



ADORATION OF THE MAGI.

HOFFMANN.

The Sentinel  
of the  
Blessed Sacrament

Vol. XV.

JANUARY 1912

No. 1

A New Year's Wish.



*Written for the Sentinel*

May the New-Year bring thee blessings,  
The most choice that Heaven bestows;  
May God's grace and benediction,  
O'er Thy life, o'erflow.

May each day dawn bright, and happy,  
And close, with no regret:  
May thy New-Year's resolutions  
In sincerity be kept.

May Jesus reign within thee,  
And never from thee part.  
Secure in the sweet knowledge,  
Of a home within Thy heart.

CARMEL.



## Thoughts for the New Year



**F**AITH and reason, religion and philosophy, have many striking things to tell us about the flight of time as measured by the beautiful succession of minutes and hours and days and weeks and months and years. The largest manageable fragment of time is a year, and the beginning of a new year brings home to us more emphatically those solemn lessons that are suggested by the least serious consideration of life and time. "Sands make the mountains—minutes, years;" but we trample the sands under foot, uncounted and unobserved, while the mountain rises up before us, calm, immovable, and the eye must needs rest upon it constantly; we cannot ignore it. Nor can we ignore the passing of a year, however lightly we may heed the minutes that compose it.

And therefore it is that at this epoch of the year, when one year has just ended and another has just begun, even the most thoughtless find themselves constrained to put this question in some form or other to Him who alone can answer it: "Make known to me, O Lord, the number of my days, that I may know what is wanting to me" (Psalm xxxviii. 5). This prayer of the Psalmist springs naturally to our lips whenever anything makes us realize how quickly life is passing away from us. So much of our term of life is gone already and the rest is following so swiftly that the question presses upon us: How much of it still remains? "Make known to me, O Lord, the number of my days." God will not do so; the number of our days and years He keeps a secret to Himself, and this secret is one of the most important

provisions of God's providence in working out the sanctification of our souls. This secret adds a terrible emphasis to the often-repeated warning of our Redeemer, Who will be our Judge : " Be ye always ready—watch and pray, for you know not the day nor the hour."

On new Year's Day we look back, and then look forward. We are like travellers climbing a mountain, who must at certain stages pause to take breath. Now, the first use the climbers are sure to make of such breathing spaces is to turn their faces away from the heights above them and to gaze down at the place from which they started, the road by which they have come. Something like this we, too, have done in bringing the old year to a close ; but such a retrospect, such a glancing backward, is chiefly useful as an incentive to make us form the resolution that St. Paul had formed before he said : " Forgetting the things that are behind, I stretch myself forward to the things that are before me." We, also, must now again face resolutely the heights above us, and with renewed courage and energy, we must continue the toilsome ascent.

For many of us, however, the remainder of life's journey can hardly be called an ascent. We not only speak of life as an uphill journey, but we speak of those who have reached a certain stage of that journey as going down the hill. Life is not a journey from sea-beach to mountain-top, but rather from shore to shore, across the steep and rugged and perilous isthmus which separates two oceans—the ocean of nothingness from which we have come, and the ocean of eternity towards which we are hastening, however reluctantly ; hastening, not by voluntary effort of our own, but by the very gravitation of our mortality. Every step brings us nearer to the margin of that dark mysterious sea, which all must cross over, never to return. The waves of that ocean dashing on the rock below—we may hear them more and more clearly at every step.

Yes ; at every step. For here it is not as with those mountain-climbers we spoke of a moment ago. For us there is no pause. Whether we rest or toil, sleeping or waking, life goes on. The very moment in which we are speaking, even before we have finished the sentence,

may, the words upon our lips, is already gone, as irrevocably gone, as the day of our First Communion, long ago.

These are mere truisms, but we sometimes require to be reminded that certain mere truisms, however plain and commonplace and tiresome, are after all true; and this is true, that even the longest life is made up of a limited number of moments of time, and that moment after moment, without the slightest break or pause between them, passing away silently and swiftly, and with each moment passes away, used or unused, an opportunity of increasing our security of a happy eternity and of making that eternity happier.

Yes, happy and happier. For it is not merely a question of being lost or saved, though that ought to be enough "to make us work out our salvation with fear and trembling," in real earnest, without a day's break or an hour's delay. But over and above the final saving of our souls, every hour of the year that is just over, every hour of all the past years of our lives, which was not employed in God's grace and according to God's will, is a loss to be deplored, a loss, to a certain extent, irreparable. Yes, every hour once lost is, in a certain true sense, lost utterly and for ever. That individual hour can never be made up for, can never be employed for the purposes for which God gave it to us. Some other hour, indeed, may try to atone for it; but that other hour has its own work to do, its own merits to gain without seeking to supply for other portions of God's gift. Heroic penance, it is true, can leave languid innocence behind in the race for sanctity; but with poor sinners like us, with such penance as *we* are likely to perform, has not each day of our lives quite enough to do to atone for itself? Why should we allow our daily debt to God to fall into such terrible arrears?

Let us then strive to begin the New Year not only with a pure conscience and a fervent and humble determination to save our soul at any cost, but with an earnest wish and a firm purpose to spend each month and week and day, as it passes, in such a manner that we shall be able to look back upon them, not with remorse



I have come that they may have life.

but with joy and gratitude, from that future day (God knows how far in front of us it lies), that day of death which shall be for us the New Year's Day of eternity. Fancy that you have reached that day — fancy that you are lying on your deathbed, and looking back on your past life from your deathbed, and try now to realize what shall be your feelings and desires *then*: then, when we shall know better how perfectly God deserves to be loved, how faithfully and fervently He merits to be served, and how generously He will reward through the endless day of eternity each separate additional moment of this fleeting time that is spent in His service.

In this effort to read the present in the light of the future we may be helped by a little apologue of Jean Paul Richter—the same idea indeed which was developed into a delightful Christmas Tale in our own language and made many laugh and some almost weep some sixty Christmases ago, and often since. (1) The New Year's Night of a Miserable Man (as the German writer calls his phantasy) supposes a certain man, miserable indeed and old, friendless and desolate, to be forced by the epoch of the year which has suggested to us a similar train of thought to look back on the life which he felt was for him coming to an end. He looks back, and he sees nothing there but a dreary blank and worse than a blank: folly and sin and crime—opportunities lost, graces abused, inspirations stifled, the promise of youth blighted—all lost utterly and for ever. And he cries out in the bitterness of his soul: "Oh that I could live my life over again! Oh, that my youth could return!"

And lo! his youth returned. He was young again. His life was still before him. It was all a dream of what might have been, of what might still be, if he did not now at once shake off his sloth and curb his passions and live for God and eternity. Let us also dream this dream and awake from it to a like resolve.




---

(1) Charles Dickens's "Christmas Carol," the first and far the best of his four Christmas books. It has just been translated into Irish by the Rev. Patrick Dinneen.



## Epiphany and Holy Communion

(See frontispiece)



### *Before Communion.*

**F**OLLOW to-day in contemplation, and with faith accompany the three Kings of earth in their search for the King of Heaven—They were wise men, wisdom being a sovereign disposition for finding Infinite Wisdom. From the east—the commencement of the world, the beginning of life—they came, guided by a star, seeking the sun. They left the great city of Jerusalem, where everything was in confusion, to find the Lord in the tranquility of Bethlehem; they descended from their grandeur, accommodating themselves to its lowliness, their first steps being to lower their heads to the ground, and so reach that heaven which was at its foot. They entered in, where everything was open, to find a new-born Babe, and a great God, undistinguished either here in Its smallness, or above in its immensity. They approached Him, in the arms of the Aurora, and in the midst of tears and pearls; they paid homage to Him as their God, offering their hearts in the centre of their gifts.



Oh you who to-day are to receive Him in Holy Communion, reflect that you are sallying forth in search of this same King? Oh, that you may be guided by the star of your felicity, the light of His Divine Grace, to find Him if you are wise, not with the wisdom of this age, but disillusioned, come from the orient of your life, and marching on diligently in the paths of perfection!

### *At the Time of Communion.*

The star which guided the three Kings also undeceived them, introducing them, not into a lotty palace, but into an humble porch, which they entered not only with their breasts on the ground, but with their mouths saluting it as the throne of His feet—not in order to admire rich tapestries of silk and gold, but cobwebs woven by spiders, and in place of brocaded embellishments they found a stable carpeted with straw. There, in the midst of beasts, lay Infinite Wisdom, and a crib made for animals was changed into a sublime throne of seraphs. Casting themselves at His feet, they formed with their crowns His Seat, making the loftiness of their spirit rival the humiliation of their love. They both wept and laughed, effects of the sight of that Infant Sun, and amidst the most abject poverty in the world they recognized and acknowledged all the fulness and richness of heaven.

Soul! To-day the star of your felicity guides you, not to a stable, but to an altar, where your three powers await the same Child-God Who gave audience to the Kings. It does not cost you so many steps to find Him as it did them, for you have Him near you, and not only does He permit you to adore Him, but actually to feed on Him. If the Kings considered it a great favor to be allowed to kiss the earth of the stable—*terram lingent*—to you is conceded to feast on His Humanity, and to nourish yourself with His Divinity. They sought His Feet to kiss them; you to take them into your mouth. They were allowed to clasp Him in their arms, embracing Him; you to receive Him into your very heart. Appreciate, then, your happiness, and derive therefrom abundant profit.



### *After Communion.*

The Kings opened and displayed their treasures to their infant God. After having first offered to Him their souls, they presented Him with the brilliancy of gold and the bitterness of myrrh, thus predicting as faithful astrologers the dolours of His Passion. Having adored Him as God, they desired to fondle Him as a child. The Virgin Mother permitted them and the rustic shepherds to do so. Each in turn they would take Him up, caressing Him, desiring to possess Him, and in homage folding in their purple robes Him Whom others would clothe in garments of ignominy. They never tired of imprinting their kisses on those cheeks which, later on, His enemies would redden with their cruel blows, and they who had come in such haste now enjoyed leisurely and quietly

their felicity, not finding their way to return, it being necessary that the Divine oracle should show it to them in their waking dreams.

Soul! prostrate thyself after having communicated at the feet of this Child-God, presenting Him thy three powers, with the incense of contemplation, the gold of thy affections, and the myrrh in memory of His sufferings. Offer Him a lively faith, a brave hope, and a burning charity. Give Him the incense of obedience, the gold of poverty, and the myrrh of chastity. Honour thy God by prayer, assist thy neighbour with alms-deeds, and thy own self, with mortification.

### *In Thanksgiving.*

The wise men proved themselves liberal of their gifts, and no less so in their gratefulness and praises of the Lord; they proceeded in every way as befitted Kings, for that which rendered them dumb about informing Herod made them eloquent in their praises, blessing the Lord, publishing in all their lands the wonders of the King Whom they had found, for undoubtedly the lips that had pressed those tender Feet could never more be closed to the Divine praises, but for ever rendered Him their grateful homage.

Oh, you who have communicated, act in a kingly manner, not as a low being; prove yourself wise by being grateful, and thankful, returning praises for His favors, over and over again letting this food of Heaven repose amidst the slumbers of contemplation. Return by another road to a new life, laden with virtues in exchange for your offerings, marching on to the orient of fervor, and not to the occident of tepidity!



*When all looks dark and hidden,  
And through the clouds, thou can'st not see.  
Say: O Sacred Heart of Jesus,  
I place my trust in Thee.*

## The Force of Example



PEAKING at the Home for the Aged in Los Angeles on New Year's Day, Bishop Conaty alluded to the sentiment of New England as to Christmas and Catholicism a half century ago, and spoke of the great change that had taken place there within his own experience. During the time when Know-nothingism was rampant, the idea of a Christian Christmas was almost unknown, yet even then the leaven was working and minds were awaiting the light of truth.

He illustrated this point by narrating an incident that occurred when he was a young priest in the city of Worcester, Mass. There resided about ten miles out from the city a well-to-do family having in their employ about the place an old Irishman, who was much esteemed by them all. One cold winter day the old man was missing, and much wonder was expressed at his absence, for it was snowing hard and the day was dreary. At night he returned and a young lady of the family asked him where he had been in such weather. He replied that he had been into town. When asked why he didn't take the horse, he replied; "Sure, no man having any regard for his beast would take him out in such weather:" When asked why he had gone out in such weather he exclaimed: "Sure, and I've been to Mass. Don't you know that it's Christmas?" A few days after the young lady called on the priest and asked him to explain what it all meant, for if a religion could produce such devotion she wanted to know more about it, with the result that after instructing her the good priest had the joy of receiving her into the Church, and she became a very devout Catholic. This was but one illustration of the lack of understanding of the true faith only a few short years ago, and of the tremendous force of example.

To the  
**Holy Name of Jesus**

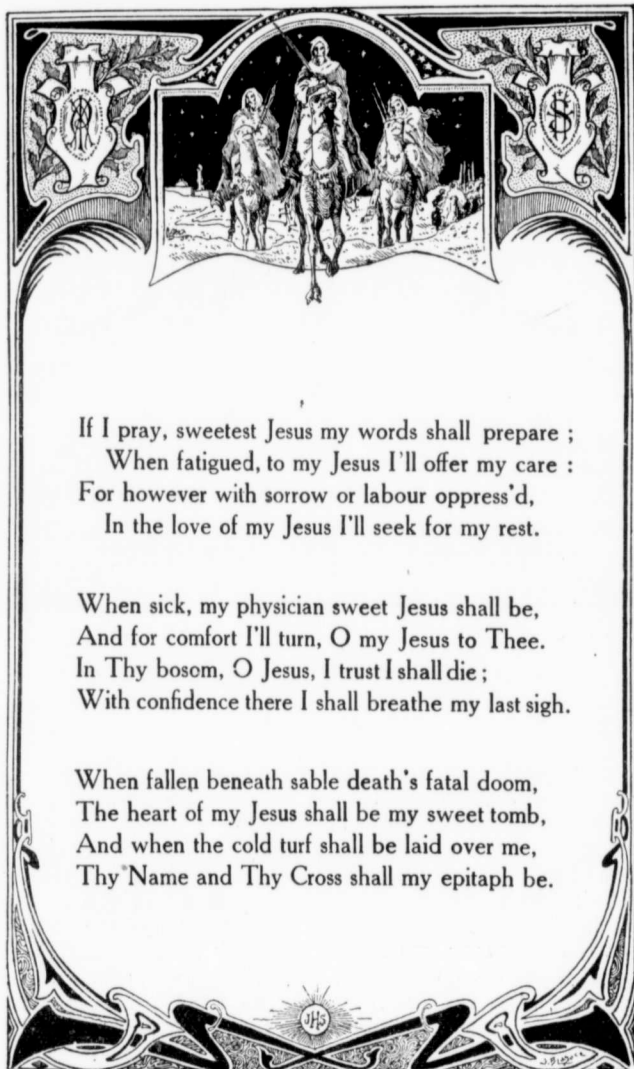
---

O Jesus, sweet Jesus, O Jesus divine.  
My life and my death unto Thee I resign :  
Every action of mine shall Thy patronage claim ;  
For whatever I do shall be done in Thy name.

If I walk, sweetest Jesus my footsteps shall guide,  
If I sit, dearest Jesus shall be my side :  
And the greatest of joys I shall deem it to be,  
In the night time to watch, O my Jesus, with Thee.

When, with sleep overcome, my eyelids shall close,  
Still breathing Thy love will I take my repose ;  
And when using my pen, it shall be my delight  
The adorable Name of my Jesus to write

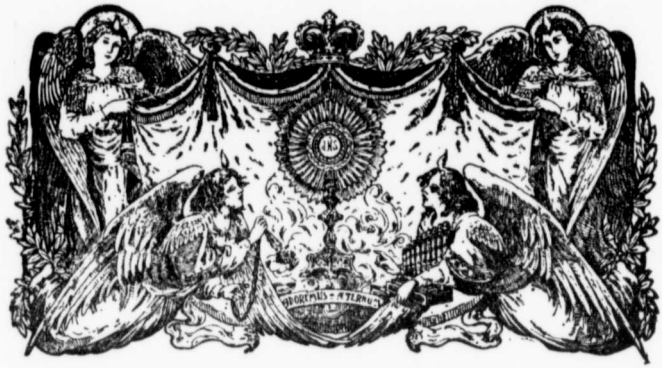




If I pray, sweetest Jesus my words shall prepare ;  
 When fatigued, to my Jesus I'll offer my care :  
 For however with sorrow or labour oppress'd,  
 In the love of my Jesus I'll seek for my rest.

When sick, my physician sweet Jesus shall be,  
 And for comfort I'll turn, O my Jesus to Thee.  
 In Thy bosom, O Jesus, I trust I shall die ;  
 With confidence there I shall breathe my last sigh.

When fallen beneath sable death's fatal doom,  
 The heart of my Jesus shall be my sweet tomb,  
 And when the cold turf shall be laid over me,  
 Thy Name and Thy Cross shall my epitaph be.



## HOUR OF ADORATION

### The Soldiers Cast Lots for His Garments.

REV. PÈRE CHAUVIN, S.S.S.

*Milites ergo cum crucifixissent eum acceperunt vestimenta ejus, et fecerunt quatuor partes, unicuique militi partem, — et tunicam.*

And after they had crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots. And they made four parts, to every soldier a part, and also His coat.—(Matt. xxvii, 35 ; John xix, 23.)

### I — ADORATION

Immediately after the crucifixion the Roman soldiers proceeded to divide the garments of Jesus. They formed a very insignificant prize, for Jesus had been very poorly clad. Nevertheless, they had eagerly set their heart upon them in the hope of selling them at a high price to some disciple of the august Criminal, or to one of the pious women who appeared so attached to Him. Perhaps, even, having heard of the cure of the woman by touching His mantle, they thought that these garments possessed some kind of curative power, which would greatly increase their value. Meantime, the four executioners seated themselves at the foot of the Cross and, having divided the garments into four parts as equally as possible, drew lots for the different shares. Jesus' coat was not comprised in

these four parts, for it was the most valuable of all. To cut it would have been to destroy it. And so, by common consent, they proposed to draw lots for it, as they had already done for the rest.

And thus it had to be. The Holy Spirit had uttered this prophecy over a thousand years before, and He was still there to insure its fulfilment. This word of Holy Scripture had to be accomplished: "*They parted My garments among them, and upon My vesture they cast lots.*" "Jews and pagans judges, great ones of the world, doctors, nations, populace, and soldiers,—all who have insulted, struck, delivered Jesus,—all who have covered Him with spittle,—all who have put Him to death,—all have lighted so many torches to show forth the splendor of His Divinity. They struck Him not one blow that did not tear away some shreds of the veil which was hiding It. The more furiously they lacerated the Flesh of the Man, the more they showed forth the God." By the admirable relation of these most minute details with the oracles of the Old Law, Jesus' Passion, while forming the foundation of our hope, becomes also the foundation of our faith.

How venerable are those garments of the Man-God! Simple and poor in themselves, their value enhanced by neither embroidery nor precious metal, they had been torn into shreds by ropes and chains, soiled by spittle and the mud thrown by the mob, discolored by the sweat and blood of the Garden and that of the wounds that covered Jesus' body from head to feet. And yet for Mary, for the pious women and disciples, for all who knew Jesus, those vestments, so miserable in appearance, are adorable. They were sanctified by contact with the Flesh of Jesus, and they have become instruments, channels of His grace and divine power. The woman afflicted for so many years had only to touch the hem of the Saviour's garment to be made whole.

Doubly precious was this tunic which the executioners seized upon to draw lots for it! Tradition says that it had been woven by Mary for the Child Jesus, and that it had grown with Him like the garments of the Hebrews during the forty years of their sojourn in the desert. It was without seam, of one single piece, one single web, one single thread, which from top to bottom, woven in various ways by one single hand without interruption, formed one nicely proportioned whole. And these are the sacred relics of Jesus, which at this moment I am contemplating, all covered with blood



in the hands of the Saviour's executioners ! Would that I could prostrate before these precious garments ! Would that on my knees I could kiss them with respect and love !

At His Resurrection Jesus did not resume His earthly robes. He was then clothed with a mantle of glory, and it was in triumphal vesture that He manifested Himself to the elect. But He could not remain in that state on earth. If the Apostles were unable to endure the brilliancy of a single ray of His glory, how could they now gaze upon Him in all His majesty ? And so He has covered Himself with the mantle of the sacramental species, that marvelous tunic woven by love ! The part it plays is not to protect the Master's body against the inclemency of the atmosphere, but to disguise His greatness, that we may approach Him without fear or diffidence.....

## II — THANKSGIVING.

Even to the end Jesus willed to show His benevolence for poor sinners. To whom, before dying is He going to bequeath the few goods that remain to Him ? Is it to Simon of Cerene, to reward him for the service that he rendered Him by helping Him to bear His Cross ?—is it to Magdalen ?—is it to John ?—is it even to Mary, His tender beloved Mother ? No, it is to His executioners, to those who have just brutally nailed Him to the Cross, that He gives this last mark of love and charity.

Still more, all tradition has seen in this a fact of very elevated mystery, one full of consolation for us. The sacred clothing of Jesus was the figure of His Church. Just as the body is enveloped and hidden by its clothing, so Jesus Christ is hidden by His Spirit in His Church. The Church is one, and at the same time she is spread everywhere over the four cardinal points of the globe. " These vestments shared by four soldiers," says Saint Augustine, " represent the universality of the Church. The tunic signifies her unity, which is contained in the bond of charity."

First.—*The dividing of the garments signifies the universality of the Church.* Jesus from the height of His Cross presides over the fulfilment of this symbolical prophecy. He measures the earth with His glance and opens His Heart to inundate it with His divine life. He wills the salvation of all. The vocation of His religion will be to penetrate *everywhere*, to spread *always*, to speak to *all*, in order to realize the

plan of His Redemption. And for that He will open the heart of His Apostles to ambition for conquest such as has never been seen among men. He will envelop the four quarters of the world with His Spirit and His grace as with a garment.

Jesus saw me at that moment. He prepared for me the grace of the Christian, religious, sacerdotal life. He placed a priest on my path to baptize me, to instruct me, to pardon me. He established near my dwelling an altar on which He immolated Himself anew to me, a tabernacle from which He gave Himself as nourishment to my soul. *He Himself* covered me with a portion of His garments.

Oh! I thank Thee, Jesus for having realized this prophecy in me and in all my brethren. Extend the frontiers of Thy Church to the confines of the earth. Do Thou Thyself carry Thy celestial life into the world of souls with lightning rapidity, even to the ends of the earth. Cease not to conquer realms, to embrace the whole universe, until there is no longer a single spot in which Thou dost not reside, a single heart that Thou dost not sanctify by Thy presence and love.

Secondly.—*The seamless tunic signifies the unity of the Church.* The garments divided, the soldiers were unwilling to cut the tunic, so they decided to draw lots for it. All the holy Fathers have seen in the seamless tunic a symbol of the unity of the Church, which suffers no division. Our Lord Himself in a vision to Saint Peter, Patriarch of Alexandria, sanctioned this interpretation. One day, the Saviour, under the form of an infant, appeared to the saint, His tunic torn from top to bottom. He held it in both hands and pressed it against His breast, as if to hide His nudity. Peter seized with fright, most humbly asked who had reduced Him to that state. "It is Arius," answered Jesus, "for he is a hypocrite, who has divided the Church and snatched from Me some of the souls that I redeemed with My Blood."

The tunic of Jesus is, indeed, a striking, a faithful image of the Church. "One single divine Hand formed it on one single design, of one single spirit, and from the beginning to the end. There is seen in it no division, but a continued series of pastors, who, like a single thread, mount up to Jesus Christ and end in the last Christian without ceasing to be the same. From top bottom, in her all are chained together, all support one another. She suffers no innovation. For all her members and in all things there are the same faith, mora-

lity, the same worship. A single thread cannot be broken without endangering the whole. The heretics, the schismatics who deny or abandon her, do but separate this unity, but they cannot alter it. The Church remains always one, always the same. *The tunic was without seam, woven entire from top to bottom.*

What grace Jesus has granted me by calling me into the divine unity of the Church! I thank Thee, O Jesus, for having given me faith in Thy doctrines! I thank Thee, O Jesus, for having made me share in this unique Sacrifice in which Thou art immolated everywhere and always, the same Victim by the same Sacrificer! I thank Thee, O Jesus, for permitting me to unite with all the children of Thy great family in sending up my prayer with all the same meaning, often with the same formula, to the same Heart of the Father who is in heaven !.....

## LIFE

Permelia T. Schweitzer.

WHAT is life? A serious drama,  
 Staged for all to play a part.  
 Like real actors, up and doing,  
 Each must strive to win a mark.

Life was given for something higher,  
 Than to while the hours away.  
 Awake! Awake! Oh, slumbering mortal!  
 Learn to labor and to pray.

Only those whose best endeavor,  
 Shines forth as a beacon light,  
 Shall receive the Master's hire,  
 On the Great Eternal Night.



## Under the Sanctuary Lamp

### THE HILL OF THE SHEPHERDS



"While all things were in silence and the night was in the midst of her course, Thy Almighty Word, O Lord, came down from heaven, Thy royal throne." And behold an angel of the Lord stood by some country shepherds watching their flocks and announced the glad tidings.

It is fitting that angels should chant over Bethlehem on His birthnight: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will." How full our joy should be when the same Babe of Bethlehem is born daily in the chalice on our altar, and with what jubilee our hearts should thrill when in Holy Communion Mary's Child comes for a fuller birth into our souls.

In the stable Mary and Joseph are in prayer and in ecstasy of wonder and of love. They have seen the face of God and lived. It is true to say they have enjoyed, in a certain sense, the beatific vision, for they have looked upon the countenance of their Creator. Round about the Child, who is uncreated Holiness are His two most loved souls in Heaven or on earth ; the one His Mother, in whose womb for nine months He has dwelt and who in grace and dignity has no parallel ; the other, Joseph in sanctity below His spouse, the foster father of the Babe in the manger and over whom in some mysterious way the Eternal Father has thrown the shadow of His uncommunicable Paternity.

The heavenly choir has ceased ; the bright light has faded out of the skies and the dawn is coming timidly over the hills of Moab, as if afraid and in reverence before the light which shines from the face of the child. Mary raises her eyes and sees the first adorers of her Son.

There was no need to tell Mary who the visitors were. Their weather-beaten features, their rough clothing, their dark faces told their calling. Then, too, the Mother knew it was proper that the shepherds should be among His first worshippers. Was not the Babe in the manger to be a shepherd, not, it is true, of sheep fattened on Judea's hills for the temple sacrifice, but a shepherd of souls redeemed later on by the blood now redding His infant lips and cheeks? The child now in His Mother's arms will, thirty years hence cry out in the streets of Jerusalem : " I am the Good Shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep." It was to feed the starving sheep and lead them back into the one true fold that He would grow to manhood and walk through the streets of Sion and on the bosom of the mountain and by the edge of the lake. To feed the sheep, He will die and leave His Body and His blood that they may eat and live. Can we wonder, then, that with hastening steps the shepherds came to kneel at His feet? How welcome these poor, simple men are at the dawn of this first Christmas day ! They are men who have led lives of toil. Their garments are coarse, their hands hard, their faces roughened by the biting winds which blow over



*The Holy Family at Nazareth.*

the hills of Bethlehem. They had little of this world's good and still less of its pleasures. But they have what is better and dearer, the Heart of the Babe of Bethlehem. They are simple men and true, faithful to the light given them and living in fidelity to the Law. And now these are called to be the first adorers of the new-born Child.

So too, the same Child of Mary is in His Tabernacle, and His love and care go out to all of us. In our fatigue if we go to Him there we shall be refreshed as the shepherds were. In our toil and poverty we shall be, oh so rich, if we only kneel before the Tabernacle and receive into our hearts the riches of the Father, His only begotten Son. Then we shall be rich indeed, and go away so content, yet not content to go away.

Shall we not join the shepherds? When He comes into our hearts in Holy Communion we must not hear the sound of the earthly music, which is streaming from the open windows of Herod's palace, but in our hearts will be ringing, as in the shepherds' ears, the anthem of the angels: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will."

It is hard to leave the feet of the Child and His blessed Mother and her holy Spouse. Would that we could linger with them always! Yet we must go. It is sad to think that on the first Christmas night our Blessed Saviour came to Bethlehem and asked in vain for lodging, shelter and a place in which to be born. The doors were closed in His Mother's face, and on His birthday He was sent out to the cold hillside. There was no room for Him in the inn. During the rest of His life, though He wandered as a child along the yellow Nile, though He toiled to manhood in obscure Nazareth, and was often in the Temple for the Passover, yet He seems to have come back never again to David's city, where He was born. Many a time and oft He walked through the streets of Jerusalem and beyond the Jordan; frequently His sacred feet trod the hills and valleys of Galilee; time and again He was found on the white sands of Genesareth, and He sailed on its bosom in calm and storm; but nowhere do we read in Holy Writ that

He ever trod the streets of Bethlehem. He came there on the first Christmas night and asked for a place to be born. The request which is refused to no other was denied Him. And He went out from the city of David never to enter it again. What a dreary life ours would be if He came some Christmas and asked to be born in our hearts, and we closed the doors of our souls in His face. How sad that Christmas day for the soul out of whose life the Babe of Bethlehem has gone never to return ! But those who love to linger near the Tabernacle under the light of the Sanctuary Lamp are not such as will refuse to the Babe of Bethlehem the gift which He prizes most, their heart ; and they are not likely to forget that the best Christmas giving, is Christian living.

J. H. O'ROURKE, S.J.



## EUCCHARISTIC LESSONS

♦♦ FROM ♦♦

### Our Blessed Mother's Life.

Egypt and Nazareth

THE Christmas hours have come and gone : We have all responded to the soul-stirring " Venite Adoremus " and knelt, side by side with the Shepherds and the Wise men. We have followed Mary and Joseph to the Temple and sympathized with our Blessed Mother, as the aged Simeon worded his prophecy : " And thy own soul a sword shall pierce ". We have seen the " Holy Three " journeying from Bethlehem to Nazareth, and no sooner are they home again than the shadow of the sword, foretold by Simeon, fell across their lives. An angel appeared to St. Joseph in his sleep and bade him arise, take the Child and His Mother, and flee to Egypt, for Herod would seek to destroy the Child of their love.



We can picture to ourselves the anguish and fear with which Mary rose in obedience to St. Joseph's hurried summons. They must bid farewell to the peaceful home where they had hitherto dwelt so contentedly, and go forth into the wide world; a long and perilous journey lay before them, ending in the strange land which had been the asylum of distressed Hebrews since the days of Abraham. Though this hasty flight was in itself a heavy trial, the reason which demanded it was more painful still.

The tyrant from whom Joseph fled with Mary and the Child was now drawing near the end of one of the most terrible careers known to history. Not only had he murdered Jewish priests and other prominent men of his kingdom, but he had killed his own sons, Alexander, Aristobulus and Antipater as well as his wife's father and mother; he had butchered his most devoted personal friends; he had strangled Marianne, the faithful wife whom he had vowed to love. And all this slaughter seemed but to increase his thirst for blood. "Herod will seek the Child, to destroy Him" (Matthew II, 13.) And oh! the anguish of that thought for Mary! Already His dear life was in peril, that life on which so much depended, which would be passed in doing good unto all. He came to seek and to save that which was lost, to call sinners to repentance, to invite unto Him all who labored and were heavily burdened. All the prophets had spoken of His mercy and compassion, yet, if He had come in wrath and indignation to avenge the wickedness of mankind He could not have inspired greater hatred or dread.

It was still night when they set out, St. Joseph walking sorrowfully beside the ass which bore Our Lady and her Divine Son. Their anguish increased as they passed one by one the familiar landmarks, and advanced farther into a strange land; yet no sound of complaint escaped them. They did not pause to ask themselves why this trial should have been laid upon them, why the life should be threatened in infancy which they knew by the Sacred Scriptures was not to be laid down till in the prime of manhood. God, who destined His Son in the fulness of

time to work so many wonders, could have averted this danger had He so willed, but He had not so willed. And Mary and Joseph bowed submissively before the Wisdom and justice of the divine decrees. In the midst of their sorrow they were comforted by the knowledge that God was watching over them; that He was with them; and as their journey proceeded, they witnessed a striking manifestation of the divinity of the Child whom their hurried flight was destined to save. Travelling slowly onward in the midst of suffering and hardships, driven



by remorseless enemies, the very life of their precious charge hourly threatened, it would seem that their cup of humiliation was full. But the God-Man was with them, and as they passed the Egyptian temples the images of the idols fell shattered on the ground.

The lesson which our Blessed Mother teaches us today is one of which we are too often forgetful: "The Lord is with us." He leads us on through life in ways that are known to Him, and in which His wisdom sees how to guide us. But we in our blindness and ignorance

are tempted often times to murmur, to forget that the path in which He would have us walk, however rugged and stony it be is the one which will lead us to Him. From the tabernacle He watches over us in the midst of the troubles and dangers which beset us; He will remain with us all along the way if, like Mary and Joseph, we rely on Him. Yes, He is with us, that hidden God who in the holy Sacrament makes Himself our Companion, our Guide, our Light and our Strength.

This earth is no longer a place of exile, for we can kneel at the altar-rail and be at home with our Father. It need not be a place of misery and tears, for He who is the joy of heaven is with us. O Mary! of all creatures most closely united to Jesus, help us to keep close to Him, to flee with Him from the dangers that threaten our souls!

The Holy Family had for some time dwelt in exile when an angel again came to St. Joseph in sleep, and told him that he might now safely return with Jesus and Mary to Israel, for Herod was dead. To Nazareth, therefore, they bent their steps, and once more resumed the peaceful home life that had been disturbed by the dread of the enemy. "And the Child grew, and waxed strong, full of wisdom; and the grace of God was in Him" (St. Luke II, 40,) How precious must these years have been to Mary! We are told that "she kept His words in her heart", and pondered them over, all her life long: and we can imagine the joy and love with which she actually heard them. If they seem beautiful even to us, so naturally cold and hard of heart, what must they have been to Mary, hearing them spoken in the sweet tones of that divine voice which had such power to win and subdue, and watching the heavenly expression with which they were uttered?

He was now old enough to help St. Joseph in the latter's daily toil, and His Mother's tenderness and admiration would have increased, if that were possible, in marking His humility and diligence.

Whether, distaff in hand, as painters love to portray her, she watched Jesus at His work, or whether she busied herself in other parts of the humble little home, she was

alike absorbed in Him. Her every thought and desire was to please Him, to minister to Him, to watch over Him, to suffer for Him, if need be. Her heart thrilled at His childish caresses and tender, loving words, but the proofs of His wisdom and His heavenly virtues were more precious to her still.

Thus she passed her days in constant and more perfect union with Jesus, contemplating His virtues and ever closely imitating them.

Should not we, her children, endeavor to follow her in this, and to profit by this means of drawing nearer to God in each Communion? Union with our Sacramental Saviour is necessary for us, living as we do in the midst of a sinful world, where everything tends to distract us and make us forget high and holy things. Mary lived a retired life, away from the bustle and clamor of men, yet all her time which was not employed in domestic duties was given to prayer and meditation: and we, whose days are frequently passed so uselessly, think half or even a quarter of an hour too long to spend with God. We ought to be sincerely ashamed of ourselves! Why not slip into a church once in a while and there in the solemn silence ask ourselves why we are here and whither we are going? We should be the better for it for we would see our lives and their surroundings in a very different light.

Let us awake to the reality that "the Lord is with us" and let us show by our conduct that we feel and appreciate His presence. Why not be with Him since He is with us? Why not think of Him as we work; why not speak of Him, hold sweet discourse with Him?

Sweet Mother, help me in my efforts to see Jesus as thou didst see Him in the little home at Nazareth, to live in union with Him and to keep my heart pure through love of Him!



## A Brave Little Fellow

By Hope Willis



**T**HE village of Graverolls was an island of the Seine, inhabited by about forty families. There the vicar of Rigny went several times a week to say mass in a little chapel. Pierre Hureau, a boy of eleven, always served the vicar's Mass. He was now ready to make his first communion, after having from his infancy shown unusual piety.

On the morning of January 28, when Pierre crossed the bridge on his way to school at Rigny, he remarked that the Seine was rising rapidly, but the village was situated on an elevation above the river, and he had often heard his father and mother say that it was in no danger whatever from a flood. At 4 o'clock on his way back from school, Pierre left his companions and turned aside, as was his custom, to say a few prayers in a small chapel on the way. Thus it happened that he was quite alone when he came in sight of Graverolls. He at once perceived that the flood had made great ravages since morning. As far as he could see before him, the fields were inundated, and on the higher ground, thought to be free from danger, the tops of trees were all that could be perceived through the broad expanse of dark, pulsating water.

Proceeding on his way, Pierre soon saw that the river had almost reached the bridge. At Graverolls silence and desolation greeted him. His father's house was deserted, the other habitations also. Water began to appear in the roadway. There was no one in sight. Everyone had fled. His parents had no doubt counted faithfully on meeting him on the usual route from school. They could not have thought, of course of the detour he was in the habit of making every day to pray a few moments in the little chapel. And thus they had missed him.

Pierre looked about him. The water had not yet mounted to the floor of the bridge; there was time for

him to return to Rigny, where he would be sure to find his family. But as he passed the chapel he saw through the windows that the sanctuary lamp was still burning, and he knew that the Blessed Sacrament must be there. Doubtless the sacristan an old resident of Graverolls, had forgotten in the haste of departure, and the vicar would not come again until to-morrow. To-morrow probably he could not come. By that time the chapel would be inundated. For a moment Pierre hesitated, not feeling able to assume the grave responsibility that presented



itself. But only for a moment; the Blessed Sacrament must be saved. He resolved to take the ciborium from the tabernacle and carry it with him to Rigny.

But now another situation was to be faced. The key of the tabernacle was kept in the sacristan's house. It would be necessary to get it. The water was rising: it was fast growing dark. Pierre ran as quickly as he could to the deserted dwelling. He could not find the key for some time; there seemed to be no matches. At last he laid his hands upon it, and, closing the door, he ran back

to the church. The wind was blowing fiercely ; the water dashed against the buttresses of the bridge with an ominous sound. The road was submerged. The boy ran through water above his ankles. Fortunately the chapel was some steps above the street, besides being built on a slight elevation of the ground. He entered ; the water began to follow him. He ran toward the tabernacle, opened it and seized the ciborium. But when he reached the chapel door, he found himself in the water almost up to his knees. The inundation was advancing every moment ; he found it impossible to take a single step.

He closed the door and re-entered the chapel, placing the ciborium on the altar, and looked about him. The sanctuary was three steps higher than the floor of the church ; the platform of the altar, two steps above that ; and the water had already reached the level of the first step of the communion rail. He turned to the altar, whereon, hidden in the ciborium, reposed his Lord and his God. For a moment a spasm of anguish convulsed his soul. Must he perish, there, all alone ? No, our Lord was with him. Tears began to roll down his cheeks. He knelt close to the altar, in front of the ciborium. He prayed, but time passed slowly—oh, so slowly. And it was dark and cold.

The water is now creeping into the sanctuary. Pierre climbed upon the altar shelf, where he remained for some time. Hours passed, he thought - it might have been only moments. The water was now rising about his feet. It crept along the shelf where he crouched. With a desperate effort, the ciborium in one hand, he mounted to the top of the tabernacle. There he sat, with it pressed to his heart, still praying. At length his head fell upon his breast and he slept, without letting go his hold of his treasure. Meantime the water remained stationary.

\* \* \*

Next morning, when the flood had somewhat subsided, a small boat, containing a priest with two oarsmen, made its way to the submerged village of Graverolls. They advanced toward the chapel, the door of which they found open, forced by the winds and the waves. The

water was still so high that the little boat could ride upon it easily. All they could see as they passed the aisle, was the tabernacle, on top of which sat a pale, boyish figure, his head sunken on his breast. In his hands was clasped the ciborium.

"Pierre!" cried the vicar.

There was no answer. The boat came nearer.

"Pierre!" again spoke the vicar. "My dear Pierre;"

In a moment one of the boatsmen had the boy in his arms, lifting him in the bottom of the boat, while the priest took the ciborium from his loosening clasp. Pierre slowly opened his eyes. There was a heavy blanket in the bottom of the boat—a large, warm blanket, on one half of which they laid him, throwing the other half over him. Oh, how delicious it was, that feeling of warmth, of release, of companionship! He opened his eyes slowly, and gazed into the kind face of the priest above him.

"Pierre, are you cold?" asked the vicar.

"Not now, Monsieur l'Abbe," answered the feeble, tired voice, in a whisper.

"Are you hungry?"

"No, Monsieur l'Abbe," came faintly from the trembling lips.

"Will you not have a morsel of bread and a sip of wine? We have a supply with us. We thought perhaps to meet some poor sufferers on the way, but had no idea we should find you here. Your parents are searching for you everywhere. We came for the Blessed Sacrament. A few drops of wine now, my little Pierre!"

"No, no—not that!" murmured the boy.

"What, then?"

"That, if I may," pointing to the ciborium—"if you will, mon Pere, before I die."

"Ah my child," said the priest, bending over him and marking the glassiness of his eyes, the exceeding waxen pallor of his face, the blueness of his trembling lips. Again the boy pointed to the ciborium.



The priest raised his eyes to heaven. They were full of tears.

"Yes," he said, "you have deserved it well—the bread of angels. I will give you the God for whom you have given your life."

He opened the ciborium and laid the Sacred Host upon the tongue of the dying boy. He closed his lips softly with a smile of gratitude. They heard the murmur of a prayer, while his face shone with a light not of earth.

"Come," said the vicar, "let us hasten back to Rigny, that his parents may see him once more. They are in great grief."

The boat floated out of the chapel into the broad stream that had once been the main street of Graverolls. The sun shone out radiantly; Pierre opened his eyes to its soft, ineffable rays. The priest lifted the boy's head to his knee.

"I feel so happy now, mon Père," he murmured, with a sweet smile and a look of gratitude.

That night at Rigny in the midst of his family, the priest kneeling at his bedside, the boy opened his eyes for the last time.

The mother sobbed aloud. Pierre felt for her hand and laid his own upon it; then, closing his eyes he heaved a faint sigh, and his pure soul took his flight to heaven—one more innocent hostage for his unhappy country.  
—*Ave Maria.*

## CONTENTS

A New-Year's Wish, (*poem*). — Thoughts for the New Year. — Epiphany and Holy Communion, (*frontispiece*). — The Force of example. — Holy Name of Jesus, (*poem*). — Hour of Adoration: The soldiers cast lots for His garments. — Life, (*poem*). — Under the Sanctuary Lamp. — Eucharistic Lessons from Our Heavenly Mother's Life. — A Brave little Fellow.