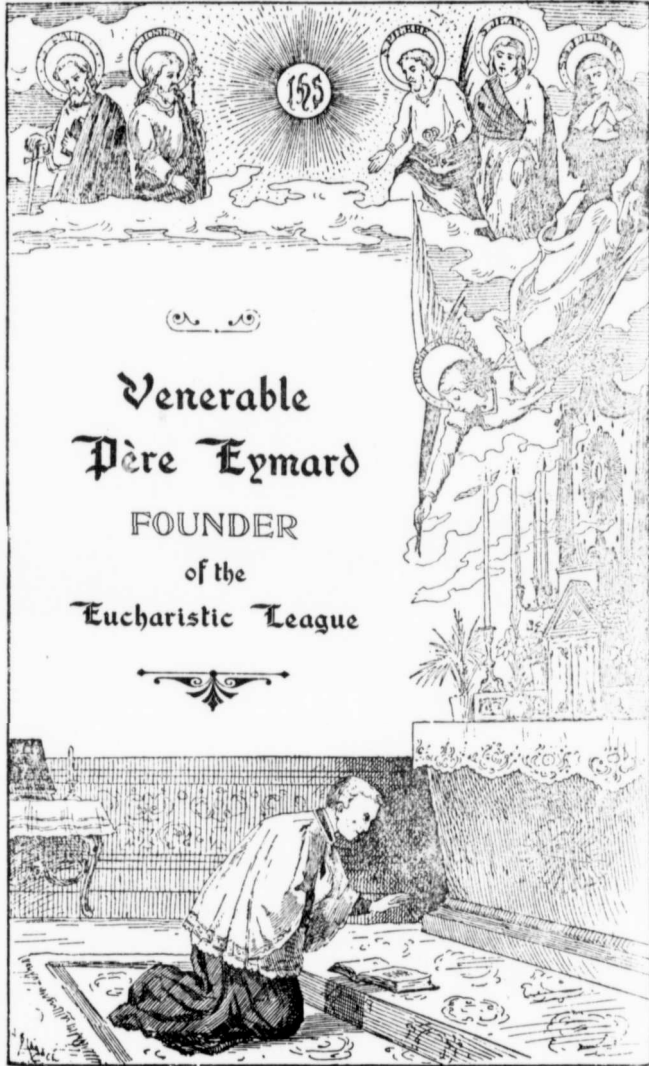
After Communion.

The holy old man, no longer satisfied with only gazing upon Him, is emboldened after being so favoured, and taking courage, changes fear into zeal, and that white swan with saintly purity expands its wings, soaring to approach nearer, and from being content with looking upon Him proceeds to embrace Him. He asks of the Virgin to be permitted to hold for a while Him whom he had longed to have for eternity, and she liberally grants the favour—she who, united to God, ever pleads for each one—and so into his arms he takes Him who was to encircle the whole of Heaven *accepit eum in ulnas suas*. In that instant the swan was changed into a seraph, alternating tears with fiery darts of love. How closely

Simeon must have embraced Him! what tender expressions he must have used! and deeming that nothing else was left for him to look upon, he contemplates Him with his eyes closed, and having nothing more to desire, he asks permission to die, for to separate him from that embrace was to part him from life.


Soul! behold here your happiness, and learn how to obtain it. You have the same Christ of the Lord, not only in your arms, but within your bosom. Nor are you permitted to adore Him only and to kiss Him, as was granted to Simeon, but actually to receive, eat and be nourished by Him. This being your bliss, how great should be your consolation? This is the favour of your God, how great then is your love? What more can you desire in this life, after having attained to receiving Him in Holy Communion? Entreat that you may die to this world and live to God not in the flesh but in the spirit, and on this day more than ever let your conversation be in heaven.

Simeon, deeply conscious of the Divine favours, but with little life left to spend in gratitude, and failing strength to render due thanks, chooses rather to yield up his life. He could not contain himself from loudly publishing the Divine mercies, sweetly singing them like a divine swan, and bidding adieu to every object which was less than God. Not content with remaining alone in his happiness, he holds it forth to every land, communicating it to all the people as the light of the eyes of all the world and the glory of the people Israel. Imitate him to-day in gratefulness, you who have communicated; and having exceeded Simeon in bliss—for once only was he allowed to hold the Child-God in his arms, whilst you are so often permitted to receive Him into your breast—be truly thankful. Break forth in new canticles, emulating this sweetest of sinners, who, in closing his eyes to all terrestrial blessings, opens his lips to sing the Divine glories. Shut your heart to the world, and open it wide for God alone, confessing Him in the council of the just and in the congregation of the upright ones.



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"Enlacer le Monde d'un réseau de Feu."



IT was the burning desire, the oftspoken purpose of the Venerable Père Eymard. This apostolic priest made the holocaust of his life to enwrap the world in a "network" of Eucharistic flame. It was surely a task as venturesome as it was glorious, and revealed a daring found only among the most high-souled of God's saints, a confidence akin to that which possessed the Lisieux apostle of Divine Love. But the breath of God blew upon the spark that was kindled, and of wood from Calvary there was plenteous abundance; so the fire grew to a conflagration, and the dream came true, not indeed in the days of toil, but, as is usual with the saints, when the dreamer had entered into the joy of his Lord.

The figure of the founder of the Eucharistic League is not a familiar one. We, most of us, have read the story of the curé d'Ars, Père Eymard's contemporary and friend. His extraordinary mortifications, and his dealings with the "*grappin*" made lasting impressions on the mind, especially if it be a youthful one. The growing interest in the Eucharistic Congresses has likewise familiarized many with the blind priest, Msgr. de Segur, whose apostolate on behalf of frequent Communion and of the Eucharistic Congress has won him an undying fame in the Church of God. A third apostle of the Blessed Sacrament, Msgr. de la Bouillerie, is also not unknown on this side of the Channel, thanks to his exquisitely beautiful writings on the Mystery of Faith. Msgr. de la Bouillerie was one of the three bishops appointed to decide on the Eucharistic vocation of our saint. Yet neither he, nor the gentle de Segur, nor the Blessed Jean Marie Vianney, whose devotion to the Hidden God was inexpressibly tender, has secured for himself the title of the "Priest of the Eucharist." It has been reserved for their more obscure, but equally zealous contemporary, Pierre Julien Eymard.

This Servant of God was born at La Mure d'Isère on February 4th., 1811. His predilection for the Blessed Sacrament betrayed itself from his earliest years. He was still an

infant when one day he was missed for the space of several hours and was discovered kneeling on a stool, which he had managed to drag close up to the altar. His hands were clasped, and his eyes riveted on the Tabernacle. To his mother's question as to his business there, he replied, "I am listening to Jesus." Another time the little fellow took off his shoes, put a cord around his neck, and candle in hand came up to the altar to make reparation to the Prisoner there. The memory of his First Communion used to bring tears to his eyes in later life. Pierre made that day a solemn promise to His Guest that he would be a priest, which promise he faithfully kept, though his father's opposition, a severe illness, and finally his father's death, made it no easy task.

He was ordained at the age of 23, having spent only three years in the theological seminary at Grenoble. Who shall tell the delights of his first Sacrifice? We know from his beloved sister that in his two first missions, Chatte and Monteynard, he prepared for two hours before offering Holy Mass, and his thanksgiving was scarcely any shorter. Five years later he entered the noviciate of the Marists. As a lad he had passed ten months in that of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, but sickness had compelled him to leave. His Heavenly Mother now summoned him again to her side, that she might make him ready for the apostolate as yet curtained from sight in the mists of the future. What his new superiors thought of him we may surmise from his appointment as Provincial six years afterwards. One day,—1851,—he had gone to Fourvières, Our Lady's shrine at Lyons, though not to the gorgeous Basilica that now looks down on the fair city by the Rhone. There he received a supernatural communication from her whom in after years he was to glorify under the title of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament. She made him understand her intense desire for the creation of an order of men who would devote themselves exclusively to the worship and the interests of the Eucharist. None such existed, and he must undertake the foundation. He consented to be her instrument. Five years, however, passed away, then Jesus asked of him the sacrifice of his Marist vocation. That, too, he laid on the altar of holocaust, vowing to found a society of adoration, even if he should have "to eat stones for bread and should die in a hospital."

At length, in 1856, the Congregation of the Fathers of the Blessed Sacrament began its career, in a parlour-chapel, where a few boards, calico-covered, formed the altar. There



*Chapel of the Fathers of the Blessed Sacrament,
Montreal, Canada.*

were not twelve apostles, but only two, by name, appropriately enough, Peter and John. Meanwhile another and better abode was being prepared, and on the Epiphany of 1857—a

memorable day in the history of the Congregation—Our Lord first took possession of His Royal Throne. But not for long; they had to leave their Bethlehem almost immediately, and a year elapsed before a new one was found. There they received the precious blessing of the saintly Pius IX. The work had now begun in earnest, and for ten years the "Priest of the Eucharist," amid trials and contradictions and interior crosses, fanned to flame the Eucharistic Fire.

A congregation for women, the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament, was successfully set on foot. Many hundreds of souls were brought back to grace through *l'Oeuvre de la Première Communion des Adultes*. The devotion to Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament was begun, the devotion which Pius X has authentically sealed by the indulgencing of the invocation: *Domina Nostra Sanctissimi Sacramenti, ora pro nobis!* Having opened a noviciate, he set up one by one his Cenacles, raised the Divine Prisoner on a throne, which he surmounted by a crown, and draped with a royal mantle of ermine, and made beautiful with costly flowers. Nothing was too good for the King. Worshippers flocked to these sanctuaries, and the zealous Père Eymard organised a Guard of Honour, that His Divine Majesty might be continually adored, and this Guard of Honour is our Eucharistic League. But a retrospect is necessary here.

The first Eucharistic Confraternity brings us back to Liège, with its memories of the Corpus Christi saints, Blessed Juliana and Blessed Eva. The former died in the cell of her sister Agnes, a hermitess who dwelt close by Namur. Her remains are not far removed from those of the modern saint of that town. This happened in 1258, sixteen years before the Eucharist's sweetest singer, the Saint of Aquino, had his "thirst slaked by Its unveiled vision." His magnificent office for the Feast of Corpus Christi has replaced that which the Prior John Cornillon wrote under the inspiration of the Blessed Juliana.

There is an obvious parallel between the task of the latter and the apostolate of the "Priest of the Eucharist." In the thirteenth century there was a notable omission in the cycle of festivals, an omission signalized to the humble Augustinian nun by the luminous disc with its dark portion. This omission

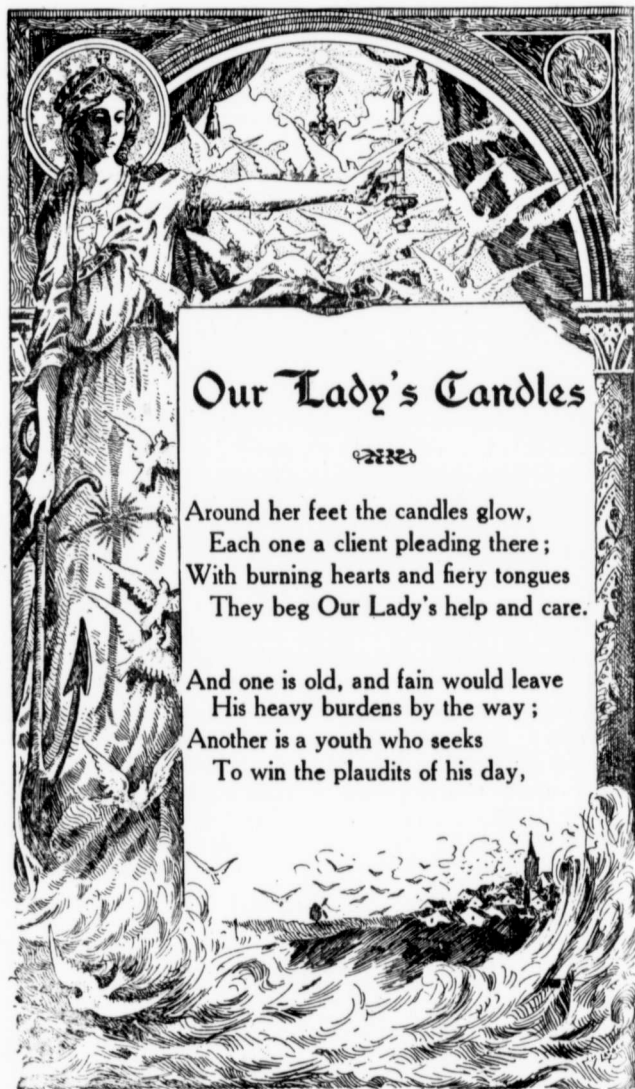
was made good by Bishop Robert of Liège, and later by Pope Urban IV., owing to the prayers and direct influence of Juliana. But the Church has another cycle which keeps green the memories of her Bridegroom and his Mother. Various Orders of men and women pay homage to one or the other of the mysteries of Jesus and Mary. Nevertheless, in the nineteenth century that cycle was as yet woefully incomplete, for the Eucharistic King was still without His priestly bodyguard; the Eucharistic Sun, round which all else revolves in the Church, and which irradiates all life and light and beauty, lacked Its chosen group of satellites. It was not enough that from the seventeenth century a branch of Dominicanesses had devoted themselves to the work of perpetual adoration. Where were the Levites of the Lord? So Mary spoke to her Marist child, and the gap was filled.

From Liège the scene shifts to Rome. In the very year in which Paul III. orally approved of the Company of St. Ignatius, the Roman Pontiff gave his approbation to the great Archconfraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, which, until recently, was the sole mother of all such confraternities. Revolution was in full riot in 1539. The Pope thought some Eucharistic sunshine would dissipate the Cimmerian darkness. It was laid down that the rigid canonical rules concerning confraternities were not to apply to this most glorious of them all. Similar associations could be anywhere instituted, and were, by the very fact of their institution, affiliated to the parent confraternity in *Santa Maria sopra Minerva*. The canonical law, which declared that each town might possess but one centre of any confraternity was abrogated in its favour, and a decree of the Congregation of Rites urged its establishment in every parish. It has many branches at this day, and several in the British Isles.

THOMAS N. TAYLOR.

(to be continued)





Our Lady's Candles



Around her feet the candles glow,
Each one a client pleading there ;
With burning hearts and fiery tongues
They beg Our Lady's help and care.

And one is old, and fain would leave
His heavy burdens by the way ;
Another is a youth who seeks
To win the plaudits of his day,



And one a maiden fair who finds
Two lovers pleading at the door ;
Beside her kneels a Magdalene,
Who vows that she will sin no more,

Another, is a holy nun ;
Two plead for orphan's daily bread
And one is for a soul unborn,
And one is for the blessed dead.

And so they burn the long hours through,
While o'er them bends Our Lady's face,
And who shall say she does not hear,
Or win from Christ, for each a grace ?

Mary Curtis Shepherd.





THE LIFE of JESUS

— in the —

BLESSED SACRAMENT.



Dalgairns



Jesus, God and man, is all in all to us. We are dead by nature, and if we are to live, His life must flow into us, and become ours. This is Christianity, and there is no other. We are now going to study the great means by which this is effected. Our Lord redeemed us on the Cross, but there still remained the application of this great Redemption to each individual soul, and this is done through the Sacraments, and, above all, through that one which is the Blessed Sacrament. The same Sacred Humanity, the beauty of which has so often ravished our hearts with love, is to be the source of our sanctification. As it was no ideal body which was torn on the Cross, and no phantom blood which was shed, so no figure of the Manhood of Christ can communicate His life to us. The same Body and Blood, animated by the living soul, and imbued with the living Godhead, must come to transfuse the great life-stream into the intimate being of every one of us. Union with the living Jesus, this is the great end of the Blessed Sacrament, and we are now going to study the life which Jesus lives here in order to unite Himself to every one of us.

The wonders of that great Sacrament are not exhausted by the study of the moment of transubstantiation itself. When the great act of consecration has been accomplished,

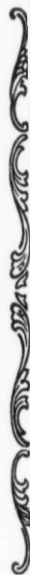
when the Sacred Humanity has taken the place of the substance of the bread and wine, we can still try to penetrate into the life and operations of Jesus beneath the veil. A thousand questions rise up as to how the powers of His being are affected by the inextension of His human frame. What are His thoughts and feelings while a willing captive in the Host? He must be living, since He died once for all, and can never die again; what is the physiology of that most wondrous life? Even His Body must be living; does His soul still use it as its organ? Are His senses awake, or are they buried in the sleep of mystic death? We gaze at the Host as it lies before us, and all these thoughts throng upon our souls. Above all, at the great moment of Holy Communion we fain would know whether He is simply passive, and, if not, what are the operations of His 'Sacred Humanity at that moment? The Blessed Sacrament is a very world in itself, and we feel the same thirst for knowledge of its wonders as others do for those of the world of nature, which weaves and unweaves its many-coloured web around us. We are now going to study the life and the functions of Jesus in that great mystery. We feel that Holy Communion must have its separate theology. It is already and inexhaustible wonder that all the wonders involved in the production of the Blessed Sacrament have Communion for their end and object. Each of the countless Hosts consecrated over the universe is destined to be received in a human heart. It may first be raised on high for blissful, silent adoration, amidst the blaze of lights and the sweet smell of flowers, but, after all, its destiny is to be received. It is elevated for a time on a throne but its last home is a human breast. We carry Him in procession, we enshrine Him for a while in gold and jewels; but He finds His way at last to the most intimate union with some one of His poor Creatures. This was why He left heaven and came down. All the exhaustless miracles of transubstantiation involved in that Host, each one of which throws into the shade the countless wonders of the living forces or the dead mechanism of the universe, have this end in view, to unite the Sacred Humanity and the Godhead of Jesus

with some individual. This is not the least wonder of the Holy Eucharist. That strange nativity which takes place on the altar has this peculiarity in it, that while in the midnight birth at Bethlehem, Mary's child was born for all the world, the extension of the Incarnation involved in each Host is made for some one particular soul. What infinite love does Jesus show to each one of us. All the miracles in each Host, involving the full stretch of God's Omnipotence, are worked for the pure pleasure of uniting Himself with some wretched sinner, who has just been absolved from mortal sin. No pure bosom of Mary awaits Him here, but some heart but lately stained with guilt. He is, indeed, the lover not only of the human race, but of each particular soul in that countless multitude. There in each little Host that we gaze upon are miracles, thick as the stars which throng the heavens, and greater than the original creation which brought them into being; and each Host with its separate wonders, is meant for its own communicant. Jesus loves each one of us with such a tender and particular love, that He enters upon His Eucharistic life for the ultimate purpose of uniting Himself most intimately with the passionate and wayward nature of every one of us, of sharing its human joys and soothing its human sorrows, of rendering its temptations tolerable, and of transferring into it His own pure life.

Such is the general idea of the mystery of Holy Communion, but it will not do for us to rest in vague generalities; we must try to penetrate as far as is possible into His great act of love, and to understand what is the life which Jesus leads in the Host in order that we may know, as far as we can, what are His operations in our souls.

Let us take, then, the moment of Communion. The Confiteor is said, and the priest holds the little white Host in his hand, and bids the worshippers in the hushed and tranquil church look on the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. He used the centurion's touching words, to put the kneeling and expectant communicants at the altar-rail in mind of the greatness of the Lord, Who is to enter into their inmost souls, and

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their soul's lowly house. He descends the steps of the altar, and places the Lord of Heaven upon the tongue of His sinful creature. Let us, however, forget the communicant, and fix our thoughts solely on the Blessed Sacrament. We know that the Sacred Host flew from the altar to seek out St. Catherine of Sienna as she remained at a distance on her knees, crouching down in a corner of the church, weeping because she could not receive her



Lord. Jesus, in the Host, was all the while even more eager than the saint, who had been burning with desire to be united to Him, and satisfied His eagerness by working the miracle. We know that He sank through the the breast of St. Juliana Falconieri, when she could not receive Him through her lips. He, in the Blessed Sacrament, also longed for the last time to be united to her upon earth, though the dying saint only dared to ask to

gaze upon the Blessed Sacrament once more before she died. But, in the communion which we are contemplating, there is no saint in the case. It is only such a one as takes place at countless altars in Christendom every day. It is some ordinary Christian who has been to confession, and is in a state of grace. What is going on in the soul and body of Jesus, beneath the sacramental veil, in such a communion as that? Our Lord makes no sign. All is done swiftly and silently. He is quite passive in the hands of the priests; He obeys the ordinary laws of motion, which rule all dead and inanimate things, not those which regulate the rapid flight of angels and of spirits. He is inseparably chained to the species and betrays no powers of motion of His own. The priest relaxes his hold a little, and He falls to the ground. He has given up all the privileges by which living things can interfere with the empire of weight, and can have movements of their own. Nay, He interferes not with the common qualities of the species by which bread and wine affect our taste and touch, and yield to the action of vital powers within us, or obey the laws of corruption; all these go on as though He was not there, though He Himself is unchanged. He seems indifferent to all the powers of nature, to all that takes place around. The light of heaven shines upon Him when He is taken from the tabernacle, but He betrays no sensation. He has withdrawn Himself into a sphere far removed from all the influences of the external world. He is to all appearances passive, inanimate, dead.

Is there any life in that seemingly dead Christ! We know that grace flows out of Him in the Blessed Sacrament, but is it like water flowing from the hard rock at the stroke of the prophet's rod? Is it like the red blood which rolled down His side to the ground when His pierced heart was dead? Or else is it the result of His conscious vital action in the blessed Sacrament? I know that He works evermore in heaven; but I am speaking now about Jesus in the Host. What is He doing at the moment of Communion? Does He know me? Can He hear me?

The instinct of every one of us answers this question in the affirmative. In some sense we all feel that in the Holy Communion Jesus knows and loves us, that He is conscious and living. But the question is how He does so, and the only way to answer it is to consider the state of all the complicated powers which make up the being of Jesus one by one, and to see what we can gather on the subject from the teachings of the church. We are more free than usual in the inquiry, for we are entering upon ground where little is defined. The opinions of theologians, however, are still our guides as to what we may hold and what we may not. The possibilities of the Sacred doctrine are always limited. We can exhaust the number of consequences which can flow from the truth, and we can tell which are inconsistent with the analogy of faith, though we cannot always tell which is absolutely true. The inquiry will amply reward us, for it will open before us the depths of the doctrine of the Blessed Sacrament, and, consequently, teach us more of the love of Jesus, although we cannot sound them.

What is there contained in the white circle of the little Host, which the priest has held in his hand, and which he has given us?

First; there is the great dread Godhead. It never left the Sacred Humanity since first the life of Jesus began in Mary's womb. The Godhead can never leave it. When the Body and the Soul of Christ were most widely separated, it remained with each. It accompanied the soul to the Limbus of the Fathers. It stayed with the lifeless body in Mary's arms; it descended with it into the tomb. It never ceased to be united with any drop of the precious Blood which was to come back to His veins after the resurrection. It could not, therefore, but accompany the Body and the Blood in the Blessed Sacrament. The everlasting Godhead is therefore in the particle given to the communicant. The Son is there, and consequently the Father and the Holy Ghost. If by an impossible supposition God ceased to be present in the whole universe, and abandoned every being, spiritual and material, still His other presence in the Sacred Host might still continue. But above all, the Eternal Word is there, pour-

ing His never-ceasing unction over that ever-blessed Body and Soul, as when the Incarnation first took place and Mary felt the Sacred Heart of Jesus beating beneath her own. There His Godhead still imbues His Sacred flesh and the precious Blood is still impregnated with its power. But though all this is certain it helps us but little on our way. The presence of Godhead is not a proof of life. The body of Jesus was cold and unconscious when it was taken down from the Cross, when Mary washed it, and wrapped the winding sheet around it, though it was still a sacred thing, because the Godhead penetrated it. The soul was far away, and even the Sacred Heart had ceased. to love, though not to be divine. It was a lifeless corpse which was carried to the tomb in that mournful funeral procession, and the inanimated limbs returned not Mary's embrace, though she genuflected to the Body, because God was there. The presence of the Godhead, therefore can tell us nothing of the life of the manhood. We must know the state of the Soul and the Body of Jesus before we can tell whether the Sacred Humanity knows and loves us in the Blessed Sacrament.

(to be continued)



Our Frontispiece



The Blessed Bartholomew Fanti was born at Mantua about the middle of the fifteenth century. At the age of seventeen he received the habit of the Carmelites. So rare were his virtues that he was placed in charge of the Noviciate as soon as he was ordained priest. It was before the Tabernacle that he formed his novices to the religious life. His reputation for sanctify spread far and wide, and many were cured of various maladies by his application of the oil from the lamp of the sanctuary.

The Hundredth of the Flock

By *Leo Masson*



HERE is no God, mother ; why do you insist on bothering me with your exhortations ? Your God was invented to frighten little children, and if He exists why does He not give a reasonable sign of Himself for a thinking man to accept ? ”

“ A sign for a thinking man to accept ? Why, my son, how does this beautiful world come to exist ; how do you explain your existence, and the tremendous riddle of the stars and the more humble though not less wonderful phenomenon of the growing grass ? Are these not signs enough for you ? ”

“ Mother, those are every-day occurrences. They are all simple, plain nature. ”

The mother sighed deeply as another of her attempts ended in failure, while her son put on his hat and left the house. He was a devoted son, but his agnosticism grieved his mother greatly. He never lost his temper or became blasphemous, though he could not always hide his irritation at her frequent attempts to bring him back to the Faith of his fathers. A favorite method of his to close the discussion was to leave the house.

On this occasion, as usual, his mother sought refuge and encouragement in her rosary and a prayer to St. Monica for help. After finishing her prayers, she sat in contemplation, going over in her mind again her son's entire life as she had so often done, trying to place the responsibility for his defection on the occasion thereto.

In his boyhood days he had been as devout as any, had served at Mass almost daily, and was always especially delighted and would bring the news to his mother with breathless joy when selected cross-bearer at the head of a Corpus Christi procession. His father had been a devout Catholic ever since his marriage, though before that he had led a somewhat wild and unchristian life. Possibly there was something in heredity after all, though his son had never received any but the best example from him.

Suddenly her meditations were broken in upon by the ringing of the door-bell. At the door she was confronted by a gentlemanly person, who gave his name and then added, quickly, that her son would like to see her.

"Why," she replied. "where is he; can't he come home to see me?"

"Not very well just now; you see, he has met with a little accident."

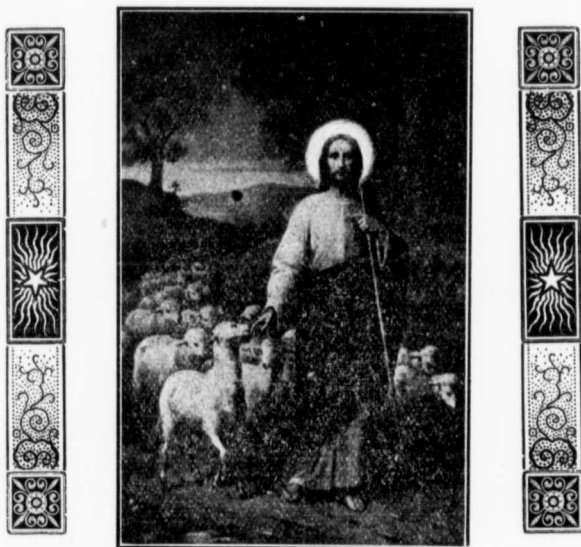
"Accident—accident? What sort of an accident? Was he killed?"

No, he wasn't killed, but she must come at once, as the doctor said it would be the best medicine. In her hurry, the distracted mother forgot her cloak, though it was a chilly day, and the stranger, having reminded her of her oversight, gently helped her wrap a shawl warmly about her shoulders. In fact, his sympathy calmed her greatly.

On the way the stranger told her that her son had been injured by an automobile while saving a child. The automobile became unruly and suddenly, getting beyond the control of the driver, was dashing straight for the curb, where a child, all unconscious of its danger, was calmly making mud pies. Her son, realizing the danger, leaped for the threatened child and succeeded in getting it out of harm's way, but was unable to do as much for himself. He was caught between the curbing and the heavy machine, and when brought to the hospital the doctors found three broken ribs, a fractured ankle and suspected probable internal injuries. "But," he added, hastily, "the doctors say that he may not be

injured internally to any great degree, in which his chances for recovery are excellent. In fact the messenger felt certain that there was no fear of his not recovering, for a young man who would risk his life for a strange child was certainly a good man, and God would have him in His special keeping.

They arrived at the hospital, and she was shown into a long room such as she had never seen, with rows of white iron beds down both sides, most of which were



occupied. The flood of softened light, coming in through the large and numerous windows, showed many worn, pain-racked, emaciated faces—some almost as white as the pillows they rested upon.

A nurse came rapidly, but noiselessly forward from the other end of the ward where she had been sitting near a curtained bed. A few low-spoken words passed between the guide and the nurse, whereupon the gentleman bowed himself out, and the white-capped, gingham-gowned nurse led the mother to the bed beside

which she had been keeping watch. The nurse, after cautioning against exciting the patient, and that the interview was limited to ten minutes, drew the curtain and stepped beyond earshot.

Was that her son—this colorless man with drawn features, lying there on the bed? He had left her a short time before, full of strength and healthy color, and now—but at this instant his eyes opened and their gaze met. With a heart-rending, moaning sob the mother sank to her knees, while her son painfully put forth his hand and rested it upon her head. Very little was spoken, as words seemed superfluous or inadequate under the circumstances. After all, what was there to say? They understood each other perfectly, this mother and son, and even in her anguish she was conscious of a feeling of pride and glory in his brave deed.

Soon—very soon it seemed to the two suffering ones—the nurse gently reminded them that the ten minutes were up, adding that to-morrow at this time she could probably make a longer call. At the door of the ward the mother met the guide who had brought her to the hospital. He took her to the office of the institution and, after handing her a card of admission, which would permit her visit during certain hours, introduced himself as the assistant physician in charge.

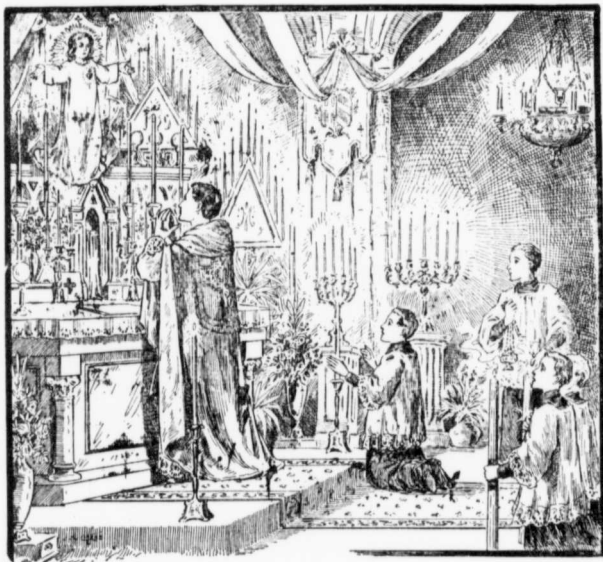
At first slowly, and later rapidly, her son, to her great delight and thankfulness, showed splendid signs of improvement, and in less than a month he was permitted to take his place in the convalescent ward. He was also visited frequently by the thankful parents of the child he had saved, and through these visits learned incidentally that the father was a socialist agitator and rabid agnostic.

His mother, thinking the experience he had gone through a good one to use in leading him back to his God, mentioned the matter to him gently a few times, which, unlike formerly, he merely met with silence.

The mother, seeing the time was not yet ripe, redoubled her prayers and hope. When she was finally permitted to take him home, he was still far from well,

but a few weeks more would surely return him to his old, robust health, the doctors said. Among other things they also advised a daily walk as beneficial. These walks were to be short at first, and gradually extended as his strength permitted, but no exciting discussions or anything similar should be permitted.

He took his daily walk generally alone and, to the mother's joy, gained strength steadily. But one day he returned from his walk, trembling, pale and wild-eyed. His mother sprang to him and he, shivering, buried his face in her bosom.



"My boy," she cried, "what has happened? Did your walk tire you? Do you want to go to bed? Shall I call the doctor?" To all of these questions he weakly shook his head and remained silent. Gently leading him to the sofa she placed her arm around him and rested his head on her shoulder. He became calmer gradually and then he spoke.

"Mother do you remember the father of the child I saved and that he was a socialist and rabid agnostic?"

"Yes, my son."

"Well, I found him a few blocks from here, standing on a soap-box, haranguing a crowd, denouncing and blaspheming God. I stopped to listen and heard him challenge God to prove His existence by a sign, when suddenly a brick that had fallen off the scaffolding of a building being erected there, came tumbling through the air and killed him instantly. The crowd scattered in fright, but I walked up to see if I could be of any help, and his face, mother, his face—" He became agitated and unable to continue.

His mother gently patted him and said, encouragingly "Yes, his face—what of his face?"

"Oh, mother, his face?"

Being a wise mother, she pressed him no further and, leading him gently to his room, got him to lie down on his bed, and left him, closing the door.

Then she hastened to the little altar of the Blessed Virgin, lighted the two candles and prayed to Mary and St. Monica as never before. She realized that the crisis had come. "Oh, Blessed Mother, implore your Son and the Holy Ghost that They lend him grace and light now—now when the good fight must be won or lost."

Half an hour later she stole to his room and quietly opened the door to see how he was resting. Instead, she beheld the sign of victory, and her heart thrilled with such joy as she had feared she might never know. Her boy was kneeling at his bedside, absorbed in prayer!

Next Sunday a happy mother and son received Holy Communion. The presence of the son at the altar-rail caused many inquiring glances between occupants of many pews. But mother and son heeded them not. They were conscious only of the "peace that passeth understanding."—*Extension Magazine.*



The Self-Invited Guest.

IF we suppose that the sacred species do not disappear for some fifteen minutes after we have received our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, one who approached the Holy Table once a week for a year would have spent thirteen hours in most intimate union with Christ. By going twice a week, twenty-six hours—more than an entire day and night—would have been passed in His company. Were one to receive Him every day, an aggregate of time equivalent to nearly four days and nights would have been spent in such close intimacy with our Redeemer as only the Blessed Virgin Mary herself was privileged to enjoy before the institution of the Holy Eucharist. How could any one be so blessed and not be the better for it? Being the better, it may be remarked, is not necessarily feeling the better. Some of us feel better than we are; it is safer to be better than we feel.

It is a blessing that makes true Catholic life a sweet perfume in the barren bitterness of the world, to have Christ with us in the tabernacles of our churches and chapels. If He had confined Himself within a single tabernacle on the top of earth's highest mountain we should

make haste to visit Him. To have Him a neighbor down the street, or across the fields, one whom we can drop in upon at any hour we please, is a gift of love, of Divine ingenuity beyond all mortal devising. But unutterably strange and sweet as is His Presence in our tabernacles, it is not so strange or so sweet as His Presence in our breasts during the silent moments after Holy Communion; no union could be closer; as no love could be greater.

He who made the universe out of nothing alone could do this. And, after He hid His Divinity behind the veil of food, only His express wish and command could bring us to receive Him in such homely and familiar fashion. We shall never fully understand the intensity of His love; moreover, the little understanding which we may have acquired through His illuminating graces leaves us humbly mystified that such love should be at all; and because we do not know its tenderness and its depth and its strength, here and there devout, but timid, souls hesitate to respond to its gracious invitation.

When we bear in mind that the Church is the Mystical Body of Christ, that He lives and acts in it, and makes His will known through the official teaching, recommendations and disciplinary measures of the Pope and the rest of the hierarchy in union with him, the present movement within the Church in favor of frequent, and even daily, Communion takes on a new and startling significance. The voice of the Church is the voice of Christ Himself. Christ is pleading with us—and there is a new note of urgency, a new poignancy, in the tones of His appeal—to receive Him oftener, to take Him in more frequently “under our roof,” to give Him every morning against the rough chances of the day the shelter of our hearts.

It is not the first time that Christ has asked for a lodging. It was first asked for Him of Mary by the Angel, and she answered with ready and gentle humility: “Be it done to me according to thy word.” Again it was asked for Him by Joseph on that momentous December evening in Bethlehem. We do not know how many doors were shut against Him then: but somewhere in eternity are



the souls of them who now see with infinite regret how their sharp refusal kept the Son of God from being born a Man in their own home. They did not know. They did not recognize under the simple request for charity, golden opportunity and unspeakable blessing.

Suppose some dweller in the little hamlet on that winter night knew who those two travelers were and met them thus :

"I cannot receive you. My house is in no condition to receive the great Guest who accompanies you."

"We have come to thy door," let us imagine Joseph replying, "guided by Him who is with us. He knows that thou triest thy best and that thou wilt not willingly offer Him mockery or insult. Therefore in love is this grace offered thee."

"No, no, no ; it is too great. I do my best, it may be. But I seem never to get anywhere. In spite of all I can do, my floors are not swept clean, the furniture is coated with dust, my table is poor, my rooms are narrow and stifling ; nothing here is fit for the great Presence. I should need a palace to entertain worthily Him whom you bring with you."

"But," rejoins Joseph, "even a palace of the Cæsars is not worthy of His Presence. If He were looking for worthiness He would not be down here out of His Heaven. So long as you do not bar Him out in hate, your poverty and failures are only so many additional reasons why He would abide with you. He longs to aid you and console you and encourage you."

But the householder faltered.

"I am afraid. I do not feel equal to the obligation which the reception of such a Guest would impose upon me. I should be forgetful and distracted and neglectful and forever running abroad ; do what I will, I shall be scatter-brained and heedless. To treat Him in such wise would be worse than not to receive Him."

“Nay, not so !” and the Blessed Virgin Mary, we can fancy, joined in the protest of Joseph. “ He who seeks thy hospitality sees thy good intention ; as for performance, no one knows better thy weaknesses and is readier to make large allowance. He will not make thy generous reception of Him a trap wherewith to catch thee unawares. He comes not to spy or to hurt, but to help. Thy Guest will help thee to be a kindly host.”

In vain. So Christ had to be born in a stable. The poorest home in Bethlehem were better.

Not thus Elizabeth received Him, with her exultant “ Whence is this to me ?” Not thus did the two sisters meet Him at their door when Martha had the felicity of busying herself about Him and Mary sat in rapturous contemplation at His feet. Zaccheus, perched in the branches of the sycamore, and doubtless the last person in the multitude to expect such distinction, saw our Blessed Saviour look towards him and heard Him say : “ Make haste and come down, for this day I must abide in thy house.” And Zaccheus repulsed not nor denied the self-invited Guest.

For self-invited guests, when they are kings and we are lowly, should never be unwelcome. Their notice is a graceful act of kindness which it would be rude to rebuff, even out of timidity or nervousness. Christ must needs be a self-invited Guest. We should, none of us, ever dream of asking Him to visit us had He not first taught us that He wishes it so ; and how could He express His desire more plainly or more forcibly than in offering Himself to us in Holy Communion as our soul's nourishment ? To-day, perhaps, more than at any time since first He stepped down to this lowest of all levels in order to be close to us, does He clamor at our doors. His Church feels through all its length and breadth the rising note of appeal and yearning in His voice, the growing insistence of His sweet importuning as He knocks at the closed lattice of our heart. To all who labor and find it hard to serve Him He comes each day, where formerly He came haply only each week or each

week or each month, clamoring eagerly—He, our God! —for entrance and such poor entertainment as our penury can offer. To all who are heavy laden with the sorrows of life and the relics of bad habits and the burdens of a nature passionately inclined sinward, He offers Himself every morning for their refreshment.

His Voice is echoing from Rome to the uttermost confines of His world-wide kingdom on earth. And we cannot help thinking that He addresses Himself especially to those humble, diffident children of His, men and women, young and old, who give too much thought to His Majesty and too little to His Infinite Tenderness. They are among His most favored children, and He must love them exceedingly for their sensitive loyalty and affection; all the more does He crave for the daily entertainment of their clean, courageous hearts, that He may dry their tears, calm their perplexities and anchor them in peace. As a mother tries to overcome gently the groundless terrors of a timid child, so Christ is employing every gentle device to make them lay aside their vague fears and give themselves in trusting surrender to daily Communion with Him in the Sacrament of Love.

JAMES J. DALY, S.J.



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Published with the approbation of the Archbishop of Montreal