



B. Plockhorst.

The Apparition of Jesus to Mary Magdalen.



THE SENTINEL
OF THE
BLESSED SACRAMENT

Vol. XVI No 4.

Montreal.

April 1913.

My Friend Across the Way

FROM my little study-window
I can see a lamp's faint ray,
'Tis the ever-faithful watcher
Of my Friend across the way.
Through the day I oft look over,
"All for Thee" is what I say,
And I fancy it's a comfort
To my Friend across the way.

When the sky is bright and cloudless
And my heart is also gay,
In my joys I'll not forget You,
Comrade mine, across the way.
If the day be dark and dreary,
Drifting round me mists of gray,
Then I whisper: "Don't desert me,
Dearest Lord, across the way."

Let the years be hard and toilsome,
Still my life is one bright May,
For my burdens all are carried
By my Friend across the way.
When I leave my study-window
At the close of life's short day,
Through the gates of death I'll take Him,—
Take my Friend across the way.

DAVID P. MCASTOCKER, S. J.

Holy Communion for Children.

Public or Solemn First Communion.

(Continued)



THE *Etudes Religieuses*, conducted by the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, give the following historical account of the origin of Solemn Communion :

“The practice of celebrating the First Communion in a public and solemn manner is neither old, nor of universal adoption. It was formerly the custom to apply to children, in regard to the Eucharist, the same canonical rule issued by Innocent III at the Lateran Council, that is still applied to them in the case of the Sacrament of Penance.

“As soon as parents perceived that reason had dawned upon their child and that he was able to distinguish good from evil, they helped him to examine his conscience and to make acts of contrition, and then sent him to the priest, who gave or withheld absolution according as he judged the child capable of it or not. There is no mention of a First Confession day. Just in the same manner, the father or mother explained to the child about the wonderful Sacrament of the Altar, and when they saw that he was sufficiently instructed and desirous of receiving that divine Food at the Holy Table, along with the rest of the faithful, they would take him to the priest, and the latter accepted him if he considered him fit. They considered that it was the child's dispositions that needed testing rather than his age.

“Nevertheless the question of age also came to be discussed, and all did not arrive at the same solution.

“Benedict XIV, cites two different views. Some thought a child to be possessed of sufficient discretion if he was capable of receiving absolution, in as much as the canonical rule of Lateran by imposing the law of

the annual confession and of the Easter Communion on all the faithful who have reached the years of discretion, seems thereby to appoint the same age for the reception of *both* these Sacraments. Then, again, a manual ascribed to Henry, bishop of Sisteron, directs parents to teach their children the *Pater* and the *Credo* at the age of seven or over, and to take them to the Church on Good Friday, for the kissing of the Cross, and on Easter Day, for the purpose of receiving the Body of Our Lord after they have confessed. Others held that more mature judgment was needed for approaching so great a Sacrament with due reverence, and devotion, and that, ordinarily, the obligation did not come into force before the age of nine. From Martene we learn that in some monasteries the children brought up there were trained to receive Communion at Easter and at Pentecost. Several synodic constitutions and episcopal statutes—one of Saint Charles Borromeo amongst the rest—fixes Easter as the time for this sacred act. And as those who had been prepared for it in common naturally performed it in common, the idea arose of holding a special ceremony for the occasion. By degrees this rite was subjected to regulation. In more than one diocese it was ruled that children were not to be admitted to the solemnity before a stated age, for instance, until they had completed their eleventh or twelfth year, and that, in the interval, they were to study the catechism.

“These rulings evoked vigorous protests and heated controversy in Belgium, Germany and France. By what right—people asked—were so many thousands of children denied their right to be nourished with the Bread of Life? Was a bishop at liberty to exclude a numerous class among the faithful from the use of a Sacrament which an universal law of the Church, and a divine precept, strictly bound them to receive? The dispute was settled by being referred to the Sacred Congregation of the Council. That high tribunal, in a decision which was approved and confirmed by the Sovereign Pontiff, defines the sense in which episcopal laws relating to the present matter are to be interpreted.

“The provincial Council of Rouen having forbidden the admission of children to their First Communion until they had reached their twelfth year, the Sacred Congregation reformed this law, replacing it by the following rule borrowed from the Catechism of the Council of Trent: Let none be allowed to receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist without having knowledge and relish for that Sacrament, according—chiefly—to the judgment of the parish priest and of the priest to whom the child makes its confession. But let parish priests bear in mind that once they have found children to be sufficiently disposed, they may not any longer deny them this super-substantial Bread, which is the life of the soul and the unfailling source of health to the spirit.

“Pius IX severely blamed the Gallician practice of debarring children from the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist. The Cardinal Secretary of State, writing to the French bishops in the Pope’s name, on March 2, 1866, said: ‘It being well known how greatly the use of the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist helps to protect and maintain the innocence of children and how much their constant employment contributes towards nourishing and strengthening the growing piety of these tender young hearts, the Holy Father absolutely condemns this system and wishes to arouse the attention and solicitude of the bishops, in order that they may adopt the proper rule as to admitting children to the practice of the sacraments.’

“Again, we have the following decision of the Sacred Congregation of the Council, of July 21, 1888, concerning episcopal ordinances for regulating Solemn First Communion: ‘These ordinances are to be confirmed subject to circumstances of time and place, with a certain limitation. The limitation is that, according to the decrees of the Lateran and Tridentine Councils, a bishop has no power to prevent priests from admitting to their First Communion those children who have evidently reached the age of discretion.’

“As a result of the fresh impetus which has been given to principles which are as old as the Church her-

self, we shall doubtless see bishops, who have appointed a somewhat advanced age for solemn First Communion—such as eleven, twelve, thirteen or fourteen years completed—lowering that age to nine or ten, at all events allowing their clergy a larger discretion in the matter. People fancy that knowledge of the Eucharist is beyond the grasp of children. They consider it better to instil it into them later on when they will be better able to assimilate it, and that it is even more rational and natural to end up with such teaching, as being too abstract and too far beyond the reach of the senses. So far from this being the case, I venture to assert it as a fact that there is no kind of knowledge which gains readier access to the mind and the sympathies of a child, and therefore that it is more reasonable and more logical, if not to start with it, at all events to link the idea of the Eucharist with such notions as one impresses upon a child before all others. At six years of age children may usually be taught the elementary notions of the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist.

“If one comes across children—and many such may be met with—who have attained the age of discretion before being old enough for the solemn celebration—children, let us say, of eight, nine, or ten—why should they not be allowed to share in the public ceremony by the side of their older, but less intelligent companions? Surely these poor children, whose only fault is that they are less backward and more pious than others, that they have learnt their catechism more quickly and conceived a stronger desire for the Bread of Angels—surely they do not deserve—what is to them—a most bitter mortification—that of being shut out from a festivity in which they will see their comrades sharing with beaming countenances? Moreover, as the Bishop of Annecy points out, this exclusion robs them of the great good they would derive from the general Communion, the retreat, the impressive ceremony, the hymn-singing, the family gathering, the mutual joy of parents and children, and finally the renewal of baptismal vows and the consecration to the Blessed Virgin.”

(to be continued)



COMMUNION EVE



(Written for the Sentinel)

I cannot feel the rapture
His blessed Saints have felt,
My heart like theirs for Jesus
With love it doth not melt.

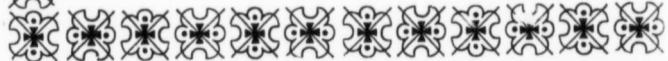
No noble deed, no virtue,
Unto Him could I bring,
Only a soul sore, sinful
Could be my offering.

But what it is I know not,
That doth my heart relieve.
That gives it peace unearthly
Each sweet Communion Eve.

The trials that would crush me
Some other day with pain,
This Eve I feel their burden
Grow light and free from strain.

For Jesus cometh to me,
My only Joy in pain
And if there's aught that's wanting
In Him my needs I'll gain.

If I've displeased my neighbour.
Or sinned or done amiss
With sorrow I will ask Him
For a forgiving kiss.



What if the world be dreary ?
To-morrow Jesus comes,
And every pain or anguish
With Him but sweet becomes.

If failings and temptations
Should sink my spirit weak
When Jesus comes, oh, from him
The needed strength I'll seek.

Communion E've ! That blest hope,
Brings Hope and Joy serene,
That earth with all its splendours,
Knows not, nor e'er hath seen.

That thought comes like a star-shine
And lights the weary heart.
That through earth's night keeps
To win the rightened part. [struggling]

Communion Eve ! what wonder
If this my joy shall be,
For what need we O Jesus
On heav'n and earth but Thee ?

We know that Thou art coming
And so it is that we
Make light of earth's vain phantom,
With hope of having Thee

No matter how'er sinful
My soul, dear Lord, may be,
I know, I feel, I confess,
That thou art all to Me.

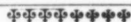
S. M. F.
Holy Angels' Convent
Trevandrum.





→ FATHER CARSON EXPLAINS ←

A dialogue on early and daily Communion for all.



RS. MARY went up the steps of the parochial residence with an air of excited determination, and rang the door bell with energy. She had a very positive way with her when anything was on her mind.

"Father Carson, please," said she to the smiling housekeeper.

"Tell him I wish to talk with him on something urgent—and important."

Father Carson smiled too, when he received the message.

"I think I can guess what that 'something' is," said he; "you'd better have the pile of books on my study-table convenient, to bring me, when I ring. I'm afraid Mrs. Mary is going to examine me in theology, ethics, and canon law this afternoon." And he went downstairs to the parlor.

"Well, Father Carson!" cried Mrs. Mary, "what is this that Bobby says you told him! That poor little mite to make his First Communion in May?"

"And why not, to be sure?" answered Father Carson, with provoking good-humor. "Isn't he turned seven

whole years of age? Didn't you listen when I read the Pope's decree at Mass the other Sunday?"

"Well!" said Mrs. Mary, with a peculiar emphasis, settling herself more firmly in her chair. "Just go ahead. I suppose you're going to try to convert me to these new ideas. But it will be a very cold day in June when you can satisfy me that Bobby ought to be making his First Communion now."

"My dear Mrs. Mary," answered Father Carson, with a pleasant twinkle in his eye, "I can sum up all the arguments I need to use with you in one short, true sentence. Bobby should make his First Communion now, because unfortunately, he has not made it sooner,—and he should make it in May, so that he can go every day during Our Lady's month, and as often as he can forever afterwards. Now, what do you think of that?"

"Think!" gasped Mrs. Mary, "I think it perfectly awful—the very idea!"

"Now I'm going to ask you, Mrs. Mary," said Father Carson, looking a bit more serious, "to tell me your doubts, your difficulties, your fears and questions—all the reasons you have against Bobby's making his First Communion now, and going every day of his life that he can. Because I know," and here the smile came back again, "that if you are once converted to orthodox views on this so very important matter of Children's Communions, you will become the apostle of your neighborhood, and save your pastor a great deal of explaining."

"Oh, I suppose so!" said Mrs. Mary, with a toss of her head. Well, to begin with, he's much too young."

"Too young for what?" answered Father Carson, amiably.

"Too young to understand what he is doing, to begin with," answered Mrs. Mary.

"No please attend to what I am going to say, Mrs. Mary. You think Bobby too young because he can't understand. But perhaps you don't realize, that in order to receive the benefit of the Blessed Sacrament, one doesn't need to understand. Why, in some places in the very earliest days of the Church—now mark this well—

little babies, just after Baptism, were taken up to the altar and given a sip of the Precious Blood. Do you suppose the Fathers, who approved of that custom of giving Communion to babies in arms, did not know their Christian Doctrine as well as ourselves? And what can a babe in arms understand of Holy Communion? And yet I assure you, that if only those little babes were baptized, and swallowed one drop of that Precious Blood, they received an increase of sanctifying grace in their souls, as surely as did the greatest saint who ever went to Communion."

"Well, I declare!" cried Mrs. Mary. Babies in arms? I never heard of such a thing! And do you say that they truly received the good of the Sacrament?"

"They undoubtedly did!" answered Father Carson, with emphasis. "And why shouldn't they, pray? Is there anyone in the world more innocent than a little child? And all that one needs to receive a fruitful Holy Communion, is to be baptized and in the state of grace, and to swallow the Sacred Species of the Sacrament."

"Even if one doesn't know what he is doing?" gasped Mrs. Mary.

"Even if one doesn't know what he is doing!" affirmed Father Carson. "The one only thing absolutely necessary is,—the state of grace. True, if one has the use of reason, there must be some intention to receive the Sacrament,—but supposing this, the one thing necessary is—the state of grace."

"But how can that be!" cried Mrs. Mary. "I always thought that a good preparation was so necessary, to receive Holy Communion fruitfully."

"All we grown-ups," answered Father Carson, "owe it to our Eucharistic Lord, to make ready for Him with all the reverence and love we can, when he visits us in the Blessed Eucharist. And this preparation surely opens a wider door to the grace of the Sacrament. The better we prepare, the more grace we receive. But so long as we are in the state of grace, and have a good intention, the door is open wide enough for grace to enter in. Our Lord can come fruitfully into our souls. And the reason



of this wonderful truth, which I see puzzles you very much, is contained in these three words, which theologians use to describe the action of the Blessed Sacrament:—It has an efficacy '*Ex opere operato.*'"

"Latin! But what does it mean?" answered Mrs. Mary.

"It means, '*On account of the deed which is done,*'" answered Father Carson, "and if you wish to understand what is, to my mind, the very basic reason for early and frequent Communion, you must listen to a thorough explanation of the meaning of those three words, '*ex opere operato.*'"

"Please go on," said Mrs. Mary, "I'll do my very best to understand."

"Every Sacrament," began Father Carson, "is really an act, and a prayer of Our Blessed Lord. True it is the priest or other minister who goes through the actions, and who speaks the words, but he does so in the name and in the person of Christ. And the Heavenly Father, seeing those actions, hearing those words which Christ has bidden His ministers to do and speak in His Name, is moved by the merits of His Divine Son, to pour down on the recipient that grace, actual and sanctifying, which Christ meant that they should receive when He instituted the Sacrament. Is that clear to your mind?"

"You mean," said Mrs. Mary, "that God gives us grace because the Sacrament is, in His eyes, not only an act of the priest, but even more an act of His Divine Son. I think I can follow that."

"Very good!" went on Father Carson. "This, then, is what is meant by '*opus operatum,*' the 'deed which is done' in Christ's Person, and in His Name; and so long as those words and actions are duly performed by the authorized representative of Christ, The Sacrament is complete, ready to pour grace into the soul of the recipient, by reason of the very '*deed which has been done.*' Remember it is Christ who has done the deed. It is His merit which moves the Heavenly Father to pour down grace on the recipient. All that is absolutely required now, on the part of the receiver of the Sacrament is this—

that he put no positive impediment in the way. Now apply all this to the Blessed Eucharist. This Holy Sacrament is made ready at the Consecration of the Mass, when bread and wine are changed into Christ's Body and Blood. But it is applied to the receiver, when he performs the act of swallowing the Sacrament. He may be distracted at the moment. He may be a tiny babe, which has just been baptized. But if he swallows the Sacramental Body of Christ, *opus est operatum— the deed is done.* Jesus has fed him with His Sacred Body, as He fed His Apostles at the Last Supper. God has seen the Holy Sign completed, and by virtue of *'the deed that has been done ('ex opere operato,' you remember)* He unfailingly pours down His grace, into that soul, unless some obstacle interfere. Now what are the obstacles that can interfere in the case of Holy Communion? Only the lack of those two conditions which Christ Himself laid down and which His Church teaches us are alone required for a fruitful reception of this Sacrament. And these two conditions are, first, the state of grace, gained by Baptism, or by Penance after a mortal fall; and second, in adults, the intention to receive the Sacrament. Now, is all this clear?"

"It sounds very strange," said Mrs. Mary, "why—from what you say, nothing more is required for a fruitful Communion, than for a fruitful Baptism."

"Only the state of grace," said Father Carson, smiling. "Anyone who can be baptized, can receive the Holy Eucharist fruitfully straightway afterward, provided only he can swallow the Blessed Sacrament. But from motives of reverence, not every one who may be baptized, is allowed to receive the Holy Eucharist. The two Sacraments are not equally necessary, you see."

"Well—isn't it an irreverence to the Blessed Sacrament," said Mrs. Mary "to give Communion to little tots who can scarcely say their prayers? How can they realize what they are doing!"

"Ah, my dear Mrs. Mary," said Father Carson, "if it comes to that, do we realize much more ourselves what we are doing, when we receive the Bread of Life? We

believe that Jesus Himself is present,— truly and really present there in the adorable Sacrament as He is in the court of heaven,—but how far do we realize the great Gift of God? Does it fill our heart and mind for hours and hours beforehand? Do we spend days and nights in an ecstasy of gratitude afterward, unable to do anything else than marvel at the goodness and mercy of God? And yet these things are what one would expect from us, if we realized what it means to receive the God of heaven Himself in the Blessed Sacrament.”

“Why,” said Mrs. Mary, “I suppose not. I don’t, I’m sorry to say. Only the great saints realized it so.”

Then let us not keep the little ones from this mighty Sacrament, which works such sure and splendid holiness in their souls, because they forsooth do not all-together realize what they are doing! If that were requisite for good Communions, good Communions would be rare, indeed, I fear.”

“But if all this is true, then why are we urged to make such a careful preparation before Holy Communion,” inquired Mrs. Mary, “if one can receive fruitfully with so little preparing?”

“To receive Communion fruitfully is one thing,” said Father Carson. “To do our full duty by our loving Lord requires something more. Surely, the best we can do is not too good for such a visitor. We should never think of sitting down to any earthly banquet with any earthly guest, until we had made ourselves neat and clean, and seen to it that everything was ready to entertain him. How much more carefully we should prepare when we are making ready to entertain the Lord of heaven and earth! And then, as I was saying before, another weighty reason for careful preparation, is that the better one is prepared, the more grace he receives from the Sacrament. The floods of grace which Holy Communion brings to the portals of our soul are like a mighty river, bountiful enough to save a world of souls. But not all that flood of graces can enter into every heart. If the flood-gates of our soul have been thrown wide by a careful preparation, great tides of grace pour in upon us.

But if they have merely been set a bit ajar by a good intention and the state of grace, then the fruit of the Sacrament will be less bountiful and overflowing. The better we prepare, the more our grace and merit are."

"Then the longer the preparation the better!" exclaimed Mrs. Mary.

"As good and as fervent a preparation as we can make under the circumstances,— we owe that to God and to our own souls," said Father Carson. "But suppose that we find ourselves unable to spend a very long time in preparation? Holy Communion, remember, is the Food of our soul. Now, who would refrain from eating when in sore need of food, merely because he had not time to prepare as carefully as he would desire? Our Lord bids us to consider the Blessed Sacrament as our food. One can scarcely spend as much time in immediate preparation for taking one's daily bread, as one might for a ceremonious banquet which one attends only once or twice a year."

"But isn't all that a dangerous doctrine?" exclaimed Mrs. Mary. "People are careless enough as it is. If they hear that a long preparation isn't absolutely required, they will do still less to make ready to receive Our Lord."

"Of course, it is a dangerous doctrine," answered Father Carson, "for those tepid folk who are always on the look-out for ways of doing as little as they possibly can for God. Such people are always in danger of abusing God's goodness, and they should, indeed, be urged to make a more and more careful preparation. But it is not these tepid and careless ones who wish to go often and daily to Holy Communion and are deterred by vain scruples and groundless fears. It is the good and fervent men and women and the innocent children that are kept away from the altar by false and exaggerated notions of what is required by way of preparation. To them one must say with the Pope:—'What is absolutely necessary is, the state of grace and a good intention.' After that, the more careful one's preparation is, the better. Let us do as much as ever we can for Our Lord. If we can do only a little, we need not, therefore, stay away from His Heavenly repast."

"Well, somehow," said Mrs. Mary, "I still see something unbecoming in letting a little mite receive the Blessed Sacrament."

"Mrs. Mary," said Father Carson, "I asked you for reasons and you are giving me prejudices. The one thing unbecoming in God's sight is sin. Sin alone can make a soul ugly and disgusting to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. And where is He more sure of finding that snowy sinlessness, which His Sacred Heart so deeply delights in and longs for, than in the fresh, stainless heart of a simple, innocent child? And do you think, Mrs. Mary, that we are any of us much more than children in Jesus' sight? Ah, but we are naughty children, most of us, who have grown rebellious and wayward, and grieved our heavenly Father's Heart. We are spoiled children, who give Him anxiety and pain. But these tender little ones are as pure and spotless now as when He gathered them to His loving arms in the Sacrament of Baptism. And how He must yearn to keep them so all their lives! How He must long with all His mighty Heart to come to them every day, in the all-powerful Sacrament of Love, to quite preoccupy them, body and soul, and keep them all His own! Do you never look at Bobby's bright and innocent little face, Mrs. Mary, and wish that he might always be as pure, as good and white of soul, as he is now, when he is guileless and young?"

Mrs. Mary wiped away a furtive tear.

"Of course I do! What mother doesn't?" said she, "dear little fellow! I just hate to think of his ever growing up."

"And who can keep him pure and innocent so surely," said Father Carson, "as Jesus Himself, if He feeds him every morning with His Own Flesh and Blood? Would it not be the best, Mrs. Mary, to let Our Lord take early and daily possession of these pure little hearts, before the world, and the flesh, and the devil steal in and work sad ruin of their innocence?"

REV. EDWARD F. GARESCHÉ S.J.

(To be continued.)



HOUR OF ADORATION
"Behold thy Mother"

(Continued from February Number)

Rev. Père Chauvin, S.S.S.

III. REPARATION.

"Behold thy Mother!" — John was a good son to Mary. For the long years that he had the happiness of caring for her after the Ascension of Jesus, the disciple was toward her a model of filial devotedness. But it must not be forgotten that he had not accepted Mary as his Mother for himself alone. It was in the name of all mankind that he had received her from Jesus; it was in the name of all that he contracted with her the obligation of loving and serving her.

It is, then, a rigorous duty to recognize in Mary a Mother. It is a commandment, an expressed will of the Son of God, a new moral law which He promulgated and wishes to see observed by every one who desires to be His disciple.

How do I fulfil my obligations of child of Mary? Do I in practice recognize Mary for my real Mother? Am I persuaded that it was to bring me forth to the life of grace that Mary suffered so much on Calvary? that it is I who have brought so many tears to her eyes by crucifying her well-beloved Son?

Do I compassionate the dolors of Mary when meditating on the sufferings of Jesus? Have I not despised her tenderness, disdained her love? How many Christians, in spite of their sacred promises, think not of her, never kneel before her image to repeat that prayer which cradled their infancy — *Ave Maria!*

What sorrow for Mary! To have children who have cost her so dear, to have sacrificed herself for them, and to receive from a great number of them only coldness, neglect, and ingratitude, indifference and forgetfulness! Do you not hear her at this very moment expressing her grief and, in a voice broken by sobs, repeating the words of the prophet: "I have brought up children and exalted them, but they have despised me" (Is. I, 2).

We despise Mary, above all, when we despise her Son by committing sin. Mortal sin is the greatest affront that we can offer to her Son. Sin dishonors Him by destroying grace in the soul and making it a slave of Satan. When the Blessed Virgin appeared on the mountain of La Salette, her eyes were full of tears, her countenance expressive of deep sorrow. Why? It was because, turning her eyes to earth, she beheld everywhere souls degraded, debased by sin. It was, again, because her children, alas! in such numbers, blasphemed God, violated the Lord's day and, by a voluptuous and sensual life, profaned their title and character of Christian.

How many of them, in spite of her tears and sufferings, in spite of all her loving efforts, have lost their souls, and are now and forever in the abyss of hell! And these souls, once a part of her family, Mary loved, and desired to draw to herself that she might associate them with herself in happiness. But in vain did she extend to them her arms! How her maternal heart must have thrilled with horror on hearing these words: "Depart, ye cursed! . . ."

Have I myself a great respect for my Mother in heaven? Do I look upon her as the most sublime creation of God? Am I persuaded that, being the Mother of God and at the same time the Mother of men, she has a right, — *latria*, or the supreme worship due only to God, excepted — to all kinds of worship, all kinds of homage? Have I for her the most profound veneration in thought, word, and action? Have I the highest esteem, sovereign respect for her name, her images, her sanctuaries, her worship, her prerogatives, and all that relates to her person? "*Honora matrem tuam!* Honor thy Mother!"

Another duty of the child toward the mother is exact *obedience*, prompt and perfect. What does Mary desire of me? Hear her at this moment addressing to you the recommendation that she made at the wedding of Cana: "Whatsoever He shall say to you, do you!" Consequently, do you wish to be pleasing to me? Then, be detached from the world, be humble, meek, and merciful — pray, respect your parents and all representatives of authority, — fly impurity, injustice, and lying. Love your neighbor and, above all, love my Son whom you have the happiness of possessing in the Holy Eucharist. Come often, every day if possible, to assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the memorial and renewal of the Sacrifice of the Cross. Approach the Holy Table as often as possible, and eat with fervor and love the Divine Bread that I have prepared for you. Spend as long as you can in the company of my adorable Son, who remains here in the Host to help you, to sanctify you, and to save you.

Hearken, again, to the earnest recommendations that Mary in these latter days addressed to her children. When giving the Miraculous Medal to one of her servants, she suggested as an ejaculatory prayer these beautiful words: "O Mary, conceived

without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee!" — At La Salette, great tears fell from her eyes, and she pronounced terrible chastisements if men would not be converted. As arousing God's wrath in a very special manner, she signalized blasphemy, the profanation of Sunday, the violation of the law of abstinence, and she was insistent in her demand for reparation. — At Lourdes, she appeared, a Rosary on her arm, her eyes raised toward heaven, and she revealed her name in these words: "*I am the Immaculate Conception!*" Then she exclaimed: "Penance, penance, penance! Pray for sinners! . . . Let all come here. Go to the holy spring, and wash therein. . . ."

How have I put in practice these recommendations of my Mother? "*Obedite parentibus vestris in Domino.*" Again, my duty as a child is to love my Mother. Do I love her as Jesus, her Son, loves her, — as John, her adopted son loves her, — that is, with a love tender, filial, constant?...

IV. PÉTITION.

"Behold thy Mother!" — John at once responds to the desire of his good Master. "*The disciple,*" says the Sacred Text, "*took her to his own,*" and until her death, he showed himself the devoted child of his good Mother.

Let us not forget that every one of us, I myself, miserable sinner, Jesus bequeathed to His Mother when He said: "*Behold thy Mother!*" To fulfil perfectly the duties that this testament of the Saviour imposes on us, to become the worthy children of Mary, we must be for her like unto John, filled, as he was, with filial veneration and tender love for her.

No one was better fitted than John to take Jesus' place toward that holy Mother. He was the intimate friend of the Master. Jesus had culled him like a lily in the still enclosed garden of the Church. He had kept him at His side, nourished him with His sacred word, confided to him His most secret thoughts. John, on his side, had always shown Jesus much love. He alone of all the Apostles, had followed Him to Calvary, and he alone stood there at the foot of the Cross to receive His last sight.

Again, John was a virgin, and for that, above all, was he the well-beloved disciple of Jesus. It was his love for virginity that had led him to be preferred to Peter, Andrew, James, or any other of the disciples. "When dying, Jesus commended His Virgin-Mother to His virgin-disciple," says Saint Jerome.

If I wish to be a true child of Mary, I must, O Divine Saviour, become a faithful copy of Thy well-beloved saint John. How often Thou hast nourished me, not only with Thy Sacred Word, but still more with the substantial Bread of Thy own Sacred Flesh! How many sweet revelations of love hast Thou made to me on our frequent heart to heart communications in Holy Communion! Yes, I confess it, my soul filled with gratitude, — I have, indeed, been the disciple that Thou lovest!

And how little have I responded to those loving advances ! Grant me, O my Saviour that love of which I have need. I ask it earnestly through Thy Mother and mine. That will be the first condition for my becoming a true child of Mary.

John was a virgin. Mary delights only in the midst of lilies. And I am but sin, my evil passions seethe within me. Give me the love and the practice of this beautiful virtue, O Jesus, that I may become a worthy child of such a Mother !

Grant, O Jesus, that I may cherish Thy Cross as did Thy beloved disciple ! I desire to remain near unto Thee with Mary and John, above all when Thou art outraged. There it is that I shall better understand the beauty and the grandeur of that word addressed to me as well as to Thy disciple of predilection: "*Behold thy Mother!*"

Mary, Mother of Jesus and my Mother, realize in me in all its perfection, the last desire of thy beloved Son ! For the sake of Jesus and of Saint John, the first and the most loving of thy adopted sons, make of me, of mine, of all Christians, thy devoted children, faithful unto death.


St. Mary Magdalen.


(See frontispiece)

Behold Magdalen in her suffering love ! She goes where men dare not go. She mounts even to Calvary, abandons her loved family, follows Jesus Christ suffering even to the end. We see her with Mary at the foot of the Cross. The Gospel names her, and well does she deserve it. What is she doing there ? She is loving, she is compassionating. He who loves, desires to share the condition of his friend. Love fuses two existences, into one. Magdalen is not standing. She remembers that she has been a sinner, and that her place is on her knees. Mary alone is standing, immolating her dear Son, her Isaac.

Magdalen remains there until after the death of Jesus. On the morning of the first day of the week, she returns. She knows very well that Jesus is buried ; but she still wishes to suffer and weep. The Gospel lauds the zeal, the magnificence of the gifts of the other women ; but of Magdalen, it speaks only of her tears. Behold the Christian heroine ! More than all the saints, Magdalen shows forth to us the divine mercy.



Eucharistic Thoughts



Those who know the Blessed Sacrament have always found it a source of strength in each day of the unending battle with sin and self. They have been able to come to Him at the day's end, or maybe midday, in the thick of things, to talk their hearts to Him, and get His reply; and they have learned to say again: "The Lord is my help, I shall not fail. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, have mercy!"

But in another way comes might from the tabernacle to help us make iron of our wills, and hold fast to Him, unbudging in the contest. It is by the inspiration of the Sacred Prisoner's example, the comforting knowledge that here with us He Himself is unchanging, ever steadfast.

For He is always present in the tabernacle, and always the same dear God there, for the food and life of our souls. Men, even His own children, may neglect Him, but that will not move Him to relax His tireless waiting for them. His souls may be exposing themselves recklessly, or others begrimed in filthy sin may be wallowing there and stubbornly resisting His every call. Yet, undiscouraged and heedless of neglect and insult, He remains the unchanged Watcher, alert for the crucial moment to strengthen this weak soul against this terrible allurements, endlessly looking for the least sign of repentance in this fallen one.

His presence, too, in the Sacred Host is a straitened presence, wherein His sight and hearing and other senses are held bound; a lowly presence, where the adorable God is hidden under the species of bread, and for that very reason is scoffed at by unbelievers as a God to be eaten; a helpless presence where He is absolutely in the

hands of His creatures, and even liable to unspeakable sacrilege. Still, all this means nothing to Him. The one act of love that placed Him on the altar in the beginning has kept Him there, day in and day out, and through each minute of the night, our same unchanged Prisoner, our same ceaseless Watcher, unmoved, always our God with us, there beneath the sanctuary lamp. "I am thy God, and I do not change.

For lovers of the Blessed Sacrament that thought will be a steadying inspiration in the work-a-day struggle. In the pressure on all sides to yield, to ease up the firmness of the will and give way a little to looseness and the easy downward drawings of persons or circumstances, of seasons like the summer time, of moods and passions; when it is easy and apparently "no harm" to give in a bit, and it takes an extra fight to say "no," then the thought of Him who has never relaxed His tabernacle love for us, who never budes from the lowly humiliating position He has taken to be with us, will thrill us with the determination to remain unbudged in the stand we have taken for Him. Is He not our loyal changeless One, and would we not be steadfastly, firmly like Him? Each hour, then, when for a moment we turn and beg: "Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, have mercy on us," we shall think of Him as immovable here on the altar for love of us, and our aspiration will mean: "Make my will firm and immovable in doing right and resisting temptations for love of Thee."

Request for Prayers



Quebec: Miss Annie Leonard. — Montreal: Mrs. Michael Carey. — Barrie, Ont: Miss Mary Stritch.

R. I. P.

Venerable Pierre Julien Eymard

Founder of the Society of the Most Blessed Sacrament.



(Continued)

As soon as he was old enough he was sent to school, where he remained until his twelfth year, an example of application to study and modesty for all his companions. If sometimes a coarse word escaped their lips, he would say: "Stop that! Be silent! It is not nice of you and, besides, it is displeasing to the good God." If they were larger and stronger than himself, he would write to them as soon as he returned home from school; "If you go on speaking in my presence as you have done, understand that I will have nothing more to do with you, for it gives me too much pain." Soon he exercised over them so great an influence that even the boldest restrained themselves in his presence, and carefully avoided whatever might wound his modesty.

The thought of the priesthood spurred him on in his studies. Once he went very simply to the Curé and said to him: "M. le Curé, will you teach me my lesson? I want to be a priest." "What book have you?" asked the good Curé. "My treatise on politeness," answered the child. It was a Gothic manuscript, the *ne plus ultra* of the scholars of his day. He added that he wanted to go to Rome, to kiss the feet of the Holy Father, and obtain the pardon of all his sins. He himself acknowledged his great trouble every time he had to go to confession, for he knew not what to tell. He was inconsolable over this, and he used to say: "If I never commit sins, I shall not longer have the happiness of going to confession." He then recalled two rude words that he had pronounced, and took them to the confessional. His sister declared that she never saw him disobey but twice, and then he at once accused himself, promising that it

would never occur again. She added: "He always led a pure and irreprehensible life. I never saw him commit a voluntary venial sin."

First Communion was for Pierre Julien a decisive moment. Oh, with what care he prepared for it! During the catechetical instructions he could not restrain his tears, and he was astonished at not seeing his companions equally touched. When he mentioned it to them, they replied that they could not weep as he did. Ah, that is a privilege given only to chaste and deeply earnest souls! To angelic purity he joined sincere penance and mortification. He fasted during a whole Lent, secretly giving his breakfast to the poor, and sleeping on a plank. It was at this period of his life that he used to go barefoot to pray at the Calvary of "La Mure." Once, as he afterward related, he tried to imitate all that he had read about the saints. "Oh, how much I loved the good God when I was little. I would not have offended Him for all the gold in the world!"

At last, came the morning of the great day, March 16, 1823. "How many graces," he says, "did Our Lord grant me at my First Communion! Then it was that my conversion was sincere and entire. At the moment I received Jesus into my breast, I said to Him: One day I will be a priest. I promise Thee!" Oh, admirable promise! He did not say, "I ask it of Thee." but "*I promise Thee!*" He seemed, as it were, to have a presentiment of all that it was going to cost him to realize his desire. His devotion to the Blessed Virgin was ardent. While still a child, he went to cast himself at Mary's feet, a rough rope around his neck, and thus consecrated himself to that good Mother. It was to her that he confided the success of his cherished enterprise. At the age of ten, he went on foot to the chapel of Notre-Dame de Laus, about fifteen miles from La Mure, there to find out his vocation. He returned with the irrevocable resolution of becoming a priest. The Blessed Virgin gave Him the assurance of her protection in an extraordinary manner. Doubtless, she appeared to him. Discreet as he was, he rarely spoke of himself, and of his good qualities; yet,

once or twice, he dropped a few words which might lead to this opinion. When one lives with another, he himself has said when speaking of his own communication with Our Lord, one ends by finding out all that he thinks. It was by such remarks that he betrayed himself so to say. Speaking once of the pilgrimages to Laus which he had made during his childhood, he said: "One kisses the ground the moment this venerable church comes in view." "And why?" "Because there the Blessed Virgin is so kind. There—there one can *see* her!" Then he blushed, appeared annoyed and became silent. Again, these words escaped him: "Oh! at Laus, there one *sees* the Blessed Virgin!" and immediately added: "Ah! I have said too much." All this naturally betrayed his secret. It was at this time he had special need of Mary's maternal protection to lead him to the priesthood, for multiplied obstacles were then confronting him. His father constantly opposed the boy's desires and vocation, and refused him the means of making the necessary studies. His only idea was to secure the assistance of his son and, later on to behold him taking his own place as a cutler and oil-presser. But He who had snatched David from the midst of his father's sheep to place him over his people, drew to His Heart this youth to make him the Apostle of Eucharistic love.

Love triumphs over all obstacles. With his little savings, Pierre purchased an old Latin grammar, and from it learned the rudiments of the language. From time to time, he would ask an explanation from some or other of the seminarians who were spending their vacation in his neighborhood. Meanwhile, he continued his work at the oil-press, though studying in secret. But he found his progress unsatisfactory, so he humbled himself so far as to ask admission into a boarding-school as a poor scholar, and this he obtained. There he received some little instruction, for which he paid by domestic services.

Shortly after he entered the home of a priest of Grenoble where, in consideration of his services, he received lessons in Latin. In about two years, he returned to La Mure. There he continued his studies, though without

a teacher, by translating the Latin authors, and examining his own work by means of the vernacular editions which he procured for the purpose.

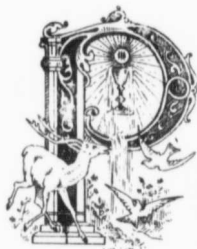
It was during this time that he lost his good mother. On learning the news of her death, which was announced to him without the least preparation, he hastened to throw himself at the feet of the Blessed Virgin, begging her to take him for her child. She did, indeed, hearken to the request.

Pierre's courage, moreover, was unshaken. On a certain day, he thought he had attained the end of his desires. His father consented to allow him to enter among the Oblates of Mary; but unfortunately, a new trial awaited him. After ten months of novitiate, a dangerous sickness led him back to his father's house, where he remained for two whole years, always ill, but confiding in the goodness of Mary. Once, when he was thought to be in his agony, some one said to him that now he must give up his idea of becoming a priest. But he exclaimed with all the strength of which he was capable: "I *will* be a priest! I *will* offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass!"

Pierre Julien had attained his twentieth year when he lost his father. Free now to follow his vocation, he presented himself, though still very weak, at the Grand Seminary of Grenoble. He was received and, after three years, was ordained to the priesthood, July 20, 1834. Without delay, he hastened to cast himself at the feet of the Blessed Virgin in the church of Notre-Dame de l'Osier. There it was that he celebrated his first Mass all alone, without even the presence of his good sister, all alone with Jesus and Mary! He always said that he owed absolutely everything to Mary, that she had been his professor in all his studies, theology excepted, for that was the only branch in which he had followed the regular course.

(to be continued.)

The Apostle of His Family



PERCY BROWN, without doubt, is in Heaven with the angels and saints. Indeed, his short career was so unusual that he deserves a place among God's apostles.

When a little fellow of five years he was a frequent visitor at a neighbor's house next door to his own Protestant home. And for this reason, in one of the rooms of this good Catholic family there hung a large and beautiful picture of the crucifixion of Our Lord. It was something new and strange to Percy, and the very first time he saw it he demanded an explanation, which was given with due deference to the supposed infantile intelligence of the inquirer. He was awed and impressed and constantly spoke about it at home. He was not understood, of course, and no attention was paid to his prattling. His visits to the picture continued, however, and the good mother of the Catholic home instinctively felt that there was something unusual about Percy. His two brothers took him to the public school when he was a little over six years old. But he was not satisfied there, and left after a few days, and, without the knowledge of his parents, went to the parochial school with a little Catholic friend of his own age. His brothers mentioned the matter at home, but when Percy seemed so happy his parents said it "made no difference," and permitted him to continue.

The next year, during the Ember Days of September, the younger children of Saint Mary's School were prepared for first confession. Percy, who had learned his Catechism and the method of confessing, marched to the church with the rest and took his place near the box.

A lady who was making a visit to the Blessed Sacrament in the church had her attention attracted to the children and was surprised to see the little "Protestant

boy" who had never been baptized, seated with the Catholic children before the "box." She knew Percy fairly well, and was quite a friend to the little boy; in fact, the picture of the Crucifixion to which we have referred was in her house. She immediately spoke to the Sister in charge of the class.

"Sister, isn't that Percy Brown?"

"Yes; Percy is going to make his first confession. He is well prepared."

"But, Sister, don't you know every one belonging to him is Protestant? Why, the child has never been baptized in any church."

"What!" exclaimed the Sister, turning pale, "Percy not a Catholic—not baptized, you say?"

"He is not a Catholic and has never been baptized," repeated the lady. "I live next door."

The Sister lost no time in going over to Percy and telling him that he could not go to confession—that she did not know that he was not a Catholic. The effect upon Percy was startling.

"Oh! Sister," he sobbed. "I am a Catholic. I do want to go and tell my sins. I ain't a Protestant."

His grief was heart-breaking. The children all stood up and looked at the little fellow, thinking he was re-proved for some misdemeanor; and the priest, hearing the noise, came out of the confessional and asked what was the matter. The Sister told him. Looking at the tear-stained little face and the swimming blue eyes, the priest smiled and said:

"Why, my boy, what is the reason you want to go to confession?"

"To tell my sins," said the little six year old, between his sobs.

"But your sins cannot be forgiven by absolution. You have never been baptized."

"Well, then, baptize me, Father, and let me go to confession."

The priest hesitated. The little face was thoughtful, even though drenched with tears.

“Well, you may come into the confessional. But you must stop crying and not distract your companions.” And the priest returned to the box.

Percy was quiet at once, and when his turn came he went into the confessional. When he came out he went straight to the altar railing and knelt there in prayer. As he left the church he said to the Sister: “I’m going to bring my mother to Father-to-morrow. I am going to be baptized a Catholic.”

The Sister was rather surprized at the emphasis of the little fellow, and said warningly: “Dont make your mother angry, Percy. You ought to wait until you are older.”

“But suppose I should die!” said the little philosopher. “You told us yourself, Sister, we would never see God without being baptized.”

The Sister acknowledged the fact, but, not wishing to cause trouble in a Protestant household, told Percy to say a fervent prayer before he asked his mother.

What Percy told his mother we do not know, but the very next afternoon she came to the rectory with Percy.

She explained that the boy gave her no peace, insisted on being baptized, and was so serious and earnest that she and his father saw no great harm in gratifying him; and she asked the priest to baptize him. Percy was radiant with joy. The good pastor baptized him, and the mother with a few others who were present, watched the ceremonial.

Percy received the name of Joseph, and was so delighted that he would answer to nothing else, except from his father, who always called him Percy.

He bought a small crucifix and wore it around his neck, and continued his attendance at Saint Mary’s School. He was obedient and attentive and possessed the usual amount of boyish liveliness. After a year or two he began to tease his mother about his two brothers. He told her that they would never go to Heaven if they were not baptized, and he continually spoke of the beautiful instructions and the many interesting things that happened at the parish school. In the end he per-

sueded her to send the other two boys to Saint Mary's with him.

The Sisters were surprised and delighted one morning to see his two elder brothers (not much older to be sure) and have them placed on the school roll. This young apostle never ceased until he obtained their consent and that of their parents to their baptism, and both boys received the sacred waters of regeneration. They appreciated the grace that was given to them through their little brother, and they loved him with an extraordinary tenderness, in which all at home shared. In due time all three were confirmed and made their First Holy Communion.

Percy now became an altar boy, and his piety and diligence were remarkable. He had an altar erected in his little bed-room at home, where he hung his precious crucifix and all the medals and sacred pictures he received at school. One day his father, annoyed at some childish misdemeanor, commanded him to take "that Popish trumpery" down. "If you don't," said the angry man, "I will throw the whole business into the fire and take you from that Papist school."

Percy stood still, as if he were rooted to the spot. Then the large tears gathered in his eyes and rolled down his cheeks and his frame shook with emotion. He fell on his knees.

"Papa! Papa! he cried, "you will break your little boy's heart. Oh! papa, you don't know how good they make me."

The father's heart was touched to see his darling boy, his favorite son, in anguish. He lifted him up and told him he might keep his pictures and stuff. But as Percy nestled to his father's breast his heaving bosom and convulsive sobs showed how the little heart was wounded.

After that his father never permitted him to be crossed in his piety or his "religious notions," as he called them. Percy was frail, and to his parents he seemed like an angel, too sweet and rare to belong to this earth—his face was so pure and spiritual, his saying so unusual, so "old-fashioned," as they phrased it.

After Percy left school he went to learn a trade, and sometimes had to make great efforts and even sacrifices to hear Mass on Sundays and receive the sacraments. On one occasion he was detained late on Saturday night and he cautioned his mother not to let him oversleep himself.

"You know, mother," he said, "Catholics commit a mortal sin if they stay away from Mass on Sunday."

His mother promised, but when she went to call him he looked so weary and slept so soundly she "had not the heart" to rouse the poor boy. When he awoke and found the lateness of the hour he rushed out of the house without his breakfast and ran from church to church, only to find even the last Mass almost over. He returned home disconsolate. All week he was depressed and sad over this accident, and his mother assured him she would never disappoint him again. It was then that Percy asked her to go with him on Sundays, and to please him she consented, and later accompanied him to Mass. One grace led to another, and before the end of the year she was baptized and made her profession of faith.

Percy's whole heart was now set on the conversion of his father. But this seemed an impossibility. Mr. Brown had not interfered nor made objections when the rest of his family followed Percy, but no example nor precept seemed to effect him. He was a good man, as far as honesty and morals go, but he had no use for special piety or religion. Percy grew more fervent, more prayerful. We know not the thoughts that filled his innocent heart, but we know that his health began to decline. He was not nineteen, yet it was evident he had not long to live. Work was perforce given up and the lad remained at home. Patient, gentle, uncomplaining, he prayed and read and became the object of the tenderest love and care.

One day he came across his father sitting on the back porch with his own little Catechism in his hands. The boy said nothing, but his heart gave a great bound of joy.

"Bring him to the faith, Lord, and take my poor life," he murmured.

It was not long before the propitious moment came. His father knew what was passing in the boy's mind and had set to work to learn something of the religion which surrounded him with such peace and content. He felt that his cherished son was praying for him—nay, might be offering his pure life for him. He resisted grace no longer. He spoke to a priest, was instructed and baptized and he became a member of the Holy Catholic Church.

Percy's soul was filled to the brim with holy joy. He lay on his couch, white and wan, but overflowing with happiness. He felt he was dying, but oh! it was easy now to die, when those he loved—mother, father, two brothers—were bound close to him by a common faith and would be with him in the spirit world by the consoling doctrine of the communion of saints. And one day when they gathered round his bed and watched the death damp gather on his forehead he smiled an angel's smile on their bleeding hearts and fled away to receive the crown of an apostle.

Oh! can we doubt that his spirit still hovers over them and helps them to bear life's trials and its pains? "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for their works live after them."—The Rev. Richard W. Alexander in *The Helper*.



... CONTENTS ...

My Friend Across the Way (*poem*). — Holy Communion for Children, (*continued*). — Communion Eve (*poem*). — Father Carson Explains ; A Dialogue on Early and Daily Communion for All. — Hour of Adoration; Behold thy Mother (*concluded*). — Eucharistic Thoughts — Venerable Pierre Julien Eymard. — The Apostle of his Family.