Seventh Day.

The Lord has shown Himself to you also, as He did to the three Wise Men from the East who represented you on the feast of Epiphany. You have had mercy shown you on this day because now you have the right to choose the true faith, and you should be thankful for this grace. You have had a singular privilege extended to you, which all Christians do not enjoy to the fulness. There are among us many who have not the consolation of dying in the arms of Jesus. They cannot claim that He said to them, I am the Resurrection and the Life. We know that they, too,
[018] are hastening with us to the Last Judgment, but with what a difference! When a misfortune befalls these men in life they have no peace of mind; when a humiliation meets them, the ungentle spirit of nature is aroused in them at being despised. They are unhappy in privations, impatient in disputes, and they are selfish. The life of those who think not of Christ is full of misery, disappointment, and dissatisfaction; they sit in the darkness of heathenism; but you who have the faith find relief in all your ills. Be not one of those who by their sinfulness deserve to be deserted by God.

Prayer.

Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, in Thy heavenly mercy, the prayers of Thy suppliant people; that they may perceive where their duty lies, and be enabled to accomplish whatsoever tasks are necessary for their salvation. Amen.

Eighth Day.

Our faith ought to be pure and precious as the gold which the wise kings offered at the throne of God. You ought, then, to hold fast the faith of Jesus Christ, which is preserved in the Catholic Church. Learn your faith, learn the proofs of it; you will be a more

fervent adherent to the chair of St. Peter and be well instructed in everything that concerns the Church. You will pray for our Holy Father, the Pope, and for holy Mother Church in these troublous times. If love is a part of that purity of faith, read nothing, listen to nothing which is against your faith; do not belong to societies that are condemned by the Church, for they are enemies of God's religion. Your faith must be a lively one; give signs of it in your [019] actions. Sweet-smelling as the incense in the hands of the kings must be our faith. Every one should see that we are good and stanch Catholics; education or riches or social standing should not be an obstacle to our humble practice of our religion. What is there more beautiful than a well-educated man practising the Catholic faith according to the laws of the Church? Unhappily the rich and the learned are sometimes ashamed of the Church, leaving it to the poor and ignorant to be good Catholics.

Prayer.

O my God, I thank Thee for the inestimable gift of faith which Thou hast bestowed upon me. Grant that I may always acknowledge this Thy mercy with thanksgiving; and this not only in words, but in making a good use of it. This grace I ask through Thy sweet name, Jesus. Amen.

Ninth Day.

In trying to lead a good Christian life you will often meet with contradictions and persecutions, even from your associates. But the Wise Men included the myrrh of mortification among their gifts. He who wants to lead a life of purity will necessarily meet with many persecutions and crosses, and only when he has taken up the cross can he follow the divine Redeemer. The faith of Christ cannot exist without the bitter herb of mortification. This faith is the power that conquers the world, and the world's insults. Let us then be firm in our faith as the three kings were in all their

[020] trials, for they had many a one to encounter before they found the cave of Bethlehem. Let us show our appreciation then by our zeal and our holy lives. He is my God, and I will glorify Him: the God of my father, and I will exalt Him. Exod. xv. 2. The holy man Job will be an example to us as to how we should serve God in trials and tribulations. Though the Lord allowed great sufferings to come upon him, and precisely because he had been good, still he remained true and firm and would not make a compromise with the devil, his persecutor. Job was thankful for everything that came from the hands of God. He praised God for it all his days.

Prayer.

O my God, how good it is to serve Thee thus, and to give ourselves wholly to Thee. Give to me as Thou didst to the Magi the spirit of wisdom, of prayer, and of sacrifice, so that, following Thee through all my life, I may reach a happy eternity. Amen.

Tenth Day.

It is a singular fact that the star disappeared at Jerusalem, though that was not, as yet, the place where the new-born King of the Jews was to be looked for. Herod was the temporal king of Jerusalem; the high priest and the doctors of the Law were also there. As this was the seat of the religion of the people of God, here were made many prophecies that were to be accomplished. We should have thought that here also the star would have been seen. Jerusalem, however, remains in darkness, the people that were to be the recipients of God's promises are passed over, and

[021] the great grace of vocation was given to men who knew nothing of the testament of God to pagans. The star appears to them and illuminates the darkness in which they find themselves, and calls them to a heavenly light. Our Lord explained this Himself afterwards, when He said that from the rising to the setting of

the sun would come those who would sit at His banquet, while the children of the kingdom should go out empty-handed, for they deserved no better treatment because of their infidelity and presumption.

Prayer.

O God, Who didst permit the children of Israel so often to sink under the trials which Thou didst send them, and so often to offend by yielding under temptation: have regard, I beseech Thee, to Thy servant, and assist me with heavenly strength that I may have patience and courage under all the trials of life. Amen.

Eleventh Day.

We are similar in condition to Jerusalem: We have the promise of God, we have the Messias in our midst, on our altars. Jerusalem was the gay capital of the Jewish nation, and it had no time to attend to the call of God. We also will meet the same fate that overtook that unfortunate city, which knew not the day of its visitation. Our Lord came unto His own, and His own received Him not. We are too busy with the things of this world to give a few thoughts to God; we do not realize the precious gifts of Our Lord, or of His sacred presence, and so we will be allowed to go forth empty-handed; strangers will take our places in the [12] heavenly kingdom, while we shall sit in darkness for all eternity. The Lord will find faithful followers among strangers who have not our knowledge; they are guided only by a star that does not speak. They follow it and are rewarded; they follow it because they acknowledge the fact that they stand in need of a leader and guide.

Prayer.

Help me, O my God, and defend me from all dangers; let Thy heavenly light dart upon my soul amidst all its darkness; let faith be its guide, and support it with hope. Behold, I now protest that

I renounce all kinds of suggestions that are injurious to that faith and hope which I am bound to have in Thee. Amen.

Twelfth Day.

Mary was found with the Child by the Magi; she it was who received the gifts for the Lord. There sat Mary as on a throne, having the Infant Jesus in her lap, and the Wise Men fell down and adored Him. How kingly seemed to them the poverty of that Babe! how right royal that sinless Mother's lap, on which He was enthroned! We, too, have arrived at the stable of Bethlehem in our meditations. Mary is there, holding out towards us also her divine Son. Through her He has become ours in holy communion, ours when we are faithful servants of this good Master. Mary is always with Jesus; we cannot think of the sacred humanity of Christ without thinking also of the Mother who gave Him birth.

[023] How far removed is the Mother from the Son? Let us then bow down in humility and adoration before the Child who is Our God; but let us also look up to Mary. She teaches us God as we never could else have learned Him. The Child Jesus seems to understand better than we that the caresses which are poured out to Him are also intended for us. Let us look with gratitude at this good Mother of Jesus, who is to be our Mother because she has taken us under her protection, and presents our petitions to the divine Infant, her sweet Son.

Prayer.

O Mary, my good Mother, I cast myself into thy arms: obtain for me from thy divine Son the virtues of humility and charity, great purity of heart, of body, and of soul, final perseverance in good, the gift of fervor in prayer, a pious life, and a happy death. Amen.

Thirteenth Day.

Mary is present at our visit to Jesus, to receive the gifts that we are about to bring to the Infant at this sacred season, when we celebrate the feast of Epiphany. We are going to offer to Jesus, through Mary, a gift of gold. Gold is the most precious and the most sought after possession in the world. Whatever we have most precious, then, we will give to Him: our attachment to our family, our inclinations, our prejudices, our possessions, we will lay at the feet of Jesus, so that Mary may point them out to this sacred Babe, and show Him how generous we have been to make a sacrifice of the dearest things we have on earth. The man of the world makes supreme efforts to gain gold, so we will make [24] supreme efforts to bring our whole being, with all its energies, as a sacrifice to Him; our hearts with all their inclinations will be consecrated to the service of Jesus Christ. We will love Him not only in Himself, but in our neighbor; we will succor Him in the person of the poor, and in those even of whom we have to complain; and that on account of His words, As long as you did it to one of these, My least brethren, you did it to Me. Matt. xxv. 40.

Prayer.

O my Mother, give me Jesus as thou didst give Him to the holy Wise Men. Obtain for me a fervent heart to desire Jesus; a pure and humble heart to receive Jesus; a constant heart, that I may never, by the least wilful sin, sadden His loving Heart. Amen.

Fourteenth Day.

During these days make the sacrifice of your heart a persevering, loving, patient sacrifice. You are not going to retain anything of this heart, you are not going to divide your love. Jesus has

given Himself entirely to you; He has been presented to you by the hands of Mary. He has made you a Christian, that you may take advantage of this privilege of enjoying Him as often as you please. You can be on familiar terms with Him, you can unite Him to your heart in holy communion, when He will enter your soul and be such a gracious, noble guest. By your Christian character He has privileged you to participate in all the
[025] sacraments of the Church. He confirms you in your Christianity; He pardons your transgressions when you have fallen, and when, with sorrow in your heart, you wish to rise again; He claims you as His at the end of your life by anointing you in your last sickness: He claims you in fact, body and soul, for His own glory.

Prayer.

Most sweet Infant Jesus, I acknowledge Thee my benefactor. I return Thee thanks for whatever I possess, and I heartily beg Thy grace, that I may make good use of the benefits which through Thy great mercy I enjoy. Amen.

Fifteenth Day.

You are going to appear before Jesus and Mary during these days with the incense of the Magi, which they presented to Him as a tribute of praise; they acknowledged Jesus as their God. Incense is offered to God alone; it is a prayer in itself, and ascends with a pleasant odor. You are going to stand before Jesus offering your incense of prayer and adoration. You have your daily prayers to say; in fact the whole day should be a prayer, which should insert itself into all your actions. How noble will not such a day appear to you when you look back on it! Oh, that all your days were like this one, full of holy joy, peace and happiness; such a happiness as you cannot find in earthly pleasure and enjoyment. Mary will receive this gift of prayer for her divine Son, and point out to

Him the pious Christian that has brought the same sacrifice as did the kings of the East the incense of prayer. How pleased will be our sweet Jesus to receive this gift from our hands, and in exchange He will give us the gift of piety, thus enabling us to [026] love God alone and to despise all else.

Prayer.

Hail, most sweet Jesus, Son of God and of Mary, I love Thee with my whole soul, and above all things, because Thou art infinitely worthy of all love. I firmly resolve by Thy grace to sin no more, and henceforth to avoid all occasions of sin. Amen.

Sixteenth Day.

Mary is found with Jesus, too, in order to accept another gift, which you must not forget and which the Magi brought also, i.e., the bitter myrrh of mortification. We have seen that we should offer a pure heart to the Lord and a life full of prayer, but we must also add to these gifts the virtues of self-denial, self-abnegation and mortification. Mary offered this great gift of generosity in its fulness. She is the Queen of martyrs, the sorrowful Mother. Mourn with her over your own ingratitude and the sins of the world; follow her in the way of the cross of her life; condole with her. It is a precious gift to God to mortify one's self, and one can find daily opportunities of doing so. As a Christian you are not to look backward. Give the same gifts as the Magi did; put some little privation on yourself, no matter what it may be, or how insignificant it may appear. God will look upon it with eyes of love, and in return will enrich you with the spirit of mortification and of sacrifice, which will make you apostles and martyrs. [027]

Prayer.

O most sweet Infant Jesus! grant me, as Thou didst to the Magi, the spirit of wisdom, of prayer, and of sacrifice; so that

following their example of steadfast faith, I may one day receive the reward of eternal happiness. Amen.

Seventeenth Day.

We read that the Lord accompanied His parents on a visit to the Temple in Jerusalem, and remained there unknown to them, when they had departed for their own home. It was His Father's house, and He expressed a kind of wonder that He was expected to be anywhere else at any time. We might apply this to ourselves as well. God is Our Father; the church is Our Father's house, and we should be found at home. Besides, Jesus is in the tabernacle; He, our Brother, is in His Father's house, and the whole family should be gathered there. You should make frequent visits to the church, and should any one be surprised at your conduct, and ask you the reason, you can answer with justice: *Am I not to be about the things that are my Father's?* Go to your work, be in your home, but also love to pass some time in the presence of the Lord in the church. The angels are there, silently praying before their God in the tabernacle; join them in their devout occupation. You like to visit a friend; no nearer nor dearer friend will you ever find than Jesus, your loving Saviour.

Prayer.

[028] O Jesus, Thou knowest my desire of serving Thee with the purest intention of living but for Thee. Thou art my hope, my strength, and my life. I will seek not so much for consolation as for the grace of a greater love towards Thee, my sweet Saviour, and for strength to suffer bravely for Thy greater glory and my own sanctification. Amen.

Eighteenth Day.

From your early childhood you have been brought to the church. Even before you knew what church meant you trotted along with the other children, and sat in your pew and knelt with the rest, not knowing how to pray, not knowing what you were about. But afterwards you began to understand that you were going to a holy place, where sacred things were performed: things that reminded you of heaven, even while you were still on this earth. When you were made a Christian by Baptism, then you were introduced into the mystic body of the Church, and you also received the right to stand in the material temple of the Lord, and take your place among the many members of the Christian people. The Church has become your home, a place of happiness and consolation in all your afflictions. But do we use it as such? Do we go with all our trials and temptations to our sweet Lord, hidden in the tabernacle, Who is there waiting and anxious to console us in our miseries?

Prayer.

My dearest Jesus, how much hast Thou not done to oblige me to love Thee, and how much hath it cost Thee to gain to Thyself my love? Pierce my poor soul, O dearest Jesus, with the sweet [29] dart of Thy love, so that I may ever languish with desire of Thee. Amen.

Nineteenth Day.

When the shepherds were told to seek for the Child Jesus, they were sent to look for a child. When we set out to look for the Redeemer we expect to see something remarkable; with fear and trembling we approach the spot, and find only a helpless Child lying on some straw in a manger. Man looks for great and startling works, and God meets him by showing things which, in his consideration, are insignificant. We think that God should choose great things and He chooses small ones. This is the

difference between divine and human reasoning, between the ways of God and the ways of man. God has become man in the form of a child, and human wisdom thinks that now, over the whole world, a great clamor, noise, and wonderment should be raised; that all nations should be astounded. Instead the Lord is a child that does not talk, does nothing wonderful, even cries like other children, and so He remains, or rather grows, gaining by degrees the use of human faculties the same as other children. These are the ways of God; we think we should have ordered all things differently.

Prayer.

O sweet Babe of Bethlehem, I adore Thee in Thy humility. Mayest Thou be ever reverenced and adored by all creatures. May we with the angels ever adore Thee, and may the hearts of all the faithful ever breathe out in Thy honor a most sweet perfume. Amen.

[030]

Twentieth Day.

What a difference! Adam was placed in paradise, a most beautiful garden; the second Adam, Jesus, is placed in the manger. The former was but a simple human being, while this One is the true God. And why was this difference made? Through Adam's sin paradise, that beautiful place, had been desecrated: God, the Author of our being, forgotten. In punishment of this rebellion the second Adam had to atone for this defection. We had lowered ourselves to the level of the animals, we had sought our joy among the natural inclinations, and thither Our Lord had to descend in order to find us. Paradise is again to be brought to this earth. We, too, should show by our faith, our devotions, and our magnificent churches, where our happiness is. We may

enjoy this paradise even on earth by doing the will of God in all things, and receiving frequently the body and blood of Christ, in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Prayer.

O most sweet Infant Jesus, behold here a poor petitioner who wants Thy aid; but such is my unhappiness, the more I want the less able I am to ask for relief. Have regard, therefore, to my distressed condition, and according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies have compassion on me. Amen.

Twenty-first Day.

The angels announced the glad tidings of the birth of Christ to the shepherds, who heard the words and acted on them promptly and with joy, ignorant though they were. The promise of the [31] coming of a Redeemer was clearly placed before their minds, so that they were as prepared for this startling announcement as if they had been waiting for it for many years. So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant. How beautiful is Our Lord's attraction to the lowly, represented in the call of these poor men. Such are the men that the Babe called first. We should allow the glorious truths of the incarnation to sink deeply into our souls, that we may celebrate the month of the holy childhood with profit to ourselves and to the glory of God. We should be interested also in spreading the Gospel among Protestants and Jews, and by our lives lead bad Catholics back again to the Infant Babe. Lay people can sometimes do more good than they imagine, and in some cases even more than a priest, because their advice and good example may have an effect where a priest could not reach.

Prayer.

O most sweet Babe of Bethlehem! what praise, love, and thanks shall I return Thee for all Thy mercies? Let my body,

soul, and all that is within me bless Thee eternally, and let heaven, earth, and all that is within them say Amen.

Twenty-second Day.

God's glory was the object of the angels who came to announce the birth of Our Lord. Glory to God in the highest! Infinite glory accrues to God the Father by sending His divine Son to this earth to become man. We are His intelligent creatures, to whom He
[032] was sent, and we must give to God a rational worship. When we do not give glory and thanks to God, and are ungrateful, we rob the Creator of that recognition which He should have from His creatures. But the same must be said of all our works; we must have the glory of God before our minds; we should do nothing but with the express or implicit motive the honor of God. Our maxim should be, All for the greater glory of God. When the angels reported the birth of the Lord they did not refer to their own greatness but sang our God has done this from His throne in heaven, to Him is due the glorification of His creatures; so also we, after a good action, do not think complacently of our own sanctity or excellence, but say it was the inspiration of God, and God's work, which has been done by us unworthy instruments in His hands. Mary referred all her glory and graces to God: My soul doth magnify the Lord.

Prayer.

Almighty and everlasting God! Lord of heaven and earth, Who dost reveal Thyself to little ones, grant us, we beseech Thee, to honor meetly the holy mysteries in the life of Thy Son, the Child Jesus, and to follow Him humbly in our lives, so that we may come to the eternal kingdom promised by Thee to little ones, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Twenty-third Day.

Again the angels said,Peace on earth to men of good-will. How precious is the peace of the soul! Peace is the fruit of a good conscience, which produces peace with God and with one's [no's] self. Seek to purify your will, make it conformable to the will of God, for then you enjoy peace more and more; you will taste the happiness of that peace which surpasses all the joys of the world, and which the world cannot give. In the contemplation of the joyous feasts which we celebrate, during this month of the mysteries of the divine infancy of the Lord, we will find the happiness of our soul. Continue in your adoration of the Infant Jesus, bring Him the grateful thanks of a pure heart, pray with earnestness, with perseverance, for the mercy of God, which He can extend to you in answer to your supplications if you are sincere. Remember the words of the angels, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good-will, is a saying which is worth repeating to yourself.

Prayer.

O most amiable Jesus, who for my sake and instruction didst vouchsafe to conceal Thy eternal wisdom under the weakness of childhood! I most humbly thank Thee for having shown me in Thy own sacred person how I should sanctify my youth, and thereby draw a blessing on my future life. Amen.

Twenty-fourth Day.

Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart, Luke ii. 19. Twice do we read that Mary did this. The Holy Ghost certainly wished to attract our attention to this fact, that we might imitate the action. All that was done and all that was said made [de] a great impression on Mary's heart. She merited more and more the eulogiums which God Himself bestows on those who hear

the word of God and keep it. The facts and the words of the incarnation must be the same to us precious thoughts and gifts which we know how to value and appreciate. At certain times we should give evidence of our belief in the joy of our heart. God's glory must be published externally, we must not bury it in our hearts only, for Mary preserved all these words in her heart so as to make them public at some future time, for the welfare of the Church. With greatest devotion and zeal she had heard the revelations of God; with liberality she made manifest the fulness of her heart for the glory of God.

Prayer.

O Wisdom, Who didst proceed out of the mouth of the Most High, reaching from end to end, with might and with sweetness disposing all things, come and teach us the way of prudence. Amen.

Twenty-fifth Day.

Mary not only kept all these words in her heart, but she also meditated on them. In fact the meaning of the word kept in her heart, is that they were ever fresh there; she kept the eyes of her soul on them, and thought of them; she was part of the workings of God's providence, and had no other thought than that the will of God should be done in all things, especially just now, in this instance of the childhood of Christ. Men and angels had brought
[035] her the testimony of their admiration of the wonderful works of God; and Mary was consoled and confirmed in her willingness to suffer everything for her divine Infant Son. To us also the meditation and the consideration of God's infinite goodness, and the facts of revelation, are the very centre-post around which the Christian life should move. Be not a passive Christian that is borne along in the crowd; go a little farther, and become an intelligent worshipper, who has reflected well on religious tenets,

and to whom they have given a great deal of consolation and hope of future happiness.

Prayer.

O Adonai and leader of the house of Israel! Who didst appear to Moses in the fire of the flaming bush, and didst give him the Law of Sinai: come and save us with a stretched-forth arm. Amen.

Twenty-sixth Day.

We are often solicitous about temporal affairs: our eating, drinking, clothing, and that which is dependent on us. We are right in making all necessary efforts, but we must not forget God, or lose confidence in Him. The Magi left their kingdoms, palaces, families, their great comforts of home, and went on a long journey, led by the star, without being clearly told how far their journey was to carry them. They had to travel through unknown lands, under a burning sun, exposed to wild beasts, and the enmity of wandering tribes. Still they persevered until they were rewarded by the sight of the Messias, the Redeemer of the world. Then they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. This is also a lesson [036] to us to quiet our fears. God knows what we have done for Him, and a thousand-fold will He reward our generous actions, and at the same time our families will be protected and our wants supplied. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His justice: and all these things shall be added unto you. Luke xii. 31.

Prayer.

O Root of Jesse! Who art a signal to the people, in Whose presence kings shall be silent, and to Whom the Gentiles shall pray: come and deliver us now and delay not. Amen.

Twenty-seventh Day.

The revelation which you have received from God ought to enter deeply into your soul. Mary's heart was full of grace. You should receive God's word into your hearts, that it may be the nourishment of your souls, that it may fill you with holy sentiments and desires, and model you according to the life of Christ. During these days you have given much thought to the birth of Our Lord. Be careful in your prayers not to keep it on your lips only, but let it take deep root in your hearts, so that Christ may be born again in your souls. Pray to Mary, to the angels, and to the saints, that they may assist you; that you may preserve the deposit of faith with fidelity as they preserved it, for the nourishment of the spirit and the sanctification of your soul, and of others that may be intrusted to your care. Your piety and love of the Lord should
[037] increase with these meditations.Thy word is exceedingly refined: and Thy servant hath loved it. Ps. cxviii. 140.

Prayer.

O Key of David and sceptre of the house of Israel! Who openest, and no man shutteth: Who shuttest, and no man openeth; come and take out of prison him that is in fetters, and who sitteth in darkness and in the shadow of death. Amen.

Twenty-eighth Day.

The obedience of Our Lord to His parents is an admirable lesson. Jesus Christ is obedient, and submits His infinite wisdom to the commands of human beings. Not only was He obedient to His heavenly Father even unto the death of the cross, but He exactly fulfilled all the requirements of the Fourth Commandment without a murmur, without deferring the execution of His parents' wishes to a time more suitable to Himself. St. Bernard says that he is obedient who fulfils a command without delay, and

with a cheerful heart. Our Lord fulfilled this law so scrupulously because He wished to leave us an example. Remember the fact that the Boy Jesus was not only obedient to His heavenly Father, but also to His superiors according to the order of things. The Lord left, without delay, the performance of a holy action when He was called away from it. Our obedience to the Church and its lawful pastors is also an obligation devolving upon us. Children, obey your parents, servants, your masters, citizens, the State and all constituted public authority. Religious fulfil this law of obedience because they make a vow of obedience. [038]

Prayer.

O Orient brightness of eternal light, and Sun of righteousness! come and enlighten those that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death. Amen.

Twenty-ninth Day.

Jesus advanced in wisdom and age, and grace with God and men. Luke ii. 52. From the first instant of His sacred life on earth there were hidden in the Lord all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He constantly developed these before the sight of men. The sun has always the same abundance of heat and light, yet it still increases as the day wears on until it stands in the zenith in all its glory and power, and as the day wanes it, as it were, draws its power to itself. The older Jesus, the Sun of justice, grew, the brighter became the light of His holy life, and it illumined more and more the lives of those who observed Him. The growing older is inevitable; as time passes we grow older, but we do not necessarily grow in wisdom before God and men. Our piety before God is not increased, and we frequently give scandal to men by our impiety. When we were young we loved God, but as we grew older we were so implicated with the things

of this life that we lost a great deal of our simplicity. Why should this be so?

Prayer.

O King of the Gentiles, and their desired One, the corner-stone that joins the two walls! come and save man, whom Thou didst form out of dust. Amen.

[039]

Thirtieth Day.

Jesus was filled with grace and truth from the very beginning of His life. We have seen His glory, the glory of the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. More and more did His virtues, however, shine forth with ever increasing splendor; men wondered at this glorious Being, loved Him, and afterwards followed Him when He began His mission. We, too, were full of grace at our Baptism, and long afterwards, in our childhood, we were pleasing in the sight of God, because we were innocent children whom God loved. We were then modest, pious, obedient, but in course of time we sought to please men more than God. To please men is often to displease God. We should have hungered and thirsted after justice, and this would have kept alive in us the desire to grow in grace, wisdom and truth. But now let us arouse ourselves, and even though we are old, let us strive to become like the divine Infant. Let us, with the grace of God, renew in ourselves the graces that were in us. Let us examine our conscience, and see whether we have remained faithful to our good resolutions, if we have ever made them before. It is not too late yet to resolve to do better in the future.

Prayer.

O Emmanuel, King and Lawgiver! the expectation of the Gentiles and their Saviour; come and save us, O Lord, Our God. Amen.

Thirty-first Day.

On this last day of the devotion of the holy infancy, let us endeavor to make permanent the pious sentiments that have passed through our souls. We wish to have Jesus in our hearts, not only for the present but also for the future. It is not enough to find Jesus as the shepherds and the Magi did, but we should try to keep ourselves always in His sacred presence. The means to retain Jesus are no other than to keep ourselves in grace, to avoid sin, to preserve His love in our hearts, and lastly to be watchful, when temptation assails us, against sensuality, pride, avarice, and want of charity, and any other vice. Let us remain close to Our Lord, remembering our promises of fidelity, in a humble confidence that He will assist us with His grace. Let us remember the words of the Royal Prophet David: That a soul that fears God will not be affected by infidelity. Let us repeat with the spouse in the Canticles: I found Him Whom my soul loveth: I held Him: and I will not let Him go. Who will separate me from the love of Christ?

Prayer.

O Infant Jesus! grant that each moment of our lives, we may pay homage to that moment in which Thou didst begin the work of our salvation. Amen.

Mass in Commemoration of the Holy Infancy of Jesus Christ.

Preparatory Prayer.

Deign, O almighty God, to give me the grace to remember, with devotion and love during the holy sacrifice, the sacred birth, the Passion and death of Thy Son, Jesus Christ. I offer to Thee,

Thy divine Son by the hands of Mary, His Virgin Mother, to [041]
the honor of Thy holy name, and in grateful thanksgiving for the numberless graces and blessings which Thou hast bestowed upon Thy poor creature. I offer Him also for the joy of the heavenly court, as a victim of propitiation for my sins, for the living and the dead, and for my special intention, which, with all confidence, I recommend to Thee. Permit me to feel Thy sacred presence, to be immersed in Thy pure light, and to be comforted by it, so that I may always, but especially on this day, serve Thee faithfully, and bear the trials which Thou sendest me with love and courage. In consideration of the tears and the precious blood of Thy divine Son, by Whom I knock at the gates of Thy mercy and kindness, grant that all misfortunes of body and soul may be averted from me, through Christ Our Lord, Who is ever praised with Thee and the Holy Ghost, for all eternity. Amen.

Introit.

O my God, I should be holy as Thou art holy, fountain of all sanctity; and still Thou seest in me nothing pure. I am full of iniquity. Have mercy on me, make manifest in me Thy mercy. I present to Thee, in sorrow and humility, the Infant Jesus as my intercessor. Look upon Him, O heavenly Father, the brightness of Thy own glory, now lying in a crib in a wretched stable. And from that lowly bed He raises up His little hands, begging for pardon, in order that we, His erring brothers and sisters, may be brought back to Thy paternal Heart, and to ward off the
[042] punishment which we so richly deserve. O divine Redeemer, despise not our confidence! Stretch out Thy almighty right hand and draw us forth from the floods of our sins, miseries, and iniquities, so that we may gratefully thank Thee and the Father for all eternity. Amen.

Gospel.

We render Thee, O loving Jesus, our everlasting thanksgiving for having descended from Thy unspeakable happiness in heaven to this miserable earth, where Thou dost wish to console Thy

needy creatures and to teach us by Thy holy Gospel the way to heaven. Who would not approach Thee with confidence, when he sees Thee, the infinite God, wrapped in swaddling-clothes, resting on the bosom of the purest and tenderest of Mothers, with hands full of graces and a Heart full of love! Even though untold misery should overwhelm our hearts, and innumerable desires consume our souls, still we would take confidence from this kindness and love, and our souls would be filled with happiness and peace. Look upon me, then, O gracious Infant! and by that look of kindness may my intellect be enlightened to understand the divine truths; may my will be inflamed to fulfil Thy commands and inspirations, and my memory continually suggest Thy promises and Thy goodness. So that on the altar of my heart may be placed a triple sacrifice of faith, hope, and charity, and then I can claim from Thy majesty new graces and benedictions upon myself, upon those in whom I am interested, and upon all those on whom the light of the Gospel has not shone, that we may become vessels to Thy honor and love, and may praise Thy mercies for all eternity. Amen. [043]

Offertory.

As I kneel in spirit at the crib of Bethlehem, and see the divine Infant offering Himself to the heavenly Father for my sins, so I bring, as an offering with the priest, my poor heart which thirsts for Thee. Oh, that I could offer Thee as gifts many virtuous acts! but bowed down in the dust of my own nothingness, I cannot offer anything more than an empty, sorrowful heart. Look upon it with mercy, and send upon it the dew of Thy grace and love, which will quickly bear fruit of humility and meekness. Adorn my soul with the flowers of devotion, that my whole life may become a song of praise and petition for mercy. Amen.

Sanctus.

Unfathomable, O Lord God, are the depths of Thy mysteries, and wonderful the inventions of Thy mercy. Faith teaches me that He Who is in the crib, and weeps and trembles, is the One

Whose thunder rolls in the clouds, at the sound of Whose voice cherubim and seraphim veil their faces with their wings. What a manifestation of humility and love do I contemplate in this! Come, O Lord, with Thy all-conquering love, and enkindle my cold heart and the hearts of all careless Christians with the flames of love! Come to me in the fulness of Thy graces and blessings, and stir up my sluggish humor; enlighten all needy souls with the abundance of Thy eternal brightness, that we may now, and for all eternity, sing the angelic anthem: Holy, holy, holy, is Our
[044] God! Amen.

The Secret.

O kind Father! in humility I beg of Thee, through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, may our sacrifice and prayers please Thee. Bless me, bless those who are here present at this sacrifice, and bless also all who are needy and suffering. I pray Thee especially for the holy Catholic Church and her ministers, that Thou mayest keep them in peace and harmony; that Thou mayest protect and govern them, and mayest pour into their souls that peace which the divine Infant brought to this earth, Who alone is the cause of the happiness which we enjoy here below. I wish to join the angels in exclaiming, Peace to my soul, peace to all men of good-will.

Consecration.

Look down, O Lord God the Father! on this altar where Thy divine Son adores Thee as He did from the stable of Bethlehem, and offers Himself as a spotless lamb as He did on Calvary. We unite our prayers with His, and we beg of Thy unlimited mercy that Thou wouldst listen to the pleading of this divine Heart and of this precious blood, and grant us what is pleasing to Thee. Grant that we may grow in the odor of sanctity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and share with Him eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.

After The Consecration.

O divine Infant Jesus, give me the grace to realize the wonders of Thy holy love! In all humility I consecrate myself to Thee as

a holocaust to Thy holy condescension. Oh, that I were able to [045] adore Thee with that sincere and heartfelt devotion with which the holy Virgin, St. Joseph, the pious shepherds, the Magi, and all the fervent adorers of Thy divine infancy adored Thee. With all my soul I will love Thee. All the movements of my heart shall be directed towards Thee; my soul shall be Thy dwelling. With Thy grace I will fulfil all the duties of my state in life. Change this sinful man into a new being by Thy almighty love, by the same love with which Thou hast changed the bread and wine into Thy adorable body and blood. May Thy profound humility restrain the pride of my heart; may Thy wonderful purity transform me into a lily of purity for the heavenly garden, and Thy love guide me through the storms of this wretched life to the habitation of bliss: to Thy throne, where ever and ever springs forth life without end. Amen.

Commemoration Of The Dead.

Remember, also, O most merciful Jesus! all Thy servants who have departed this life, marked with the seal of faith and charity, and who sleep the sleep of peace. Let them all feel, according to their burning desire, the power of the holy sacrifice of the Mass. Open to them the gates of heaven, the abode of light and peace, that they may join the innumerable chorus of angels and saints, who praise and love Thee for all eternity. Amen.

Agnus Dei.

O immaculate Lamb of God, suffering all human tribulations! teach me to tear myself away from the affections of earthly things, which still keep me from adhering solely to Thee. O [046] gracious Lamb of God, Who didst descend from heaven to bring grace and light into my needy soul! let the dew of Thy kindness descend upon this barren land of my heart, to enrich it with many virtues. O pure Lamb of God, Prince of peace and love! calm in my soul all disquiet, and let it be inflamed with the flames of Thy holy love, whence all my words and actions derive their merit. Amen.

Communion.

O dearest Jesus, my Redeemer! from the stable of Bethlehem Thou callest to me, Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Matt. xi. 28. Pressed and overwhelmed with many trials, my soul longs for Thee, and desires to partake of the heavenly banquet of Thy flesh and blood, and to be united to Thee most intimately. Come, O Lord, to comfort my languishing spirit! strengthen my weak resolutions; change my whole being into something more pleasing to Thee. What heart is not softened by Thy loving glance, and desires not to be one with Thee? Admit my heart to a union with Thine, that both may be consumed together. As dry wood easily takes fire from flames, so may my heart begin to burn brightly, and whatever is displeasing to Thee be consumed by Thy holy love. Let me find rest in the enjoyment of Thy divinity; and let me have no earthly attachments, so that when I shall be loosed from the ties of this world, I may fly to Thee, and rest in Thy bosom.

Soul of Christ, sanctify me:
[047] Body of Christ, save me:
Blood of Christ, inebriate me:
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me:
O good Jesus, hear me:
Within Thy wounds hide me:
Permit me not to be separated from Thee.
From the malignant enemy defend me:
In the hour of my death call me,
And bid me come to Thee,
That, with Thy saints, I may praise Thee
Forever and ever. Amen.

Conclusion.

Accept, O Blessed Trinity! my grateful thanks for the graces which Thou hast poured upon my soul during this holy sacrifice,

which I have attended in honor of the holy infancy. And then, O divine Infant! permit me to remain with Thee whilst I am engaged in the duties of my state in life. Make me ever mindful of that gratitude which I ought to have for Thy holy love; let me feel the truth of the words,I have found Him Whom my soul loveth ; I will never be separated from Him. Amen.

Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus.

(Form to which an indulgence of three hundred days was granted by Pope Pius IX., who suppressed all other forms.)

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Jesus, hear us.
Jesus, graciously hear us. [048]
God the Father of heaven, Have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, Have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost, Have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, Son of the living God, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, splendor of the Father, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, brightness of eternal light, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, king of glory, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, sun of justice, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, Son of the Virgin Mary, Have mercy on us.
Jesus amiable, Have mercy on us.
Jesus admirable, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, the powerful God, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, father of the world to come, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, angel of the great council, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, most powerful, Have mercy on us.

Jesus, most patient,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, most obedient,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, meek and humble of heart,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, lover of chastity,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, lover of us,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, God of peace,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, author of life,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, model of all virtues,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, zealous for souls,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, our God,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, our refuge,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, father of the poor,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, treasure of the faithful,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, good shepherd,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, true light,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, eternal wisdom,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, infinite goodness,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, our way and our life,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, joy of the angels,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, king of the patriarchs,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, master of the apostles,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, teacher of the Evangelists,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, strength of martyrs,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, light of confessors,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, purity of virgins,Have mercy on us.
Jesus, crown of all saints,Have mercy on us.

[049] Be merciful,Spare us, O Jesus!
Be merciful,Deliver us, O Jesus.
From all evil,Deliver us, O Jesus.
From all sin,Deliver us, O Jesus.
From Thy wrath,Deliver us, O Jesus.
From the snares of the devil,Deliver us, O Jesus.
From the spirit of fornication,Deliver us, O Jesus.
From eternal death,Deliver us, O Jesus.
From the neglect of Thy inspirations,Deliver us, O Jesus.

Through the mystery of Thy holy incarnation, Graciously hear us, O Jesus!
Through Thy nativity, Deliver us, O Jesus.
Through Thy infancy, Deliver us, O Jesus.
Through Thy most divine life, Deliver us, O Jesus.
Through Thy labors, Deliver us, O Jesus.
Through Thy agony and Passion, Deliver us, O Jesus.
Through Thy cross and dereliction, Deliver us, O Jesus.
Through Thy languors, Deliver us, O Jesus.
Through Thy death and burial, Deliver us, O Jesus.
Through Thy resurrection, Deliver us, O Jesus.
Through Thy ascension, Deliver us, O Jesus.
Through Thy joys, Deliver us, O Jesus.
Through Thy glory, Deliver us, O Jesus.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Spare us, O Jesus!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Graciously hear us, O Jesus!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Have mercy on us, O Jesus!
Jesus, hear us.
Jesus, graciously hear us!

Let Us Pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who hast said, Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you, grant, we beseech Thee, to us who ask the gift of Thy divine love, that we may love Thee with our whole heart, in word and work, and never cease from showing forth Thy praise.

Grant, O Lord, that we may have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name, for Thou never failest to direct and govern those whom Thou hast instructed in Thy true and solid love, through the same Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Litany of the Infant Jesus.

(For Private Devotion Only).

Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Infant Jesus, hear us.
Infant Jesus, graciously hear us.
God, the Father of heaven, Have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, Have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost, Have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, Have mercy on us.
Infant Jesus, Have mercy on us.
Infant, very God, Have mercy on us.
Infant, Son of the living God, Have mercy on us.
Infant, Son of the Virgin Mary, Have mercy on us.
Infant, begotten before the morning star, Have mercy on us.
Infant, Word made flesh, Have mercy on us.
Infant, wisdom of Thy Father, Have mercy on us.
Infant, purity of Thy Mother, Have mercy on us.
Infant, only Son of Thy Father, Have mercy on us.
Infant, only-born of Thy Mother, Have mercy on us.
Infant, image of Thy Father, Have mercy on us.
Infant, Creator of Thy Mother, Have mercy on us.
Infant, splendor of Thy Father, Have mercy on us.
Infant, honor of Thy Mother, Have mercy on us.
Infant, equal to Thy Father, Have mercy on us.
Infant, subject to Thy Mother, Have mercy on us.
Infant, joy of Thy Father, Have mercy on us.
Infant, riches of Thy Mother, Have mercy on us.

Infant, gift of Thy Father, Have mercy on us.
Infant, offering of Thy Mother, Have mercy on us.
Infant, precious fruit of a Virgin, Have mercy on us.
Infant, Creator of man, Have mercy on us.
Infant, power of God, Have mercy on us.
Infant, our God, Have mercy on us.
Infant, our Brother, Have mercy on us.
Infant, perfect man from Thy conception, Have mercy on us. [051]
Infant, ancient in wisdom from Thy childhood, Have mercy on us.
Infant, father of ages, Have mercy on us.
Infant of days, Have mercy on us.
Infant, giving life and nourished at the breast, Have mercy on us.
Infant, Eternal Word, and making Thyself dumb, Have mercy on us.
Infant, weeping in Thy crib, Have mercy on us.
Infant, thundering in the heavens, Have mercy on us.
Infant, terror of hell, Have mercy on us.
Infant, joy of paradise, Have mercy on us.
Infant, dreaded by tyrants, Have mercy on us.
Infant, desired by the Magi, Have mercy on us.
Infant, exiled from Thy people, Have mercy on us.
Infant, king in exile, Have mercy on us.
Infant, destroyer of idols, Have mercy on us.
Infant, vindicator of the glory of God, Have mercy on us.
Infant, strong in weakness, Have mercy on us.
Infant, powerful in abasement, Have mercy on us.
Infant, treasure of grace, Have mercy on us.
Infant, fountain of love, Have mercy on us.
Infant, author of the blessings of heaven, Have mercy on us.
Infant, repairer of the evils of earth, Have mercy on us.
Infant, head of the angels, Have mercy on us.
Infant, stem of the patriarchs, Have mercy on us.
Infant, word of the prophets, Have mercy on us.

Infant, expectation of nations, Have mercy on us.
Infant, joy of the shepherds, Have mercy on us.
Infant, light of the Magi, Have mercy on us.
Infant, salvation of children, Have mercy on us.
Infant, hope of the just, Have mercy on us.
Infant, teacher of doctors, Have mercy on us.
Infant, first-fruits of the saints, Have mercy on us.
Be merciful, Spare us, O Infant Jesus.
Be merciful, Graciously hear us, O Infant Jesus.
From the bondage of the children of Adam, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
From the slavery of the devil, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
From the corruption of the world, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
From the lust of the flesh, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
From the pride of life, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
From an immoderate desire of knowledge, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
From blindness of mind, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
From perversity of will, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
From our sins, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
[052] Through Thy most pure conception, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
Through Thy most humble birth, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
Through Thy tears, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
Through Thy most painful circumcision, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
Through Thy most glorious epiphany, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
Through Thy most devout presentation, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
Through Thy most innocent conversation in the world, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
Through Thy most holy life, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
Through Thy poverty, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
Through Thy sorrows, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
Through Thy labors and trials, Infant Jesus, deliver us.
Lamb of God. Who takest away the sins of the world, Spare us, O Infant Jesus!

Lamb of God. Who takest away the sins of the world.
Graciously hear us. O Infant Jesus!
Lamb of God. Who takest away the sins of the world. Have
mercy on us. O Infant Jesus!
Infant Jesus, hear us,
Infant Jesus, graciously hear us!

Let Us Pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who didst vouchsafe so to annihilate the greatness of Thy incarnate divinity and most sacred humanity, as to be born in time, and become a little child; grant that we may acknowledge infinite wisdom in the silence of a child, power in weakness, majesty in abasement: so that adoring Thy humiliations on earth, we may contemplate Thy glories in heaven. Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest, God, forever and ever. Amen.

The Mysteries of the Sacred Infancy.

(For every day of this month and each 25th day of every month during the year.)

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, etc.

R. As it was in, etc. Our Father, etc. [053]

1. The Incarnation.

O most sweet Infant Jesus! Who for our salvation didst descend from the bosom of the eternal Father, into the womb of the Virgin Mary, where, conceived by the Holy Ghost, Thou didst take upon Thee, O Incarnate Word, the form of a servant, have mercy upon us.

V. Have mercy upon us, O Lord.

R. Have mercy upon us. Hail Mary, etc.

2. The Visitation.

O most sweet Infant Jesus! Who by means of Thy Virgin Mother didst visit St. Elizabeth, and filling Thy forerunner, St. John the Baptist, with the Holy Spirit, didst sanctify him from his mother's womb, have mercy upon us.

V. andR. Have mercy, etc.

3. The Expectation of the Birth.

O most sweet Infant Jesus! Who for nine months enclosed in the womb, didst wait for the time of Thy birth, and didst meantime inflame the hearts of the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph with most ardent longings, and didst offer Thyself to God the Father for the salvation of the world, have mercy upon us.

V. andR. Have mercy, etc.

4. The Holy Nativity.

O most sweet Infant Jesus! born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem, wrapped in poor swaddling-*clothes, and laid in the manger, glorified by angels, and visited by shepherds, have mercy upon us.

[054] V. andR. Have mercy, etc.

O Jesu! born of Virgin bright,
Immortal glory be to Thee;
Praise to the Father infinite,
And Holy Ghost, eternally.

V. Christ is at hand.

R. O come, let us worship Him. Our Father, etc.

5. The Circumcision.

O most sweet Infant Jesus! circumcised when eight days old, called by the glorious name of Jesus, and proclaimed both by Thy name and by Thy blood to be the Saviour of the world, have mercy upon us.

V. andR. Have mercy, etc.

6. The Adoration of the Kings.

O most sweet Infant Jesus! Who wast manifest to the three kings, who worshipped Thee as Thou didst lie on Mary's breast, and offered to Thee the mysterious presents of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, have mercy upon us.

V. and R. Have mercy, etc.

7. The Presentation.

O most sweet Infant Jesus! presented in the Temple by the Virgin Mary, embraced by the holy old man Simeon, and revealed to the Jews by Anna the prophetess, have mercy upon us.

V. and R. Have mercy, etc.

8. The Flight Into Egypt.

O most sweet Infant Jesus! Whom Herod sought to slay, carried by St. Joseph with Thy Mother into Egypt, saved from death by flight, and glorified by the blood of the holy innocents, [55] have mercy upon us.

V. and R. Have mercy, etc.

O Jesu! born of Virgin bright, etc.

V. Christ is at hand.

R. O come, let us worship Him. Our Father, etc.

9. The Sojourn In Egypt.

O most sweet Infant Jesus! Who didst dwell as an exile in Egypt for seven years, where Thou didst utter Thy first words, and, loosed from Thy swathing-bands, didst first begin to walk upon this earth, and, in the destruction of the idols, didst work, in a hidden manner, Thy first miracles, have mercy upon us.

V. and R. Have mercy, etc.

10. The Return From Egypt.

O most sweet Infant Jesus! Who when Herod was dead, wast recalled out of Egypt into the land of Israel, and didst in the journey suffer many fatigues and hardships, and wast carried

back by Mary and Joseph to the city of Nazareth, have mercy upon us.

V. and R. Have mercy, etc.

11. The Life in the Holy House.

O most sweet Infant Jesus! Who in the holy house of Nazareth didst dwell most holily, and didst pass Thy life in obedience, poverty, and toil, and as Thou didst increase in years didst manifest to God and men signs of wisdom and grace, have mercy upon us.

[056] V. and R. Have mercy, etc.

12. The Disputing With The Doctors.

O most sweet Infant Jesus! Who wast taken to Jerusalem when twelve years old, wast lost by Thy parents, and sought for by them with sorrow, and after three days wast found, to their exceeding joy, with the doctors in the Temple, have mercy upon us.

V. and R. Have mercy, etc.

O Jesu! born of Virgin bright, etc.

V. Christ is at hand.

R. O come, let us worship Him. Our Father, etc.

During the year:

V. The Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt amongst us.

At Christmas and during the octave add Alleluia.

At the Epiphany and during the octave:

V. Christ hath manifested Himself unto us. Alleluia.

R. O come, let us worship Him. Alleluia.

Let Us Pray.

O almighty and everlasting God, Lord of heaven and earth! Who didst reveal Thyself to little ones, grant, we beseech Thee, that whilst we duly celebrate and honor the most holy mysteries of Thy Son, the Infant Jesus, and worthily strive to imitate them, we may arrive at that heavenly kingdom which Thou hast

promised to little children, through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

[057]

Communion Prayers in Honor of the Infant Jesus.

Preparation for Holy Communion.

1. I believe most firmly, my dear Jesus, that in the consecrated Host is contained Thy humanity and Thy divinity, together with Thy sacred flesh and blood. I believe in this mystery of our faith, because Thou, Who art infinite wisdom, hast announced, My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. I believe as firmly as Thy holy Mother Mary believed in all the sacred truths which Thou camest to preach. With the heart of Mary, O divine Infant Jesus, I would love Thee! I would wish to receive Thee into the shelter of my heart, as Mary didst receive Thee into her arms with devotion and tenderness, and Thou didst find a resting-place. Cold and dreary was everything about Thee, that night of Thy birth, but Thou didst find a warm heart in Thy holy Mother. Let me embrace Thee with the same fervor with which Joseph and Simeon welcomed Thee into their arms. Give me now, O divine Infant Jesus, through the participation in Thy body and blood, the burning love of Thy holy spirit, which induced Thee to become my Brother. Thou didst institute this Holy Sacrament that I might be united to Thee and Thou to me. I am heartily sorry that I have, hitherto, preferred creatures to Thee, and so far have done nothing to deserve Thy mercy. Forgive the sins for which I have had only a superficial sorrow, and which I, perhaps, have confessed in the same spirit. Clothe me with the

garb of innocence of Thy holy childhood; by Thy adorable blood
[058] purify me, by Thy holy spirit enliven me, that from the present I may no longer live, but Thou, my Jesus, live in me forever.

O Holy Ghost, Who didst prepare the body of the Blessed Virgin Mary, by the infusion of sanctity, to be a worthy habitation of the body of the divine Infant Jesus, prostrate before Thee I beg that Thy grace may also render my soul and body worthy to receive the body of Christ, that I may receive Him with purity and faith, and may through the reception lay a foundation of sanctity, which will entitle me to enter the glorious kingdom of heaven.

O my good Jesus, my whole confidence is in Thee; Thy wounds and Thy sacred blood encourage me to hope in the Lord.

O Son of the almighty God, Son of the Virgin Mary, hear me, and be merciful unto me. My heart desires to receive Thee with the same joy and desire with which Mary conceived Thee and gave Thee birth.

Come, then, dear Lord, and fashion my heart according to Thy will; and, oh, holy saints, devout adorers of the Infant Jesus, St. Francis, St. Anthony, St. Stanislaus, pray that my faith may be strong, that my hope and confidence in the Infant Jesus may increase, that my love for Him and His good Mother may burn with an inextinguishable flame.

And thou, my guardian angel, as well as arch-*angels and angels, cherubim and seraphim, accompany me to the holy table of the Lord; cover me with thy wings, for I am not worthy to receive this heavenly food.

2. O my God, my Lord, is it possible that Thou lovest me, a miserable human being, so tenderly, that now Thou dost feed my
[059] soul with Thy precious blood, with the bread of angels? By this sacred food Thou dost so firmly unite me to Thee as to make us one; Thy soul unites itself with my soul, and Thy body with my poor human nature. Rejoice, then, O my soul, for no longer can it be said, My tears have been my bread day and night: whilst it

is said to me daily: Where is thy God? Ps. xli. 4. For my food is the bread of angels and my God is not far from me and my God is in my soul! O dear Jesus, how liberal art Thou towards him that seeks Thee! How can I make return for this great kindness?

3. Consider, O my soul, that as often as you receive communion, you become, as it were, like Mary, the Mother of God, and a spouse of Jesus Christ: for in holy communion you may consider that the Lord comes to you as the little Child of Bethlehem. He becomes your Spouse because He loves you, takes care of you, and caresses you. O my soul, with what energy you ought to seek to acquire the virtues of our dear Mother Mary. She was adorned with every virtue when the incarnation took place in her, and she enjoyed the presence of her God.

Put yourself exclusively into the hands of God, and have the same sentiments that Mary had when she said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, or with the spouse in the Canticles, My Beloved is a bunch of myrrh which rests in my bosom. And with Simeon, the prophet, exclaim, Now Thou dost dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word in peace: Because my eyes have seen Thy salvation.

4. Permit me, my dear Jesus, to use Thy words in the Gospel: I am come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I but that it [160] be kindled? Luke xii. 49. Why is it that I receive so often, and approach this fire of divine love, and am not ignited? Let, then, this fire of love, which burns in this Sacrament, communicate its flames to me, that I may rise from the things of this world. I will now endeavor to love Thee above all things and no creature shall hinder me from Thy love. I will love Thee with my whole strength.

5. Dear Infant Jesus, Thy love has conquered my heart! I know now that Thou givest Thyself to me as my food, and as a ransom to free me from the slavery of Satan. My servitude to the devil, the flesh, and the world has been hard, but being once liberated from these chains, I hate my former cruel masters, and wish to

belong entirely to Thee. There is no joy or happiness in anything in this world, but in Thee, my God, Who callest to me: Come to Me all you that labor, and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up My yoke upon you ... and you shall find rest to your souls. Matt. xi. 28, 29. Yes, I will willingly subject myself to Thy yoke, by obedience to Thy holy commandments, which I will keep with the greatest exactitude. Permit me to approach Thy sacred banquet, for which I am now preparing.

6. In Jesus you may find all that you seek, and all that you need. Why, then, do you turn to other consolations? Seek that only Good which contains all good. Consider Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, the greatest Good, and stir up in yourself a desire for Him. He will not despise you, though you are unworthy of the favor. When Jesus dwelt on earth, and travelled through cities, towns, and country, He always had compassion on misery, and rejected none that came seeking relief from the ills of body and soul. And now that same Jesus is in heaven, and He can refuse no one. The woman who touched the hem of His garment was healed of a long standing infirmity. Magdalen, the sinner, kisses His feet, and her sins are forgiven. The pagan woman of Chanaan obtains the cure of her daughter. The sisters Mary and Martha obtain the resurrection of their brother Lazarus. Those possessed by the devil are freed.

[061]

My heart will not hesitate, but will boldly and humbly approach the Lord and ask the cure of my soul. He gives me His sacred body and blood, and all other needful things will be added unto me.

7. Yes, my God, my Lord, will come to me! I will not fear; I will approach with a joyful heart; I will not lose courage because I am sinful, as I know the Lord invites the sinner. He has eaten and drank with them, and treated them as His friends. He will also eat with me, and entertain me at His own table if I am only sorry for my sins. He will give me the kiss of peace and welcome me to His house. With His own flesh and blood He will feed me.

8. Come, O dear Jesus, wash my feet as Thou didst the apostles'. St. Peter refused, but when he was told that unless he complied he would have no part with Jesus, he gladly consented. Purify me also that I may have share with Thee in Thy glory. I am full of impurities in body and soul, my lips are unclean, because they utter many reprehensible words, my eyes and ears are impure, because they see and hear impurities. Who can purify me but Thou, O Lord, O crucified Redeemer, by Thy sacred [pg 62] blood which flows from the cross?

9. Who shall give me the wings of a dove, that I may fly to Thee, my rest, my peace? Give me two wings: one the firm confidence in Thy goodness, that Thou wilt allow me to claim some of Thy merits for my salvation; the other the wing of love, that I may soar beyond this world, and remain with Thee. Prepare me for Thy sacred banquet with the virtues which Thou Thyself would have in me. Teach me how I am to serve Thee. Give me a real thirst after Thy sacred blood, and a real hunger after Thy sacred flesh, that I may really desire it.

10. O consolation of my soul, dear Infant Jesus, I beg of Thee to root out of my heart all the sins and vices to which I am so much inclined; spare me not in removing them, even though it may hurt, even though I may be unwilling. Piety, humility, sincerity, modesty, and love are necessary. Then plant these virtues in my soul, and give me grace to practise them.

11. The Bridegroom is coming! I hear this cry, and I am to go forth to meet Him. Am I prepared? Have I oil in my lamp? Bestir yourself then, O my soul: it is not an angel that is coming, or a great prophet. No, it is God Himself Who is approaching: the Son of God, the King of glory. Rise, my soul, and prepare a resting-place in your heart, where the Lord may remain.

After Communion.

Ejaculations To The Dear Infant Jesus.

How great is Thy love, sweet Heart of Jesus, Who hast given Thyself to me as a celestial food! Thou deservest to be loved [pg 63]

with an infinite love, and not with the love of ordinary creatures.

O Jesus, I am heartily sorry for having hitherto loved Thee so little! Why did I not love Thee sooner?

Would that I could redeem that time in which I did not love Thee! Where will I find hearts that are going to help me to make up for the glory that I should have given Thee up to this time?

Would that I loved Thee with that tender love with which Mary loved Thee. The angels and saints loved Thee, my Jesus; let me also join them in their love.

Offering.

I offer Thee my whole being; let it be unreservedly Thine. Thou hast taken possession of my heart, Thou art its Master; my whole life shall be used for Thy greater honor and glory. Wherever my influence may reach, there will I carry the name of Jesus. Wherever the word of God may be announced, I will glory in Thy name.

Thou, O Lord, art so full of love, and still Thou art so little loved! O would that I could enkindle all hearts with the fire of Thy love! Thou, O Lord, art the Master of all hearts; we belong to Thee because Thou hast created us, and when we rebelled from Thee and became slaves of Satan, Thou didst redeem us. What greater right have we than to belong to Thee, to be subject to Thee, and to announce Thy holy name to all, so that by our mutual example we may be encouraged to live lives of sanctity?

O that all of us would have the love of the Infant Jesus in our [064] souls, and make earnest endeavors to spread Thy love among all men! When, O Lord, will I be dissolved, to live only with Thee? To Thee my sighs and desires go up day and night. When will I see Thy blessed countenance? When my time comes to die, let me die in Thy love, so that I may love Thee for all eternity. Thy will, O Jesus, be done in all things, and let me delight to walk in Thy footsteps.

Do with me what Thou wilt; I am willing to submit to joy or sorrow, life or death, fortune or misfortune. It is all indifferent

to me as long as it is Thy will, only give me the grace to endure adversity with resignation. It will be a joy to me to fulfil Thy holy will in all things.

Thanksgiving After Communion.

Adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, according to St. Francis de Sales.

How can I, O Lord Jesus Christ, praise Thee sufficiently for having visited my soul in Thy infinite goodness, by Thy divinity and Thy sacred humanity, with Thy body and blood? I give Thee, my Lord and my God, a loving welcome, Thou Who art my Redeemer, my last end, my consolation, my sweetest rest, my all. A thousand welcomes to Thee, my dear Jesus, my good shepherd. In the abyss of my nothingness I humbly adore Thee. I adore Thy sacred flesh and blood, which Thou hast given me for my food, and the pledge of my eternal union with Thee. I adore Thy sacred head crowned with thorns; I adore Thy eyes that have shed so many tears for me; I adore Thy mouth, with which Thou didst teach me eternal truths; I adore Thy sacred countenance, [illegible] which has been beaten for me by cruel soldiers; Thy feet, that have been pierced by the nails and fixed to the tree of the cross; Thy arms, which were outstretched for me, for a loving embrace; Thy side which the lance pierced, and from which blood and water issued forth, the witnesses of my redemption; Thy Heart, which loved me even unto the death of the cross. My dear Redeemer, I adore Thy sacred body, covered with innumerable wounds which Thou didst suffer for me. I adore Thy most holy soul, which was saddened unto death in the Garden of Olives that I might reach eternal life.

My dear Jesus, with great love I embrace Thee, and I will remain faithful to Thee until my last hour. Bless these feelings of a good heart: grant that no storm of temptation may lead me again to be unfaithful as I have repeatedly been heretofore.

A Pious Salutation To The Infant Jesus.

Hail, holy and adorable Infant Jesus, source of mercy! Thou

art the life of the sinner, unfathomable ocean of divine sweetness, our hope, our joy. To Thee, born in the dreary stable of Bethlehem, we cry, poor children of Eve, to Thee we send forth our sighs, to Thee we send up our lamentations in this valley of tears. Turn then, O incarnate love, Thine eyes of mercy towards us, O blessed fruit of Thy Virgin Mother. As Thou didst show Thyself full of kindness in the stable of Bethlehem, so show unto us, after this miserable life, Thy divine mercy, when Thou shalt come in the glory of Thy Father. O sweet, O loving, O clement
[066] Infant Jesus! Amen.

Pious Invocation To The Infant Jesus.

(Father Elias Avillon)

Hail, Infant Jesus, Thou fountain of mercy, Thou life of the sinner dead in sin, Thou unfathomable ocean of divine consolation, our hope and our joy. Hail, to Thee, born in the desolate stable of Bethlehem, do we cry, poor children of Eve. To Thee do we sigh and bewail our misery from this valley of tears. Turn then, O incarnate love of God, Thine eyes of mercy upon us, Thou blessed fruit of the womb of the Virgin Mary. As Thou didst show poor humanity unbounded mercy from the manger, so also continue Thy kindness during our life, until after this miserable existence we arrive in the glory of heaven, where we shall meet Thee, to praise and glorify Thee for all eternity. O sweet, O pious, O merciful Infant Jesus! Amen.

A Prayer To The Holy Name Of Jesus.

Eternal God, Father in heaven, daily do we pray that Thy sacred name be sanctified, that Thy kingdom come and Thy will be done. It is also Thy holy will that the name of Thy beloved Son should be glorified. Thou hast given Him a name at which every knee should bend in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. I pray Thee with all my heart that Thou give us the grace to pronounce that holy name with the greatest devotion, and to serve the Lord with a good and willing heart. Engrave this holy name on my heart, that I may never forget it. Place it as a sign on my forehead,

that I may ever be faithful to it. O holy name of Jesus! my heart rejoices when I hear thee mentioned. I feel great consolation [067] as often as I hear that holy name. Angels of heaven, who are gathered in ecstasy about the throne of God, praise with us on earth the sacred name of Jesus; sing its praises worthily, as we cannot sing it; invoke it for us also, that when our feeble powers fail, thy holiness and zeal will supply our deficiency. Thy holy name, O Jesus, be praised forever!

Adoration of the Child Jesus in the Twelve Mysteries of His Divine Infancy.

Dear Jesus, divine Infant of incomparable beauty, of infinite goodness, I adore Thee, because Thou art my Redeemer, and I love Thee. I make a sacrifice to Thee of all my intellect, and of my heart, and I thank Thee for having become a child for my sake. I adore Thee in all the mysteries of Thy holy childhood, and pray Thee to let me enter into the spirit of it. Give me the grace to honor Thy childhood all my life, and that I may imitate the virtues which Thou dost inculcate by Thy example.

I adore Thee, O God of purity, at the moment when the Holy Ghost formed Thy sacred body in the bosom of the Virgin Mary, and beg of Thee the grace to be always pure.

I adore Thee, O hidden God, hidden for nine months in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, and I desire to honor Thee by my perfect life.

I adore Thee, O Child of grace, in Thy visitation to John the Baptist in order to sanctify him. Visit also my soul, that I may live a saintly life and remain faithful to the impulses of Thy grace.

I adore Thee, O Child Jesus, at the moment of Thy birth, and I desire, with Thy help, that no other fire burn in my heart than [068] that which Thou camest on this earth to kindle.

I adore Thee, O Spouse covered with wounds, in the painful mystery of the circumcision. I conjure Thee by the sacred blood which Thou didst then shed for the first time for our salvation,

that Thou wilt give me the virtue of meekness, with which I am to go through life, for Thy glory and the edification of my neighbor.

I adore Thee, O Lord Jesus, with the Magi, who came from the distant orient to adore Thee lying in the crib in the stable. Give me the grace to be in earnest in the work of my salvation.

Great God, Author of all sanctity, I adore Thee in the Temple, where Thou didst present Thyself according to the Law of Moses, to be offered to Thy Father as His first-born Son. Give me grace to subject myself to every law, even though it would imply that I am a sinner, which I really am.

I adore Thee, humble Jesus, in Thy flight into Egypt, and beg of Thee to give me the grace, by this holy mystery of Thy life, of perfect humility of heart.

I adore Thee, O Child Jesus, in Thy poverty, which afflicted Thee in Thy stay in Egypt. Give me the grace also to be poor in spirit, and endure actual poverty with resignation.

I adore Thee, O Child Jesus, in Thy joyful and triumphal return from Thy exile in Egypt to Nazareth; give me the grace to overcome the enemies of my salvation.

I adore Thee, O obedient Child Jesus, in Thy exact compliance with the commands of Mary and Joseph; give me the grace
[069] joyfully to obey my superiors.

I adore Thee, O Child Jesus, in the midst of the doctors in the Temple of Jerusalem, when Thou didst enlighten their minds on the sacred prophecies of the Old Testament. Give me a Christian simplicity, that I may believe all that Thou teachest me through the holy Catholic Church.

[070]

February. The Holy Family.

What a beautiful sight is the Holy Family dwelling on earth! God could not create anything more beautiful than this Holy Family; He reached the limit of possibilities in creation when He had accomplished this. It is indeed a great example to us, and a model which we ought to hold before our eyes during this month, in order that we may study the foundations of what a holy family ought to be; what a life that should be, where the holiest are bound together in ties of most affectionate friendship and relationship.

Our Holy Father Leo XIII. has seen the great importance of the Christian family: the family established by the laws of the Church and the country, where marriages are legalized and solemnized; where continence and modesty reign; where children, under kind and parental subjection, are brought up to be good men and women, good for religion and for society. When poverty strikes such a family there is patience and forbearance shown; when sickness and death come, there is resignation to the will of God. In the Christian home there is surpassing peace, and not that crazy restlessness that looks for satisfaction in grasping at possessions, never satisfied day nor night.

I do not think that this devotion has been appointed for this month by any authority, except the idea that after having adored the divine infancy during the month of January, the devotion to the Holy Family may follow as a natural sequence. Should any one desire to make this devotion during another month, it would certainly not be out of the way, for save only in a few cases has a certain devotion been assigned to a particular time. The devotion to the Holy Family is a beautiful and instructive one; the Christian family should be built on this great model. The

[071] Holy Family consisted of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph; the father, Mother, and Child. All other families are made up of the same constituents.

Those who are actually in a family, or who intend to choose that mode of life by which they may get to heaven, will love this devotion and find instruction and consolation in it.

One of the greatest works of God in this world is the Holy Family at Bethlehem and Nazareth. He sent down upon the earth His only Son, Jesus Christ; prepared a most holy Mother for Him, Mary immaculate, and selected for Him a foster-father and a protector. He held them together in the most tender family ties of father, Mother, and Child. He kept them in that relation until St. Joseph died a blessed death, and the Lord Jesus went forth on His sacred mission of teaching and redeeming mankind.

What a beautiful sight to us poor human beings! what a glory to God was that Holy Family, dwelling in the humble abode of Nazareth! We find here the model on which we shall reflect for this month of February. We will consecrate this month to praising God with the members of the Holy Family; we will study the ways by which they were so pleasing to God, and we will draw from these considerations many valuable lessons for our own conduct.

Our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII., with an ever-watchful eye to the necessities of our time, has seen the importance of a devotion to the Holy Family, and has recommended it to the faithful, and with his own authority established a sodality of the Holy Family; he has invested it with many indulgences in order to encourage the faithful in taking the Holy Family as their model. Here is, then, a practical way to teach ourselves the way of salvation by the example of others.

It is therefore a most useful practice of piety to become members of the sodality of the Holy Family; you will then place yourselves under its special protection, and choose Jesus, Mary, and Joseph for your particular advocates before God. Look upon

the members of the Holy Family as the most perfect models for imitation, whose examples will teach you what to correct and what to avoid, what to do for your temporal and eternal welfare, and that of your families. [072]

Considerations and Prayers for Every Day.

First Day.

In an apostolic brief of June 14, 1892, the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII., demonstrates how the welfare of the family and of the State depends chiefly on education, and that it is of the utmost importance that a religious spirit be fostered in the Christian family. From the first family, God so arranged the method and order of such a life as to exhibit to the world a form of a divinely ordered association, in which all human beings might behold a most complete model of family life, and of all virtue and holiness. The devotion to the Holy Family, a holy and a powerful institution before God and man, has increased very much within a few years, and it is worth our while to think of this on the first day of our monthly devotion, and appreciate it as we ought.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, Who didst hallow by Thy surpassing virtues, and the example of Thy home life, the household Thou didst choose to live in whilst on earth, mercifully look down upon this family, whose members, humbly prostrate before Thee, implore Thy protection. Remember that we are Thine, bound and consecrated to Thee by a special devotion. Protect us in Thy mercy, deliver us from danger, help us in our necessities, and

impart to us strength to persevere always in the imitation of Thy Holy Family, so that, by serving Thee and loving Thee faithfully during this mortal life, we may at length give Thee eternal praise
[073] in heaven. O Mary, dearest Mother, we implore thy assistance, knowing that thy divine Son will hearken to thy petitions; and do thou, most glorious patriarch St. Joseph, help us with thy powerful patronage, and place our petitions in Mary's hands that she may offer them to Jesus Christ. Amen.

Second Day.

Within our own time the devotion to the Holy Family has grown under the fostering care of the Supreme Pontiff, who has authorized the establishment of associations throughout the world, by which men and women, married and unmarried, are gathered into one fold from the standpoint of the family. The Holy Father desires that all the faithful of the Catholic Church should consider this association as a consecration to the Christian life, and that they will feel that they are bound to lead a holy life because their association is established and legalized by God. For what is the Sacrament of Matrimony but the legalizing of the family before God and man? Let us consider the family as a special institution of God's providence for the preservation of the world, and the propagating in it of sound principles of learning and religion.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Third Day.

We are to consecrate ourselves to God under the union of a family. That is the pretence with which we come before God, to

claim His kindness and mercy because we belong to a family. We are not isolated creatures, looking for our selfish ends, but we [074] are a union of individuals constituted under a certain authority, which gives us a claim to the respect of God and man; for God has said, Where there are two or three gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them. Matt. xviii. 20. The formula of consecration of a Christian family has been given us by the Sovereign Pontiff himself; rules, regulations, and by-laws have been given to this society under the same authority of the Holy Father. The whole Christian family should be so united among themselves, that there be but one family under one head, set over all to rule them by its supreme power. We belong to this Christian family of the Church; let us then unite for the common good of all.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Fourth Day.

The scope of the pious association of the Holy Family is that all Christian families be consecrated to the Holy Family of Nazareth, placing it before themselves for veneration and imitation; offering up every day before its image prayers in its honor, and practising in their lives the sublime virtues which the Holy Family offered for imitation to every grade of society. The rich will find a model before them, the learned and highly educated will know exactly what to do according to the dignity of their position, the working class, especially, will find here the guidance and friendship needed in their temptations and troubles. The Holy Family is a poor, working, humble family, as poor as [075] the poorest, as laborious as the most hard-working, as humble as the most lowly.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Fifth Day.

The picture of the Holy Family should be in every household; it is a perpetual reminder, placed in tangible form, of our dear Lord, our blessed Lady, and our friend, St. Joseph, who were the members of the Holy Family. We often are interested in the pictures of great persons, and take delight in representations of angels and holy people. What is the secret of this inclination? Why, we can see those whom we wish to imitate, and grow to know their good and holy lives through their pictures. The Holy Father has approved one special picture which is to be the emblem of this association: Mary and Joseph, holding the youth Jesus between them by the hand. Jesus is not an infant, for this picture is to bring to mind the fact that His parents had to suffer care and anxiety in order to bring Him to this stage of boyhood, for which noble duty they were fitted by special providence and by special faithfulness.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Sixth Day.

We have good hopes, says the Holy Father, concluding his
[076] encyclical letter, that all to whom the salvation of souls is committed, especially the bishops, will make themselves partners and sharers of our zeal in promoting this pious association. For those who recognize and deplore with us the change and corruption of Christian morals, the extinction of the love of religion and piety in families, and the passion for earthly goods, enkindled beyond

measure, will desire exceedingly to apply suitable remedies for so many grievous evils. Since nothing can be more salutary and efficacious for Christian families than the example of the Holy Family, let care be taken that as many families as possible, especially those of the working classes, against which insidious forces are more strongly exercised, enroll themselves in this association. Let the association be on its guard, lest it swerve from its purpose, or change its spirit—rather let the practices of piety and the prayers which have been determined on to be preserved intact. May Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, thus besought within the family circle, be graciously present! May they foster charity, regulate morals, incite all that imitate them to virtue, and alleviate and render more bearable the hardships which oppress mankind!

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Seventh Day.

A plenary indulgence after a sincere confession and a worthy communion, and praying for the intentions of His Holiness, may be gained by the members of the association on the following days: First, on the day of their entrance into the association, after they have recited the act of consecration. Second, on the day of a general meeting, when all go to communion in a body, and renew their promises. Third, on the feasts of the Nativity (Christmas), the Circumcision, Epiphany, Easter and Ascension. Fourth, on the feasts of the Blessed Virgin: Immaculate Conception, Nativity, Annunciation, Purification, Assumption. Fifth, also on the following days: feast of St. Joseph in March, Patronage of St. Joseph, Third Sunday after Easter, Espousal of the Blessed Virgin on the twenty-third of January. Sixth, on the feast of the Holy Family, and Seventh, at the hour of death.

Prayer.
O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Eighth Day.

Partial indulgences may be gained when visiting a church where the association is established, provided the members pray for the prosperity of Christendom, and for the intention of the Holy Father. Seven years and seven quarantines may be gained on the feasts of the Visitation, Presentation, and the Patronage of the Blessed Virgin. The same indulgences may be gained by the family in the reunion in prayer among themselves, if they pray before a picture of the Holy Family. The same also, whenever the members attend a public meeting of the association. Three hundred days' indulgence is granted as often as a member of the association recites, before a picture of the Holy Family, the
[078] prayer O most loving Jesus,etc., etc. The members may gain an indulgence of two hundred days when they make the salutation: Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, enlighten us, aid us, save us. Amen. One hundred days for every new member that is brought to the association, and sixty days for every good work done in honor of the Holy Family. All these indulgences are applicable to the souls in purgatory.

Prayer.
O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Ninth Day.

The Catholic Christian has the true faith which comes to him from Jesus Christ, the Founder of the true Church. He ought, then, to show by his conduct that his faith has made him better

than so many others, who have not had the graces and advantages which came to him. In other words, it is not enough to believe the truths that God has revealed; it is not enough to belong to the true Church by the internal adhesion of the mind; it is indispensably necessary to manifest our faith in exterior works. Our faith should so have penetrated our whole being, that the profession of religion should show itself in all our actions. Faith without works is dead, and at the Last Judgment the almighty Judge will demand of us an account of all our actions, and then will He render to every one the merited reward or punishment. Let it be our aim in life to fill the days of our stay on earth with many good actions, the outcome of our faith, so that when we stand before the throne of God, we may have many glorious deeds to our credit. [079]

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Tenth Day.

A Christian considers his faith as a gift of heaven, a priceless treasure far surpassing any earthly wealth, because it raises man to a true knowledge of God and secures for him his eternal salvation. He rejects with horror the maxims of our modern infidels, who say, One religion is as good as another; Hell is only a bugbear, The faith of the heart is enough for salvation, and many others of the same nature. He rejects them because he knows that God is one, that the truth that comes from God is one, and that therefore faith must be one, and religion one. He knows that religion cannot be framed according to the whims of man, but only can come from the authority of God in His holy revelation. He will not associate with those who hold the above false doctrines; he will be an enemy of bad books, which teach

errors of faith and which drag those who read them into the mire of immorality, and he will caution his friends against them.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Eleventh Day.

The Catholic Church was founded by Jesus Christ as a perfect society, with authority to make laws, with power to punish the guilty, and to expel rebellious subjects from her midst. This
[080] power was given to the Church by Christ when He said, And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven. It is clear that Christ intended His Church to be our guide in all our actions, as an authority to teach us what the revelation is concerning our future state. We should, therefore, be obedient and faithful children of the Church. We should be grateful to God, Who in His mercy has established certain fountains of grace, which are found in the Church, and are guarded by her. These fountains of grace are the sacraments, which point out the holy states of life, and the true manner of pleasing God. We should use the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist for the remedy of our faults, and the strength of our weakness.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Twelfth Day.

Confession is the correction of our faults, and if we have sinned let us remember we have an advocate in heaven, to Whom we wish to return in the sincerity of our hearts. The Holy Eucharist

is the body and blood of Christ and communion the partaking of it.

We should not, therefore, be deterred from frequenting these sacraments by human considerations, or by the mockery of the people of this world. We should have these words of Christ deeply engraven in our hearts: Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you. John vi. 54. A devout Catholic is easily distinguished [81] from the crowd of careless ones, when we see him humbly and frequently going to confession and to holy communion.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Thirteenth Day.

Be also reverent and devout in the house of God; not brought there by vain curiosity, or by fashion, but by unfeigned piety, rendering to God an external tribute of dependence and adoration. Look upon priests as the ambassadors of God, treat them with respect, listen to their teaching, and put it into practice. Reverence the bishops as divinely constituted guardians and teachers in the Church: especially the see of St. Peter, the Vicar of Christ, the Roman Pontiff, the Father and teacher, in whom is intrusted the plentitude of power to rule the whole Catholic family. Reverence the infallible authority of the Pope, which guides you in matters of faith, in form of worship, and morality.

Accept with docility and obedience the decisions of the Holy See, and conform to them your opinions and thoughts. Do not follow the changeable and novel opinions of our infidel age.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Fourteenth Day.

The true Christian must not only profess the faith, but also the
[082] laws of Christ. He is anxious to observe them exactly and to observe them all, knowing that he is guilty of damnation who violates the law in one important point. This law bids us to love all men as fellow creatures, to love our relatives, our country, but above all, and before all, we must love God, the Author of our being, the great loving Father of heaven. The honor of God is the very first duty of man, who as a rational being knows God and His infinite goodness; we wish to serve Him as His subjects, render Him the homage due to His immensity, a worship which our infinite littleness renders to God. Never profane the word of God yourself, and prevent curses and oaths in others as far as possible. By acts of praise and benediction let us repair the offences against God when we cannot prevent them. At least pray for those who use the name of God in vain, and thus endeavor to ward off from them the eternal punishment due to that wicked practice.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Fifteenth Day.

Contribute your share towards the glorification of the name of God, by observing the Sundays and festivals of the Church. God has expressly reserved these days to Himself, and has pointed them out by the authority of the Church. In the Old and in the New Law, God has had days of rest and of religious practices; and for the observances of these He has promised publicly that there should be many rewards. Every good, God-fearing man
[083] will give a just tribute of respect to God, because God wills it, and because he is looking for some benefit from God. Abstain

then from servile works on those days, no matter what temporal gains may be expected, and be careful that others, too, keep holy the Sabbath of the Lord, particularly those who are intrusted to your care and command. Do not have work done on Sunday, and allow none to be done about your premises.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Sixteenth Day.

Respect your parents, superiors, and masters, and all those who hold positions of trust towards you. They hold the authority of God, and he who despises them despises God Himself. Honor and respect those superiors as representatives of God, and obey them in all things that are not against His law; and so we come to that great second commandment, which is like unto the first: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. We should do unto others as we would wish that others should do unto us; that is, we should look upon one another as children of one great family, of which God is the heavenly Father. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another, not showing this love through politeness only, but through a real, downright feeling of interest in others, and without a selfish regard of our own interests. Try to perform spiritual and corporal works of mercy for your neighbor. [084]

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Seventeenth Day.

In all your intercourse with others respect their persons and property; do not look for unjust gains; be faithful to your bargains and

contracts; never look to your own selfish interests solely. Never speak ill of anybody, nor circulate detractions, nor reveal secrets and defects that might lessen the esteem in which any one is held; excuse the faults of others, and find some excuse for the intention with which even an evil action is committed. We are all temples of the Holy Ghost, sanctified and ennobled by the blood of Christ. We are the dwellings of the Holy Trinity, called to a heavenly inheritance. Do not desecrate this sacred temple by impurity; guard against impure thoughts and immodest desires, flee from dangerous occasions. Avoid foolishly pursuing the luxuries and vanities of the world, improper company, and bad conversation. Do not enter theatres or places of amusement where your morals are endangered, and from which you carry nothing but pictures of immoral objects. Arm yourself most effectually against the approach of evil by the powerful shield of prayer, and walk in the presence of God.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Eighteenth Day.

So far we have considered the law of God practically interpreted
[085] in our every-day life; let us go still further and endeavor to learn the laws of the Church, for the Lord has said: He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me. And If he will not hear the Church let him be to thee as the heathen and publican. On Sundays and holydays of obligation, we ought to hear Mass. We should observe the feasts of the Church and the restriction from flesh meat on Fridays and other days of abstinence. Remember that these little acts of mortification are a great benefit to us, since the Lord has commanded that we should bring forth fruits worthy of penance. Make your Easter duty, for the Church has laid down the law that you should fulfil

those duties, not from routine or human respect, but with the knowledge of the needs of your soul.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Nineteenth Day.

What an exalted opinion we should have of Christian piety! It inspires the Christian man and woman with lofty ideas, and prepares them for noble undertakings. These lessons of piety should be planted early in the hearts of the young, that they may take root and grow up to a magnificent fruit of mature virtue. Serve God as a loving and dutiful child, cherish a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin, and have recourse to her in all your wants, being sure that all your petitions will meet with a ready and hearty response. Never forget these three truths, which should be the main considerations of the true Christian on every occasion: [86] First, That sin is the only evil which should be feared; Second, The grace of God is the real good for which we should strive with all our heart; Third, The salvation of the soul is the all-important business of our lives, for which we were created, and which should be looked after with that care which it deserves.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Twentieth Day.

The husband, as head of the family, owes to his wife fidelity, love, and support. Fidelity is that constancy of affection which he has promised at his marriage, and which must be preserved inviolable until death; it means that purity of soul and body which

will not permit itself to be degraded by impurity and adultery. Conjugal fidelity is a great and holy duty, in which matrimony is held sacred. There you find peace, happiness, and the blessing of almighty God. Our Lord was very stringent upon this point, for He says: Whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart—Matt. v. 28. Whosoever then commits adultery transgresses a most important divine commandment. In the Old Law this crime was punished by stoning the guilty person to death, and in the primitive Church by a severe public penance of many years' duration. What fidelity does not the husband demand of the wife! With the same strictness is he obliged to be faithful to her whom he has
[087] chosen as his life companion.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-first Day.

The second duty of the husband and wife is conjugal love. The word conjugal means joined together, because husband and wife are united to bear the same burden. The Apostle says: Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it. Ephes. v. 25. Husband and wife are individuals whom God has joined in inseparable companionship. The greatest bond between mankind, and the sweetest one, is conjugal love, of which we are thinking on this day consecrated to the Holy Family. Keep this great duty before your eyes and never forget it, for it is easily destroyed. It is from that love, too, that should spring your children, who are to grow up to take your place in the Church and the State. These children you are to bring up in the fear and love of God, faithful to the Church and their fatherland. A tremendous responsibility!

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-second Day.

The husband is the main worker in the family, so that his duty is to provide for his family by his industry and economy. He must look for employment and strive to keep it, so as to have a [p 88] never-failing source of income, by which his people may live in comparative comfort. There are husbands who will allow their wives and children to work, while they themselves live idle lives, which is the fashion of the untutored Indian. Not only must the husband work, but he must live in economy, and not throw his money away foolishly in gaming or in drunkenness. The most frequent cause of a husband and father's failure to provide for his family is drunkenness. Drunkenness causes woe, sin, sorrow and shame. Drunkenness besots the mind, and makes of an intelligent being a brute in his passions, and a fool in his actions; it extinguishes the spirit of God in him, all sentiments of religion are lost, the Church of God is despised and disgraced. Drunkenness does as much harm as the greatest vices, bringing ruin with it whenever indulged in.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-third Day.

The husband has to share the care of the children and he should look after the instruction of the child. Children are a great treasure, worth more than all the wealth of the world. The Lord said of them to the apostles: Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of

God. And why is the Lord so anxious for the welfare of the innocent child? Because it is a weak human being, unable to help
[089] itself, destined for heaven, redeemed by the blood of Jesus, and a temple of the Holy Ghost, more fitted to be such on account of the purity of its soul. Now the care of this child is given to the father and the mother, under whose care it is to grow up a true Christian, an exemplary member of the Church of God; to live on until it has fulfilled its days and the duties of its state of life, when, like yourself, having come to the fulness of maturity, it is gathered in to render an account of its life work to almighty God. The success of the child's life depends chiefly on the manner in which its parents fulfil their duty.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-fourth Day.

In what special duties are you to instruct your children? First of all, let the young children learn early to pray, make them think of God, speak to them of His love for mankind, teach them to adore Him, because He has created them, to thank Him for all His benefits which flow to them so abundantly, to ask Him with confidence for all the graces that they need. Correct the children for their faults: Lying, stealing, cursing, stubbornness, disobedience, fighting, and cruelty. Have an eye very early on their morals, for little children learn to do wicked things, by which they lose the love and grace of God. Be not a tyrant, but a sensible, religious father or mother, and see to it that the children are free from these vices. Give them no bad example,
[090] especially by using profanity, or by getting intoxicated. All this presupposes perpetual vigilance; remember you will have to render a strict account of these things before God.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-fifth Day.

Having considered the husband's duties, we must now look at the duty of a wife. The Scriptures say of the wife: A good wife is a good portion; she shall be given in the portion of them that fear God, to a man for his good deeds. Eccles. xxvi. 3. There is nothing in the whole world more precious than a good wife. A wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish will pull down with her hands that also which is built. Prov. xiv. 1. A wife must love her husband, and she owes him the most scrupulous fidelity; if the first duty of the husband is to love his wife, so also is there a corresponding duty to return that love. She must be patient with him when he comes home murmuring against his fate; she must make the home agreeable to him by cleanliness and cheerfulness. She must bear the burdens of this life with her husband, and encourage him, that he may not be despondent. The wife must be sober, not given to scolding and fault-finding. Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord; because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church. Ephes. v. 22. [091]

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-sixth Day.

The conscientious observance of the marriage vows is to be a supreme law to the wife. Purity must be the virtue principally looked to in marriage, according to the laws of the Sacrament of Matrimony; the wife's motto must be that of Susanna of old,

who said: I will rather die than sin before God. The wife owes her husband a compliance at least to his wishes; not exactly an abject obedience, but that the husband and wife consult with each other, and that she comply in all lawful and sensible things. This subjection is founded on the Scriptures. God Himself said to Eve, "Thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall have dominion over thee" (Gen. iii. 16), and St. Paul declares, "Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord" (Ephes. v. 22. The loving, true, and obedient wife exerts an unbounded influence for good over her husband. She will make him great in the eyes of men, she will make him respectable and presentable in society; in short, she will make the married life a truly happy one from beginning to end.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-seventh Day.

[092] The wife has a sublime calling to be a mother. What is more beautiful than motherhood? what is more useful to the new-born humanity than the mother? All the world recognizes her dignity, and respects her. A Christian mother will consider the child a gift from God, which though given to her, still belongs to God; hers is the first care of the newly-born infant, her care and love will not relax for all time to come. She is always the mother. Have the child presented for Baptism at the very earliest moment; if it be in danger of death see that it receives private baptism. Then start out in patience and kindness to rear it, giving it a secular but above all a religious training, as the child must be prepared to take its place as a good member of society and of the Church. Hence prayers must be taught, and care must be taken that they are recited with piety and regularity; the dogmas of the Church must be impressed on the child. At home it has to learn all that

pertains to the spiritual life of the holy Roman Catholic Church, of which it is a member. Secular learning must be imparted, too, as much as possible in schools belonging to the Church, so that the very best education may be secured for the child.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-eighth Day.

The mother must watch over the children, and be very careful of the company they keep. She must see that prayers are said morning and night, before and after meals, that they go regularly to church on Sundays, and to school every day. When they are able to go to work, give them an occupation so that they [89] will not be idle. Keep a vigilant eye on your grown-up sons and daughters. They are forming acquaintances which perhaps are not good for them; their associations may not be the best. Unrestricted, unobserved meetings should not be allowed, for they excite the passions. When the time of their marriage comes, pray to almighty God that they may find such partners as will be a help to them for the rest of their lives, and lead them on in sanctity to their eternal salvation. As you have been a good mother to your children, they will respect your memory, will pray for you when you are gone, and will imitate your virtues. The memory of a good mother lives forever.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-ninth Day.

The principal feast during the month of February is the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, or Candlemas. On that day

Mary goes to the Temple, because the days of her purification are over. For forty days she was excluded from the Temple as being impure. Mary, as we know, was holy and good, and did not need to subject herself to the Law of Moses; but she was obedient and permitted herself to be regarded as an ordinary woman. There in the Temple she presented her first-born Son to God. He belongs to God already, He is God; He is the victim by whose atonement a permanent reconciliation is effected between God and man. The gates of heaven are opened, and the places made vacant by
[094] the fall of the angels are to be filled. Mary brings with her the offering of the poor, a pair of turtle-doves as a ransom. God has accepted the sacrifice of His divine Son, made for Him by His holy Mother. O holy Virgin! do thou also make propitiation to the Father for us poor sinners, that we may be acceptable to God, may belong to God, and may spend our lives in His service.

Prayer.

O most loving Jesus, etc., etc.

Litany of the Holy Family.

(For Private Devotion Only).

Lord, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
God, the Father of heaven, Have mercy on us
God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, Have mercy on us

God, the Holy Ghost, Have mercy on us
Holy Trinity, one God, Have mercy on us
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, Have mercy on us
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, worthy subjects of our reverence and love, We all have recourse to you.
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, by the voice of the ages called the Holy Family, We all have recourse to you.
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, names forever blessed, of the father, the Mother, and the Child, who compose the Holy Family, We all have recourse to you.
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, pure husband, pure spouse, and divine Child, restorers of the family, degraded before Christianity, We all have recourse to you.
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, image of the august Trinity on earth, We all have recourse to you. [095]
Holy Family, whose chaste union was prepared for by an innocent and virtuous youth, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, tried by great contradictions, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, afflicted in the journey to Bethlehem, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, repulsed by all, and forced to take refuge in a stable, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, greeted by the concert of angels, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, visited by the poor shepherds, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, extolled by holy Simeon, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, persecuted and exiled to a strange land, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, hidden and unknown at Nazareth, We all have recourse to you.

Holy Family, faithful to the law of God, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, model of the Christian family, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, in which reign peace and concord, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, whose head is a model of paternal vigilance, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, whose spouse is a model of maternal solicitude, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, whose Child is a model of obedience and filial piety, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, who led a poor, laborious, and penitent life, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, who earned your bread by the sweat of your brow, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, poor in goods of the earth, but rich in goods of heaven, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, despised by men, but great in God's eyes, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, our support during life and our hope at the hour of our death, We all have recourse to you.
Holy Family, patron and protector of our associates, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, We all have recourse to you.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Spare us, O Lord!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Graciously hear us, O Lord!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Have mercy on us, O Lord!
Jesus, hear us. Jesus, graciously hear us.

Let Us Pray.

O God of goodness and mercy, Who hast vouchsafed to call us to this pious association of the Holy Family, grant us the grace

always to honor and imitate Jesus, Mary, and Joseph; that having living pleased them on earth we may enjoy their company forever in heaven. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Memorare To Mary.

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary! that no one ever had recourse to thy protection, implored thy aid, or sought thy mediation without obtaining relief. Confiding, therefore, in thy goodness and mercy, we cast ourselves at thy sacred feet, and do most humbly supplicate thee, O Mother of the Eternal Word! to adopt us as thy children and to take upon thyself the care of our salvation. O let it not be said, our dearest Mother, that we have perished, where no one ever found but mercy, grace, and salvation. Amen.

Form Of Renewing The Baptismal Vows.

Humbly prostrate before Thee, O my God! and before the Holy Family, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I return my grateful thanks for the inestimable benefit bestowed upon me, of being born and educated in the Catholic Church, of which I was made a child by Baptism. I thus received a right to the graces which Jesus Christ dispenses through the sacraments, the happiness of being admitted into the number of the children of the true faith, and the hope of one day entering paradise. I come to renew and ratify the promises made at my Baptism. Yes, O my God! I desire to belong entirely to Thee, to serve Thee all my life, and strive always for the end for which I was created. Therefore I renounce Satan

and all his works, sin and its occasions. I renounce the world, [097] its maxims and vanities. I renounce the flesh and its concupiscences, all irregular desires, and whatever may be displeasing to Thee. I renounce human respect, which for so long kept me from Thee. Formerly I feared the world and its ridicule, now I have but one fear, that of forgetting my religious duties. I will henceforth faithfully perform them, I will live according to the precepts and maxims of Jesus Christ, I will be a good Christian. O Jesus, Mary, and Joseph! make me more and more worthy of the name. Through the help of your powerful protection, may I be a respectful child of God, submissive to the Church, faithful to my duties, that I may one day have the happiness of thanking and glorifying you in the heavenly country. I am resolved to live according to the precepts and maxims of Jesus Christ; yes, I desire to live a good Christian life, that I may die the death of the elect. I promise to remain faithful to my obligations as an associate of the Holy Family, and hope to persevere until death. And at that moment what happiness it will be for me to pass from the arms of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph on earth, to the arms of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in heaven, for all eternity. This is my hope. Amen.

An indulgence of forty days.

Act Of Consecration.

O Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I, N. N., in sight of the whole celestial court, choose you this day for my patrons and protectors. I offer, and solemnly consecrate to you in this association, my body and [098] soul, all I have and all I am. I promise to live as a good Christian, that I may die the death of the predestined. What happiness for me to pass one day from the arms of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph on

earth, to the arms of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in heaven, for all eternity. This is my hope. Amen.

[099]

March. St. Joseph.

We can easily imagine that the foster-father of the Infant Jesus must have been a great man in the eyes of God. His duties were very important; they called for such a self-sacrificing character. We wish to imitate his virtues this month; we wish to praise almighty God for all the distinctions which He has showered upon St. Joseph; we want to belong to St. Joseph, to be associated with him in heaven, and even now while we are still on earth, for prayer associates us here with those whom we address above. The saints hear our prayers by God's favor, and they reply at once. We need many things, and so we are going to pray to St. Joseph, especially during this month, for whatever we want. Go confidently and make out a list of your necessities, write them down, and look over them occasionally to see whether your petitions have been granted.

St. Joseph is all-powerful before God; whatever we ask of him we are sure to obtain; this has been the experience of many good Christians; it will also be your experience if you sincerely try it.

St. Joseph sanctified labor, poverty, and privations, by bearing them with patience, humility, and resignation to the will of God. We have many trials in life to endure, we have need of these virtues; let us look to it that we acquire them for our own spiritual comfort. Let us bear with patience all these trials; patience makes things bearable, for without this virtue we would sink in despair.

The feast of St. Joseph is celebrated on the nineteenth of March, and for this reason the month of March is dedicated to honor, venerate, and pray to this great friend of God. The Church has in various ways encouraged this devotion. Her devout children have taken it up, so that we find the month of March as much dedicated to St. Joseph as the month of May to the

Blessed Virgin. Catholics hold St. Joseph in high veneration, [100] and deservedly so, as we will see in the following meditations on his life. They have great confidence in his power before God, they know that he is a great saint, and a great favorite with the Almighty. Many examples of virtue has this loved saint given to us: his love of poverty, his assiduous labors, his resignation to the will of God in the most trying circumstances, are practical virtues, which we may endeavor to acquire for our own spiritual as well as temporal welfare. The affairs of human life are such, that we often find ourselves having to sustain hard trials, in which we need precisely those same virtues which made him a great saint.

Let us then enter upon this month with great joy, and continue to honor this saint, that we may love him, and become particularly devoted to him. Let us pray especially for our eternal salvation, in which he is greatly interested being the patron of a happy death, and then we will be sharers, after this life, in the same glory which he enjoys in heaven.

Considerations and Prayers for Every Day.

First Day.

After the adoration of the Lord, and the veneration of the Blessed Virgin, next in order of importance comes the devotion to St. Joseph. Among all the saints of God in heaven, there is none more powerful, none has more claim on our confidence and love. Almighty God encourages us to look up to St. Joseph, for to him were intrusted the greatest treasures that the world ever saw,

Jesus and Mary. Our Lord from the first moment recognized St. Joseph as the one who took the place of His heavenly Father, and He obeyed him in all things. Mary respected this saintly man as the head of the family, as her spouse whom God had sent to her for her protection. She, before whom the angels bowed
[101] in respect, willingly served St. Joseph in the necessities of this life. The Church of God, the custodian of truth, revelation, and tradition, has encouraged this devotion by many indulgences. St. Francis de Sales said to his confessor on the eve of his death: Do you not know, venerable father, that I belong to St. Joseph? St. Teresa called him her father and master.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, be mindful of me, pray for me, watch over me. Guardian of the paradise of the new Adam, provide for my temporal wants. Faithful guardian of the most precious of all treasures, I beseech thee to bring this matter to a happy end, if it be for the glory of God and the good of my soul. Amen.

Second Day.

The devotion to St. Joseph, when well understood and faithfully practised, is undoubtedly a great means of increasing piety. We know well that we honor the saints most by imitating their virtues, therefore we will endeavor to acquire these virtues which most distinguished our saint, and the chief virtue of St. Joseph was piety. We will learn to love Jesus tenderly; to do all our actions with the intention of pleasing Him, to remain faithful to the teachings of the Church; all this is piety. The whole life of St. Joseph was a life of poverty, humility, retirement, recollection and prayer. When the Egyptian people were starving, and clamoring for food, Pharao said to them, Go to Joseph, who
[102] had gathered the superfluous grain of seven abundant years, and

kept the keys of the granaries in his possession. So now, also, can we say confidently, Go to Joseph, who holds the keys of the graces and blessings of God. We need never fear the poverty which may stare us in the face, knowing that all our needs will be supplied by him.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Third Day.

When Mary was chosen to be Mother of God, the old judgment of God was re-echoed, It is not good for man to be alone. God gave her a chaste spouse. The honor of the Son of God required that He should be born of a virgin, but He needed a man to protect Him and His Mother. A man worthy of this trust had to be chosen, and such a one was found in the person of St. Joseph. He was a man of angelic purity and he would guard the purity of his bride. He was to be the reputed father of Jesus before the Jews, lest Mary be stoned for having broken her marriage vows; his purity was to be in every way similar to that of the purest of virgins. All those who were immediately connected with the great work of our salvation, were to be pure and spotless, their sanctity was to be unquestioned. It was the will of God that the divine origin of His adorable Son should be hid from human eyes, and Joseph was chosen to become the cloak with which this mystery was enshrouded. Only in the secrecy of his family life did he manifest his adoration of the Word made flesh, and [103] there, as in a sanctuary, he adored his Lord and Saviour.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Fourth Day.

Joseph is that wise and provident servant, who was set over his family to distribute to it the necessary food at stated times. He is the visible physical means which God employed for the work of the salvation of mankind. God chooses, it is true, humble instruments to accomplish His holy designs, but at the same time He furnishes them with suitable graces, that His work may be gloriously and effectively performed. Such a servant was chosen by God in the person of St. Joseph, who was a humble and saintly man. To him He gave His graces, for He refuses them to the proud. We too ought to be disinterested and humble in the service of God, using our natural talents to the fullest extent because they belong to God, and have been given to us for the special purpose of performing the duties of our vocation in this world. Disinterestedness and humility are the great sources from which all good proceeds.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Fifth Day.

All the saints were filled with the spirit of the Lord, and in con-
[104] sequence they esteemed the virtue of humility as the foundation of perfection. St. Bernard considered this virtue as the corner-stone of the edifice of faith; the perfection of Christian virtues; the tower of safety, into which the soul could retire before the insidious attacks of Satan. And St. Ambrose calls this virtue the first one, and the source of all other virtues. All other virtues must be combined with humility to give them value. To no other virtue does God give so many graces. Just because St. Joseph thought nothing of himself, and lowered himself in the eyes of others, did Jesus select him as His foster-father. This great virtue

of humility appears in all the circumstances of his life. Though of the royal house of David, still he did not disdain to labor at the humble trade of a carpenter. He was perfectly resigned to the providence of God; God's will was his will, and he never repined at the trials God sent him.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Sixth Day.

Joseph consented to become the spouse of the Blessed Virgin, because he knew he could preserve the chastity which he had vowed to keep, and because he could be the guardian of the virginity of Mary. Little did he suspect that he was to become the spouse of the Mother of God. St. Bridget had a vision, in which the sentiments of St. Joseph were made known to her by the Blessed Virgin herself. She said: "When Joseph, who was given to me by the Most High as my protector, knew of the mystery of the incarnation, which was operated in me by the [135] power of the Holy Ghost, he was filled with astonishment, and conceived not the least suspicion against my purity. He believed firmly in the prophecies which proclaimed that the Son of God would be born of a Virgin, and therefore he considered himself unworthy to serve such an exalted Mother." St. Joseph learned the virtue of humility still more profoundly in his association with Jesus and Mary, for how could it be otherwise when he hourly observed their self-abnegation? Daily did he see the Mother of God engaged in the most lowly services.

Prayer.

Holy Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Seventh Day.

What must have been the feelings of the holy patriarch in witnessing the humiliation of the Son of God! What must have been his astonishment, when the divine wisdom of the Child Jesus asked him his counsel, obeyed him in all things, and was for many years his fellow-laborer at his humble trade! The Lord taught him the great lesson: to be meek and humble of heart. Surely we may suppose that St. Joseph was in a constant ecstasy of adoration as he contemplated the Son of God, lowered to the condition of a helpless child, and afterwards by natural growth becoming a man and laboring at such humble employment. How could he have within himself one spark of pride or vanity in the knowledge that he was a descendant of King David? Therefore
[106] he humbled himself all the more, and only considered himself great in the thought that he was allowed to imitate the humiliation of the Son of God. Let us learn from St. Joseph the value of this virtue, and practise it all our lives. Let us often enter the Sacred Heart of Jesus to learn from Him meekness and humility.

Prayer For Humility.

Glorious patron, St. Joseph, let me understand the deep feeling with which thou didst witness the humble lives of Jesus and Mary. How far am I from being able to say that I have acquired this virtue! Thou seekest only to hide from the gaze of the world the divine gifts with which thou art enriched, whilst I seek to draw the attention of the world on myself, to shine before the world, and to be much thought of. O my loving protector, my patron, my father, obtain for me the virtue of humility, which is the foundation of all perfection. Obtain for me the great grace to know myself, to despise myself, to look for humiliations from others, to feel inferior to all, that in the future I may desire no other witness of my actions but God, and no other reward but God. Amen.

Eighth Day.

When God had created Adam, and made him strong and intelligent, He found that one great thing was wanting. Adam needed a companion; he could not content himself in all the superabundance that was around him. Then God took a rib out of the first man, and built a woman upon it. The same thing seems true in the case of the Blessed Virgin. She was all alone in the [90] spiritual order among men. She was endowed with many graces, yet in all her abundance she would be desolate, only God said, let us make her a companion like unto herself, one who would also be the favorite creature of God, and would be the recipient of many extraordinary graces. He therefore chose a great saint, and gave him special gifts. A prince of this world does the same thing when he desires to make a lowly subject his companion; he first makes him a noble, then enriches him with much wealth in order that the favorite may make a good appearance before the world. God united in St. Joseph all the virtues and graces of the other saints, that he might be greater than they. From all eternity it had been ordained that St. Joseph was to be the foster-father of Jesus.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Ninth Day.

Great must have been the terror of Mary when the angel of God appeared to her, and announced that she was to be the Mother of God. She was troubled, but the angel encouraged her, saying, Fear not, Mary. The angel announced the incarnation to St. Joseph, and he was greatly troubled; the angel assured him, Fear not, Joseph, Son of David. Mary gave life to the Lord and brought Him up. Joseph, on his part, labored day and

night to scrape together what was necessary for their existence.
[108] Both Mary and Joseph were equally, according to their position, contributing to the rearing of Jesus. Like Mary, the Mother of Jesus, St. Joseph is powerful with her divine Son. St. Joseph is called, by the Holy Ghost, a just man. He was the first to be exposed to the persecutions of the Jews for the Lord. In all things then, is Joseph like unto Mary; similar also are his virtues, and like also his eternal reward.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Tenth Day.

We may trace other phases of similarity between the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph. Mary is the Queen of angels, high above them, because she is the Mother of the Creator; she is then all-powerful, and she can use these heavenly spirits for the glory of God. St. Joseph is not inferior to the angels in purity; his mind was always careful to guard against any pollution; he was a guardian angel to Jesus, Our Lord. This office made him a great being in the sight of Jesus Himself, for He acknowledged His guardian angel and was on the most intimate terms with him. St. Joseph served Our Lord as a throne. The choir of thrones are the angels on whom God is carried about in majesty, and Jesus was carried about in the arms of St. Joseph. The seraphims, in a certain degree, were inferior to St. Joseph. The angels have no paternity, but St. Joseph is called the father of Jesus. The angels could then bow down before St. Joseph, and acknowledge and call him their superior, because he had received a commission
[109] which no angel had ever yet received, and because he had a name which had never been given to any of these holy choirs.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Eleventh Day.

It was the privilege of the father to give a name to the child, and this privilege St. Joseph exercised at the circumcision of the Lord. It was he too who usually performed the painful operation of the circumcision. Thus it was that St. Joseph shed the first drops of the adorable blood which was to redeem mankind. The name of Jesus had been predestined for the Saviour, and given by God Himself; but Joseph, the father on earth, was commissioned to declare it publicly. O great saint! you cannot give to this divine Child a greater dignity than He possesses, for He is your Creator and Lord; but you do the next greatest thing, you give him a name which publishes Him to the world in His character of Redeemer this great honor is reserved for you. Holy name of Jesus, the greatest of all names, before the mention of which all heaven and earth shall bow their knees in adoration, be to me a source of heavenly joy, and a consolation in all the trials of life.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Twelfth Day.

Joseph, no doubt, understood all the importance and meaning of the name of Jesus. He therefore knew all the obligations [100] which this holy name imposed on the divine Child, as well as the obligations which it imposed on himself. He understood that Jesus must be the man of sorrows and derision, and that he must share His destiny. St. Joseph always had the image of the crucified Lord before his eyes. If the faith of the great Apostle of the world was such that he carried the image of the crucified Redeemer always before his eyes, much the more can this be said of our saint, for he had Jesus always with him. When he embraced His sacred head, he had before him that head crowned

with thorns, and bowed on His breast in His last agony; he could see that little body covered with wounds from the scourging. God treated St. Joseph as His most intimate friend, and filled him with His share of sorrow. Do we wish to enter into the glory of the Lord, then we, too, must suffer patiently. The closer we follow the Lord, the more intimate we are with Him, the more we will look for sufferings, and love them because they make us resemble the Lord more closely.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Thirteenth Day.

St. Joseph was a man of faith. We read in St. Paul, the just man lives by faith. It is the foundation of sanctity, it is the fountain of our spiritual life. All the works of St. Joseph were done in a spirit of faith. Were it not for this spirit of faith, he would never have consented to become the spouse of the Blessed Virgin, for
[111] he desired to preserve his own chastity; and the spirit of faith taught him how he might do this. When he had entered upon his duties as spouse, he noticed that the Virgin was with child, and he fell into deep sorrow and concern, until an angel appeared, dispelling all his doubts: Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife: for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost; and she shall bring forth a Son: and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He will save His people from their sins. Matt. i. 20, 21. The spirit of faith made him believe in these words, whether he understood them or not. He subjected his will to the manner in which God wished to redeem mankind, and he was forever afterwards without solicitude.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Fourteenth Day.

Then came a new trial to the faith of St. Joseph. In due course of time the Lord was born, a little helpless Child, in the humble stable at Bethlehem: where He was wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and laid on a little straw in a manger. Joseph became the first adorer, after the Blessed Virgin. But it required great faith to recognize in this weak Infant the Son of the most high God; still the grace of God sustained him, and he humbly adored. The angel had promised a wonderful Child. He was to be a powerful being, Who would conquer the demons of hell, and free the people of Israel. Now Joseph beholds a small, weak Infant, beginning life in poverty and distress. Far from being a powerful creature He [112] even needs the help of Mary and Joseph. St. Joseph carried the Child in his arms, and yet at the same time acknowledged that the same Child in heaven was carried about on the shoulders of the holiest angels, and governed the universe with His will. He heard the wailings of the Child, but knew that He was the joy of paradise. He taught Him the praises of His heavenly Father, knowing at the same time that He was eternal wisdom.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Fifteenth Day.

Joseph is eminently the just man who lives by faith. No sooner is the Child Jesus born, than, as if an unforeseen accident had happened, which made it necessary to fly, as if there were no God to protect that Babe, an angel appeared to Joseph in his sleep, and bids him arise, and take the Child and His Mother, and fly into the land of Egypt. The enemies of the Child will be on your heels, and all depends on your rapid flight, to save Him from their hands. Fly into Egypt, a far-off foreign country. He

gets up, and hastily gathering the few necessary articles, makes off in the dead of night, so that the people of Bethlehem may not know where he has gone. But Joseph performs his duty in a spirit of faith: he does not doubt the omnipotence of God. He feels that such is the command of God, and he makes no objections, but goes with alacrity into the poverty and suffering which he knows
[113] are inevitable.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Sixteenth Day.

Joseph remained in Egypt until the time of Herod's death. The angel again appears to him, and bids him return to Judea, as if the divine Infant were not sure of His life until His enemies had disappeared. What frailty, what meekness in this little Child! Can this be a God? Without the least hesitation, Joseph treats the Child with the same reverence, and adores Him, as if he had seen Him working miracles. Never was such a faith found in Israel. Nowadays we could not find such a faith. From a want of this noble faith, St. Teresa says, the world is full of sin. Ask St. Joseph to obtain for us a faith similar to his. Faith is a gift and a virtue. By this gift our intellect is enlightened, we know God, and confide in Him. By the virtue of faith we use this light, and let it shine on all our actions. Let us not be satisfied to bow down our intellect under the influence of the great grace of the gift of faith; we should regulate all the actions of our life according to the dictates and laws of this faith, and live according to it. St. Joseph can obtain such graces for us, if we pray to him.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Seventeenth Day.

St. Joseph possesses another great virtue: it is his obedience. From his childhood he observed with conscientious exactitude [de] all the laws of God. Without a murmur he accompanied Mary to Bethlehem in a severe time of the year, and with Mary so soon to give birth to the Child Jesus, to fulfil the command of a heathen prince. When the command was given to take up the Child and flee into Egypt, he was ready. But one word is necessary: he does not consider any plans for flight, but executes the command without a moment's delay. In many cases he could have alleged causes of inconvenience, or of his not understanding how it could be accomplished; he might have asked the angel for an explanation, saying, how comes it that a few days ago you announced that this Jesus is to be the Redeemer of His people, and now He is to fly before His enemies? He will not be able to free His people afterwards, when now He cannot hold His ground. But he subjected his reason to his faith, and obeyed.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Eighteenth Day.

Through our faith God leads us to the knowledge of His goodness and His promises, that so the desire and hope of enjoying God may be born in us. St. Joseph's faith and knowledge of God effected in him a great confidence; he had been peculiarly confirmed in hope. It is a fact that our confidence in God grows with grace when our hope is strengthened by the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, and when we have great devotion and love for the Blessed Virgin; so we must certainly conclude that Joseph's love of Jesus, Whom he daily carried in his arms, should lay a greater [ter] foundation of hope than that of any of the saints. The flight into

Egypt is an example of it. His confidence in the providence of God is so implicit that he makes no preparation. There is Jesus, the Son of God, Who is to go with Him; there is Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, who is to be of the party. These are the two strongest pillars of our hope, and why not to the hope of St. Joseph? God the Father will provide. Is He not the God Who, with a strong arm, led the Israelites out of Egypt, and, after forty years of wandering, introduced them according to promise into the land flowing with milk and honey?

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Nineteenth Day.

In Joseph's flight into Egypt, he knew that Jesus was a more powerful protector of a perilous journey than the Ark of the Covenant which was carried before the tribes of Israel, or the column of smoke that led them during the day and the pillar of fire that protected them at night. He would be the manna, the inexhaustible food, in a desert and strange land. Accompanied by this treasure, St. Joseph is content to suffer for Jesus, and under the eyes of Jesus. We can imagine the sympathy of Joseph for his charge, when he relieved the Blessed Virgin of her burden, and had Him to rest on his bosom. Good and faithful Christian, in all the trials of life keep Jesus close to your heart, and when the world storms and frets, be faithful to your promises made
[116] in Baptism, and often repeated during your Christian life by receiving the sacraments.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Twentieth Day.

The providence of God knows what our destiny is, and what is the best for us. Then let us be resigned to His will. All our anxieties would disappear if we were thoroughly convinced of the goodness of God in our behalf; but because we want to do everything without God, not only do we feel anxiety for the future, but disaster will really overtake us. Let us trust in Providence and give Him entire control of all that concerns us. In all our necessities let us pray and wait, until it is God's pleasure to step in, and do away with our troubles, if it be to His greater glory; or if not, then let us patiently bear them. We know that Providence so watches over us, that not a hair falls from our head without His approval. God has His reasons for all that He does, and for all the evil that He permits, though we may not be able to see them. In this way the Christian soul sleeps softly and peacefully in the arms of God, as a child in the arms of its mother. As David, the prophet king, sang in his psalms: In peace will sleep and rest in peace because Thou, O Lord, hast founded my hope on Thy providence. Thy mercy shall accompany me all the days of my life.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

[117]

Twenty-first Day.

Joseph lived in Egypt for eight years, among a pagan people, without repining, without being distressed at the prolonged stay, an exile from his own country and relatives. There, far from the sacred Temple of God, he remained in seclusion, serving God in his soul. Who can tell the suffering he underwent among the

barbarians, amid their shocking practises of religion, which were abhorrent to him who was so closely united to God? Good people are in the same condition in the wickedness of the world: it is a cross to them. But crosses are to be met with everywhere; you cannot escape. If you get rid of one cross, another is waiting for you, and perhaps a far heavier one; but your consolation should be the knowledge that Jesus, Mary, and Joseph endured the same sufferings. Joseph lived in the Holy Family with the greatest recollection. This should also be the case with those who live in the world, that fiery oven of the trials of God; they should sing the praises of God in the very midst of distractions, and be perfectly recollected, serving God without being led away from the path of duty.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Twenty-second Day.

So greatly did Jesus love poverty, that, not finding it in heaven, He came upon the earth to practise it. All those principally asso-
[118] ciated with Our Lord in the salvation of mankind were obliged to endure poverty. Since the Lord loved poverty so much, St. Joseph, too, had to practise this virtue. Even before St. Joseph was selected to become the foster-father of Our Lord, he was poor according to the will of God, but afterwards he learned the virtue still more from the example of Our Lord. If one single sentence that he had heard from the Gospel, induced St. Antony, abbot and patriarch of monks, to give all his wealth to the poor, how much more did the example of Our Lord act effectively on Joseph, so that he renounced all expectation of worldly advancement. Often in their communing with each other, the question of their destitution must have been the topic; but it was not to find ways and means to avoid it; on the contrary that they should be

patient in the trial. Joseph possessed nothing; hence he witnessed the Lord in His poverty laid in a manger after His birth. At the presentation he could make no other offering but that of very poor people, a pair of pigeons which could be bought for very little money. He also had to undergo many hardships on his journey to Egypt.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Twenty-third Day.

In Egypt, so tradition has it, Joseph had to labor for others in order to bring in the means of a livelihood for himself and the Holy Family. Even then their income was by no means superfluous, and according to St. Liguori they often had to suffer actual want. [19] In this manner Joseph spent eight years in Egypt. When he was recalled by the voice of the angel, he settled in Nazareth; though his circumstances there were probably better, they were by no means luxurious. Bossuet says: "Imagine a poor laborer, who had no other fortune than the labor of his willing hands, no other means of subsistence but his work. Every day he saw the end of his provision, and he had to begin again on the following day, like our poor working people. Still he was rich in contentment; he had enough, because he had nothing which might be coveted by others; he possessed all because he stood in need of everything; he was happy, quiet, secure, although he had no place whereon to rest his head. He was continually constrained to labor with the sweat of his brow. He divided all his income with Jesus and Mary. Was it not a consolation for him to do this? even according to our weak reason, guided by religion.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Twenty-fourth Day.

When we have contemplated the willing poverty of Joseph, the thought naturally comes to us to imitate him in the practise of this virtue. Poverty makes us like to the Lord. Our Lord walks before us with giant strides in the practise of this virtue. The rich, burdened with the goods of this world, can hardly follow Him. Let us consider that, after all, our happiness is not to be
[120] found in the possession of wealth. He is happy, according to St. Augustine, who possesses what he wants, and who wants nothing beyond what God has sent him. The rich are frequently unhappy, because they are carried along to desire the things which they cannot reach. Not only is poverty a source of virtue and of peace; but also it is a means by which we can make progress in our perfection. For as avarice is the source of all evils, so also poverty is the power by which all our vices are corrected, and held in check. This virtue watches over humility: a virtue so very necessary to our perfection, and it preserves chastity by reason of the mortification of our senses.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Twenty-fifth Day.

The interior life of the Holy Family in Nazareth must have been a most beautiful one. They were joined so closely to God, that there was no earthly distraction which could separate them from contemplating and communing with Him. They formed a kind of trinity on earth, a representation of the Trinity in heaven. These three were one, because they were united by the bond of union, Jesus Christ. The people of Nazareth did not know the adorable person of the Lord, nor the dignity of the Mother of God. They knew Joseph by sight, for he had often gone out to look for work,

and necessarily came more in contact with his neighbors. That holy house of Nazareth was a perfect paradise, full of peace, of order, recollection, unity, and happiness. Their conversation was about God and the best means to comply with His holy will. [121] Joseph and Mary adored the Lord because He was God; but they exacted His obedience because He was their Son.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Twenty-sixth Day.

Let us think to-day, of the social life between Joseph and Mary. St. Joseph was a very great saint, and Mary was unstained by sin: so pure, so holy, that no created being could be compared to her. What can we suppose was the conversation of these heavenly beings? When Mary visited her cousin, St. Elizabeth, John, in his mother's womb, leaped for joy. In other words, the presence of the God-man in the womb of the Blessed Virgin scattered graces about her with god-like profusion, and certainly St. Joseph, too, was affected by it. With as lively a faith as we have before the tabernacle on the altar, St. Joseph must have recognized the presence of the Lord, for he was acquainted with the mystery of the incarnation, as it had been revealed by the mouth of the angel. We are silent, and sunk in deep devotion in church, where God dwells. Was St. Joseph less impressed than we, when he recognized Him Who was the Son of God, and Who was to redeem His people Israel from their sins? How great was their devotion to the hidden Lord, how fervent their prayers! Still St. Joseph was the master in that house; he was the head of the family, and was obeyed in all his instructions. [122]

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Twenty-seventh Day.

Joseph was obedient to the Law of Moses; scrupulously exact in following the instructions of the Jewish ceremonial, as all good Jews were. Poor as he was, and notwithstanding the loss of time it necessarily entailed, he still went every year, as was the custom, to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of the Passover. He did this because it was a law of Moses. The Blessed Virgin and the Child Jesus were equally anxious to fulfil the law. And when the feast was over, all went back to Nazareth, but Jesus remained behind, and hid Himself from Joseph for three days, making him feel wretched, because he thought that he had been delinquent in his trust of the divine Jesus. But Jesus wants to be looked for, not with an ordinary desire, but with a real love, and the longer we are separated from Him the more loving should we become, because our heart is desolate without His holy presence. O my God, I have sought Thee all my life! but I have not found Thee because I do not look for Thee where Thou art to be found. Indeed Thou art in my heart, but I go out and look for Thee in distractions where Thou shalt not be found.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

[123]

Twenty-eighth Day.

St. Joseph, as we have seen, earned his livelihood by the sweat of his brow. When Jesus grew up and was stronger, He helped His father, and tradition tells us that the Blessed Virgin was not idle. She sewed and embroidered in order that they might live. The lot of the laborer is always hard, and St. Joseph's life, beyond the consolations of religion, was no exception. Day after day

work was necessary, and pleasures and recreations few. That Joseph was of the royal house of David was forgotten because he was poor; had he been rich people would have honored him, would have given him political prominence. Let us also sanctify our labors; Joseph's work made him holy, because it was honest work, done with a good intention and in the spirit of prayer. Prayer and work were the constant employment of St. Joseph; this is the way that God wishes us to spend our time. He wishes us to pursue an active, laborious life, while we keep our eyes on Him.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Twenty-ninth Day.

The whole life of St. Joseph is a perfect model of a Christian life, a life which we must necessarily lead in order to go to heaven; a life of piety and faithful fulfilment of the duties of our station, and the performance of our daily actions in the best manner. In this way St. Joseph reached heaven, and we cannot choose another [124] road. Joseph did nothing extraordinary in a worldly sense; he was no king, with great command of men; he was not a literary man; but he was great, because he made himself, with the grace of God, a great saint. He lived a simple life as far as possible, he strove to perfect himself more and more in the presence of Jesus, his daily companion, and consequently he was always impressed with the omnipresence of God, before Whom he walked in the simplicity of his heart all the days of his life. He is the best model of obedience to Jesus and Mary. In his life we can find a great example of all Christian virtues.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Thirtieth Day.

As the life of St. Joseph was such a perfect one, the seal of approval from almighty God was placed upon it by the grace of a happy death. For thirty years St. Joseph was the head of the Holy Family, and now Jesus was to go forth on His public mission. By the disposition of divine Providence, when his course had been completed and the purpose of his life was over, he was called away to another world to be rewarded for his holy life. What death was ever more precious in the sight of God, than that of St. Joseph! St. Paul exclaimed that the grace of God was not ineffectual in him, and it gave him great joy. But much more did Joseph co-operate with the graces received, so that he was
[125] sure that every moment of his life was spent for the greater glory of God. Holy Scripture describes the death of the just as a peaceful falling asleep in the Lord. Precious in the sight of God is the death of His holy ones. They can exclaim, I know that my Redeemer liveth and mine eyes shall behold Him on the Last Day. St. Joseph died in peace and happiness in the embrace of Jesus and Mary; his soul was sent forth to the abode of the patriarchs at the bidding of Jesus, Who had created him. What words can describe the consolations that filled this noble breast, and with what confidence he looked up to his Redeemer! And so St. Joseph has become the patron of a happy death.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Thirty-first Day.

On this last day of the month, let us consider the power of St. Joseph for our good in heaven, so that we may draw from it confidence in his willingness to use it for our spiritual and temporal welfare. The general principle is, the greater the saint the greater

friend he is of almighty God; and the greater is the power given him by God for the benefit of those who live in this vale of tears. We may with reason assert that after the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph is the greatest saint in heaven. He has been distinguished by God with the greatest privileges on earth, which certainly did not cease in heaven but rather increased. The heavenly Father loved him, because he represented the paternity of His divine Son on earth. God the Son loved him because he was the protector of His infancy and youth, and the faithful guardian and spouse of the Blessed Virgin. The Holy Ghost loved him, because he complied so faithfully to His inspirations. In this predilection for him by the Holy Trinity, lies the secret of his great power. Who will say, if he asks for anything from God, that his prayer will be rejected? Let us turn with confidence to the patronage of St. Joseph, and entreat him to pray for us in all our necessities.

Prayer.

Holy St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, etc., etc.

Efficacious Prayers.

Thirty Days' Prayer To St. Joseph.

To Obtain a Happy Death and Other Good Intentions.

Ever-blessed and glorious Joseph, kind and indulgent father, and compassionate friend of all in sorrow, through that bitter grief with which thy heart was saturated, when thou didst behold the sufferings of the Infant Saviour, and in thy prophetic view didst contemplate His most ignominious Passion and death, take pity, I beseech thee, on my poverty and necessities, counsel me

in my doubts, and console me in all my anxieties. Thou art the good father and protector of orphans, the advocate of the defenceless, the patron of those who are in need and desolation. Do not, then, disregard the petition of thy poor child; my sins have drawn down upon me the just displeasure of my God, and hence I am surrounded with sorrows. To thee, O amiable guardian of the poor neglected family of Nazareth, do I fly for
[127] shelter and protection. Listen, then, I entreat of thee, with a father's solicitude, to the earnest prayer of thy poor supplicant, and obtain for me the objects of my petition. I ask it by the infinite mercy of the eternal Son of God, which induced Him to assume our nature and be born into this world of sorrow. I ask it by the grief which filled thy heart when, ignorant of the mystery wrought in thy immaculate spouse, thou didst fear thou shouldst be separated from her. I ask it by that weariness, solicitude, and suffering which thou didst endure when thou soughtest in vain at the inns of Bethlehem a shelter for the sacred Virgin and a birthplace for the Infant God, and when, being everywhere refused, thou wert obliged to consent that the Queen of heaven should give birth to the world's Redeemer in a wretched stable. I ask it by that most sad and painful duty imposed on thee when, the divine Child being eight days old, thou wert obliged to inflict a deep wound on His tender body, and thus be the first to make flow that sacred blood which was to wash away the sins of the world. I ask it by the sweetness and power of that sacred name, Jesus, which thou didst confer on the adorable Infant. I ask it by that mortal anguish inflicted on thee by the prophecy of holy Simeon, which declared the Child Jesus and His holy Mother the future victims of their love and our sins. I ask it through that sorrow and anguish which filled thy soul when the angel declared to thee that the life of the Child Jesus was sought by His enemies, from whose impious designs thou wert obliged to fly with Him and His blessed Mother into Egypt. I ask it by all the pains, fatigues, and toils of that long and perilous pilgrimage. I

ask it by all the sorrows thou didst endure when in Egypt thou [128]
wert not able, even by the sweat of thy brow, to procure poor food and clothing for thy most poor family. I ask it by all the grief thou didst feel each time the divine Child asked for a morsel of bread, and thou hadst it not to give Him. I ask it by all thy solicitude to preserve the sacred Child and the immaculate Mary during thy second journey, when thou wert ordered to return to thy native country. I ask it by thy peaceful dwelling in Nazareth, in which so many joys and sorrows were mingled. I ask it by thy extreme affliction in being deprived three days of the company of the adorable Child. I ask it by thy joy at finding Him in the Temple, and by the ineffable consolation imparted to thee in the cottage of Nazareth with the company and society of the little Jesus. I ask it by that wonderful condescension by which He subjected Himself to thy will. I ask it through that dolorous view, continually in thy mind, of all thy Jesus was to suffer. I ask it by that painful contemplation, which made thee foresee the divine little hands and feet, now so active in serving thee, one day to be pierced with cruel nails; that head which rested gently on thy bosom, crowned with sharp thorns; that delicate body which thou didst tenderly fold in thy mantle and press to thy heart, stripped and extended on a cross. I ask it by that heroic sacrifice of thy will and best affection by which thou didst offer up to the eternal Father the last awful moment when the Man-God was to expire for our salvation. I ask it by that perfect love and conformity with which thou didst receive the divine order to depart from this life, and from the company of Jesus and Mary. I ask it by that exceeding great joy which filled thy soul when the Redeemer of the world, triumphant over death and [129]
hell, entered into the possession of His kingdom, and conducted thee also into it with especial honors. I ask it through Mary's glorious assumption, and through that interminable bliss, which with her, thou wilt eternally derive from the presence of God. O good father! I beseech thee by all thy sufferings, sorrows, and

joys, to hear me and to obtain the grant of my earnest petitions. (Here name them or reflect on them.) Obtain for all those who have asked thy prayers all that is useful to them in the designs of God; and finally, my dear protector, be thou with me and all who are dear to me in our last moments, that we may eternally chant the praises of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Amen.

Choice Of St. Joseph As A Patron.

O blessed Joseph, faithful guardian of my Redeemer, Jesus Christ, protector of thy chaste spouse, the Virgin Mother of God, I choose thee this day to be my special patron and advocate, and I firmly resolve to honor thee from this time forth. Therefore I humbly beseech thee to receive me as thy client, to instruct me in every doubt, to comfort me in every affliction, to obtain for me and for all the knowledge and love of the Heart of Jesus, and finally to defend and protect me at the hour of death. Amen.

Virginum Custos.

Guardian of Virgins, and father, holy Joseph, to whose faithful care Christ Jesus, Innocence itself, and Mary, Virgin of virgins,
[130] were committed, I pray and beg of thee, by these dear pledges, Jesus and Mary, free me from all uncleanness, and make me with spotless mind, pure heart, and chaste body, ever most chastely to serve Jesus and Mary all the days of my life. Amen.

An indulgence of one hundred days, once a day.

Sorrows and Joys of St. Joseph.

1. O glorious St. Joseph, most pure spouse of thy most holy Mary, even as the trouble and anguish of thy heart was great in the perplexity of abandoning thy most chaste and stainless spouse, so, too, inexplicable was thy delight when by the angel was revealed to thee the sovereign mystery of the incarnation.

Through this sorrow and this joy of thine, we pray thee, now and in our last agony, to comfort our soul with the joy of a good life, and of a holy death, like unto thine between Jesus and Mary.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father.

2. O glorious St. Joseph, most blessed patriarch, who wast selected for the office of reputed father of the Word made man, the grief which thou didst feel at seeing the Child Jesus born in such great poverty was suddenly changed for thee into heavenly exultation at hearing the angelic harmony, and seeing the glories of that most resplendent night.

Through this sorrow and this joy of thine, we beseech thee to obtain for us that, after the journey of this life is over, we may pass hence to hear the angelic praises, and to enjoy the splendors of the glory of heaven. [131]

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father.

3. O glorious St. Joseph, who didst fulfil most obediently all God's commands, the most precious blood which the Child Redeemer shed in the circumcision struck death into thy heart, but the name of Jesus revived it, and filled it full of joy.

Through this sorrow and this joy of thine, obtain for us that, all vices having been taken from us during life, we may expire in exultation with the most holy name of Jesus in our hearts and upon our lips.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father.

4. O most glorious St. Joseph, most faithful saint, who wast a partaker in the mysteries of our redemption, if Simeon's prophecy of that which Jesus and Mary were to suffer caused thee a mortal pang, it filled thee also with a blessed joy at the salvation and

glorious resurrection of innumerable souls, which he at the same time foretold would thence proceed.

Through this sorrow and this joy of thine, obtain for us that we may be of the number of those who, through the merits of Jesus, and at the intercession of the Virgin Mother, are to rise again in glory.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father.

5. O glorious St. Joseph, most watchful guardian and familiar attendant of the incarnate Son of God, how much didst thou suffer in supporting and in serving the Son of the Most High, particularly in the flight which thou hadst to make into Egypt; but how much again didst thou rejoice at having always with thee that same God, and at seeing the idols of Egypt fall to the
[132] ground.

Through this sorrow and this joy of thine, obtain for us that, by keeping far from us hell's tyrant, especially by flying from dangerous occasions, every idol of earthly affection may fall from our hearts; and that, wholly occupied in the service of Jesus and of Mary, we may live for them alone, and die a happy death.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father.

6. O glorious St. Joseph, angel of the earth, who didst marvel at beholding the King of heaven subject to thy commands, if thy consolation at bringing him back from Egypt was disturbed by the fear of Archelaus, yet, assured by the angel, thou didst with Jesus and Mary dwell in joy at Nazareth.

Through this sorrow and this joy of thine, obtain for us that our heart, unclouded by hurtful fears, may enjoy peace of conscience, and that we may live secure with Jesus and Mary, and with them may also die.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father.

7. O glorious St. Joseph, model of all holiness, when, without fault of thine, thou hadst lost the Child Jesus, thou didst seek Him for three days in the greatest sorrow, until with joyful heart thou

didst possess again thy life, finding Him in the Temple, among the doctors.

Through this sorrow and this joy of thine, with fervent sighs we supplicate thee to interpose in our behalf, that so it may never befall us to lose Jesus by mortal sin; but that, if unhappily we ever lose Him, we may seek Him again with unwearied sorrow, until once more we find His favor, especially at the moment of our [113] death, that so we may pass to the enjoyment of Him in heaven, and there, with thee, sing His divine mercies for all eternity.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father.

Ant. Jesus Himself was beginning about His thirtieth year, being (as it was supposed) the son of Joseph.

V. Pray for us, O holy Joseph.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray.

O God, Who by Thy ineffable providence didst vouchsafe to choose the blessed Joseph for the spouse of Thy most holy Mother; grant, we beseech thee, that he whom we venerate as our protector on earth may be our intercessor in heaven; Who livest and reignest forever and ever. Amen.

Indulgences: One hundred days each time, three hundred days on Wednesdays, three hundred days on each day of the two novenas before St. Joseph's feast and his patronage; plenary on those two feasts; plenary once a month for daily recital; three hundred days for each Sunday when recited seven Sundays running. Applicable to the dead.

Responsory To St. Joseph.

Ye that would live and die secure,
In merit strong, of mercy sure,
Choose Joseph for your heavenly friend
To guide your steps and bless your end.

He was sweet Mary's consort dear,
And Jesus' sire, when exiled here;
Just, true, of purity untold,
Say, shall he ask and God withhold?

[134]

He worshipp'd at the manger-bed,
And then the exile comforted;
And sought his Son, and joyous found,
While on His Father's business bound.

He through sweet toil and patient pains
The world's Artificer sustains;
And Whom th' angelic legions praise
Obedience to His creature pays.

And now he waxes old, and dies;
But first beholds with loving eyes,
Jesus and Mary, gracious sight
Then sleeps entranced in deep delight.

Ant. Behold the faithful and prudent servant whom the Lord set over His house.

V. Pray for us, holy Joseph.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Litany of St. Joseph.

(For Private Devotion Only).

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Jesus hear us.
Jesus, graciously hear us.
God the Father of heaven, Have mercy on us
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, Have mercy on us
God the Holy Ghost, Have mercy on us
Holy Trinity, one God, Have mercy on us
Holy Mary, spouse of St. Joseph, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, confirmed in grace, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, guardian of the Word Incarnate, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, favorite of the King of heaven, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, ruler of the family of Jesus, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, spouse of the ever-blessed Virgin, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, nursing-father to the Son of God, Pray for us. [135]
St. Joseph, example of humility and obedience, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, mirror of silence and resignation, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, patron of innocence and youth, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, exiled with Christ in Egypt, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, intercessor for the afflicted, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, advocate for the humble, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, model of every virtue, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, honored among men, Pray for us.

St. Joseph, union of all Christian perfection, Pray for us.
St. Joseph, patron of the dying, Pray for us.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Spare us, O Lord!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Graciously hear us, O Lord!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Have mercy on us, O Lord!

V. Pray for us, O holy St. Joseph.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray.

Grant, O Lord, we beseech Thee, by the merits of the spouse of Thy most holy Mother, that what our unworthiness cannot obtain may be given us by his intercession with Thee, Who livest and reignest with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

[136]

April. The Passion: Meditations for Every Day of Lent.

During the month of April we generally celebrate Holy Week, and so this month is dedicated to the Passion of Our Lord. The followers of Christ should be acquainted with the history of their leader, Jesus, the Master; they should know what He has endured for His followers, and they should think frequently of His sufferings, especially in Lent, when the Church, in all her offices, keeps the commemoration of the Passion foremost in her mind. There are many things to be done during this month. You ought to recite the stations of the cross privately, or be present when they are publicly performed; hear sermons on religious topics, practise a little fast or abstinence. This last is not so much to do, yet God takes note of it, and makes a great fuss over it, like a father that has received an insignificant present from his child. Take from any book the meditations on the Passion, read them slowly, and with sympathy; slowly, so as to be able to follow the recital and to be able to realize it; with sympathy, that you should bring to it a feeling for Our Lord, and show that you are touched with all that He endured for you. The God-man going to a disgraceful death, after a most apparently unsuccessful life, should make us feel for the loving Jesus. St. Augustine remarks that nothing is so useful to our advancement in the spiritual life, as daily to meditate on the Passion of Our Lord. Certainly the most appropriate time for these considerations and prayers is during Lent, which happens about this time.

We shall give forty short considerations for every day in Lent. They can be begun upon Ash Wednesday; we will then strive to gain spiritual benefit from these considerations, by perusing

them with piety and with a great love for our crucified Lord. Before the time of Augustine, Origen writes that it is impossible
[137] for a man to remain in sin, as long as he often remembers the sufferings of Our Lord, and nothing will so inflame our hearts with love for Christ. Father Alvarez said that so many Christians are lost, because they ignore the treasures that are concealed in the Passion of Our Lord; and he led his penitents to perfection by enjoining on them frequent contemplation of the Passion. St. Francis de Sales tells us, That every wound of Our Lord is a tongue, which teaches what the Lord suffered for us. What flames of love will naturally burn in our hearts, when we see the love with which Our Lord regarded us! Happy, therefore, the soul who will find leisure for this holy exercise of the mind and heart. You will draw water with joy from the fountains of the Saviour. The sinner will receive confidence in the mercy of God, and know that his case is not so desperate as long as he has the wounds of the Lord to plead to the Father for mercy and forgiveness for all our transgressions have been laid upon the shoulders of Jesus.

How, then, can we have any fear, says St. Paul, that God will refuse us His graces? He that spared not even His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.

Considerations and Prayers for Every Day.

First Day.

Before Our Lord's suffering took place, He disclosed to His disciples the story of the cross. It was good for them to understand

and to remember what the sufferings of Jesus were to be. The prophets of the Old Testament had declared that the Son of man must suffer. Daniel, especially, describes the Passion of Our Lord very minutely. This was the future that was before Our Lord, and it was well that the disciples should know it and think of it. So it should be with ourselves. We, too, are the disciples and followers of Christ, and we, too, must make the Passion a subject of serious thought. The Church has chosen the Lenten time as the most appropriate for this exercise. She joins penance with this meditation, as being the most efficacious means of stirring [118] ourselves up to a pious life. Let us approach these meditations with a conviction that we are really unworthy to be admitted to the graces of this holy contemplation; but Jesus will help us.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, whilst before Thy face I humbly kneel, and with burning soul pray and beseech Thee to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity, true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment; the while I contemplate with great love and tender pity Thy five wounds, pondering over them within me, whilst I call to mind the words which David, Thy prophet, said of Thee, my Jesus: They pierced My hands and My feet; they numbered all My bones. Ps. xxi. 17, 18.

Second Day.

It is not hard to understand why the Lord desires us to think of His Passion. St. Francis Xavier is said to have gone over the Passion once every month; but we know, too, with what love he was attached to the Lord, with what wonderful patience and perseverance he continued to labor. It was the effect of the meditation on the Passion. We, too, should grow in the love of Our Lord. But how will we grow, unless by contemplating all

that Jesus has done for us in His Passion, until He died on the cross? As the Apostle says, He loved me, and delivered Himself up for me. In this way the Lord wants us to study His Passion, so that we may learn how intensely He loved us; that although
[139] He was God, and we poor miserable creatures, still He did not hesitate to sacrifice His life in order to redeem us from eternal perdition.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Third Day.

Our Lord desires that we should think of His Passion, in order that we may imitate Him in our own sufferings: for we have many things to endure in this life on account of the original fault of our first parents. You will learn to die with Christ, and your sympathetic heart will avoid sin. By the frequent thought of the Passion the Lord will have you love the sacrifice of the Mass, where in an unbloody manner the Passion of Our Lord is repeated, and we begin to appreciate it the more the better we understand their relation to each other. The Lord will have you show sympathy for Him in His sufferings; for you must remember that it was for you that He suffered, that you caused His suffering by your sins. Now, if you have inflicted these punishments on the Lord, would it not be an act of horrible ingratitude if you were not to show your sympathy for Christ? Another effect of the contemplation of the Passion will be that you shall be stirred up to do great things for Christ. Your time of labor will be sanctified, and your life will be given to the service of Jesus.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Fourth Day.

We should think often of the Passion of Our Lord, but not with coldness or repugnance. It is a sad subject, and not at all pleasing to the human feelings, but when we have learned to love Jesus it will be an exercise that will make us very happy. We are dreadfully poor spiritually, and nowhere will we be able to find more spiritual wealth than in the Heart of Jesus in His Passion. There flow living fountains of blessed waters, there is the bread of life. Approach, then, with a lively faith to the foot of the cross, and remain there faithfully; let the blood of the Lord flow upon your body and soul, realize that Jesus died for you, see Mary, our dear Mother, beneath the cross; St. John and Mary Magdalen, with some other faithful followers of Christ at a short distance from it; associate yourself with them and study what were their sentiments; try to bring them home to yourself, and your heart will surely fill up with love, gratitude, and confidence.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Fifth Day.

The feeling of love towards Our Lord must be specially aroused. We are supposed to have the faith: but we need more love, so that we may understand why Our Lord underwent such terrible sufferings for poor humanity. Let us look upon the Lord: He is an innocent, holy person, an untiring benefactor, a true friend, a [144] wonderful consoler, a man of peace and of blessings, the noble Son of the great King, the Son of God Himself. This good

Jesus has saved you from eternal damnation. He descended from heaven and did the work of a miserable slave. And the worst and bitterest consideration is that you really, individually and personally, are the cause of the sufferings of Christ. You have struck Him in the face and spit upon Him, you have crucified Him, you have mocked and derided Him, and cried out, Vah; if Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. The Lord, reflecting upon all His sufferings, declared that all this happened in the house of His beloved ones. What did the Lord do to you, that you should treat Him in this manner? Now then return Jesus love for all this, and He will be satisfied.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Sixth Day.

The Jews now began to consult among themselves how to catch Jesus by some intrigue or other. Our Lord could have avoided the Passion; He might have prolonged His life, but He wanted to die just then. The machinations of the Jews could only furnish an occasion for the death of Our Lord, but it was His own divine will that regulated time, place, and circumstance. Judas the disciple makes a contract with the high priests that on a certain night, [142] when the Lord would go out to Gethsemani to pray according to His custom, the high priests would be ready with their guards to bind Him. For the miserable price of thirty pieces of silver was the Lord sold, by a man whom He had befriended so much in His career of public ministration.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Seventh Day.

Let us consider the case of Judas in another reflection and apply it to ourselves. Judas began as well, perhaps, as any of the other disciples; but now he is approaching the dreadful abyss of sin into which he fell, as we know from the Gospel. How much the Lord did for that disciple! By kind words and patience, He made him understand that though He knew of his impending fall, still He did not cast him off, but tried to win him back. When Judas had eaten the morsel which Our Lord had presented to him, the devil seemed to have entered into him. It was only then that the Lord gave him up, and bade him go and do quickly what he had in his mind. Now His mercy is at an end, and with terrible severity Our Lord speaks of the scandal, and says it would have been better that Judas had never been born. All this shows that unless we co-operate with the grace which God almighty offers us, we, too, shall fall into sin, notwithstanding all the good instruction and good example given us. It shows that if we follow our own bent of evil intentions, we will go from bad to worse in spite of all that God has done. There are times of grace that are all-important for us. [143]

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Eighth Day.

When the Lord sat at the Last Supper He made all the apostles aware of their future infidelity. Simon Peter spoke for himself rather than for all, when he said:Although all should be scandalized in Thee, I will not: I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison and to death.Our Lord foresaw his frailty and corrected him for his presumption, though no doubt it was well meant at the time, and said to him,Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired

to have you that he may sift you as wheat. Peter followed the Lord from afar, to see what the end would be, and entering the courtyard of the prison, he was accosted by a maid-servant, and before her and the bystanders he cursed and blasphemed that he did not know the man. As in the case of Peter, so Our Lord knows our frailty that we cannot stand by ourselves. We ought to distrust ourselves, and remember how sinful we have been, and now that we stand be careful lest we fall.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Ninth Day.

The Lord called His disciples together in order to eat the Pasch with them for the last time on earth, and also take a long farewell
[144] of them. They would not meet again until after the resurrection. St. John the Evangelist gives us much of the discourses which the Lord held with His disciples. Let not your heart be disturbed, He says, at what is going to happen to Me. The sorrow at parting, and the dreadful suffering which the Master was to undergo, acted in a most depressing manner on their spirits. No wonder they felt so downcast. He was their great friend, the joy of their heart, and now He is about to leave them. It is related that when Jesus was a boy, His companions felt such consolation in His presence that when any of them were distressed, they would say, Let us go to the Son of Mary; He will console us. Even now Jesus is our great joy and consolation; now that He is to be found in the Blessed Sacrament, now that He is in heaven at the right hand of the Father, to Him we can always go, and find refuge in His kindness.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Tenth Day.

At the Last Supper Our Lord continued His discourse, consoling and encouraging His disciples by telling them: In My Father's house there are many mansions; if not, I would have told you: that I go to prepare a place for you. John xiv. 2. Lift up your eyes, My beloved disciples, from this vale of tears to heaven, where you are to dwell for all eternity. My separation from you will be but short. I will go to heaven, and where I am, My faithful servants shall be. This earth is a desert for the one that loves [yes] God; there is no hope of peace and perfect happiness. Eternal joys are reserved for us in heaven if we are faithful to Jesus, and confide in Him. Though our sins may be many and great, we will be washed clean in the blood of the Lamb, and we may still hope to enter the realms prepared for us by Christ Himself. Resolve now to be noble-hearted in the service of God, and shrink not from work or suffering.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Eleventh Day.

After the discourse at the Last Supper Jesus takes off His outer garments, girds Himself with a towel, pours water into a vessel, and approaches Peter to wash his feet. For this purpose the Lord kneels down and prepares to wash Peter's feet. Peter is really shocked at this self-abasement; he revolts at the thought that he should allow this to be done to him by his divine Master, Whom he had acknowledged, and Whom he knew to be God. Our Lord practised this out of humility, at this solemn moment just before parting from His disciples, to show how important this humility is, and to make a great impression on all of us. We, too, must be humble, and humiliate ourselves as did Our Lord. We cannot

practise virtue without humility; we cannot enter heaven unless we possess this virtue. He washes the feet of the apostles just before the two great acts of His life: the institution of the Blessed
[146] Sacrament and the beginning of His sacred Passion.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Twelfth Day.

Our Lord was determined to perform the ceremony of the washing of the feet of St. Peter and the apostles. He advised Peter to be obedient, and to allow the washing to take place, otherwise he would have no part with Him. When Peter heard this he became very much afraid, and with his usual ardor he cried out: Lord, not only my feet, but my head, my whole body! Our Lord answered: He that has his feet washed is entirely cleansed. You are washed clean, still not all. By this, reference was made to the condition of Judas. Why does the Lord make reference to the washing of the feet? Because it is the feet that are soiled when we come in contact with the world; but if our feet do not touch the world, if our hearts are above the things of this world, we may be sure that we have not contracted any filth on the soul.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Thirteenth Day.

After the ceremony of the washing of the feet, Our Lord concludes His discourse by telling His apostles that now He will not say much more to them, for the prince of this world, Satan, is
[147] about to approach to claim a share in His sacred humanity: but

in that He has no part. This He tells them, that the world may acknowledge that the Son loves His Father, and that He does all that is required of Him. John xiv. 30. There are many who love to sit at the table of the Lord, to be filled with consolation, and to enjoy the spiritual luxury of His company. But few there are who would follow Christ to the cross. We must not only love the table of the Lord, but we must also be with Him in His Passion. We should suffer the trials sent to us, as good followers of the Lord Jesus. Remain then with the Lord under all circumstances, whether it be for consolation or bitterness of suffering. Some of the saints understood this so well that they prayed for afflictions.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Fourteenth Day.

And now, after the Last Supper, the Lord goes forth with His disciples to the Garden of Gethsemani, where He is so overcome with fear and sorrow, that He seems to cling to the society of the apostles for consolation. Falling down on His face, He prays that the chalice might pass, yet not as He would, but as the Father willed it. The disciples slept as if they had lost all sympathy for the Lord. But why is Our Saviour so distressed? Why is He so downcast? The sins and the consequences of sin appear before Him so vividly, and He is so overwhelmed with them, that He feels His soul oppressed unto death. He sees all the misery of [148] humanity, all the cruelty practised by man, all the ignorance and degradation of the world; and for this He must suffer, to bring God's mercy again to man. He is to take upon Himself all the sins of mankind. He is to be degraded to the level of a slave, to die the same death, and all for us.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Fifteenth Day.

In the terrible agony of Our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemani, the Lord saw all the sins of mankind. He sees the injustice of man in comparison to the eternal justice of God. He beholds their ingratitude to His everlasting love, their obduracy against the sweet mercy of God. This leprosy of sin has been laid on the Lord, so that, as the Psalmist says: The confusion of my face hath covered me. Ps. xliii. 16. He is filled with the confusion of shame, because sin is so horrible. His soul is overwhelmed with bitterness, because sin is so full of malice and insult to God. Thus covered with our shame, He appears before His heavenly Father, prone on His face on the ground. The heavenly Father does not recognize His Son; Jesus prays, but is not heard. The justice of God casts Him away. He begs the Father for help, but He will not bend His ear to the supplication of His Son. Jesus waits for consolation, but instead receives His death sentence. He must drink the cup of sorrow to the very dregs. [149]

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Sixteenth Day.

The Lord bade His disciples watch and pray, but hardly has He left them to themselves than they fall asleep. Judas is not asleep; he is actively engaged in getting his company together, giving them instructions how to proceed, so that they might elude the power of the Lord. But the disciples sleep, and are careless of the Lord's interests. No wonder that the indifference of the disciples gave Him an additional pang. We, too, are the disciples of the Lord. Why do we sleep while the enemy is sowing the seed of error and irreligion? What effect has the instructions, the counsels of the divine Master, had upon us? They are all

forgotten, and we look to our own comfort and to our pleasures; we go after the world, money and honors, but think little of God. Let us then watch and pray; the spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak. The soul would act otherwise, if the body had not been allowed an almost limitless freedom while the soul is dying of spiritual starvation. Give your soul an opportunity to rise above the low necessities of the body, and the spirit will then be strong to compel the body to obey.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

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Seventeenth Day.

When Our Lord had prayed and struggled in this mortal agony, He arose and assembled His disciples about Him, and awaited the coming of the traitor. And as He was yet speaking, behold, the crowd arrived, and Judas, one of the twelve, was with them; coming up to Jesus, he kissed Him, and the Lord said: Judas, with a kiss you betray the Son of man. Judas thus betrays the Lord with the sign of friendship. He comes up to Him as of old, when returning from a missionary tour, he was met by the Lord with open arms, and he, as well as the other disciples, would tell of their labors, their successes, and the good they had done. And now, as if to throw the Lord off His guard, he pretends to have the same spirit within his breast. O Lord Jesus! with what kindness didst Thou not even then receive Judas, that he might see that Thou didst still love him. In our frequent infidelities the Lord comes to us with the same sweetness and goodness. He would lead us back to our duties and the recognition of our faults. O that we would listen to the words of Our Lord!

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Eighteenth Day.

When Judas had given that traitorous sign, the kiss of peace, the disciples all fled. Our Lord had commanded, If therefore you
[151] seek Me, let these go their way. No sooner had the disciples seen that the Lord presented His hands to be tied, than they ran off in the greatest hurry. They had forgotten the assurance they had given that they would remain faithful. They whose feet had been washed in all humility by Our Lord, Who had fed them a short time before with His sacred body and blood. We are not far inferior in infidelity to the disciples. In the morning we have gone to communion, and before the day is over we have fallen into grievous sin. We had made many resolutions at our last confession, and at the approach of the first temptation we have fallen into the same sins again. We leave, without much concern, Jesus, the best friend we have in this world. Oh, let us remain faithful to the good Master of our souls, Who, after this life is over, promises us eternal rewards.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Nineteenth Day.

Then the soldiers came up, and bound the Lord's hands as He willingly offers them. He makes no opposition whatsoever. He might have continued the exhibition of His power by which they fell back three times, and He might have walked away. But the time of the Passion had come, and He allows the soldiers to have the mastery over Him. Christ has dissolved our bonds, and He

is bound Himself; in fact, by that binding Christ has merited to loosen us from the slavery of Satan. But Christ was also bound that we, too, may bind ourselves in the law of God, and be [152] faithful to its observance all the days of our life. Tie your will to the chains of the Lord Jesus; honor those chains, yes, even love them, as they are the bonds of the union between you and Him. Make up your mind to follow Christ, to be united to Him, and never desire to be freed from this close friendship.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Twentieth Day.

The priests, the high priests and the Pharisees, the great enemies of the Lord, had held a meeting in expectation of bringing the prisoner for accusation and condemnation. This was the court to which the innocent Jesus was dragged; these were all His enemies. They all tried to destroy Him, and now the opportunity seems to present itself, and they are going to make the best of it. They are going to condemn Jesus; they encourage false witnesses, that they may make a show, at least, of the justice of the condemnation. It is considered necessary to put Jesus out of the way. It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.—John xii. 50. In all this Our Lord is silent; not a word does Jesus utter in self-defence. How easily could the divine wisdom confound human ingenuity, the skill of the lawyers, and the malice of the high priests. But Jesus held a mysterious silence, in which we must adore Him. [153]

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-first Day.

Peter, the great disciple of Jesus, he to whom the Lord had given so much, whom He had brought to Mount Thabor, for whom He paid taxes as for Himself; this Peter denied His Master. When Our Lord had been apprehended, Peter followed from afar, to see what would be the end of all this tragedy. He went on at some distance from Our Lord, until he reached the courtyard, where he could see all that was passing. There, among the soldiers, servants, and curiosity-seekers, he stood, as if he had no interest in the affair except that which would bring any stranger there. They would not have known him, only for a woman who sat in such a way that the light fell on Peter's face, and she immediately declared, This man was with Him. But Peter denied that fact; another and a third asserted that Peter was with Christ, for he was a Galilean but Peter denied the accusation with an oath.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-second Day.

We ought, right here, to think of the reasons of the terrible treason of Peter. We may suppose that his crime was no smaller than was that of Judas. We know what was the fate of Judas; what will be
[154] the fate of Peter? The cause of Peter's fall was his presumption. He imagined that he was strong enough to go to heaven, and to lead a good life without watching or praying; of course he would go to prison or death with Jesus. Instead of following the Lord closely, right among the soldiers who apprehended Him, he followed a long way off, giving as an excuse that he wished to see the outcome of the affair. He follows, and places himself in the very occasion of sin. He knew he could not be there long

without being detected, but he resolved to deny, and even to take false oaths to secure himself.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-third Day.

When Peter had thus, with indescribable meanness, denied Our Lord, Jesus turned and gave him a look of compassion. Then Peter recollected the words of Jesus, that before the cock would crow he would have denied Him thrice. Great was the sorrow in the heart of Peter after this look; he remembered himself, and filled with shame walked out and wept bitterly. This look which the Lord gave Peter was merciful and kind; so loving that it drew him back again from the sin into which he had fallen; it encouraged him to look for forgiveness, and did not drive him to despair. Judas too acknowledged his sin, but he felt no repentance; he despaired of the great kindness of God. Instead of throwing himself at the feet of Jesus, he committed another crime that of suicide. To Peter came a flood of tears. There [105] is no doubt that his sorrow for this great offence lasted all his lifetime; he could not think of the circumstance but the picture of his infidelity arose before him.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-fourth Day.

The infidelity of Peter should lead us to think of our own condition. How often have we sinned? how often have we been unfaithful to Jesus Christ? how often have we betrayed Him?

Did we ever feel the tears of sorrow gushing from our hearts? and if we did have sorrow and repentance in the Sacrament of Penance, did we not soon forget it all, as if our faults were less serious than they really are? Often the Lord looks at us when we are in sin, often have we felt that His eyes were on us, full of love, of mercy and goodness; but we were in sin, in the occasion of it, and we would not give it up even though we added more sorrow to that which Our Lord was already suffering. Set your hope, however, in the Lord; look up to Him with pleading eyes, that He may give you the strength, the will, and the grace to rise from your fall. Say to your sins, and your companions in sin, go away from me. Yes, our sins more than any other misfortune should make us despise the world, with all its sinful allurements.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

[156]

Twenty-fifth Day.

Pilate put the question to the Lord, Art Thou the King of the Jews? He wanted to hear from Christ's own lips whether He pretended to the earthly crown of a kingdom, over which the Roman power held sway. But Our Lord had no kingdom on this earth, and He answered, For this was I born, and for this came I into the world, that I should give testimony to the truth. Pilate did not want to be convinced of the truth, and he answered indifferently, What is truth? The Lord came into this world to spread the truth of the Gospel; He wished to teach us that truth which makes us truly free. The Lord wishes to show us the way in which we should walk in order to reach Him. But the world is not anxious for such enlightenment, any more than Pilate. For nineteen hundred years the Church of God has been teaching

truth. But the world does not accept the teaching of Jesus as truth; the world is too proud to receive this humble teaching. And yet Our Lord's voice rings clear, Every one that is of the truth, heareth My voice.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-sixth Day.

Pilate went out to consult with the Jews, the accusers of Christ, and he told them that he found no cause of death in Christ. He admitted that there might be some rebellion which ought to be punished, and that he would administer a severe punishment and then would set Him free. See Our Lord, humbly standing before this unjust judge; see the soldiers, as soon as the order was given, tear off His garments, drag Him over to the column of marble, and there bind Him. Then they take the stout cords, on the ends of which are leaden balls with spikes, and whirling them over their heads, they let them fall cruelly on Christ's shoulders. The blood spurts from every wound, and soon the place about the column is covered with blood. The crime of that flagellation was so great that no human words can express it. In what a dreadful state Our Lord was left after it was over! how exhausted! From the soles of His feet to the crown of His head there was no sound spot in Him.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-seventh Day.

When the Lord had been scourged, the soldiers platted a crown of thorns and placed it on His head, pressing it down, striking

the crown with sticks that they might save their hands from wounds, and then they put a purple garment on Him. All this was done to mock Him, because He said He was a king: the crown of royalty He bore on His head, and the purple garment which kings generally wore covered His body. They carried out their derision still farther; they bent their knees before Him, and having blindfolded Him, they struck Him in the face, asking Him to point out who was the one that had given Him the blow. O
[158] loving face of Jesus! upon which the angels desired to gaze; look with pity on poor humanity that dost treat Thee so cruelly; look with pity on our inordinate desires to satisfy the demands of our passions. Ah, Thou knowest who hast heaped these insults upon Thee! In Thy omnipresence Thou seest the sins which we commit. The Jews, indeed, treated Thee as a mock king, and like a fool, whilst poor mankind in its ignorance hast prepared all these torments for Thee.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-eighth Day.

Pilate must have witnessed much of this cruelty, as it was inflicted right in his court, with his consent, perhaps even by his orders. What a frightful spectacle it was to look upon this figure of a man, scourged almost beyond recognition, with a crown of thorns on His head, bound, and a cloak thrown over His shoulders. Pilate thought that this spectacle would render the Jews merciful, that the punishment had been sufficient. So he led Our Lord over an archway and placed Him in full view of the assembled multitude, saying: Behold the man! Yes, O Christian heart, look at the Lord exhausted after the scourging, the crown of thorns on His head, clotted blood in His face, burning with a fever heat, ready to die from loss of blood. O my Jesus, what sufferings didst Thou

not endure to satisfy the cruelty of man! Thou hast become a spectacle before God and the world. But the Jews were hardened. The sight of Christ in this condition did not move them. They [159] cried, Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Twenty-ninth Day.

When the Jews demanded the death of Christ so vehemently, Pilate had water brought to him, in which he washed his hands, as a sign that he was innocent of the great crime of condemning Our Lord to the death of the cross. Still he condemned Him, and wrote the inscription of the cross himself. The Lord was led out to be crucified. St. Catharine of Emmerich saw in a vision the rapture with which Jesus received the cross. That He knelt down and addressed the wood with loving words. It was the consummation of the Lord's desires. His whole aim in life was that He should die on the cross, so now He stretches out His arms to receive that precious burden, the seat of His love, the instrument of His mercy, and the sign of triumph. Dear cross! no longer are you the wood of disgrace on which malefactors are to die; you are now the sign of glory. No longer are you the accursed wood, but the glory of the elect. Cross and altar are now the same thing to us; the altar is our joy and happiness, so also is the cross. The Christian who has no love for the cross is to be pitied.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

[160]

Thirtieth Day.

The Lord takes the holy cross on His shoulders, at the foot of Calvary, and carries it up to the summit. What a journey that was, full of sorrow and pain! He falls several times; He meets His holy Mother on the way and exchanges some words of consolation with her. He meets the weeping women of Jerusalem, and bids them weep over themselves and over their children. Simon the Cyrenean is compelled to help carry the heavy weight of the cross. Veronica, a devout woman, offers a handkerchief, that the Lord may wipe His sacred countenance. Two malefactors are also to be crucified with the Saviour. He does not despise their company: He wished to be numbered among the most abject of sinners, for He carries in His cross all the sins of mankind. He has to make reparation to the heavenly Father for them all. At this sight let us no longer grumble at our crosses, but let us bear them lovingly and cheerfully.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Thirty-first Day.

After terrible exertion in consequence of His exhaustion, loss of blood, want of food and rest, Our Lord arrives at the summit of Mount Calvary, called Golgotha, the place of execution, the mount of skulls. Our Lord would have died in consequence of the terrible punishment He had received, only the power of His
[161] heavenly Father kept Him alive. Arriving on the spot, His clothes are cruelly torn off His sacred body, the wounds are reopened and bleed afresh. He kneels down, and at the command of His executioners He extends His arms and feet to the places to which they were to be attached. The soldiers take nails and hammers, and drive nails into the palms of His hands, fixing them to the

cross; then His feet are nailed also. When all this has been done they raise the cross to an erect position and set it in the ground. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, is present; she hears the strokes of the hammer every sound pierces her heart. O Mother of sorrows! make me feel the dreadful crucifixion in my soul; divide thy sorrows with me. Mary Magdalen, the penitent woman, hastens to the foot of the cross. St. John, the beloved disciple, is there also.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Thirty-second Day.

The executioners then sat down before the cross, and watched Our Lord. They played dice for His garments; it was their sinful perquisite to take possession of anything that a dying criminal left. Our Lord was poor and had nothing but His garments, and these were accordingly distributed. Our Lord hung on the cross; not a word had so far passed His lips; uncomplaining, sunk in deep prayer, the sacrifice of the cross was going on for our sins, the Lamb of God was on the slaughter bench, pouring forth His blood without giving a sign of pain. He hangs between two murderers. He is not distinguished from them in misery, except [p. 137] that He prays and they blaspheme. The Jews now celebrate their triumph; they are gathered about in knots, mocking and laughing. They invite Him to descend from the cross: that then they would believe in Him. Jesus still wears the crown of thorns, and over His head, attached to the wood, are the words Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Thirty-third Day.

The first words which Our Lord utters after a long silence, are words of mercy, and a prayer for forgiveness. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Jesus prays for His enemies, for His executioners, before He speaks a word of comfort to His holy Mother. He looks for no revenge, casts no threats at them, does not complain of their inhuman conduct. He only thinks that by His prayer He may save them. In the meantime the thief on His right acknowledges his faults, defends the Lord, and begs for mercy, which he receives on the spot with a promise of being with Christ in paradise on that very day. The centurion also acknowledges the divinity of Christ, and many who are around the cross strike their breasts, and are converted. Now that the sacrifice had been offered Jesus sees His Mother at the foot of the cross, and the disciple whom He loved. Turning to Mary He said Woman, behold thy son, and to the disciple, behold thy
[163] Mother, and from that hour John, as a dutiful son, took Mary under his protection.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Thirty-fourth Day.

After Our Lord had hung on the cross for three hours, a great darkness came over the whole universe. The sun refused to give light. Amid this weird darkness and silence Our Lord completes His sacrifice. When the world seems to desert you, and the horror of God's vengeance appears to surround you, take heart, raise your eyes to Jesus crucified, and pray Him to strengthen you in patience and endurance until the darkness is over, and you can again find comfort in God's mercy. The Apostle Paul tells us that

Jesus, in the days of His flesh, poured forth prayers and supplications with a great cry, and was heard out of reverence. Heb. v. 7. So the sacrifice of Christ was accepted, and the debt which you owed for your sins was expiated on the cross. You need no longer be afraid that your wretchedness will bring on you eternal damnation; by the merits of this sacred Passion you have a hope that you may enter into eternal glory.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Thirty-fifth Day.

I thirst. The greatest affliction Our Lord had to endure on the cross was the thirst. The fever after loss of blood and the severe and cruel sufferings, the torments of a whole night, had dried [ed4] up the moisture of His body. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, was said of Him by the Prophet, and My tongue hath cleaved to My jaws. Ps. xxi. 16. We honor this holy thirst by abstaining during Lent from all intoxicating drink, and many souls have received great blessings from God for this veneration. It is the intention that ennobles the act, and the smallest offering accompanied by a good will pleases God. Our Lord suffered this thirst to atone for our sins, that we might not go to hell, where we would thirst for all eternity. Remember Dives in the Gospel, who begged for one drop of water to be placed on his tongue. Our Lord, dying with thirst, yearned for the salvation of your soul. This was the thirst symbolized by His bodily thirst.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Thirty-sixth Day.

At last the hour has come, in which Jesus considers that He has made reparation to His heavenly Father for all the sins of mankind. The chalice has been drained, all possible humiliation had been heaped upon Him. Jesus cried, It is consummated. All the work of salvation is now at an end. All the sufferings that the Father has ordained in His eternal providence have been undergone. The work which Thou gavest me, I have performed. The work of grace is accomplished. About the ninth hour, Our Lord cried out, with a loud voice,My God, My God, why hast
[165] Thou forsaken Me? The Father had demanded the death of the Son. He must be exterminated with the most cruel torments; nothing less than death will satisfy the Father. He turns to the Father for one look of kindness, but He receives none, until that hated human flesh has been punished.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Thirty-seventh Day.

O my dear Jesus, Thou art altogether forsaken; there is nothing from which Thou canst gather consolation and support. Even in the hour of death Thou dost enter the portals of the other world without one friendly face before Thine eyes. Yes, Thou art forsaken; Thy strength, the assistance of Thy Father, the light of Thine eyes, Thy holy Mother, hath no consolation for Thee. The people that stood around the cross did not know what that great cry meant. Only Jesus knew it. He felt it. How few people understand the language of divine love! Who could think that the Father would desert His Son, and would not be satisfied but with the most extreme punishment! We should sympathize with Our Lord in His cruel abandonment, we who have been the cause of this agony. Our Lord suffers the same feeling of desertion when we do not visit Him in the Blessed Sacrament. Let it be our joy,

our pastime, our recreation, to go to Him, and to thank Him for His great love for us.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

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Thirty-eighth Day.

The last words which Our Lord uttered were: Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit. Again Jesus calls God His Father. God has accepted the sacrifice, and has taken His divine Son to His bosom, hence the Lord calls Him Father. The sacred countenance of Jesus takes on the pallor of death, the lips are parted and the last breath is gone. His soul has flown to the Father; the adorable spirit of Jesus has entered the realms of eternal bliss, where He is joyfully received. Jesus is dead, but by the infinite merits of His death and Passion He has freed us from death. Jesus is dead, but by His death we have become children of God. Jesus is dead, but we acknowledge Him to be our good Lord, our Master and our King. The death of Christ is our life, but we must exterminate sin, and let the love of Jesus flame up in our hearts.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Thirty-ninth Day.

It is consummated. All the sufferings of Our Lord are now over. The depth of humiliation has been reached, the bitter chalice has been drained, the soul of Jesus has left the body, and the body is dead. How often, dear Jesus, have I tried to shake off the cross

which God has imposed on me! I, too, ought to remain fixed to the cross, until all is over and the soul leaves my body. The fact
[167] is that I have not the virtue of perseverance, that sister virtue of patience, which protects our sanctity. I ought to be able to say with Our Lord, The work which I was to do is completed. The day will come when I, and the whole world, will see the mystery of my crosses: when I shall see clearly the purpose for which I had to bear them. Give me the grace, gracious Jesus, that I may welcome that day, because I am conscious that I have done my duty. With the consummation of the work will also come my reward.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

Fortieth Day.

When Our Lord had given up the ghost great events took place, that struck terror to the hearts of those who witnessed them, and which were told from mouth to mouth. The great veil of the Temple, behind which stood the holy of holies, was rent. A terrible earthquake shook the earth, so that the rocks were burst asunder. The graves opened and men buried for years came forth and stalked about the streets of the city. Then the centurion, who stood beneath the cross and witnessed these supernatural manifestations, exclaimed to those who stood by him that truly this must have been the Son of God. The soldier saw that all was over, and he had but one duty more to perform before he could go away: that of piercing the Heart of Jesus with the lance. Then they took the body of the Lord from the cross, and laid it for a moment in the arms of Mary. Preparations were made by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus for the burial; hurried preparations,
[168] for it was the eve of the Pasch. They laid the body in the tomb, whence, on Easter Sunday, Jesus rose triumphantly.

Prayer.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, etc., etc.

A Method of Hearing Mass by Way of Meditation.

Before The Service Begins, While Waiting For The Priest To Come In

> call to mind the Last Supper, in which Christ instituted the sacrifice of the Mass, and gave Himself to us all to be our food. Oughtest thou not to acknowledge and give Him thanks for this excess of love?

Affections.

Jesus, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end. John xiii. 1.

For Thou hast prepared a table before me, against them that afflict me. Ps. xxii. 5.

I will sacrifice to Thee the sacrifice of praise, and I will call upon the name of the Lord. Ps. cxv. 17.

When The Priest Is Descending From The Altar Before Commencing The Mass,

> consider Christ after the Last Supper going from Mount Sion, where the Supper had been held, to the Garden of Gethsemani. And His disciples also followed Him. Luke xxii. 39. And wilt thou forsake thy God in the time of temptation and trial?

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Affections.

In what place soever Thou shalt be, my Lord King, ... there will Thy servant be. 2 Kings xv. 21.

It is good for me to stick close to my God: to put my hope in the Lord God. Ps. lxxii. 28.

Lord, I am ready to go with Thee both into prison and to death. Luke xxii. 33.

At The Confession

contemplate Christ praying in His agony, when His sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground. Luke xxii. 44. Thy sins forced out His blood; and wilt thou not grieve on account of them?

Affections.

Who will give water to my head, and a fountain of tears to my eyes? and I will weep day and night. Jer. ix. 1.

Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before Thee. I am not now worthy to be called Thy son. Luke xv. 21.

O God, be merciful to me a sinner. Luke xviii. 13.

When The Priest Kisses The Altar, And At The Introit,

consider Judas betraying Christ with a kiss. And art not thou also a traitor, whilst thou rejectest thy Saviour to embrace some trifling pleasure?

Affections.

Impute not to me, my Lord, the iniquity, nor remember the
[170] injuries of Thy servant. 2 Kings xix. 19.

I know my iniquity; and my sin is always before me. Ps. l. 5.

Lord, have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me.

At The Kyrie Eleison

reflect on the threefold denial of Peter, who did not repent until the Lord looked upon him. Luke xxii. 61. How often art thou ashamed of thy Lord Jesus, and deniest Him before men? When wilt thou repent and return to Him with contrition?

Affections.

I have sinned against the Lord. 2 Kings xii. 13.

Cast me not away from Thy face. Ps. l. 13.

Look Thou upon me, and have mercy on me. Ps. xxiv. 16.

At The Gloria

think of the exultation of the Jews at the mocking and sufferings of Christ. And art not thou as one of them, if thou takest pleasure in wicked things?

Affections.

What shall we answer ... or what shall we say?... God hath found out the iniquity of [His] servants. Gen. xliv. 16.

Convert us, O God, Our Saviour: and turn off Thy anger from us. Ps. lxxxiv. 5.

I will be glad and rejoice in Thee. Ps. ix. 3.

At The Collect, Epistle, And Gradual

think of all the accusations, mockeries, blows, and spittings, which Christ endured in the houses of Annas and Caiphas. John xviii. 22. Christ was silent as a lamb before His shearers; but how easily art thou made angry, and reproachest thine accusers!

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Affections.

Where is thy fear, thy fortitude, thy patience? Job iv. 6.

Thou art my patience, O Lord. Ps. lxx. 5.

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth: and a door round about my lips. Incline not my heart to evil words. Ps. cxl. 3, 4.

At The Gospel

meditate how Christ was hurried from Caiphas to Pilate, questioned concerning His teaching, and rebuked. John xviii. Dost thou value the precious doctrine of Jesus? Dost thou receive it carefully thyself, and hand it on to others?

Affections.

Direct my steps according to Thy word: and let no iniquity have dominion over me. Ps. cxviii. 133.

Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths.Ps. cxix. 105.

I will teach the unjust Thy ways: and the wicked shall be converted to Thee. Ps. l. 15.

At The Credo

meditate upon Christ sent by Pilate to Herod, and by him sent back again to Pilate (when he obtained not the signs he expected to see), clothed in a white garment, as a silly person not worthy of credit. Luke xxiii. Art thou among those who, before they will believe, demand of Christ that they may see a sign?

Affections.

Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed. John xx. 29.

[172] I do believe, Lord: help my unbelief. Mark ix. 23.

I live in the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and delivered Himself for me. Gal. xi. 20.

At The Offertory

meditate upon the resignation of Christ and His offering Himself to bear all things for the glory of His Father, and the redemption of mankind. Ps. xxxix. Art thou prepared to endure adversity and affliction?

Affections.

I am ready for scourges. Ps. xxxvii. 18.

I will take the chalice of salvation: and I will call upon the name of the Lord. Ps. cxv. 13.

Confirm, O God, what Thou hast wrought in us.Ps. lxvii. 29.

At The Lavabo

reflect how Pilate sought to excuse himself for his most wicked deed by washing his hands. But he did not escape the guilt itself. Matt. xxvii. 24. How often dost thou seek to conceal thy sins, and to make excuses for them? So doing thou dost rather increase than diminish them.

Affections.

I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord. Ps. xxxi. 6.

O God, Thou knowest my foolishness: and my offences are not hid from Thee. Ps. lxviii. 6.

Man cannot be justified compared with God. If he will contend with Him, he cannot answer Him one for a thousand. Job ix. 2, 3.

At The Orate Fratres

meditate upon Christ about to be condemned by Pilate, presented to the people crowned with thorns and in a purple robe. John xix. 5. What will be thy state, O man, when thou shalt stand before Christ the judge at the Last Day?

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Affections.

Who will grant me this, that Thou mayst protect me in hell, and hide me, till Thy wrath pass? Job xiv. 13.

I will let go my speech against myself, I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. I will say to God: Do not condemn me. Job x. 1, 2.

For behold I was conceived in iniquities: and in sins did my mother conceive me. Ps. l. 7.

At The Preface

reflect that the very same Jews who, five days before, saluted Christ with hosannas, now cry out, Crucify Him, crucify Him. John xix. 6. Art thou guilty of similar inconstancy?

Affections.

Perfect Thou my goings in Thy paths; that my footsteps be not moved. Ps. xvi. 5.

Strengthen Thou me in Thy words. Ps. cxix. 28.

Thy hand [shall] lead me: and Thy right hand shall hold me. Ps. cxxxix. 10.

At The Canon

> meditate upon Jesus bearing His own cross as He went up to Calvary. John xix. 17. Dost thou not hear the voice of Christ? If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. Matt. xvi. 24.

Affections.

Draw me: we will run after Thee to the odor of Thy ointments. Cant. i. 3.

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Our Lord
[174] Jesus Christ. Gal. vi. 14.

Let us go forth therefore to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. Heb. xiii. 13.

At The Elevation Of The Host

> meditate on Christ nailed to the cross by His hands and feet, set forth as a spectacle to the whole world. Luke xxiii. 33. Behold, O man, thy Redeemer! With what affection hast thou hitherto embraced Him, Who here, with extended arms, invites thee to His embrace?

Affections.

My Beloved to me, and I to Him. Cant. ii. 16.

Tell Him that I languish with love. Ibid. v. 8.

Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation? or distress, or famine?... For I am sure that neither death, nor life, ... nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus Our Lord. Rom. viii. 35-39.

At The Elevation Of The Chalice

reflect how profusely Christ poured forth His blood from His five sacred wounds for the washing away of our sins. Run to Him, O sinner, that thou mayest be cleansed, and draw waters with joy out of the Saviour's fountains. Is. xii. 3.

Affections.

Suffer me, therefore, that I may lament my sorrow a little, before I go, and return no more, to a land that is dark and covered with the mist of death. Job x. 20, 21.

Perhaps darkness shall cover me Ps. cxxxix. 11. [175]

At The Memento For The Dead

reflect on the infinite mercy of God towards those who fear Him, and pray for those holy souls who have departed this life according to His justice, and in the one true faith.

Affection.

O Jesus, enlighten them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death. Luke i. 79.

At The Pater Noster

meditate upon the seven words of Christ uttered by Him upon the cross: 1, Christ prayed for His enemies; what dost thou do? 2, The thief, repenting, obtained heaven; learn seriously to repent and do penance, but delay it not to the last. 3, Christ commends His Mother to St. John, and St. John to His Mother; to whom canst thou better commend thyself? 4, Christ complains that He is forsaken; and dost thou expect consolation as thy right? 5, Christ thirsted for thy salvation; and dost thou turn away from it with loathing? 6, Christ announced that all His torments were finished; thus shall all thy good and evil in this world be brought to a close. 7, Lastly, after the example of Christ, commend thy spirit into the hands of thy heavenly Father. Luke xxiii. 46.

Affections.

And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. Matt. vi. 12.

Make me also to hear,This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise. Luke xxiii. 43.

O Mary, behold thy Son! John xix. 26.

Forsake me not, O Lord my God: do not Thou depart from me. Ps. xxxvii. 22.

For Thee my soul hath thirsted. Ps. lxii. 2.

Happy is he who hath finished his course, who hath kept the
[176] faith. 2 Tim. iv. 7.

Into Thy hands I commend my spirit. Luke xxiii. 46.

At The Division Of The Sacred Host

reflect upon the separation of Christ's soul from His body. Matt. xxvii. 50. It is appointed unto men once to die. Heb. ix. 27.

Affections.

Let my soul die the death of the just. Num. xxiii. 10.

Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. Rom. xiv. 8.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.Apoc. xiv. 13.

At The Agnus Dei,

when the priest strikes his breast, reflect how many of those who saw Christ dying on the cross, striking their breasts returned. Luke xxiii. 48. And dost not thou strike thy breast in token of true sorrow for thy sins?

Affections.

Lord, I strike my breast with the publican, and say,Be merciful to me a sinner. Luke xviii. 13.

And now, O Lord, think of me, and take not revenge of my sins, neither remember my offences, nor those of my parents. Tob. iii. 3.

Let Thy mercies speedily prevent us. Ps. lxviii. 8.

At The Communion Of The Priest

meditate upon the burial of Christ. John xix. 42. He asks from thee thy heart as a sepulchre.

Affections.

My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready. Ps. lvi. 8. [177]

Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting-place, Thou and the ark [of Thy holiness]. Ps. cxxxi. 8.

My heart shall rejoice with Thee. Prov. xxiii. 15.

At The Last Collect

meditate upon Christ's joyful and glorious resurrection. Mark xvi. 6. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Colos. iii. 3.

Affections.

We look for the Saviour, Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who will reform the body of our lowness, made like to the body of His glory. Phil. iii. 20, 21.

When shall I come and appear before the face of God? Ps. xli. 3.

I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ. Phil. i. 23.

At The Benediction

meditate how Christ, ascending into heaven, blessed His disciples. Mark xvi. 19. Unto this are you called, that you may inherit a blessing. 1 Pet. iii. 9.

Affections.

Save Thy people, O Lord, and bless Thy inheritance. Ps. xxvii. 9.

May God, our own God, bless us. May God bless us. Ps. lxvi. 7, 8.

Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, O Lord: they shall praise Thee forever and ever. Ps. lxxxiii. 5.

Prayer at the Conclusion of Mass.

Accept, O Holy Trinity, this sacrifice of the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which I have offered to Thy divine
[178] majesty in remembrance of His Passion and death; and by His infinite merits I beseech Thee that all my defects and negligences may be supplied, for He is the propitiation for our sins. Amen.

Litany of the Passion of Our Lord.

(For Private Devotion Only).

Jesus Christ.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
God the Father of heaven, Have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, Have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost, Have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, made man to redeem us, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, Who, during Thy whole life, didst burn with desire to die for us, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, prostrate in prayer in the Garden of Olives, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, agonizing, and covered with a bloody sweat, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, comforted by an angel, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, betrayed by Judas with a kiss, Have mercy on us.

Jesus, tied and bound by Thy enemies, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, abandoned by Thy disciples, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, arraigned before Annas and Caiphas, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, struck on Thy face by a servant, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, accused by false witnesses, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, declared worthy of death, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, spit upon, blindfolded and buffeted, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, denied thrice by Peter, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, delivered in chains to Pilate, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, despised and mocked by Herod, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, to whom Barabbas was preferred, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, cruelly scourged with whips, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, wounded and bruised for our sins, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, clothed in derision with a purple garment, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, crowned with thorns, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, with a reed in Thy hand instead of a sceptre, derided and insulted as a mock king, Have mercy on us. [179]
Jesus, most unjustly condemned to the ignominious death of the cross, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, loaded with a heavy cross and carrying it to Calvary, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, led as an innocent lamb to slaughter, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, nailed to a cross, and elevated upon it between two thieves, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, Who hast loved us, and delivered Thyself for us, as an oblation and a sacrifice to God, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, Who didst wash us from our sins in Thy blood, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, praying for Thy enemies, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, blasphemed by those who passed by, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, promising paradise to the penitent thief, Have mercy on us.

Jesus, giving Thy Mother to St. John for his Mother, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, complaining of being forsaken by Thy Father, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, drenched in Thy thirst with vinegar and gall, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, recommending Thy spirit into Thy Father's hands, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, bowing Thy head and expiring on the cross, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, Whose side was opened with a spear, whence issued forth blood and water, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, taken down from the cross, wrapped up in a clean linen cloth, and laid in a new monument, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, Whose soul after Thy death descended into hell, Have mercy on us.
Jesus, Who, in judgment, will demand an account of the profit derived from Thy Passion and death, Have mercy on us.

Be merciful, Spare us, O Lord!
Be merciful, Hear us, O Lord!

From all evil, Lord Jesus, deliver us.
From the snares of the devil, Lord Jesus, deliver us.
Through Thy most bitter Passion, Lord Jesus, deliver us.
Through Thy infinite merits, Lord Jesus, deliver us.

We sinners,
Beseech Thee to hear us.

That being dead to sin, we may live to justice, We beseech Thee to hear us.
That we do not glory but in Thy holy cross, We beseech Thee to hear us.
That for the love of Thee the world may be crucified to us, and we to the world, We beseech Thee to hear us.
That we may always bear about in our body Thy mortification, We beseech Thee to hear us.
That we may crucify our flesh, with its vices and concupiscences, We beseech Thee to hear us.
That Thy sacred blood may cleanse our consciences from dead works to serve the living God, We beseech Thee to hear us.
That being partakers of Thy sufferings, we may be also of Thy glory, We beseech Thee to hear us.

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Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Spare us, O Jesus!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Graciously hear us, O Jesus!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Have mercy on us, O Jesus!
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.

V. O Lord, hear our prayer.
R. And let our cry come unto Thee.

Let Us Pray.

O Lord Jesus! Who didst shed Thy precious blood for the remission of our sins, grant, we most humbly beseech Thee, that in the day of judgment we may merit to hear from Thy adorable mouth these consoling words: Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you. Amen.

A Prayer to Jesus Suffering.

O spotless Lamb! O innocent Victim, Who, by Thy death and blood, hast effaced the sins of mankind, blot out my iniquities, and do not permit that Thy sufferings should become useless to me. O Jesus, abandoned by every one, sorrowful, desolate, and resigned to death! help me now to receive with resignation like Thine, whatever afflictions Thou shalt please to send me. O Jesus, calumniated, accused, despised! teach me to disregard the judgments of men, and to suffer with patience the most base injuries. O Jesus, torn with stripes, pierced with thorns, weltering in blood for my sake! teach me to endure for love of Thee, the anguish and inconvenience of ill-health and sickness. O Jesus, abandoned to executioners, shamefully condemned to a cross! enable me to fly all vainglory, and embrace the most humbling
[181] confusion. O Jesus, sinking under the weight of Thy cross! I unite myself to Thee, and my cross also to Thine. May I ever carry it with the same strength and courage which Thou didst. O Jesus, raised upon Thy cross! draw me now powerfully to Thee. Thou art expiring for my sake. Oh, let me never live but for Thine! that being henceforth crucified with Thee, my whole occupation may be to love, to praise, and to adore Thee. Amen.

Prayers to the Five Wounds of Our Lord.

To The Wound Of The Left Foot.

O my divine Saviour! I humbly adore the sacred wound of Thy left foot, and I feelingly compassionate the intense pain it caused Thee. I thank Thee for the love with which Thou didst make Thy painful journey to Calvary, marking every step of the way with Thy precious blood. I offer to the eternal Father the

love and sufferings of Thy holy humanity, in expiation of my crimes, which I detest with sincere and bitter contrition.

Our Father, etc. Hail Mary, etc. Glory be to the Father, etc.

O holy Mother, impress deeply on my heart the wounds of my crucified Jesus.

To The Wound Of The Right Foot.

O my divine Saviour! I adore the sacred wound of Thy right foot, and I feelingly compassionate the intense pain it caused Thee. I thank Thee for the love with which Thou didst suffer Thy sacred feet to be pierced, and with barbarous cruelty nailed to the cross, to atone for my wanderings, and for the guilty indulgence [158] of my disorderly passions. I offer to the eternal Father the love and sufferings of Thy holy humanity. I beseech Him to grant me the grace to weep bitterly for my sins, and to persevere in virtue to the end of my life, without ever straying from the obedience due to Thy holy commandments.

Our Father, etc. Hail Mary, etc. Glory be to the Father, etc.

O holy Mother, impress deeply on my heart the wounds of my crucified Jesus.

To The Wound Of The Left Hand.

O my divine Saviour! I humbly adore the sacred wound of Thy left hand, and I feelingly compassionate the intense pain it caused Thee. I thank Thee for having thereby, with so much love, delivered me from the eternal punishments which my sins deserve. I offer to the eternal Father the love and sufferings of Thy holy humanity. I beseech Him to grant me the grace to profit by the remainder of my life, that I may bring forth fruits worthy of penance, and thus disarm the divine justice provoked by my repeated sins.

Our Father, etc. Hail Mary, etc. Glory be to the Father, etc.

O holy Mother, impress deeply on my heart the wounds of my crucified Jesus.

To The Wound Of The Right Hand.

O my divine Saviour! I adore the sacred wound of Thy right hand, and I feelingly compassionate the intense pain it caused Thee. I thank Thee for all the blessings which this bountiful
[183] hand has so abundantly bestowed on me, notwithstanding my ingratitude in refusing to correspond with Thy gracious designs. I offer to the eternal Father the love and sufferings of Thy holy humanity. I beseech Him to change my heart and affections, and to render all my actions conformable to His holy will.

Our Father, etc. Hail Mary, etc. Glory be to the Father, etc.

O holy Mother, impress deeply on my heart the wounds of my crucified Jesus.

To The Wound Of The Opened Side.

O my divine Saviour! I humbly adore the sacred wound of Thy opened side. I am exceedingly moved at this cruel outrage. I thank Thee for the love with which Thou didst suffer Thy side to be pierced and Thy Heart opened, to give us even the last drop of Thy precious blood that our redemption might be most abundant. I offer to the eternal Father both this outrage offered to Thy holy humanity, and the love with which Thou art always ready to receive the greatest of sinners, that my soul may be received into this most loving Heart and may abide therein forever. Amen.

Our Father, etc. Hail Mary, etc. Glory be to the Father, etc.

O holy Mother, impress deeply on my heart the wounds of my crucified Jesus.

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May. The Blessed Virgin Mary.

We are now on the eve of the beautiful month of May. This blessed month so ardently looked for by every true Christian. On its approach we see the altars of our blessed Mother in churches, chapels, and oratories decorated, and everywhere during this lovely month exercises in honor of the beloved Mother of Our Redeemer are performed with more or less pomp and ceremony. Mary is our heavenly Mother, and we are her children. What well-trained child but is anxious to express his love and gratitude towards his mother, in order to make her happy? What mother so worthy of love as Mary? Do you wish to please her? This month gives you an opportunity of so doing. Dedicate it to her, practise daily some little act of devotion in her honor, and be faithful in making these meditations. Then only will you deserve to be called a child of Mary. O immaculate Mary, Mother of our Jesus, and our Mother! also obtain that we may give thee most fervent homage during this month, and by our words and example draw all hearts to thee and thy divine Son.

Considerations and Prayers for Every Day.

First Day. Mary's Immaculate Conception.

Thou art all fair, O My love, and there is not a spot in thee. Cant. iv. 7. These words are found in the Canticles of

Solomon, and are applied to the Blessed Virgin. From all eternity
[185] she had been predestined to be the Mother of God, to give to the almighty God that body, that flesh and blood, which He was to assume for our redemption, and the creature that He selected for His Mother must have been all pure, all holy, and free from the slightest taint of sin. A few saints, such as John the Baptist and the prophet Jeremias, were sanctified in their mother's womb. And if these men, because of their predestination, were born without sin, surely it cannot be supposed that God did not bestow on Mary a greater privilege that He exempted her from the necessity of being even for one instant the slave of sin. O Mother mine, O Mother of the Church of God, I hail thee! Have pity on us, O Mary conceived without sin, and obtain for us the grace to struggle against our passions.

Prayer.

O holiest and purest of virgins, well dost thou merit this title! Thou who wast a virgin although a mother, pray for us. Take pity on us, thy children; intercede for us with Jesus, that He may have mercy on us, and grant us the grace to walk worthy of our vocation, that we may be His through time and eternity. Amen.

Second Day. Mary's Nativity.

The whole earth was filled with gladness at the birth of Mary, because of her was to be born Jesus Christ, Our Saviour and Redeemer, Who was to deliver us from the slavery of the devil. How heaven must have rejoiced at the birth of such a mother!
[186] A nation's joy at the birth of an heir to the throne may give you some faint idea of the joy the angels experienced at Mary's nativity. This is a day of jubilation for the entire world, for the just and the sinner, for time and eternity. Hell alone is afraid, for this is the woman destined to crush the serpent's head. Her appearance was the blessed dawn, announcing the rising of the

Sun of righteousness. Made holy at her conception, the object of God's love at her birth, every step in Mary's life was marked by new progress in virtue; no shadow of sin ever tarnished the beauty of her soul. Let us then praise our Mother and Queen, and implore her to take pity on us, whose lives are passed in a constant struggle against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Let us beg her to aid us in these combats, and to bring us to our eternal home.

Prayer.

What relief do I feel in my miseries, and what consolation in my sorrow! what strength do I not find in the midst of temptations, when I remember thee, and call thee to my aid! O my most sweet and holy Mother Mary, my own Mother, do thou console me! I see myself loaded with sins and surrounded with enemies, without virtue, and cold in my love towards God. Comfort me, and let me begin a new life, a life which will be pleasing to thy divine Son and to thee. Amen.

Third Day. Mary's Presentation.

Who is she that advances as the sun, beautiful as Jerusalem? It is Mary, the well-beloved daughter of the Father, who repairs to the Temple of Jerusalem to consecrate herself to the service [Luke of God. Happy he who gives himself to God in his youth, who offers Him a heart which has not been wounded by the thorns on life's weary way, a heart which has not known the state of sin. He has not to struggle against the memories of the past, which strive to draw him from the service of God. How beautiful, how filled with sweetest instruction for us, is every passage in the life of our beloved Mother! Let us look at the picture now presented to us of the infant Queen of saints, on the day of her early entrance into the Temple of God. Let us follow her, and learn our first lesson from our little Queen, so full of grace. See her as she

passes up the long flight of stairs, the little arms folded above the pure young heart, the upturned face glowing with heavenly joy a face where lies reflected the light of a soul which never for a moment was shrouded in the gloomy shadow of sin.

Prayer.

O Lord, Thou wilt not reject a contrite and humble heart! I come then to Thee, O my Father. At the sight of my bruised and bleeding heart Thou wilt have compassion on Thy child, and receive my offering. Blooming rose, Mother of God all beautiful, Virgin most sweet, pray for us, that we may be worthy to find eternal happiness in eternal light. Grant that by thy intercession our sins may be effaced. Amen.

Fourth Day. The Annunciation.

God sent His archangel, St. Gabriel, one of the great ones of
[188] His kingdom, to impart to the Blessed Virgin, Our Lady, His eternal counsel, and to ask her consent. The archangel went to Nazareth, and before the rising of the sun entered the oratory where the Blessed Virgin was, and beholding in her his Queen, he saluted her with such reverence that she was overcome with fear, not knowing what to think. We know how the heavenly messenger bowed before his Queen and said, Fear not, Mary; the Lord is with thee, for thou hast found grace before God. Behold thou shalt conceive and bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name, JesusAnd we know when that young maiden, bowing her head in her heavenly humility, consented, saying, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to Thy word, that the Holy Ghost overshadowed her, and the Word was made flesh.Truly she is blessed among all women, blessed among all mothers. By her blessedness all women are raised and ennobled. She is their honor, their glory, their model. Blessed Virgin and Mother, ever immaculate on earth as now

in heaven, where she leads the army of virgins who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. Think of Mary raised above all women, and see her wonderful humility. God loved her for it. The one thought of her life, the one end of her actions, was truly to be the handmaid of God. This is a lesson we all must learn, namely: to yield ourselves up to the will of Him Whose we are already by so many titles, wondering how He can forget the sins we have committed against Him, and how He can desire to pour His celestial grace into so unworthy a vessel. [189]

Prayer.

May Thy will, O God, be done in us, through us, and by us, this day and always, here and everywhere! Hail, glorious Mother of God; hail, Queen of heaven; hail, my patroness! To thy tender maternal love I commend myself, in order that all my actions may have for their end three things, namely, the glory of thy Son, my own salvation, and my neighbor's good. In every tribulation and sorrow come to my aid and the aid of my friends. Amen.

Fifth Day. The Visitation.

No sooner had Mary heard the words of the angel, announcing that she had been chosen to be the Mother of the long expected Messias, and that her kinswoman Elizabeth was also with child, than she rose up and went with haste into the hill country, and entering into the house of Zachary, saluted Elizabeth. Her heart was full of unselfish love for God and man, and the very love of God which made her heart burn with joy at the coming of Jesus, made it also beat quickly with gladness at the great blessing granted to Elizabeth. The angel had told Zachary that his son John was to be the immediate precursor of the Messias, and Elizabeth had been constantly thinking of all this, longing to know when and whence the Messias should come. Lost in these thoughts she sat on the day of Mary's arrival, and the instant that sweet voice

struck on her ear, it was made known to her in a wonderful
[190] manner that this was the Mother of the Messias. Rising, she knelt before her, crying, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? For a moment Mary stood in astonishment then she realized the greatness of her title of Mother of God, and while the light of ecstasy transfigured her holy face, she exclaimed, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. Because He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid: for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. Because He that is mighty hath done great things to me: and holy is His name. And His mercy is from generation unto generations to them that fear Him. He hath shewed might in His arm: He hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart. He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich He hath sent empty away. He hath received Israel His servant, being mindful of His mercy. As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever. The visit which occasioned this beautiful canticle preaches in every line the great virtue of charity which marked Our Lady's life so clearly. The Holy Scripture tells us that Mary remained with Elizabeth for three months, when she returned to her own home.

Prayer.

O Virgin most fair, worthy of all praise and honor! Sanctuary consecrated to God, Virgin Mother, hidden treasure of innocence,
[191] splendor of virginity! Thy prayers are favorably received on high. Address them for us to Him, Whom in thy virginity thou didst conceive, Who is true Lord and God, the Author of all creatures. Amen.

Sixth Day. The Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

And when the fulness of time was come, God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son, Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. The Emperor Augustus ordered that a great census should be taken in all the provinces of his empire, each family being enrolled in the city of its respective tribe. Thus, in obedience to the order, Mary came to the city of David, and in all its length and breadth there was not room for her to lay her weary head. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. Gold would doubtless have procured admission to an appropriate shelter, but Joseph had no gold. The evening wind fell cold and piercing on the young virgin, who breathed not a word of complaint though she was scarcely able to support herself. The lonely travellers, seeing themselves rejected by all the world, quitted Bethlehem, and in a poor ruined stable Mary brought forth her first-born Son, the promised Messias, and laid Him in a manger. Great artists have striven to paint the rapture of Mary as she laid her Jesus, her Son, her God, in the manger. Who can understand what it was to see Him, to adore Him as her God, to caress Him as her Child, to forget all her fatigue in her wonderful joy? We can adore Him and watch the movements of our beloved Mother, a model and [102] example of resignation on this night of poverty and humiliation. Glory and praise to thee, O holy Mother, in this thy poverty in Bethlehem! Many a poor mother in sorrow and want will look to thee and find consolation, knowing thy tender heart will sympathize with her. For what are we that we should be better treated than the Mother of Our God?

Prayer.

Immaculate Virgin, Mother of God, receive my prayer. Help me in all my necessities, intercede for me, O glorious one, with my Redeemer, even with Him, thy divine Son, Whom thou didst bear without spot of sin. Deliver me from every snare of the enemy, and from all carnal delights, that by thy intercession I

may obtain the pardon of all my sins, steadfast resistance to all my enemies visible and invisible, and the amendment of my life. Amen.

Seventh Day. The Purification.

It was ordered by the Law of Moses that all women should, at a stated time after childbirth, repair to the Temple and present themselves to the priest, in order that they might be purified. Could she who had been immaculately conceived, an immaculate Virgin and Mother, be made more pure? No, certainly not; but obedience required that she should comply with the conditions of the Law, and obedience was one of Mary's greatest virtues. Should not her example fill us with confusion we who are apt
[193] to murmur against any command that is in the slightest manner distasteful to our feelings? The Law also commanded that every first-born son should be offered to God in the Temple, and then ransomed by some gift, according to the condition of the parents. Mary and Joseph were poor, so they took their humble offering of two doves and set out for Jerusalem, to present the Son of God in the Temple. As Mary walked on, with her precious Child clasped in her arms, how little the passers-by suspected Who this first-born Son was! If they could have only known what He was to do for His people, how they would have bowed before Him and adored Him, poor weak Infant as He was! But no, He came unto His own, and His own knew Him not. And behold there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was in him. And he had received an answer from the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. And he came by the Spirit into the Temple. And when His parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the Law: he took Him into his arms,

and blessed God, and said: Now Thou dost dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word in peace: Because my eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples. A light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people, Israel. As Simeon stands thus with the Babe in his arms, the Holy Ghost shows him the sad, sad future of the Child and Mother. Turning to Mary, he said: Behold this Child is set for the fall, and for the resurrection of many in [194] Israel.... And thy own soul a sword shall pierce. Oh, the awful sorrow that fell on her young heart! For a moment she bowed down under the crushing burden of her coming pain, but only for a moment; then she stretches out her arms to receive her Child, and murmurs, Thy will, not mine, be done; be it done unto me according to Thy word. What a lesson for us to learn, we who are restless and impatient under every little trial! What a contrast to our disobedience and pride when God wishes to take some loved object from us! Oh, let the example of this most perfect of women sink deeply into our hearts, and may we learn from her the great virtues of charity, obedience, humility, and purity.

Prayer.

O Mother of mercy, forsake us not in our hour of trial and temptation! Never allow us to lose courage, but cheer us with thy aid, make us patient under suffering, and render our wills conformable to the will of thy divine Son. Conduct us through the dawn of penance to the fulness of thy light. Amen.

Eighth Day. Simeon's Prophecy.

The holy Simeon had foretold that Jesus should be a stumbling block to many. By these words Mary understood that Jesus would suffer much persecution from the Jews, and her immaculate heart was deluged with sorrow. She saw Anna come into the Temple

and heard her acknowledge Jesus as her God. She obeyed ev-
[195] erything which the Law ordained, and then with Joseph and her Child returned to the city of Nazareth, with the sharp sword of sorrow within her heart. Oh, the constant grief that followed each ray of joy that lighted her soul! How she suffered at every insult offered to her divine Son she who loved Him as no other mother ever loved a child! Every look at Jesus, every movement that He made, every word He spoke, brought to her mind the prophecy of Simeon and filled her heart with bitterness. The memory of those words were always before her, and as time passed on she saw Gethsemani and Calvary hourly drawing nearer and nearer. The words of the prophet Isaias came whispering to her heart, He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before His shearer, and He shall not open His mouth. Yet ever and anon she murmured Thy will, not mine, be done. Oh, what an example of loving resignation to the will of God! It is astonishing how shallow all human consolation is. Let Our Lady teach us how to suffer without seeking consolation. She suffered in silence; we can make our sorrows in a measure like hers by constantly uniting them to the sorrows of our dearest Lord. With confidence then we may seek the Mother of sorrows, and ask her to be the Mother of our sorrow, to help us bear our burdens to the very endto be like her, loving and patient with those who cause us pain. It is a consolation to those who mourn to know that our blessed Lady was a lifelong mourner. So let us take up our sorrow bravely, and following in the footsteps of our
[196] dear Mother, walk cheerfully on.

Prayer.

O Mary, Mother of sorrows, my refuge, neglect not to pray for me in all my tribulations! First of all in the blood of Jesus Christ, then in thy prayers, do I trust for my eternal salvation. In thee, O Lady, have I hoped; I will say to thee with St. Bonaventure, I shall not be confounded forever. Obtain for me the grace to love my God in this life and in eternity, and I ask for nothing

more. Amen.

Ninth Day. The Flight into Egypt.

Filled with joy and praising God, the Magi left the stable with the intention of going to Herod, so that he might share in the happiness. But an angel appeared to them, warning them not to return to Herod, for he sought to destroy the Christ, the new-born Messias, so they turned their camels' heads and went another way into their own country. Herod did not intend, however, to be deprived of his Victim, and lest he should miss taking the life of the new-born King, he gave orders that all the children of two years and under in and around Bethlehem should be killed. While Herod is thus plotting the Infant's death, an angel appears to Joseph in a dream, to warn him, saying: "Rise, take the Child and His Mother and fly into Egypt: and be there until I shall tell thee. For it will come to pass that Herod will seek the Child that he may destroy Him."Joseph and Mary immediately obeyed the command, for poverty has but few preparations to make. Not a murmur or complaint escaped their lips, though our hearts can imagine how difficult it must have been for Mary to leave home [197] again, and to face the hardships of the wilderness. Trembling with apprehension from the dread of Herod's followers, and suffering from heat and cold in their severest forms, they travelled on for many a weary day. But God had so ordained it, and they were ready to do His holy will. What a lesson of perfect obedience! They knew that they were carrying Jesus, yet they did not look for miracles to lighten their burden. We may reverently follow them on their journey in our meditations. Tradition tells us of trees that bowed down their leafy heads to shade with their fan-like plumes the Mother and her Child. It also tells us that the images of the heathen gods fell from their pedestals when the true God went by. And there, amid the Egyptian idolaters, Mary, the

frail, girlish Mother, and Joseph, so patient and uncomplaining, with the holy Babe dwelt for seven years. Joseph pursued his trade of carpenter, and Mary no doubt contributed her share to the support of the modest household, while Jesus grew in beauty day after day. When Herod died an angel came to Joseph, saying, Arise, and return into Judea, for they who sought the life of the Child are dead. This was glad news to Mary and Joseph, and joyfully they returned to commence anew their life in Nazareth of Galilee.

Prayer.

Hail, Mother of mercy, Queen of heaven, thou art our life, our sweetness, and our hope! Obtain for me the grace of the Holy Ghost, that He may dispose of me in all things according to His will, that He may direct my body, elevate my soul, guide my life,
[198] rule my conduct, inspire my actions, maintain within me holy thoughts, pardon my sins of the past, correct those of the present, and preserve me from sin in the future. Amen.

Tenth Day. The Three Days' Loss.

From the time of the return from Egypt, history is silent as to the life of the Holy Family, until the time when they went to keep the Easter festival at Jerusalem. According to the Law, the Jews were obliged to go up to Jerusalem to worship God three times a year, unless they were legitimately hindered. The first time was at the Pasch, instituted in remembrance of the exodus from Egypt, and corresponding to our Easter; the second time was the feast of weeks, which was Pentecost or Whitsuntide; the third was the feast of tabernacles. St. Luke, in his gospel, gives us this account of the occurrence: When Jesus was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. Unknown and unnoticed, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph passed into the holy city. Mary's heart was filled with joy at the thought

that she was leading to the Temple God's only Son made man. As she looked at the surging crowd around her both within and without the Temple, she thought to herself, Ah, if you could but know that this Boy, Whom you think is only the son of a carpenter, is the Son of the most high God! He is your King. But the week of unleavened bread came to a close. Thousands as usual had thronged the holy city to worship God. After the festival was over, the custom was that all the women should depart by one gate of the city, the men by another, in order to reunite at the halting-place of the first night. The children might [199] go either with the father or with the mother. Thus it was that Mary and Joseph travelled on contentedly, Mary thinking that Jesus was with Joseph, while Joseph on his side supposed the Child to be with His Mother. The night had fallen before the two bands of men and women met; imagine the consternation of the holy parents when they discovered the absence of their precious charge. They asked among their kinsfolk and acquaintances if He were with them, but Mary knew it would be all in vain. She knew if He were in the company He would long since have joined her; so in all haste, alone and silent, Mary and Joseph retraced their steps to the holy city. For three days they searched in sorrow for their loved Child; they made inquiries everywhere, but all to no purpose. On the third day they heard of a wonderful Child Who sat daily in the Temple disputing with the doctors. With eager steps Mary and Joseph went to the Temple; as they came along Mary's ear has caught the sound of a voice which it is impossible for her to mistakeit is the voice of Jesus. What a sight greets their eyes as they enterthe great doctors of the Law sitting around, and her Boy in the midst of them answering questions! My Son, my Son, Mary cries, Why hast Thou done so to us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing. The Son of God lifted His eyes and looked at her, saying, Why have ye sought Me? Did ye not know that I must be about My Father's business? Nevertheless, He went down to Nazareth and

was subject to them. And His Mother kept all these things in her
[200] heart. And Jesus advanced in age and grace with God and man. When we sin we too lose Jesus, Our Father and Friend; but do we, like Mary, search for Him until we find Him? We must not wait for Him to come back to us; we must go and find out where He is. Sometimes Jesus permits us to suffer pain and anguish. When this is so, think of Mary, and how sweetly and patiently she suffered during those three days when she was separated from Jesus. Let us also dwell on the obedience of Jesus; the Son of God, Our Creator, was subject to His creature. Oh, my God, give us grace to understand this great mystery and strength to follow it!

Prayer.

What relief do I feel in my miseries, and what consolation in my tribulation; what strength do I not find in the midst of temptations, when I remember and call thee, O my Mother, to my aid? O my most sweet and most holy Mother Mary, my own Mother, do thou console me! I see myself loaded with sins and surrounded by enemies, without virtue, and cold in my love towards God. Comfort me, and let me begin a new life, a life which will be pleasing to thy Son and to thee. Amen.

Eleventh Day. Meeting Jesus with the Cross.

We have now come to the morning of Good Friday to Mary's meeting Jesus with the cross, which is one of her seven dolors. It is twenty-one years since the three days' loss, and the heart of
[201] Mary has traversed a world of mysteries since then always in joy, yet always with her lifelong sorrow before her. It would be impossible to make any calculations of the sum of love which these years produced in Mary's heart. But now the time has come when Mary must give Jesus up, to be scourged and to be put to death. The Passion may be said to begin on the Thursday in

Holy Week. The first Mass took place that night, Our Lord's first unbloody sacrifice, to be followed on the morrow by the dreadful one of blood. By a miraculous grace Mary is enabled to go through all the dreadful tortures of that long night of pain. She hears the sound of the scourging, and sees the cruel soldiers crown Him with thorns, bandage His eyes, and dare to bend the knee in mockery before Him Who has one day to be their Judge. She has heard Pilate say, *Behold the man*, and the cry of the people, Crucify Him, crucify Him! and when Pilate said, *I am innocent of the blood of this just man; look you to it*, she heard the dreadful imprecation that was shouted by the demons around her, His blood be upon us, and upon our children! Crucify Him, crucify Him! Then they lead Him away to pronounce the final sentence. The streets are filled with a great concourse of people, all going in one direction towards Calvary. What a journey for Mary, yet she never shrinks. Oh, how can we, when we look at our sinless Mother suffering so patiently, how can we murmur at the petty trials that God sends us? Mary, with St. John and Magdalen, stands at the corner. She does not even tremble. Hark, that hoarse shouting, that trampling and hurrying of feet! The procession comes in sight; the centurion leads the way, the soldiers dragging Jesus and His heavy cross. When [202] the maddened crowd surge around, about and behind her. She approaches to embrace Him, but the soldiers thrust her rudely back. He staggers, and falls with a dull, heavy sound upon the street. O God of heaven! He falls, and His sweet Mother must stand and look on. Well may she say, *Look and see if there be sorrow like unto my sorrow.* Men crowd around Him, and with curses and blows drag Him up, and sweep on again on the way to Calvary, to finish their impious designs. O my Mother, I too was one of the agents in that cruel work! Surely, when I see all that my most sorrowful Mother had to undergo, it will cost me no great effort to have a loving devotion to her. Can we look on this sinless, uncomplaining Mother, standing in the streets

of Jerusalem, gazing on her Son and her God torn and bruised, crowned with cruel thorns, bending under the heavy cross which we gave Him, and refuse to bear the little crosses which He gives us? Oh, no! Let us look at our Mother, and like her see all the beauty of our Jesus in the blood-stained countenance of the God made man, and carry most gladly all trials that our loving Lord may send us.

Prayer.

O most holy Mary, in the great battle in which I am now engaged with hell, do thou always help me! And when thou seest me wavering, and likely to fall, O my Lady, do thou extend thy hand and sustain me. Mary, my hope, my refuge, my strength, do thou protect me, and never allow me to lose the grace of God. And on my part, I resolve always and instantly to have recourse
[203] to thee in all temptations, saying, Help me, Mary, help me. Amen.

Twelfth Day. The Crucifixion.

The way of the cross is ended, and they have come to Calvary. They have stripped Jesus of His garments, and have laid Him on the hard bed of the cross. Now commences the dreadful work of nailing His blessed hands and feet to the cross. The right hand is nailed to the cross first, but through some mistake the left hand will not reach; then a fearful scene takes place. The brutal soldiers pull with all their force, until, dislocating the arm, they succeed in stretching the hand to its place. Picture Mary looking in mute agony on that dreadful scene! His legs are stretched out, one foot crossed upon the other, and through them the nail is driven. Now the cross is raised on high, and Jesus hangs upon it. In the past few moments Mary has suffered a world of woe. The sacrifice of the Mother was inseparable from that of the Son; it would have cost her much less to have given her own life, and

for this reason she is justly styled the Queen of martyrs. The first hour of the three long hours of agony has passed; still Jesus is silent. The second hour begins. There are fewer persons around the cross; all is silent, and then His lips move. Mary listens with all her heart: Father, forgive them; they know not what they do. Beautiful, beautiful prayer true of all sins and of all sinners they know not what they do. Beautiful prayer also because it discloses the heart of a God. For God alone could teach such charity as this, and Mary, joining her Son in His prayer, looks up to heaven and repeats, Father, forgive them; [204] they know not what they do. The third hour begins, and His first word in this last hour goes through her very soul: I thirst. Well might He thirst. Since the night before nothing has crossed His lips, and Mary, His Mother, is unable to give Him a drink to cool them, parched and swollen as they are; she cannot even reach to wipe away the blood that has congealed there. Thus for three long hours she watches Him in His death-agony, unable to afford Him the slightest alleviation; until at last He cries out with a loud voice, Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit. And bowing His head, Jesus dies. Such were the sufferings endured by the Mother of that divine Son. Jesus dies for love of us, and we live to torture and crucify Him afresh. What sublime lessons Mary here gives us, and how perfectly is she the model of those souls whom God permits to be sorely tried in affliction! Their trials are great, but are they to be compared with hers? Ah, do not complain, but to enable you to endure your sufferings cast your eyes on this sorrowful Mother, and ask her to obtain for you grace to imitate her firmness, her constancy, and her generosity. After Jesus on the cross, the most beautiful book one can study is Mary at the foot of the cross.

Prayer.

O most tender Mother, it was I that covered thy divine Son with wounds, and put Him to death! It was I that pierced thy heart with the most bitter sword of grief! Oh, by those wounds

and by that blood, by thy sorrows and by thy tears, I conjure
[205] thee, O Mary, to be my protectress and my advocate. Pray for me, and for all sinners like me, that so many precious sufferings may not become useless to us. Amen.

Thirteenth Day. The Taking Down from the Cross.

The sorrowful day is over. All have gradually dispersed, and now only Mary and the other holy women, with the disciples, remain at the cross. The bruised and mangled body is lifted down, and laid on the Mother's knee. When Our Lord dies we are tempted to think that Our Lady's dolors ought to have ended there; but no, there is still more to be endured. Mary embraces the lifeless body, washes the gaping wounds, smoothes the tangled hair, and bathes away the clotted blood that dims its glory. She wraps Him tenderly in a white linen cloth, and gives Him into the reverential arms of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Both of these were disciples of our blessed Lord. Joseph was a good and just man, and Nicodemus was a man learned in the Scriptures, who had come to Jesus by night, for fear of the Jews, and had learned the doctrine of regeneration. Joseph had gone to Pilate and had begged the body of Jesus, which had been granted to him. Now he takes Him in his arms, and with the help of Nicodemus places Him in his own tomb. Well has our blessed Lord said, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests: but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head. Mary found nothing strange even in the tremendous sorrows that almost crushed the life out of her. She looks only to God's will. No matter how uncommon,
[206] how exacting, or how apparently unreasonable, she was always found prepared, always found with these words on her lips, O God, Thy will be done. Let us look at our lives, and see if we, like Mary, are ever ready to do God's will; ever looking at Our Lord crucified, and willing to bear all the disappointments, trials,

and sorrows that He may send us. Let us look at our immaculate Mother, standing patient and resigned at the foot of the cross, looking on the sufferings of her dearly beloved Son, and we will never murmur no matter how heavy the cross which our good God in His divine providence may place upon our shoulders.

Prayer.

O Mary most sorrowful! words fail to express the gratitude we owe thee, for the readiness wherewith thou didst consent to come to the rescue of our lost world. But do thou deign to receive our thanks, faint and inadequate though they may be. May the enjoyment of thy present bliss move thee to intercede with God in behalf of us, thy weeping, weary children. Be propitious to those who flee to thee for aid, and do thou ever intercede for those whom thy divine Son redeemed. Amen.

Fourteenth Day. The Burial of Jesus.

It is now the evening of Good Friday, and Mary is sitting at the foot of the cross with her dead Son upon her lap. It is here that mourners for future generations will come to find rest and peace. Here the widow, the orphan, and the lonely will find how good a thing it is to have their hearts crushed with sorrow, because here they will find the loving arms of their new Mother Mary [207] around them, and through their grief they will see God. But now the time has come when Mary must give up her treasure. So giving the signal to Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, they lift the body of the dead Creator and move towards the garden tomb. Mary arranges everything; she adjusts the winding-sheet, and then takes her last look on the lifeless body of Jesus. "O, look and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow!" Then her adopted son, John, comes to her, drawing her away, for she is half-dead with the grief and anguish of the past night and day. Through the same gate by which she had left the city of Jerusalem

in the morning, she re-entered it that night. Poor Jerusalem, that city of God, how often had Our Lord yearned and wept over it, longing to gather those chosen ones to Himself! But no, they had rejected Him, and now their cup of iniquity is filled. They have crucified their King; their pavements are stained with His blood. Mary knows all this, still there is no room in her heart for bitterness. Oh, what a contrast to our spirit of revenge, sometimes for even a fancied wrong. We learn from this dolor of Mary that there is no darkness like the darkness of a world without Jesus, and if His absence is caused by our own fault, our own sin, then it is the greatest of sorrows. O Mary, my Mother, keep us ever by thy side at the foot of the cross! so that remembering all that thou hast suffered, we will gladly accept all the sorrows that may
[208] come. Amen.

Prayer.

O Virgin Mother most sorrowful, I detest my sins because they have offended God, and caused thee so much pain! I am sorry for them, and will be sorry for them as long as I live, and according to the best of my power will do penance for them. Forgive me, dear Lord, for Thy mercy's sake; pardon me all that is past, and be Thou my keeper for the time to come, that I may nevermore offend Thee. Amen.

Fifteenth Day. Help of Christians.

She hath opened her hand to the needy and stretched out her hand to the poor. Prov. xxxi. 20. The whole life of our blessed Mother shows how ever dear to her has been the alleviation of the miseries that surround us. Everything in her proves to us how justly the Church gives to her the title of Help of Christians. Mary's desire to console us in our miseries is so immense, so vehement, that scarcely have we resolved to address ourselves to her mercy than she immediately flies to our relief. If Mary

is already inclined and prompt to aid us, even when we do not pray to her, what may we not expect from her when we lay our miseries before her, to beseech her to deliver us from them? The Church urges us to apply unceasingly to her, to observe faithfully the pious practices which are authorized to be observed in her honor. With this view the Church has established a great number of feasts in the course of the year, to show her children that they cannot pay too much honor to the Mother of God. Happy is [25] he whose love for Mary is ever growing; he is enjoying in time one of the choicest blessings of eternity. Let us then follow in the spirit of our holy Church, and have frequent recourse to the bounties of the divine Mother. If we would only remember how anxious our dear Mother is to assist and help us, how eagerly we would turn to her in all our sorrows and joys. O holy Virgin, Help of Christians, come to our aid in the midst of the miseries by which we are surrounded! We entreat thee, then, O Mother of goodness, to supply our insufficiency and to bless our labor. Imprint thy love in all hearts, so that having loved and honored thy Son upon earth, we may go to praise Him eternally in heaven.

Prayer.

Most loving Mother, no suppliant ever had recourse to thee in vain! Whatever our needs, thy ear is ever open to our cry. Thou art the Help of Christians! O good and powerful Mother, come to our aid, and deliver us from all our troubles. Show thyself our Mother, intercede for each one of us that we may lead a Christian life, and hereafter reign with Christ throughout eternity. Amen.

Sixteenth Day. Our Lady of Mercy.

Everything in Mary recalls the august character of mercy. It is her essence, so to speak; so that whoever names Mary names mercy, as Mary cannot be without mercy. What could we not say to prove that Mary is all mercy, and that everything she does

[210] tends to clemency? But it may be that the greatness or the sanctity of this powerful Queen alarms us, and makes us fear to present ourselves before her, we who are so guilty in the sight of God. Let us take courage, for the more holy and elevated Mary is, the more gentle and affable she shows herself to the sinner. Mary welcomes all mankind without exception; no one leaves her presence with a disconsolate or sorrowful heart. Let our confidence in Mary have no bounds, since we know that her power equals the extent of her mercy. That good Mother herself gave St. Bridget to understand as much when she told her, I am the Queen of heaven, and the Mother of mercy. There is none on earth to whom I refuse my pity; not one who has not obtained some grace through my intercession. Who can doubt that it is true to say that many who are now saved would have been lost except for Mary? If it is true to say that he is happy who loves Mary, so it is also true to say that there will be woe for all eternity to him who in this life is able to secure her mercy, but does not do so, and thus loses himself by his own fault. Flee then to Mary, O my soul; beseech her to take pity on thee, and secure thy salvation, which cost her Son so dear, and which is so priceless to her maternal heart. Be assured that all will be well with thee if thou art not lacking in true devotion and love to Mary.

Prayer.

O blessed Mother, thou art the Mother of God, the Mother of sinners, the Mother of the banished ones! Grant, O gracious Virgin, that I, thy sinful child, may not be condemned by thy
[211] divine Son; but do thou intercede for me, that He, the divine Judge, may at last welcome me, a poor exile, into His eternal home. Amen.

Seventeenth Day. Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

It is impossible to study the history of Jesus and Mary without perceiving a uniform law of Providence uniting them in the great events of their lives. Unless Mary had consented to become His Mother, Jesus would not have been born. Divine grace, no doubt, disposed her to give assent, but the act was not the less one of her own free will. As certain as man has been redeemed by the incarnation and Passion of Jesus, so surely did God make the whole depend in the first instance on the co-operation of Mary. If, therefore, you believe that Jesus Christ came to us through Mary, believe also that the graces which He merited for us must come to us through His Mother. If you believe that without her you were not redeemed, believe also that without her you will not be saved. God wished that Mary should be looked upon and honored as the perpetual help of sinners, to obtain their conversion. O Mother of perpetual help! thou art the dispenser of all those gifts which God granted to us wretched sinners. He has made thee so powerful, so rich, and so beautiful, in order that thou mayest succor us in our misery. In thy hands I place my eternal salvation, and to thee I consign my soul. I wish to be remembered among thy devoted servants.

Prayer.

O Mother of perpetual help, take me under thy protection and I shall be secure! I shall not fear Jesus Christ, my eternal Judge, [182] for by one prayer of thine He will be appeased. What I fear is that in the hour of temptation, I may neglect to have recourse to thee, and thus be lost. Obtain for me, therefore, the pardon of my sins, final perseverance, and the priceless gift to love Jesus Christ and to have recourse to thee, O Mother of perpetual help. Amen.

Eighteenth Day. Confidence in Mary.

Let our veneration for Mary be full of confidence. Our first parents had drawn upon us the greatest of miseries, but through

the divine mercy a new Adam and Eve have more than repaired our misfortunes. God could have performed the work of redemption by other means; but He preferred the very way by which man had lost his innocence. That is to say, that as Satan first deceived the woman, and through her means deceived all men, so by a woman Satan in his turn should be confounded, and men be saved. Of course Our Lord is the true mediator between God and man, yet it is also true that after having sinned, we dare not appear before God. His presence fills us with fear, so we have need of a mediatrix and this we have in Mary. If you desire an intercessor with God, have recourse to Mary, all pure, all powerful, and full of mercy. Oh, then, all you who are exposed to the temptations of the world, raise your eyes to this Star of the sea. Call on Mary, and you will soon experience the powerful effects of her intercession. Conducted by her, you will securely
[213] reach the port of a blessed eternity.

Prayer.

Sweet and kind Virgin, full of dignity and bounty, Virgin sanctified in the womb, Virgin powerful as thou art pure, most glorious Mother of God, Mother most chaste, and Lady most reverently honored, I pray thee of thy goodness to preserve my body and my soul from all sin, and take them both into thy holy keeping. Amen.

Nineteenth Day. The Love of Mary.

O Mary most amiable, who can name thee and not be inflamed with love? What Mother so worthy of love, so kind and generous to us as Mary? To her heaven is indebted for the countless number of the elect redeemed by the blood of her dear Son. As Mother of Our Redeemer, Mary regards us as her own possession. She knows how costly was the ransom paid for us, therefore she never ceases to intercede that none may be lost. How then could

we help loving this Daughter of the King, who interests herself so much in our behalf? If we love God we must love His holy Mother. It is our daily task to love Jesus more and more, and experience tells us that we never advance more rapidly in love of God than when we are accompanied by His Mother. There is no time lost in seeking Jesus if we go at once to Mary. She is the short road to Him, and speedy and full are the answers to the petitions which her hand presents. O Mary most admirable, obtain that we may love thee with all the powers of our soul, with all the tenderness of our heart, and with all our strength. [214]

Prayer.

O Mother most amiable and admirable! O wondrous Mother, thou art all lovely and glorious! Thou art the most blessed and most perfect of all! Kind and gracious Mother, pray for us, win us grace to love thee with a most tender love, that we may thereby grow in love for Jesus, thy Son. Amen.

Twentieth Day. Imitation of Mary.

All true love consists in the imitation of what we honor. If we love the immaculate Mary, if we desire to please her, endeavor to imitate her virtues, we must first imitate her in her life of prayer. To lead a life of prayer it is not necessary to spend hours on our knees in the church, for every-day duties would not admit of that. We find that Our Lady always left her prayer to spend an allotted time at work. We should let the thought of God be the first object of our waking love, and the love of God be the absorbing feeling of our heart. During the day we should every now and then cast a loving glance towards heaven, and make acts of love and gratitude. If you imitate and follow Mary, says St. Bernard, you cannot wander from the road. Our Blessed Lady will fill you with great confidence in God and in herself, because you will not be approaching to Jesus by yourself, but always by that

good Mother. O Mary, Mother of the divine Saviour, Who from the height of His cross, seeing each one of us in the person of the beloved disciple, pronounced the memorable words, Behold thy
[215] son! Behold thy Mother, obtain that we may love and imitate thee with all the tenderness and strength of our will.

Prayer.

Glory and honor be to thee, O Mary! Thy throne is in the highest heavens! Be thou our loving Mother; from the throne of thy glory cast a glance on us, who are encircled with so many dangers and trials. Pray to thy Son Jesus for us, that we may emulate the purity of the angels, so that we too may one day enjoy the beatific vision, and praise Our Creator throughout eternity. Amen.

Twenty-first Day. The Blessed Virgin the Model of Faith.

The Blessed Virgin has left us examples of faith which are full of instruction and consolation. She believed the mystery of the Trinity, that she should conceive and bring forth a child; the words of the angel announced this mystery to her. She believed that the Son of God the Father was to take the form of man, thereby making Himself like unto us. She believed herself to be the Virgin chosen by God in whom this mystery was to be accomplished. The apostles had faith in Jesus Christ and acknowledged Him to be the Son of God, but in the hour of Our Lord's Passion they abandoned their divine Master. It was not so with our blessed Mother; she followed Him even to Calvary. O Mary, may we understand well the excellence of this fundamental virtue, without which it is impossible to please God. It is by faith that Jesus Christ comes into our hearts. By faith we resist the devil, and put him to flight. Let us then love and value

more and more the precious gift of faith, and endeavor, after the example of Mary, our Mother, to be animated by its spirit. But the faith of the Blessed Virgin teaches us another lesson: namely, that after her example we should make an open profession of our faith, even though by it we should lose goods, fortune, honor, even life itself.

Prayer.

O Mary, thou art the Queen of heaven and Mistress of all created things! Obtain for us the lively faith that animated thee, so that we may grow in love, persevere to the end, and hereafter, in company with patriarchs, prophets, and all the elect of God, glorify thee, together with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost through all eternity. Amen.

Twenty-second Day. The Blessed Virgin the Model of Piety.

According to universal opinion, the Blessed Virgin dwelt in the Temple till she was about twelve years of age. During those tender years of her life she passed the greater portion of the night in the contemplation of heavenly things, giving but a very short time to repose. Chosen by the Lord, adorned and enriched with His most signal favors, the immaculate Virgin corresponded thereto with constant and generous fidelity. The devotion of Mary is worthy of imitation, especially in this, that she gave herself up to it from her early youth. Alas! how many souls have perished because they have not followed this example? On the other side how happy those who have imitated the early devotion of the Blessed Virgin! Oh, how strong and mighty [217] we are with Jesus Christ, when we are armed with the worthy merits and intercession of the Mother of God! O Mary, vessel of singular devotion, obtain for us that, after thy example, we may be entirely devoted to God!

Prayer.

Most loving Mother, no suppliant ever had recourse to thee in vain! Whatever our needs, thy ear is ever open to our cry. Thou art the comforter of the afflicted, O good and powerful Mother. Come to our aid and deliver us from all our troubles; intercede for each one of us that we may lead a Christian life, and hereafter reign with Christ throughout eternity. Amen.

Twenty-third Day. The Blessed Virgin the Model of Hope.

The salvation of the just (as well of the body as of the soul) is from the Lord. He is their help in time of tribulation, He will uphold them lest they fall, He will bring them out of danger, deliver them from the hands of sinners, and will save them in the end. And why will God bestow such honors on the just? Because, replies the Psalmist, they have hoped in Him, and put all their confidence in Him. At the marriage of Cana, Mary saw the sudden failing of the wine, and her tender charity caused her to have recourse to the omnipotent power of her Son. Our Lord up to that period had not worked any miracles, but knowing His tender Heart Mary hesitated not to have recourse to Him, and
[218] her hope was not unfounded. Let us then, like Mary, expose our wants to Jesus, and we shall obtain strength and courage to aid us in the accomplishment of our duties. Let us labor by every possible means to obtain this great gift of confidence by frequent prayer, almsdeeds, and penitential works, as well as by great purity of life. Whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, I will grant it to you.

Prayer.

Mother most amiable! By thy beauty and unsullied purity thou wast ever attractive in the divine sight. Entreat Jesus that He

would grant us grace to love Him more and more fervently, and that by our purity and innocence of life we may spread abroad the sweet odor of Jesus Christ, and daily become more acceptable in His sight. Amen.

Twenty-fourth Day. The Blessed Virgin the Model of Humility.

The Blessed Virgin possessed the spirit of humility in a perfect degree. Not that she failed to know the gifts which God had bestowed upon her; on the contrary she ever remembered that God had drawn her out of nothing, and she returned Him incessant thanks for the favors which He had given her. This virtue is most essential, since without it there is no grace for us, no recompense in heaven; while with it there is pardon, every blessing, and eternal salvation. Let us often meditate on these words of our blessed Mother when she went to visit St. Elizabeth: The Lord hath regarded the humility of His handmaid. The archangel Gabriel had saluted her full of grace and blessed among women, but the holy Virgin only humbles herself more and more, confessing aloud that she is but the handmaid of the Lord. What a contrast to our pride and self-sufficiency! If, on account of some appearance of good, we are charged with some duty of importance, do we not immediately begin to consider ourselves something? while in reality we are but nothingness, misery, and sin. St. Basil says there are three things which will establish humility in the heart. First, a perfect conviction of our own nothingness. Second, the constant consideration of the conduct of the good, who are better than ourselves. Third, persevering obedience to those to whom we owe submission.

Prayer.

O tender Mother! despise not our petitions, receive our homage, veneration, and love. Be thou our Queen; in thee do

we place our whole trust, for thou art our gracious Mother. To thee do we commit ourselves, body, soul, and spirit, with all we have and are. Show thyself our Mother both in life and death, O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.

Twenty-fifth Day. The Blessed Virgin the Model of Charity.

It is truly Mary, who, after her divine Son, has given us the most touching example of charity. Everywhere she appears full of grace, of meekness, consideration, goodness, mildness, and tenderness. Her charity was as boundless as her love of God. But now that she enjoys the clear vision of her Beloved, how great
[220] must be the increase of her love towards Him, and consequently of her charity towards mankind. All her person, her looks, her actions, her movements, her whole life breathe nothing but charity. In going to visit her cousin Elizabeth, the charity of Mary was manifested. This charity caused her to leave her home to undertake a long and painful journey under circumstances that unfitted her for fatigue. The same virtue shone forth at the marriage of Cana, when she saved the bride and bridegroom the mortification of telling their guests that the wine had given out. Her heart was one with her divine Son, Who loved His enemies so much that He gave Himself up for their salvation. Alas, how we shrink from forgiving the slightest offence that is offered to us! O my Mother, why am I not inflamed by at least a spark of the love of God! Then I would not find it so hard to forgive all who have offended me.

Prayer.

With deep humility do we exclaim, Pray for us, O holy Mother of God! Thou art the Mother of Him Who is Our Redeemer and Our God, but thou art also the Mother of sinners, for whom thy

divine Son shed His blood. Intercede for us with Jesus, and beg for grace that we may love Him with all our heart and all our strength. Amen.

Twenty-sixth Day. The Virgin Mary the Model of Advancement in Virtue.

Our spiritual advancement consists, as we have often heard, in being well persuaded that we are far from the height to which we aspire, and on that account we should make constant efforts to [221] become better because not to advance is to go back. Persons who are aiming ever so little at perfection are the choice portion of God's creation, and are dear to Him as the apple of His eye. Oh, that we could imitate Mary, who, full of grace from the first moment of her conception, corresponded thereto with such fidelity that the angels exclaimed, "Who is she that cometh forth as the morning, rising fair as the moon, bright as the sun?" The most exact observance, not only of precepts but of the lightest counsels, was the fruit of the love that burned in the heart of Mary, so that she was never guilty of the least imperfection. Ah, would that I too could speed more rapidly onwards in the heavenly road! How many graces would God then lavish upon me! O Mary, my tender Mother, aid me to imitate thee in thy advancement in virtue. O Mother most sweet, draw us more and more by the sweet odor of thy virtues to be a perfect disciple, imitator, and slave of the Incarnate Wisdom, Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Prayer.

O Mary, by thy example thou didst animate confessors and virgins, sustaining them in the dangerous struggle with the world, the flesh and the devil. Aid us, too, O mighty Queen, so that we may live as becomes the faithful disciples of thyself and thy divine Son. Amen.

Twenty-seventh Day. The Blessed Virgin the Model of Patience.

Of the virtue of perfect patience, the Blessed Virgin has left us many bright examples. We have meditated on her dolors and
[222] we have seen with what wonderful patience she endured them. How patient and firm she stood at the foot of the cross, on which her Son was fastened, covered with wounds and loaded with ignominy! Mary maintained an entire resignation to the divine will, which she loved more than her own, but this perfect conformity did not render her less sensible to her martyrdom. She loved to suffer because it was God's will that she should do so. We are encouraged, by the example left us of the invincible patience of Mary, to imitate it to the best of our power and according to our degree of grace. We shall follow, though distantly, in the footsteps of this perfect model, if we bear with patience the trials that overtake us, whether they be loss of fortune, health, or reputation. If we feel that we are getting angry let us overcome ourselves by silence; for then it is that we have the most need to be silent, because even the most prudent man when roused to anger can with difficulty restrain himself from angry words, which later he will regret heartily. O my Mother, obtain for us from Jesus the gift of patience, by means of which we shall acquire all other virtues and be enabled to persevere in holiness to the end of our lives. Amen.

Prayer.

O blessed Mother! Look graciously on thy children; behold how we, by our sins, have forfeited all claim to grace. Compassionate our misery, aid us from the abundance of thy fulness, and entreat thy Son Jesus that He would grant us grace to be pleasing in His sight and thine, and to remain faithful unto death. Amen.

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Twenty-eighth Day. The Blessed Virgin the Model of Poverty.

True and perfect poverty, says Albert the Great, consists in voluntary renouncing all temporal things for God's sake, in having but what is absolutely necessary, and in sometimes retrenching even in that for God; for where there is full provision against necessity, there is no poverty. Throughout her entire life Mary's perfect love of poverty is manifest. It was evident in the obscure city of Nazareth where this young virgin espoused to a poor carpenter dwelt, and afterwards when she set forth with Joseph for Bethlehem in obedience to the edict of Augustus. On her arrival where does she find shelter? There is no place at the inns for one so poor, so they are obliged to take refuge in a deserted stable, and there, exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, the Queen of angels brings forth the Son of the Most High. Let every one, according to his state in life, imitate the poverty of the Blessed Virgin. Those who possess temporal goods should imitate her by despising them, and by not loving them too much, by estimating them at their true value, since they pass away so quickly. Those who are poor from necessity should imitate the example of the Blessed Virgin, and freely embrace and be contented with the state in which God has placed them.

Prayer.

My most sweet, most compassionate, most amiable Queen! Oh, how great is the confidence with which St. Bernard inspires me when I have recourse to thee! I am a poor sinner, deserving of a thousand hells; I wish to change my life; I wish to love [224] my God, Whom I have so greatly offended. My Lady, dost thou understand me? Yes, I trust that thou hast understood me, and graciously heard my prayer. Amen.

Twenty-ninth Day. The Blessed Virgin the Model of Obedience.

Our Lord became obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross, in order that we might, after His example, labor to acquire and practise the virtue of obedience. The perfection to which Mary carried the obedience due to her Creator has been implied in treating of the love of God with which her heart was inflamed; it was the source of her perfect conformity to the divine will. What an example of obedience does she not give us in the presentation of Jesus in the Temple! Mary was exempted from the obligation common to all women to go to the Temple to be purified. Nevertheless, as her divine Son was pleased to submit to circumcision, so she would submit to the law of purification. The person who obeys merits very much while doing little, because obedience springs from the spirit of perfect self-abnegation, which is the most agreeable holocaust to God. Thomas à Kempis says, "Whoever willingly obeys his superiors for God's sake, performs an heroic action as a valiant soldier of Jesus Christ, for he will receive with the martyrs the palm of a glorious immortality.

Prayer.

My most sweet Lady and Mother, I am a vile rebel to thy great
[225] Son; but I come repentant to thy mercy that thou mayest obtain pardon for me. From thee I hope for every good, forgiveness, perseverance, and heaven. I hope to be one of those, who, in the kingdom of the blessed will most praise thy mercies, O Mary, for having saved us by thy intercession. Amen.

Thirtieth Day. The Blessed Virgin the Model of Modesty.

The Blessed Virgin was a perfect pattern of modesty; her exterior senses were in all things under the control of reason, and subjected to the will of God; gravity and composure marked her every movement. Oh, you who have the happiness of having chosen her for your Mother, if you love her as true children, endeavor with all possible ardor to imitate her modesty. We should particularly try to acquire that moderation of the tongue for which the Blessed Virgin was so conspicuous, and for this reason we should avoid all useless conversations. The Holy Ghost Himself has told us that in much speaking we cannot escape from sin. Thus walking in the footsteps of our blessed Mother in the faithful practice of this virtue, it will not only preserve us from many falls, many temptations and dangers, but it will also be a most powerful means of advantage in the way of sanctity and of edifying and drawing souls to God. Then will all our exterior conduct, regulated by interior motives, tend to the glory of God, the edification of our neighbor, and our own advantage.

Prayer.

Most holy, immaculate Virgin, and my Mother Mary, to thee, who art the Mother of my Lord, the Queen of the world, the [226] advocate, the hope, and the refuge of sinners, I have recourse who am the most miserable of all. I thank thee for all the graces which thou hast hitherto granted me, and especially I thank thee for having delivered me from hell, which I have so often deserved. I promise always to serve thee, and to do all that I can that thou mayest also be loved by others. Amen.

Thirty-first Day. The Assumption.

Tradition says that after Mary's sacred remains had been most reverently entombed by the apostles, songs were heard proceeding from her sepulchre during the space of three days, and on the

third day St. Thomas came, imploring to have the slab removed from the tomb that he might gaze for the last time on the beloved features of Mary. The slab was raised, but as he bent forward to look upon her, he started back in amazement; naught was to be seen save the grave-clothes in which the sacred body had been enveloped. The body itself was nowhere to be found. Then they knew that God had taken her, body and soul, to heaven. St. John describes the coronation in these terms: A great sign appeared in the heavens; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; and the Queen thus crowned took her place near her Son on a throne prepared from all eternity. O you who fear the justice of God! O you who dare not cast yourself at the feet of Jesus! remember you have with Him a powerful advocate, who is Mary. O Mary, thou blessed, loving Mother, compassionate thy orphan children; pray
[227] for us, and place us one day near thee in the heavenly Jerusalem.

Prayer.

O holy virgin Mary, who, in order to inspire us with boundless confidence, hast been pleased to assume the sweet name of Mother of perpetual succor, we implore thee to come to our aid always and everywhere; in our temptations, after our falls, in our difficulties, in all the miseries of life, and above all in the sad hour of our death. Amen.

Mass in Union with Mary Immaculate.

Prayer Before Mass.

O Mary immaculate! I come to place myself body and soul under thy special care and protection. Take me by the hand, that thy purity may hide the deformity of my soul, thy praises and thy love may supply my deficiencies. I also place in thy hands all my hopes, all my sorrows, all my cares, my life and the end thereof.

As thou didst stand by the cross of thy Son, joining thy prayers to His for man's redemption, so wilt thou come to help me now. Kindle my devotion, aid me with thy mighty intercession, so that I may worthily love and praise my God, and participate in the merits of Jesus, thy divine Son. Amen.

Confiteor.

O Father, will I cry with the prodigal, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee. I am not worthy to be called Thy child. I have grievously offended Thee through my whole life, [228] and therefore am unworthy to lift my eyes to heaven. O Mary, my Mother! beg of God grace for me, and He will hear thee. Obtain that I may know all my faults and devoutly make a sincere avowal of them, followed by a true repentance, so that I may obtain pardon for them through the loving mercy of my God. Amen.

Introit.

Behold me, O my God, at Thy feet; dispose of me as Thou pleasest. I devote myself entirely to Thee, and since my sins alone can render me displeasing to Thee, therefore I cry aloud to Thee for mercy and pardon. Amen.

Kyrie.

Lord be merciful to me a sinner! O Father of infinite mercy, have pity on Thy child! O Mary, powerful advocate, help of sinners, aid us by thy supplicating voice, and the just One by excellence will descend as a long-expected rain! O Fountain of love, grant this mercy to me and to all poor sinners! Amen.

Gloria.

Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace to men of good-will! I praise Thee, I bless Thee, I adore Thee! Blessed angels, messengers of Our Lord, who came before our King to prepare a place in which He should descend, I beseech thee in the name of thy love for Our God, teach me to love Him. Amen.

Collect.

Glorious Virgin Mary, thou who art the true mediatrix between
[229] thy sweet Son and poor repentant sinners, pray for me, obtain for me the favorable attention of Our God and Saviour. And do Thou, O Jesus, enrich my soul with Thy gifts, to the full extent of Thy tender compassion. Amen.

Epistle.

O most pure Mary, who knowest so well how to penetrate and comprehend Jesus, open my soul, dilate it, so that it may be replenished with that abundance of gifts which it will receive from heaven through thy intercession. Amen.

Gospel.

Ah, to whom shall we go, O Jesus, if not to Thee, since Thou hast the words of eternal life? Thou, O Jesus, my Lord and my God, art the true light, for Whose dawn the saints of the Old Law watched with longing eyes, looking to Thee for grace and salvation. O Mary immaculate, Virgin always faithful! lead us to Jesus, help us to find Jesus, and attach us to Him forever by the bonds of perfect charity, which, uniting us to His sacrifice during time, will associate us to His glory in eternity. Amen.

Credo.

O my God, I firmly believe in one God in three divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost! I believe in Jesus Christ, the true and only Son of God, Who was born of the Virgin Mary, and died on the cross for our salvation. I also believe all the sacred truths the Catholic Church believes and teaches, because Thou hast revealed them, Who canst neither deceive nor be
[230] deceived. O sweet Jesus, give me knowledge and understanding that I may live and die in this faith! Amen.

Offertory.

Accept, O eternal Father, this offering which is here made to Thee by Thy minister, in the name of all here present and of Thy whole Church. It is yet only bread and wine, but by a miracle of Thy power and grace it will shortly become the body and blood of Thy divine Son. Now the august sacrifice begins,

everything recalls the sorrows of our dear Jesus; His bitter agony, accompanied by a most heroic act of perfect submission when He consents to expiate every crime. O Jesus, Jesus! It is I who have bound Thee! it is I who have had the misfortune to lead Thee out to death! From this instant, O Jesus, I give myself to Thee! O Mary, my powerful protectress, purify us in the ardors of thy pure love, and do thou thyself place us on the paten with the bread, and in the chalice with the wine. Amen.

Lavabo.

Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a right spirit within me! Oh, wash me, dear Lord, from all the stains of sin, in the blood of the Lamb, that I may be worthy to be present at these heavenly mysteries. O Mary immaculate, may thy sorrows heal the wounds of my soul. Amen.

Preface.

Let us lift ourselves up to heaven, O my soul, and render thanks to the Lord Our God. O Mary most pure, aid us to break all the ties that still bind us to earth. Oh, may I, great God, unite [221] my heart and voice with all the heavenly court, and cry with them: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts! Blessed is He Who cometh in the name of the Lord! Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory! Hosanna in the highest; blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest!

Canon.

We conjure Thee, O Lord, to listen favorably to our humble prayers, to receive the vows and supplications we offer. We desire to adore, praise, and glorify Thee, and to give Thee thanks for Thy great glory, joining our hearts and voices with all the blessed in heaven, and with Thy whole Church upon earth. O Mary, Mother of mercy! Ask Jesus to give us the ineffable grace of appreciating, imitating, and loving Him until death that Jesus sacrificed by love, and immolated perpetually for us upon our altars. Amen.

Consecration.

The priest has said: This is My body; this is My blood; and Jesus has descended into his hands. The God of heaven and earth obeys a weak creature. O mystery of love! O prodigy of annihilation! O my soul, gratitude and love ought to be thy language. Eternal Truth, in Thee I believe, strengthen Thou my faith, that I may love Thee ever more and more, and hereafter behold Thee face to face in Thy celestial kingdom, my Jesus
[232] and my all! Amen.

Elevation Of The Host.

Hail, Victim of salvation, eternal King, Incarnate Word! Sacrificed for me and for all mankind, O Jesus host, Jesus love, Jesus Saviour! Holy Father, turn Thy eyes upon me, or rather look upon Thy beloved Son. Give me all that I ask in His name, and in the name of my immaculate Mother. Amen.

Elevation Of The Chalice.

Holy, holy blood, flowing from my Saviour's Heart, do thou cleanse me from all sin. It is Thyself, again Thyself, sweet and blessed Jesus Christ, Who art also entire within this chalice. Again and again, I adore Thee, and beseech Thee to be my salvation. Amen.

Memento Of The Living And The Dead.

And now, O my God, I wish to pray for all Thy holy Catholic Church, and for all Christians, religious and secular; to all give perseverance, O my God! Remember, O Jesus, those souls purchased by Thy precious blood, who have died in Thy peace, but nevertheless are deprived of Thy presence. Stretch forth unto them Thy strong right hand, and bring them into a place of refreshment, light, and peace. Amen.

Nobis Quoque.

I most humbly implore Thy mercy, O Lord, for myself also. I beg pardon for all my sins; I desire to detest them, and to renounce them forever. Then, O my God, Thou wilt accept my
[233] gifts, and we will render to Jesus all honor, praise, and glory. Amen.

Pater Noster.

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Agnus Dei.

O Lamb of God, sacrificed for my sake, have mercy on me! O adorable Victim of my salvation, look down on me and save me! Divine Mediator, obtain pardon of Thy Father for me a sinner, and mercifully grant me the sweets of Thy peace! O Mary, conceived without sin, obtain for me purity of heart, soul, and body. Amen.

Communion.

In the presence of the true body and the true blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, O my God, I place myself most humbly and devoutly at the feet of Thy loving mercy. Make me avoid sin in the present, pardon that which I have committed in the past, and guard me against it in the future. O Mary, conceived without sin, place me in the sanctuary of thy maternal heart, so that, like thee, I may preserve in peace, silence, and love, Him Whose possession makes all my happiness, all my delight, all my hope. Amen. [234]

Benediction.

O Jesus, Saviour of my soul, pour down on me by the hand of Thy minister Thy most abundant blessing. Illuminate my heart with Thy clear light, and grant that nothing may ever separate me from Thee. Amen.

Last Gospel.

O Word made flesh Who didst annihilate Thyself to give Thyself to me! Thou Who art the life and light of the world, enlighten me. How ought I not to be affected with the exceeding privilege I have enjoyed. O my God! I unite myself to Thee by

the ties of love and gratitude; thus alone can I correspond with Thy mercies. Amen.

Prayer After Mass.

And now once more I commend myself to Thee, O my God! I commend myself throughout the hours of this day to Thy keeping, to the keeping of Thy holy Mother and of Thy holy angels, and bring before Thee, for the same loving care, my kindred, my brothers and sisters, my friends, my benefactors, and all Christian people. Amen.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin.

(An indulgence of three hundred days each time)

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord have mercy on us.
Christ hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
God, the Father of heaven, Have mercy on us.
[235] God the Son, Redeemer of the world, Have mercy on us.
God, the Holy Ghost, Have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, Have mercy on us.
Holy Mary, Pray for us.
Holy Mother of God, Pray for us.
Holy Virgin of virgins, Pray for us.
Mother of Christ, Pray for us.
Mother of divine grace, Pray for us.
Mother most pure, Pray for us.
Mother most chaste, Pray for us.
Mother inviolate, Pray for us.
Mother undefiled, Pray for us.

Mother most amiable, Pray for us.
Mother most admirable, Pray for us.
Mother of our Creator, Pray for us.
Mother of our Saviour, Pray for us.
Virgin most prudent, Pray for us.
Virgin most venerable, Pray for us.
Virgin most renowned, Pray for us.
Virgin most powerful, Pray for us.
Virgin most merciful, Pray for us.
Virgin most faithful, Pray for us.
Mirror of justice, Pray for us.
Seat of wisdom, Pray for us.
Cause of our joy, Pray for us.
Spiritual vessel, Pray for us.
Vessel of honor, Pray for us.
Vessel of singular devotion, Pray for us.
Mystical rose, Pray for us.
Tower of David, Pray for us.
Tower of ivory, Pray for us.
House of gold, Pray for us.
Ark of the covenant, Pray for us.
Gate of heaven, Pray for us.
Morning star, Pray for us.
Health of the sick, Pray for us.
Refuge of sinners, Pray for us.
Comforter of the afflicted, Pray for us.
Help of Christians, Pray for us.
Queen of angels, Pray for us.
Queen of patriarchs, Pray for us.
Queen of prophets, Pray for us.
Queen of apostles, Pray for us.
Queen of martyrs, Pray for us. [236]
Queen of confessors, Pray for us.
Queen of virgins, Pray for us.

Queen of all saints, Pray for us.
Queen conceived without original sin, Pray for us.
Queen of the most holy Rosary, Pray for us.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Spare us, O Lord!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Graciously hear us, O Lord!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Have mercy on us, O Lord!

Anthem. We fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God! Despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers, O ever glorious and Blessed Virgin.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray.

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may, by His Passion and cross, be brought to the glory of His resurrection. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

V. May the divine assistance remain always with us.

R. Amen.

V. And may the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

R. Amen.

June. The Sacred Heart.

He who meditates on the life of Christ, and is acquainted with it, instinctively strikes upon this trait in the character of Jesus: The sweetness of His human Heart. The entire life of our blessed Lord was one series of most loving acts. We see Him at one time blessing the little children, at another bestowing sight on the blind, loosening the tongue of the dumb, pouring consolation into the aching heart of the mother who has lost her child, and pardoning the repentant sinner. Is it not a beautiful devotion by which we are drawn to view the loving tenderness of His human Heart, by which He won all to His side, so that not only His apostles clung to Him, but even the very pagans loved and revered Him?

Let us then love and practise this beautiful devotion, by offering that Heart the gold of charity and the incense of prayer. Let us go with filial confidence to Him, Who has taught us to lisp like an infant, Abba, Father. Let us repay Him love for love, and make reparation for the injuries He daily receives in that most kind Heart. Jesus in His turn will comfort us in all our pains and afflictions. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is the source of all charity and love; and through this devotion we will learn to love our neighbor and to sacrifice ourselves for his benefit.

Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my love.
Sweet heart of Mary, be my salvation.

Considerations and prayers for Every Day.

First Day. The Love of the Sacred Heart for Us.

[238] The love of the Sacred Heart for us is at once the tender affection of a brother, and the infinite love of the Son of God, with which, from all eternity, Our Redeemer looked forward eagerly to the salvation of mankind. He saw us doomed to everlasting death, He saw us, and each one of us individually among the number, unable to atone for our sins. Then He offered Himself to satisfy the justice of the Father. Thou didst implore mercy for us, and it was granted Thee, only on condition that Thou shouldst satisfy for us. And what satisfaction was required! Torments the most cruel, insults the most humiliating, death on the cross. Such was the price at which Thou wast permitted to redeem us. Thou didst accept all, and wast even ready to suffer more if necessary. Ah, Lord! What then shall I do for Thee? What return can I make for such great love? O generous, O incomprehensible Friend! How can I ever repay the debt I owe Thee, Heart of my Jesus? I abandon my whole being to Thy sweet love, to live and die therein.

Prayer.

Adorable Heart of my Saviour, I adore Thee, praise Thee, and offer Thee my whole self. O divine Jesus, I beseech Thee to receive me to-day into Thy Sacred Heart! Pour into my heart the light, help and graces I need to conquer my enemies, and to surmount all obstacles that will hinder my salvation, and the Christian perfection required to please Thee. Amen.

Second Day. The Heart of Jesus My Friend.

Oh, what folly, what delusion can be worse than to set one's heart on anything save Thee alone, O God! How poor is he who seeks [239] not his whole good in Thy sweet friendship alone! Heart of my Jesus, wounded for love of me, permit me to draw nigh to Thy open side, and confess to Thee a thousand times over that I love Thee. O Heart of Jesus, forgive my past foolishness! O beloved and adorable Redeemer, who will give water to my head, and a fountain of tears to my eyes, that I may weep day and night for the contempt shown to Thy love, and the ingratitude with which Thy benefits are repaid! O ye angels, who crowd the sanctuaries in which dwells the divine Spouse of our souls, cease not to pour forth at the foot of His altars the most profound homage. One of the usual duties shown by people towards those whom they respect are visits. Jesus Christ is our Friend, our Father. He is in our midst: we know it, and yet He is the only One Whom we forget. Whoever thinks of visiting Jesus Christ? We frequent the church and fulfil our other religious duties, but do we always go through motives of love or gratitude, and with the expected intention of rendering homage to Our Lord? O Jesus, could a more cruel wound be inflicted on this loving Heart? O Sacred Heart of my Jesus, forgive me, and vouchsafe me the blessing of remaining forever Thy child.

Prayer.

Prostrate before Thee, O Sacred Heart of Jesus, I humbly pay Thee all my homage, and my profound adoration. I adore Thee, O Sacred Heart, destined from all eternity to be God's masterpiece and the prodigy of His power, wisdom and goodness. Amen.

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Third Day. The Heart of My Jesus the Heart of My Father.

Heart of Jesus, Thou art my Father! All I have is from Thee; at every step I meet with proofs of Thy infinite love. Even when I strayed away from Thee, Thou didst entreat me to return, assuring me of pardon and love. If I shed tears of sorrow, Thy love wiped them away, and Thy sweet voice gave courage to my sinking soul. O my sweet Jesus, be forever a Father to me! What an amount of gratitude do I not owe to my Lord, when after so much love and care, He reappears among us in the Sacrament of the Altar? In thus dwelling among us, He willed to unite Himself with us, in a way as intimate as it is incomprehensible; shutting Himself up under the appearance of bread, He enters into our hearts and makes His own flesh our nourishment. What a source of happiness for me, O my sweet Jesus! My eyes do not see Thy divine face, but my heart feels Thy comforting presence. When I receive Thee, O Father, into my breast, I feel my soul gladdened with the wine of heaven,which maketh virgins. And since love causes lovers to resemble each other, if we love let us form our life on the model of Jesus. Let us therefore, belong forever to the Beloved of our souls. Let us give Him our whole heart, our love, our affections, inclinations, and desires.

Prayer.

Allow me, O my Saviour, to offer Thee my heart, and grant that I seek only to please Thee in all things. From this moment
[241] I consecrate my heart to Thee; take possession of it, destroy its indifference, purify its affections, and give a new life to its inclinations. O sweet Jesus, take possession of me and consume me in the flames of Thy love. Amen.

Fourth Day. In Thy Heart I Shall Find Peace.

Thee, Thee alone, O Heart of my God, will I love! Heart most pure, Heart most holy, never tiring of my insults, ever forgiving and forgetting, and, if I do but love Thee sincerely, admitting

me as a chosen friend to Thy sweet company. Come unto Me, all you that labor, and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest. Seek not elsewhere for relief in sorrow: come to the Heart of One Who loves you. Never will you meet with a more generous giver, never will you meet a kinder friend, never will you meet one who will bear with you more patiently in your trials and temptations. Be comforted, then, my heart, in having this God of love, Who will not abandon you; Who has no sweeter choice than to hearken to your prayers. Well, dear Lord, behold how my poor soul is chained down, what billows of sorrow buffet it and all but wreck it. Come then, O Heart of my Jesus, come to me or I perish. In Thee alone do I find relief. Be Thou a thousand times blessed, O sweetest Heart, for all Thy mercy! O admirable Heart, forgive my guilty wretchedness. Henceforth Thee alone will I seek, Thee alone will I love. I shall serve Thee and Thee only till my dying gasp, in hope of praising and loving Thee forever more in heaven. [242]

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, be Thou praised and blessed forever as the source of supernatural life, the nourishment of the soul, and the sustenance of the spirit! From Thy fulness all good is poured out upon us. Fill my heart, I beseech Thee, with the sentiments that inspired Thy adorable Heart. Amen.

Fifth Day. The Sacred Heart of Jesus Teaching Charity.

Thy Heart, O my Jesus, is a mystery of charity; mine is a mystery of malice. I am ashamed and confounded when I consider attentively Thy Heart, O my Jesus! Thou, the Creator and Master of all things Thou art meek and lowly of heart, and I, a poor outcast, am full of pride and presumption. How often have I not

outraged Thy love and despised Thy law, and still Thou art silent and forgivest me! Thou art ever ready to welcome back Thy lost sheep, no matter how far they have strayed, nor how deeply they have wounded and insulted Thy loving Heart! And can it be that after that I would dare violate the charity I owe my neighbor? That I would, for a slight offence, allow proud and revengeful feelings to take possession of my heart? Oh, what a contrast to Thy gentleness and patience! I cannot forget the least insult received, whilst Thou, O my God, at the first sincere prayer for pardon wilt forget all the injuries that I have offered Thee. Could I then fail to choose Thy Heart as a model for my own? But how
[243] can this cold heart of mine ever resemble that kindest Heart of Thine? Thou alone possessest the remedy. Behold me then, O sweet Jesus, and mercifully regard a misery so profound. My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready: I will extol Thee, O God my King, and I will bless Thy name forever and ever.

Prayer.

Be Thou praised and blessed forever, O Sacred Heart of Jesus, Who in the fervor of Thy charity, hast devised a miraculous means of filling hearts with the holy flame of Thy divine love. Impress my heart so deeply with this divine seal, that nothing may ever enter into it, or proceed from it, that is not in conformity with Thy Sacred Heart. Amen.

Sixth Day. The Heart of Jesus My Comforter.

To whom can I more confidently tell my many needs and frailties than to Him Who knows them more clearly than I do myself? Thy voice, O Jesus, alone has the power to console and comfort the heart that loves Thee. They are blind indeed who go in search of consolation and happiness from creatures. Why did I not fly to Thee when I felt the first onset of this world? I turned hither and thither, seeking on all sides for aid and comfort, but I turned

not my glance to Thee, Who alone canst rescue the soul from sin. Heart of Jesus, oh, what manner of love is Thine! Forgive my past foolishness, and now that I return again to Thee, give me grace never to leave Thee. Let my soul, like Magdalen, rest at Thy sacred feet. Stay with me, O Jesus, stay with me forever. Teach me what I must needs do to live with Thee, and I shall [244] trample under foot all the joy and gain this world can offer me. I shall embrace with gladness for Thy sake all afflictions and all sorrows. But, O my God, shelter beneath the wings of Thy love every instant of my life, and encourage and strengthen my poor weak heart.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, I adore the admirable impulse which made Thee all Thy life a victim of love, and led Thee to consummate it by a death of perfect love. Grant that by Thy holy grace, my heart may become a living sacrifice, desiring only to be offered up and to offer up all things for Thy greater glory. Amen.

Seventh Day. The Heart of Jesus My Helper in Trials.

How few are there who love God alone for His own sake, and bless Him alike in sorrow and in joy! Why, O my God, do I fear to travel on the royal road of the cross, the only road that Thou hast travelled, and the shortest and surest way to heaven? Do I forget that Thy cross sanctified and redeemed the world, and formed the bliss of Thy elect in heaven? Why, then, do I shrink from carrying it with courage? Let us remember that our union with Jesus crucified will be the measure of our union with Him in glory. That in suffering for Jesus we show our true love for Him. Oh, a thousand times blessed are all who clasp the cross to their hearts and follow Jesus. Be not sad, my soul, when thou art in pain: the Heart of Jesus was crushed far more than thine. [245]

That sweet Heart of my Jesus was overwhelmed with sadness at the sight of our sins, pierced with a thousand deadly shafts, humiliated, abandoned by His Father: finally cruelly wounded on the cross, shedding His blood, even to the last drop. Compare such sorrow with thine, and yet thou darest complain! Jesus, forgive me, forgive such a vile wretch, and crown Thy mercy and love.

Prayer.

O almighty and eternal God, look upon the Heart of Thy well-beloved Son, and the praise and satisfaction He offers Thee in the name of poor sinners. Have mercy upon them, since they ask it through this same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God forever and ever. Amen.

Eighth Day. In the Heart of Jesus I Shall Find Rest.

O Heart of my Jesus, I will cast myself with sweetest confidence into Thy bosom, and I will rest on Him Who is the everlasting rest of the elect in heaven. I will draw nigh unto Him Who can sweeten all the bitterness of my weary pilgrimage here. I will rest, as John the beloved disciple did, on the Heart of Jesus, and tell Him a hundred times over that peace and comfort cannot be found elsewhere but in that sweet Heart. The Heart of Jesus is the city of refuge, in which we are safe from the pursuit of the enemy. It is the city of refuge, which defends us from the wrath of an angry Judge. Give thy heart to Him, for He has opened
[246] His Heart to thee. Give not thy heart to the world, but to Christ thy Lord. O Heart of Jesus! Thou givest to the heart that loves Thee perfect peace, great joy of spirit, and a foretaste of heaven's delight. My God, make me love Thee, not coldly but with a passionate love. All for Thee, O my God, all for Thee alone!

this be my watchword, and then only will I find true rest and peace. May heaven and earth praise and bless Thee forever.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, I unite my heart to the spirits of the blessed, that with them it may sing to Thy glory before the throne of God. The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and glory, and benediction. By Thy virtue guard my heart, and preserve it from the stains of its own sinful desires. Amen.

Ninth Day. The Heart of Jesus an Ocean of Love.

O Heart of Jesus! Thou hast, in the greatness of Thy love, come down to put on the garb of humanity, and to take into Thy breast man's heart to make him a source of Thy delights: to soothe the pain that sin inflicts on his wretched soul. O God of love, what then shall I do for Thee Who hast loved me with such an excess of love? What return can I make for such great graces? Ah, yes! I will address Thee with the sweet name of Father, a God so generous and so great, and how easy will it be for me to love Thee, O Jesus, my best Friend. In thus dwelling among us He willed to unite Himself with us in a way as intimate as [247] it is incomprehensible. And to bring about this, He instituted the Sacrament of the Altar, and shutting Himself up under the appearance of bread, He enters into our hearts and makes His own flesh our nourishment. This gift of the Eucharist, O my God, is of all Thy wonders the very crown. In this banquet of love, Thou hearest all our sighs and complaints, and Thou forgivest all our sad errors and foolishness. O happy Christians, what a source of happiness we possess! Let us then give Him all the love and gratitude He has a right to expect from us. Let our love be as unlimited as the love Our God has shown unto us. O Jesus, how sweet it would be to live for Thee and Thee only!

Prayer.

O my good Jesus, within Thy Heart, with sweetness overflowing, I place myself; hide me deep therein that I may never stray away. In life my joy, in death my guide, be Thou unto me my bliss in heaven. This I ask for every one, and I ask it by Thy tears, Thy sweat, Thy sacred blood. Amen.

Tenth Day. The Ingratitude of Men to the Heart of Jesus.

Wherever we cast our eyes we meet with sad proofs of the ingratitude of men to the Heart of Jesus. A large portion of the Christian world is plunged in heresy, denying Christ's presence in the mystery of the Altar, and not satisfied with refusing to recognize this great benefit they have lifted their sacrilegious [248] hand against the sacred Host. But, O divine Jesus, behold a still more grievous source of sorrow to Thy Heart! It is not from Jews or heretics that Thou receivest these insults, but from Thine own chosen people, the people who profess to believe in Thy real presence. Jesus is in our midst, we know it, and yet He is the only One Whom we forget, the only One Whom we treat with careless indifference. It is thus that Christians respond to the love of Our Lord; it is thus they repay all His benefits. O sweet Jesus, pardon my base ingratitude! Angels of heaven, you who know so much better than I the full extent of the love of Jesus' Heart towards me, praise Him for me, and bless Him. O my God, grant that I may live poor, unknown, and hidden in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, my divine Master, forgotten and despised by creatures, so that Thou mayest establish Thy reign of love upon my nothingness. I hope that Thou wilt mercifully hear my request, and grant it.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, my Lord! O noblest, greatest, and most generous of all hearts! I adore the divine impulses which led Thee, from the moment of Thy conception, to love me who was nothing, who would offend Thee in so many ways, and so often misuse Thy graces. O holy Friend of hearts, change my heart, and make it choose Thee for its only Friend. Amen.

Eleventh Day. The Gratitude Due to the Heart of Jesus.

If it were in my power, I would return Thee unceasing acts of thanksgiving, and they would still be too little to praise Thee [249] for Thy boundless love. I thank Thee and bless Thee for having poured out Thy most precious blood to wash away my sins. Thou didst reserve nothing for Thyself, Thou didst become dry and barren as a grape trodden in the wine-press. O ardent love, that is never extinguished! would that I burned with this fire Thou hast sent on the earth, and which Thou dost so fervently desire to see kindled in souls! O most sweet Jesus, open to me, I humbly beseech Thee, the door of Thy Heart, the door of love and mercy. There only will my troubled soul find sure refuge, my crimes pity and forgiveness. To Thee alone, O Heart of Jesus, I have recourse; assist Thou me. Thou hast sought for me so painfully and so long, O my God, when I strayed from Thy loving care. Behold me here now; I give myself to Thee. With the help of Thy grace I will be faithful to Thee, and will keep my soul in spotless purity and deepest humility. O Heart of my God, prevent me from ever abandoning Thee again! May my heart be always open and ready to admit Jesus, my well beloved. Let me cling to Thy feet, like Magdalen, and give Thee love for love.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, my Saviour, I adore Thee, shedding tears over my sins. Would that I had a fountain of tears in my

heart, that I might weep as I ought for the sorrows I have caused Thee! Give me grace to bring forth worthy fruits of penance. I adore Thee, O King of hearts, Who art the delight of heaven and earth! Amen.

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Twelfth Day. In the Heart of Jesus is Found the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

O my Jesus, I have never found truth save in Thee, and aside from Thy paths I have never met but vanity and wrong. If Thou dost not guide me in all things, I shall stray about forever, and will quickly perish through fatigue and want. Speak, then, O Lord, speak to Thy servant, and grant him to comprehend Thy wonderful love. Heart of my God, give me to see that Thou art the only way in which I must walk, if I wish to walk aright. What would ever become of me if Thou wert not my life, principally in the Adorable Sacrament of the Altar, where Thou dwellest actually, corporally, and perpetually, waiting to receive my homage and ever ready to give me all graces and blessings. Oh, how boundless is my need of Thee, my God; draw me unto Thee and dispel the darkness which surrounds me. Deign to accept, O Heart divine, this poor desire. My God, Thou art my Father; have pity on me according to the greatness of Thy mercy. I abandon myself to Thee: do not reject me; make me love Thee and nevermore separate Thyself from me.

Prayer.

O sacred Heart of Jesus, Thou art the heavenly light! Thou dispellest the darkness of the soul, and fillest it with sweetness. Thou art the Heart of hearts, and worthy of the greatest love. Thou art the source of that heavenly fire that enlightens and

burns. Inflame my heart with Thy divine ardor, that it may burn with love of Thee to all eternity. Amen.

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Thirteenth Day. To the Heart of Jesus Alone I Turn.

We are made for God alone, nor can we find peace elsewhere save in God alone. But who can kindle in us Thy love, if not Thou Thyself, O Lord? Oh, then, sweet Heart of Jesus, I will not cease to knock at the portal of Thy Heart, with tears and true contrition! Let others seek the perishable goods of this world. For my part I ask but Thee alone. Forgive my past unfaithfulness, and unite me so closely to Thee that I may never be able to forsake Thee. Yes, my Saviour, I will leave creatures and all earthly pleasures to run after Thee in the Sacrament of Thy love. But I am ashamed to appear before Thee, O my Jesus, I, who am so naked and so devoid of all virtues. What then am I to do? Am I to appear no more before Thee? Ah, no! this would not please Thee. Thou dwellest in the Sacrament, not only to reward Thy lovers, but also to provide for the poor out of Thy riches. I adore Thee, then, King of my heart! O Shepherd, loving Thy sheep beyond all bounds, to this throne of love I now approach, and having nothing else to give I offer Thee my poor heart. Mercy, O Heart of God, I implore Thee a thousand, thousand times, and pardon for all my sins; grant that this may be the day of my entire conversion, so that I may nevermore cease to love Thee.

Prayer.

Heart of my Jesus, Thou knowest what is wanting in me: Thou knowest that without Thee I can do nothing. Thou knowest my weakness: have pity on me, give me humility, purity of heart, [252] love, and conformity to Thy holy will, strength against my bad habits, remission of my sins, and grace nevermore to commit them. Amen.

Fourteenth Day. The Heart of Jesus Asks for Our Hearts.

My child, give Me thy heart. Oh, let me print on my memory such a phrase of love! My child! Oh, how sweet it sounds when uttered by the lips of a God! He wishes to dwell in our hearts, not for a certain time, but forever; not as a guest only, but as its Master and its Lord. Jesus says the heart He asks of me is mine: Give Me thy heart, instead of claiming it as His right, as a matter of strictest obligation, since all that I am and have comes from Him. Oh, why should it be so difficult for me to yield up my heart to that sweet Lord Who so endearingly says, My child, give Me thy heart? The name of friend being insufficient to tell all Thy love, O dear Jesus, Thou dost employ the loving name of child to sweetly compel me to grant Thy fond request. Why is it, my Jesus, that Thou wishest my love? Why dost Thou, by every means, try to gain, by permission, that love which is Thine by every right and title? Oh, how many years Thou hast followed me, and I ever fled away from Thee! How hardened my heart was! It is true I have often returned to Thee for a little while, and Thou didst welcome me, and gave me Thy very self as my food. But too soon I fled away from Thee again. O my dearest Jesus, what favors and benefits I have abused! Pardon me, sweet Jesus: behold me at last here at Thy feet, never to leave Thee more.

[253] Take my heart, sweet Lord, and clasp it tightly to Thy Sacred Heart even to the hour of my death; never let me stray from Thee again.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, with my whole soul I adore Thy impulses of goodness and mercy towards sinners, the effects of which I have most singularly experienced! Thy loving kindness is so desirous of mercy, that it threatens to show no mercy to him who is not merciful. And what mercy can I exercise towards my neighbor? What can be compared to those mercies I have

received, and every day receive from Thee? O Heart of Jesus, loving fountain of mercy, teach me to know and worthily imitate Thy mercy. Amen.

Fifteenth Day. The Heart of Jesus at the Hour of Death.

The life of man passes away as a shadow. Time passes by as a swift flowing river, bearing on its bosom, onward to the grave, old and young, rich and poor, without any distinction. Oh, how happy is he who has laid up treasures in heaven, who has gathered for himself a hoard of merit before God. Happy, a thousand times happy, is he who in that dread hour can turn to God with all confidence, and feel God present in his heart. O my sweet Jesus, I will cling to the hope that Thou wilt forget all my past iniquities, and remember only Thy love. O merciful Jesus, who would not hope from Thee a mercy without end? It is true Thou art a God of justice and purity, and Thou seest in me sins beyond compare. But yet can it be that the same God, Who every [254] instant of my life yearns to be near me, Who begs so pleadingly for my heart: can it be that He will condemn me to hell? Oh, no, tender Heart of my Jesus! it will never be so if I am truly sorry. My sweet Jesus will never abandon me, if with a truly repentant heart, I have recourse to Him. Why should I fear death when I look upon my God agonizing in the throes of death? His death was to help me in my dying hour, so that seeing the pain that I have inflicted I might bear mine without complaint. O sweet Heart of Jesus, I offer Thee my death. I am willing to suffer all the pains Thou wishest to send me. Let me suffer as much as Thou pleasest, only let me die clasped close to Thy loving Heart.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, I adore the admirable impulses which made Thee all Thy life a victim of love, and led Thee to consummate it by a death of perfect love. Grant that, by Thy holy grace, my heart may become a living sacrifice, desiring only to be offered up and to offer up all things for Thy greater glory. Amen.

Sixteenth Day. The Heart of Jesus for all Eternity.

Eternity is Thine, O my God, and Thou givest it to Thy elect, that they may love Thee without any doubt or fear. Life is short: the last hour may toll for me when I least expect it. O thou city of God, when shall I behold thy beauty? Oh, the grace and blessing
[255] of dying at peace with Thee, great God; of closing our eyes in a holy death, to open them amid the splendors of eternal joy! Meanwhile Thou givest me a pledge of this bliss in the admirable Sacrament of the Altar. Where can love like Thine be found? Thou givest me Thy body and blood, Thy soul and divinity, as a pledge of eternal happiness. If then, Thou art wholly mine, can I be otherwise than wholly Thine? A thousand thanks to Thee, O my sweet Jesus, Who art so loving to me. Thou didst call me to Thy service, but I have responded weakly. I often disappointed and displeased Thee, yet, O Heart of my God, Thou art all mercy, and Thou wilt not turn away Thy face from Thy poor child, who casts herself down before Thee in contrition and shame. I will clasp Thy feet and remain there until Thou wilt once more saythou art forgiven: go in peaceThou art just, O Lord; nevertheless be moved to pity me. I promise that I will always serve and love Thee, and avoid anything that could in any way separate me from Thee.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, I adore Thy death of complete charity that placed Thee in the grave. Let me enter into the wound of

Thy Heart, made by the lance, and may I die there for love of Thee. O heart of Mary, Mother of the Heart of Jesus, I have recourse to thee, that thou mayest speak to me in its stead. The Heart of Jesus and thine are but one, and what thou dost for me He will approve.

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Seventeenth Day. The Heart of Jesus Sorrowful unto Death.

No one can be a true follower of Thee, O sweet Jesus, who travels by any road save that of Thy cross. For what trouble, what trial or affliction can we meet with, which has not been suffered by Thee? What were the agonies and pains Thy Heart bore for me! I am poor, but am I poorer than Thou, Who hadst not whereon to lay Thy head? I may be reviled and persecuted, but what are my persecutions in comparison to Thine, O my Jesus? Thou wast abandoned in Thy hour of agony even by Thy apostles, and betrayed into the hands of Thy enemies by one whom Thou hadst made Thy friend and companion. Thy whole life, O my Jesus, was one unbroken series of crosses, borne sweetly and patiently through love of me. Take courage, then, my soul, from the example of our dear Lord, and bear with noble strength all the trials and afflictions that may be sent to thee. I will keep my eyes fixed on Thee, cursed and buffeted, insulted and spat upon, scourged and crowned with thorns, a heavy cross laid upon Thy poor, mangled shoulders, and Thy dreadful crucifixion all for love of me. Surely then, my God, the desire will grow in my heart to be ready and willing to make some return to Thee. Yet without Thy help, dear Jesus, I am utterly helpless to bear the little trials Thou so lovingly dost send me. Thou hast said clearly, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take

up his cross and follow Me.And again, Whosoever doth not carry his cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple.
[257] understand then, dear Jesus, that if I wish to claim the name of follower of Thee, I must imitate Thee in carrying the cross. I throw myself into Thy loving arms, my sweet Jesus; do with me as Thou choosest, only give me strength and courage to abide with Thee forever.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, I adore Thy impulses of charity, which made Thee wish to fill my heart and my soul with Thine, my spirit with Thy spirit, and to feed my body with Thy sacred flesh. I adore Thy divinity, concealed from my sight under the symbols of Thy mystery of love, and I beseech Thee, of Thy mercy, to use my soul, my mind, my heart, and my body as a temple consecrated to Thy honor. O Sacred Heart, I adore Thee as a victim sacrificed by the ascendancy and power of its own pure love. Amen.

Eighteenth Day. O Heart of Jesus, Thou Art All Mine and I Am All Thine.

Heart of my God, Thou art for me light, hope, heaven, eternity, all. I thank Thee, sweetest Jesus, for all Thy generosity towards Thy unworthy creature. I scarcely know myself when I feel Thee so near my heart in holy communion. Oh, let that love of Thine fill my heart; do not leave me till Thou grantest me the comfort I hope and claim of Thee. Lord, were I to ask of Thee temporal things, Thou mightest well refuse them, but I ask that which thou Thyself art pleased with Thy holy love. I cannot love Thee unless Thou grantest me power to do so. Heart of my Jesus,
[258] where shall I find Thee if not where Thou art really present in the Adorable Eucharist? Be Thou blessed a thousand times, my

Jesus, Who hast provided so sweet a source of comfort for us poor exiles in this vale of tears. I behold Magdalen approach Thee, her heart full of shame, and I behold her leaving Thee, her heart full of peace and love. I see Augustine filled with the malice of sin, and all at once he becomes one of Thy brightest saints. Is, then, Thy power shortened? No, no, Thou never failest in coming to those who in lowliness of heart cry to Thee for help. Let me, then, O my sweet Jesus, show Thee all my sorrow and reveal to Thee all my need. If I had loved Thee as warmly as I have loved myself and my sins, I would have been a saint long ago. Now once more I return to Thee; let my hope never be confounded.

Prayer.

Be Thou blessed and praised forever, O Sacred Heart of Jesus, hidden under the mystical veil of the consecrated Host! Grant that I may worthily praise Thy ardent love. Thou art all in all to the saints in heaven. Give me Thy grace, that to me also Thy Sacred Heart may become all things, and that I may love and adore Thee in spirit and in truth. Amen.

Nineteenth Day. God is Charity and He Who Lives in Charity Lives in God.

The Heart of Jesus, a great saint has said, is the abode of every virtue, the source of every blessing; always filled with love for us, it is ever ready to receive, to shelter, and to comfort us. [239] O you who are bending under the burden of sorrow or want, or who are forever struggling against temptation, fly to this sweet Heart; there you shall find that God is love, that He is ever attentive, and ever prepared to hear our slightest prayer. Oh, then, merciful Heart of my Jesus, be with me everywhere, even when I do not ask Thee, because then the peril is much greater. Stretch out Thy

hand to me and draw me unto Thee. Thou hast told Magdalen that much was forgiven her because she had loved much; but was it not Thyself, sweet Jesus, that gave her such love? Give me the same love, my Jesus, and I shall love Thee as much. Ah, my Jesus, my heart is no longer mine—I give it to Thee without reserve. Let it live for Thee and Thee only; keep it, O Lord, and guard it as Thine own. If the angels rejoice over the returning of the repentant prodigal, wilt Thou not find greater delight in that prodigal's sincere desire of thanking Thee and loving Thee more and more? I resolve that my heart will henceforward bear Thee company by visiting Thee in Thy tabernacles, and by fidelity to prayer.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, Who in a wonderful Sacrament hast left us a memorial of Thy Passion and a pledge of Thy love, grant us, I beseech Thee, grace so to venerate the mysteries of Thy body and blood, that we may ever feel within us the fruits of Thy redemption, Who livest and reignest with the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God forever and ever. Amen.

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Twentieth Day. The Sacred Heart is a Most Patient Rewarder.

Thou, O sweet Jesus, possessest all wealth and bounty; we know that Thy riches are inexhaustible, and that Thy desire to impart them in Thy generosity is without limit and immeasurable. Thy rewards are always far greater than our merits. For a very slight service, Thou givest so amply that the greatness and depth of Thy rewards will be equal to their duration. Jesus, light of my life, shine on my poor, wretched soul, and plant in it the precious fruits of hatred of sin, deep contrition, and a firm, lasting

resolution of amendment. Make this poor heart of mine gladly embrace and bear all the crosses that Thou mayest send me as aids to the attainment of my only end—that of abiding safe in Thy bright home forever, sweet Jesus, with Thee. However great the sufferings of this life may be, we can all have recourse to God, and obtain strength and courage in the thought that Thou, dear Lord, hast been the first of all great sufferers, and that Thou wilt never permit our troubles to exceed our limited strength. Oh, how sweetly and lovingly dost Thou receive the soul who, notwithstanding temptation and trials, hast always served Thee faithfully, and hast persevered to the end in Thy service! O my sweet Love, aid me by Thy grace to bear all afflictions with loving patience, so that I may one day receive my everlasting reward.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, which from all time wast inflamed with love for the glory of Thy heavenly Father, and for our [261] salvation, be Thou praised and blessed forever! Kindle in our hearts that divine fire Thou hast brought upon the earth, and grant that we may never, on our side, oppose it, but that by Thy holy grace it may ever burn there. Amen.

Twenty-first Day. The Heart of Jesus will Glorify us in Heaven.

My Jesus, when will that moment come, when having followed faithfully the path of crosses and tribulations, I shall hear Thee say, Well done, good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I shall place thee over many. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.Oh, the joy the soul will feel when, on reaching heaven, she shall find herself in the company of the angels and saints; of Mary, her good Mother, and shall

recognize all her friends and relatives! What joy will it not be to find one's self safe in port, free from all danger, safe forever in the arms of God! The happiness of heaven once insured is ours forever more; it cannot be lost. There will be no more sorrow nor trouble. Thou, O my sweet Jesus, wilt wipe away all tears from our eyes, and with Thy sweet voice, Thou wilt gladden our hearts. My soul, enter into thyself, and reflect that thou wert made for this glory if thou wilt only struggle to the end. How foolish then is he, who for a brief passing moment of pleasure, would fling away all claim to that glory, which as St. Paul says, Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what things God hath prepared for them that love
[262] Him. Take courage, my soul, and do not murmur against those trifling tribulations, which God in His mercy sends for our own true weal. Most loving Jesus, give me grace to welcome them, to embrace them eagerly, and to bear them according to Thy good pleasure, and with sincere resignation to Thy holy will. O my sweet Jesus, grant that I may one day reach that joyful kingdom, there to unite my voice to those of the ever blest ones who, with ceaseless transports of joy, cry out before Thy throne, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts; heaven and earth are full of the glory of Thy majesty.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, Victim of love, consecrated Altar where all sacrifices are completed, Thou art the glory of the Holy Trinity, the joy of the angels and all the blessed, and the unfailing hope of mortals. Be Thou the sole Master of the desires and affections of my heart. O Heart of Jesus, that lovest me so tenderly, make me love Thee fervently in this world, so that I may love Thee eternally in heaven. Amen.

Twenty-second Day. The Heart of Jesus Opened.

Jesus, even after His death, allowed His sacred side to be opened by a spear-thrust, in order that we might see with what good-will He had suffered, and how ardently He was inflamed with love of us, and with desire for our salvation. This opening of the side of Jesus, and the wonderful shedding of blood and water, should fill us with a sweet gladness, tempered with tears of sorrow for our evil. The only time in which we wounded not His Heart [263] was that time in which we had not yet been furnished by nature with that dangerous weapon, our natural liberty, the origin of all our offences against God. He could have deprived us of that free will which has been the instrument by which we have offended Him so often; but no, He comes unto us with all love, disclosing to us all the sweetness of His kind Heart. O my Saviour, Thou never ceasest to renew Thy loving assaults! Thou didst wait on me, yearning to enfold me in Thy divine embrace. O peerless mercy of my Jesus' Heart, how can I ever repay Thee? Heart of my Jesus, I shall endeavor to prove my love for Thee by atoning as far as is in my power for the many insults offered Thee. I shall adore and love Thee to the utmost of my power, I shall visit Thee, hidden as Thou art in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar, and delight in holding sweet converse with Thee. Thy side is open wide: for whom, if not for poor sinners? O my sweet Jesus, I can enter therein at will. In Thy Sacred Heart I can find true sorrow, and contrition for all my ingratitude and thanklessness. Oh, give my heart steadiness and fidelity, that so these resolutions may be effectual and practical.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, Who with incomparable love didst vouchsafe to be crowned with thorns, blindfolded, and struck with a reed, stripped of Thy garments, nailed to the cross, and lifted up thereon between two thieves: to have gall and vinegar given Thee to drink, to be wounded with a spear: I beseech Thee, O Sacred Heart, by all these pains, and by Thy cross and death, [264] to deliver me from all that displeases Thee and in Thy mercy

to lead me whither Thou didst conduct the penitent thief. Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, God, forever and ever. Amen.

Twenty-third Day. The Heart of Jesus the Source of All Happiness.

There is one thing for which every heart craves, after its own manner. We all long for happiness—that is the one great desire that lives in every soul. Hast Thou not, sweet Jesus, given us that longing? And when Thou hast given so much surely Thou wilt not refuse the accomplishment of this desire also. Tell us, dear Lord, what souls are happy, and we will learn from their example. Let us look at the faces of those who serve Thee, and we will see them growing brighter and brighter as they draw near Thee, and they will tell us. When we love Thee sincerely, then we shall be happy; when we make Thy will the centre around which we move, then we shall be happy; when Thy sweet Heart, hidden under the sacramental species, is more beautiful in our sight than all else, when we shape and mould our lives according to the example of that Sacred Heart, then peace and joy and happiness will be ours. Teach us, sweet Heart of Jesus, from Thy tabernacle, to serve Thee as Thou deservest, to love Thee above all things, to work for Thee bravely and generously, solely because of Thy love and not for Thy gifts. Oh, what happiness may I not promise myself if I but cling to Thy most generous
[265] Heart, and use my best endeavors to faithfully serve, adore, and love it. Inflame my heart, O Jesus, with the fire of love with which Thine is ever inflamed. With St. Ignatius I will say, Jesus, Lord, give to me Thy love and grace divine, and I shall be rich enough. Henceforth I accept the remainder of my life and all its events, whether bitter or sweet, from Thee; fixing my

eyes on the tabernacle alone, I will serve Thee because it is Thy will I should do so. Help me, my Jesus, unto the end; let me find no happiness but in Thee.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, how blessed is he whose only hope and confidence is in Thee, Who alone canst satisfy the yearnings of his heart! Thou art indeed the light of our true heavenly land, the delights of which surpass all that our human senses can experience. Too late have I known Thee, O ancient beauty! Too late have I loved Thee! But if I have begun so late, make me now love Thee perfectly. Amen.

Twenty-fourth Day. The Love of the Saints for the Heart of Jesus.

What a contrast there is between my conduct and that of Thy saints between my indifference and their love towards Thy sweet Heart in the Blessed Sacrament! St. John Francis Regis, when worn out with labor, would retire to the church and would there find repose and rest at the feet of Jesus. St. Francis Xavier used to pass the night and take his repose in the sacristy, so as to be near Jesus. Leopold, Duke of Austria, would dismount from his horse, and falling on his knees would adore his Saviour as [266] the procession of the Blessed Sacrament passed him by. It is true that I cannot, nor does Jesus expect me to imitate these bright examples; yet if I have the will and the desire I can do much. Could I not often think of Jesus, lonely in the Blessed Sacrament, waiting and watching for me, His poor creature, to visit Him? Could I not, like St. Alphonsus, visit the Blessed Sacrament every day? Could I not, when I bend my knee before Him, say Blessed and praised be the Adorable Sacrament of the Altar? Could I not refrain from useless talk in church? Could I not easily

assist at Benediction as often as it takes place in church? All this I could do, O loving Heart of Jesus, if I only cared for Thee, if the love of Thee had taken full possession of my soul. But I am weak, O Jesus, and ever prone to thwart Thy adorable intentions; still I am comforted by the thought that Thou wilt aid and sustain me. This urges me to pray, in fullest hope of obtaining all things conducive to my sanctification here, and my salvation hereafter. Perfect my desires, I implore Thee, and let the example of Thy saints stimulate me to love Thee in the Blessed Sacrament more and more.

Prayer.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, Thou art the source of the joy and holiness of the saints, and from Thy fulness we receive all that we can have or wish for in heaven and on earth. Through Thy charity, and through that of the heart of Thy holy Mother, I beseech Thee to bestow on me the sweet peace of charity, and to make my heart ever yielding and obedient to the impulses of Thy divine grace. Amen.

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Twenty-fifth Day. The Agony of the Heart of Jesus.

The Heart of Jesus is filled with terror at the sight of the torments that await Him. He seems to forget what He is and why He came into this world. He prostrates Himself on the ground, and beseeches His Father to remove from Him, if possible, the chalice of suffering which He sees in store for Him. His agony is so intense that He is covered with a sweat of blood, which oozes out in great drops and trickles down to the ground. O my soul, hast thou ever beheld a sight like this? Only Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has loved man, has suffered like this. O my Jesus, my sweet Jesus, Thou hast willingly suffered the divine

vengeance which should have fallen on me. What more couldst Thou have done for me? Surely if our hearts are human, if there is one fibre of pity or gratitude in our souls, the memory of Thy agony would never be obliterated. By Thy presence on the altar, Thou has made me acknowledge the enormity of my sins. Thou hast compelled me to own that my sins have, as far as they could, reacted every scene in Thy Passion. And yet do I linger under the shadow of Thy tabernacle? Do I weep over the wounds I have made in Thy body? Oh, no, dear Jesus! I have forgotten Thee, and like the Jews, with Thy blood on my hands, I have eaten and made merry. O tender Heart of Jesus, let it be so no more. Let my heart be filled with sorrow on account of my iniquities. Let my repentance be like Magdalen's; then I shall be happy and I shall be saved, because Thou wilt never despise a truly contrite heart. O loving Jesus, make my heart so just, so upright, and so conformable to Thy Heart, that between Thee and me there may be nothing to offend Thee. [230]

Prayer.

I adore Thee, Sacred Heart of Jesus, suffering in the Garden of Olives. It is I who deserve all the pains Thou endurest, for I am the cause of them. O Sacred Heart of Jesus, through Thy sorrow my soul finds consolation, and by Thy agony my death is made sweet. Give me a contrite and humble heart, that can participate in Thy pains and sorrows. Teach me how to offer up the prayer of suffering and patience. Amen.

Twenty-sixth Day. The Heart of Jesus in the Tabernacle.

The home of Jesus is the tabernacle. Our dear Lord and Saviour dwells among the poor as well as among the rich. He lives in the noisy, crowded city, as well as in the lonely, quiet country;

in magnificent cathedrals, as well as in the poorest churches and the most dilapidated chapels. There He remains, that all may be able to come to His dwelling-place, to lay before Him all their wants, to converse with Him and to obtain from Him all the graces they need, whether for soul or body. Can we imagine anything more loving or generous? The soul that truly loves Jesus need not go far to find Him. He can be found in every church in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept, and there the King of kings, Our Lord and Saviour, is content to remain, shut up in a tabernacle of wood, with no one to keep Him company. Well
[269] has He been called a Prisoner of love. O sweet Heart of Jesus, because Thou art always with us, we forget Thee; because we are accustomed to Thy continual presence we heed it no more. Because Thou never leavest us, we grow tired of Thee and value Thee not. O loving Heart of Jesus, what ingratitude! Yet surely it ought not to be difficult to visit Thee and to converse with Thee. How many afflictions, how many troubles of mind and body, are there to tell Thee; how many graces and blessings to supplicate; how many sins and transgressions are there to weep for; how many acts of love and thanksgiving to be poured forth for all Thy numberless mercies; how many petitions ought to ascend for the conversion of those who neither know nor love Thee! O compassionate Jesus, grant that we may ever remember Thee in Thy loving Sacrament, and let Thy dear words ever sound in our ears: Come to Me, all you that labor and are heavily burdened, and I will refresh you.

Prayer.

I adore Thee, O Sacred Heart of Jesus, the joy, the satisfaction, and the supreme Ruler of all hearts. With the same loving kindness that led Thee to take the hand of St. Thomas, and carry it Thyself into Thy side, make my heart seek no joy but in Thee, O Sacred Heart. May my heart be ever subject to Thy gentle sway, for out of Thee it will find but labor and tribulation, and all the consequences of its unhappy bondage. Amen.

Twenty-seventh Day. The Heart of Jesus is My Hope.

In the Heart of Jesus we live, and move, and have our being. O Jesus, Thy care of me is so wise and gentle, that nothing can [230] harm me so long as I leave myself in Thy hands. I know the trials which Thou sendest me are irksome, that my passions goad me on to rise up against Thee, and the demon also whispers in my ear, Thou hast Jesus no longer, He has abandoned thee for aye. But no, never will I lose my hope in Thee; I shall not be affrighted; remembering the loving lessons Thy Heart has taught me, I will fear no evils. Too powerful in the strength, my God, that comes to me from the assurance that Thou, sweet Love, rulest my life and art a sharer in all my sorrow. No, I will not fear, for Thou art with me. With Jesus, my God, by my side, my hope acquires new strength. I have with me a Father Who loves me and Who is ever intent on blessing me. My eyes behold Thee not, yet through the wondrous agency of Thy grace, Thou art near to me at every place and at every moment. Be Thou then, sweet Jesus, my comforter, my delight, my crown. My senses will murmur, it is true, my passions will arise in rebellion, but fortified by Thy grace and strength, I will fight against sin with a fortitude invincible. Aid me then, O divine Heart, for Thou art my only hope. Let me rest and repose on Thy bosom and forget my wanderings. Let me learn that there and there only, I am in my true home, where alone I can be happy.

Prayer.

O most compassionate Jesus! Thou alone art our salvation, our life and our resurrection. We implore Thee, therefore, do not forsake us in our needs and afflictions, but by the agony of Thy most Sacred Heart and by the sorrows of Thy immaculate Mother, succor Thy servants whom Thou hast redeemed with [231] Thy most precious blood. Amen.

Twenty-eighth Day. All Graces Come from the Heart of Jesus.

All virtues are found in the Heart of Jesus. His Heart is the furnace of divine love, always burning with the fire of the Holy Spirit, purifying, kindling, and transforming into Himself all who yield themselves to Him, or who wish to be His. My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready. I will extol Thee, O God, my King, and I will bless Thy name forever. Since all good flows from Thy most sweet Heart, O Jesus, I should not attribute to myself anything of the good I may have done, nor regard with self-satisfaction the gifts of God, but ascribe all to Him, and return all to their original source, which is the Heart of Jesus. Place all your sins in the Heart of Jesus. Through that Heart you should ask for grace and pardon, and praise and bless Him for all His mercies. I acknowledge, O my God, Thy supreme dominion over me, and all created things. I bow down before Thy infinite sanctity, perfection and excellence, which entitle Thee to the fullest love, service, and praise of all Thy creatures. In Thy presence I protest my detestation of my countless sins, with which I have outraged Thy love, and deeply repentant, I implore of Thee a full pardon. Open wide Thy Heart of love, and let stream on my heart all the full sympathy of Thine. I know Thou canst not trust me, as I am ever prone to break my word and betray Thee. Hence I need all Thy care, all Thy grace to persevere in the good resolutions Thou formest in my soul. O
[272] sweet Virgin Mother of my Jesus, help me to praise and bless the Lord for all the benefits He has bestowed on me, and for all those He will grant for all eternity.

Prayer.

My sweet Jesus, I give Thee my soul, my body, and my will, resigning myself in all and forever to Thy most holy grace. Do with me what Thou pleasest. Make me ever love Thee in this life and in the next; do this, and then dispose of me and of everything

I have as Thou wilt. Tell me what Thou askest of me; for with Thy grace I will execute it, be it what it may. Amen.

Twenty-ninth Day. The Heart of Jesus the Source of Sanctity.

This adorable Heart offers to us at once the motive, the example, and the grace of holiness. What could be more of an incentive to keep ourselves from sin, than the remembrance of Our Lord's Sacred Heart, which was saddened by sin to such an excess as to cause His sacred body to sweat drops of blood? What more calculated to inspire us with zeal for our sanctification than the study of this Heart, which calls us to it with so much love, and by so many sacrifices? St. Bernardin of Sienna speaks of this divine Heart as a furnace of the most ardent love, capable of setting the whole world on fire. We find in the Heart of Jesus the grace of holiness, for as Blessed Margaret Mary says, "Nothing is better calculated to raise the soul in a very short time to the loftiest degree of holiness than devotion to this dear Heart." She also says that those who labor for the salvation of souls will find in this devotion the gift of touching the hardest heart. It is because [234] this divine Heart is the throne whereon mercy is seated, that invocations made to it are never in vain. It is the strong tower against which all temptations are powerless. It is the source of all benedictions. Oh, we should love with all our strength the amiable Heart of Jesus, no matter what it may cost us! We should sanctify ourselves at any cost, and to do this we should love and burn incessantly in the furnace of the pure love of God, which will purify and sanctify us at one and the same time. Let us, then, abandon ourselves into the hands of God, and we shall soon see that He will employ every means to make us perfect. He who loves perfectly makes no resistance. My Jesus, take unto

Thee my heart; I give myself wholly to Thee. May I ever be scrupulously faithful and unflinchingly constant in loving Thee, this day and every day of my whole life.

Prayer.

O beloved One of my soul, would that I had always loved Thee! Alas, there was a time when I not only did not love Thee, but despised Thy grace and Thy love. I am consoled by the sorrow which I feel for it, and I hope for pardon through Thy promise to forgive him that repents of his sins. To Thee, O my Saviour, do I turn all my affections; help me, through the merits of Thy Passion, to love Thee with my whole strength. Amen.

Thirtieth Day. The Heart of Jesus in Holy Communion.

Oh, how shall I dare to approach Thy heavenly banquet, that mystery which is the greatest and most stupendous work of even
[274] Thy almighty love? that banquet of which the noblest and purest spirits are in no sense truly worthy? Yet I feel myself comforted, when I read in Thy Gospel that Thou sendest forth Thy servants in quest of the poor, the blind, the lame, and the wretched, to invite them to Thy bounteous feast divine. O goodness of God! O Heart of Jesus, truly loving art Thou, and truly worthy of all love. Not only willingly, but eagerly do I accept Thy sweet and merciful invitation. What a consolation to be allowed to enjoy the loving embraces of the divine Spouse of my soul! As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after Thee, O God. Oh, come then, Heart of my Jesus, come to Thy poor servant. I desire to tell Thee all my needs, to protest to Thee my love, to clasp Thee to me. Come, and as Thou enterest my heart, let me hear Thy sweet, consoling words, Peace be to thee. Oh, fortify me with Thy light and strength, that I may no

more lose Thee or drive Thee from me. But as long as I live, I am in danger my resolution may become weak and I may betray Thee as I have done before. O Love unbounded, do Thou help me; from Thee and from Thy Heart, I hope all good. Let not that hope grow weak at any time, nor waver for a single instant. This I implore of Thee through the same love which has made Thee remain with us day and night, and which has induced Thee to give Thyself for our food in the Blessed Sacrament.

Prayer.

Remember, O most loving Jesus, that it is unheard of that any one ever had recourse to Thy Sacred Heart, implored its help without obtaining relief. Confiding in Thy infinite goodness [275] and mercy we cast ourselves before Thee, and do most humbly supplicate Thee to hear our prayers, and to take upon Thyself the care of our salvation. Show, divine Jesus, that Thou hast the Heart of the best of Fathers. Shelter us therein, and let it not be said that we have perished, where no one ever found but mercy, grace and salvation. Amen.

Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

(For Private Devotion Only).

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
God the Father of heaven, Have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, Have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost, Have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity one God, Have mercy on us.

Heart of Jesus, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, hypostatically united with the Word of God, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, sanctuary of the divinity, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, temple of the Holy Trinity, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, abyss of wisdom, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, ocean of goodness, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, throne of mercy, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, treasure inexhaustible, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, whose plenitude is diffused in us, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, our peace and reconciliation, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, model of all virtues, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, infinitely amiable and most worthy of being loved, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, fountain of living water springing up to eternal life, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, love of the celestial Father, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, atonement for our sins, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, full of bitterness for our sake, Have mercy on us.
[276] Heart of Jesus, sad unto death in the Garden, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, wrung with ignominy, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, wounded from love, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, pierced with a lance, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, drained of Thy blood on the cross, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, broken with grief on account of our sins, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, still outraged by ungrateful men in the Most Holy Sacrament of love, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, refuge of sinners, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, strength of the weak, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, comfort of the afflicted, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, perseverance of the just, Have mercy on us.

Heart of Jesus, salvation of those who hope in Thee, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, hope of those who die in Thee, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, sweet support of Thy adorers, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, delight of all the saints, Have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, help in our afflictions, Have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Spare us, O Jesus!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Hear us, O Jesus!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Have mercy on us, O Jesus!
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.

V. Jesus, meek and humble of Heart.
R. Make my heart like unto Thine.
Let Us Pray.

O Lord, almighty Father, eternal God, cast Thine eyes upon Thy beloved Son; accept, we beseech Thee, the satisfaction He offers Thee; be appeased by His divine homage, and mercifully protect us, through the same Christ, Thy Son, Who, being God, livest and reignest with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Mass in Union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Introibo.

O divine Jesus, Thou art the Victim laden with all the iniquities of the world: Thou didst shed bitter tears for them; Thou didst [237]

expiate them by the most dreadful torments, and by the most cruel of deaths. I come to mingle my tears with Thine; I confess to Thee, in the presence of Mary, ever Virgin, and of all the saints, that I have sinned exceedingly; that it is my ingratitude that pierced Thy Heart, and put Thee to a cruel death. O God, my Saviour, through Thy tears, through Thy agony in the Garden of Olives, through Thy precious blood and the wound in Thy Sacred Heart, I beseech Thee to pardon me, and to grant me the remission of all my sins. Amen.

Introit.

Let us adore the Heart of Jesus, which has loved us so much; let us prostrate ourselves before Him, and bewail the sins of which we have been guilty. Grant us, O Lord, a contrite and humble heart; let the homage of our adoration be as acceptable to Thee as if we offered Thee thousands of victims. Amen.

Kyrie.

The days of propitiation have arisen upon me; I may call Thee by Thy name, O God of majesty; I may call Thee my Saviour and my Father. Thou art present on our altars, that Thou mayest heap Thy favors upon us. I will draw nigh, therefore, with confidence unto the throne of mercy, and I will say unto Thee: Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. Amen.

Gloria.

Glory be to God, Whose justice is satisfied by the perpetual sacrifice of so noble a Victim. Peace and happiness on earth to
[278] men of good-will, who behold a God annihilating Himself daily to save them, and to feed them with His own substance. I praise Thee, I bless Thee, I adore Thee, O Lord, and I stand amazed at the sight of the wonders of Thy love. Shall I suffer them to be of no avail to me through the evil dispositions of my heart? Shall I reject that peace which Thou offerest me? Shall I not labor to acquire that good-will by which it comes? O my God, allay the strife which is so often excited in my heart, making the flesh rebel against the spirit. Amen.

Collect.

O Divine Jesus, inexhaustible fountain of all good things, open unto us, we beseech Thee, the interior of Thy Heart: that, having entered by pious meditation into this august sanctuary of divine love, we may fix forever there our hearts, as the place wherein is found the treasure, rest and happiness of holy souls; Who livest and reignest forever and ever. Amen.

Epistle.

Wisdom hath built herself a house, she hath hewed her out seven pillars. She hath slain her victims, mingled her wine, and set forth her table. She hath sent her maids to invite to the tower, and to the walls of the city: Whosoever is a little one, let him come to me. And to the unwise she said: Come, eat my bread, and drink the wine which I have mingled for you. Forsake childishness, and live, and walk by the ways of prudence (Prov. ix. 1-6).

Gospel.

Praise, honor, and glory be to Thee, O Jesus, Saviour of the world! Who, thirsting for the salvation of souls, didst endure for [279] them so much labor and fatigue; Who for their sakes didst pass entire nights in prayer, and didst weary Thyself going from city to city, from village to village. Grant, I implore Thee, that Thy love may also make me prompt and apt in every good work, and that I may never grow tepid in Thy service. Help me to know and practise the holy counsels contained in Thy Gospel, and grant above all that I may penetrate the divine wisdom contained in Thy words: If any man will come after Me, let him take up his cross and follow Me.

Credo.

I believe, O my God, the truths which Thou hast revealed to Thy Church. I desire to live and die in this faith. Grant, O Lord, that my life may be conformable to my faith; that my faith may be animated by good works; that I may never be ashamed to declare myself a Catholic, and may constantly maintain the

interests of Thy holy religion. O holy Roman Catholic Church, the persecutions which thou hast endured, far from weakening my faith, do but strengthen it the more, since thy divine Spouse foretold them. Sweet Heart of Jesus, draw close the bonds that bind me to Thy holy Church; put into my heart a spirit of perfect obedience to my lawful pastors. In its bosom I became Thy child, and in its bosom I wish to live and die. Amen.

Offertory.

O Jesus, we draw near with confidence to Thy sweet Heart: cast upon us, we beseech Thee, a look of pity, and make our
[280] hearts a perpetual offering consecrated to Thy glory. O Heart of infinite goodness, I offer Thee my heart; vouchsafe to change it, to bless and sanctify it. O my soul, how Jesus Christ hath loved us! At what a price He hath redeemed us! Not with gold, nor with riches, but by the voluntary shedding of His blood. He hath sacrificed Himself for us: let us then live only for Him; let us sacrifice ourselves together with Him. But, O my God, my heart is not full enough of love and fervor to be an offering worthy of Thee. What then shall I give Thee? I will give Thee Thy Son. That Son, the most worthy object of Thy complacency, will supply my inability. O Lord, look not on me, but on this divine offering. Amen.

Preface.

Lift up, O Lord, do Thou Thyself lift up my heart to Thee. Take from it all unholy thoughts, all earthly affections. Lift it wholly up to heaven, where Thy Heart is worthily adored, and to the altar, where it is about to manifest itself to me. Through Thy most kind Heart, I beseech Thee to draw my heart wholly into Thine. Bury it in Thine, so that it may be so absorbed into and united to Thy Heart, that I may no longer have any heart but Thine. Suffer me, then, to join my feeble voice with the voices of all the heavenly spirits, and in union with them to say, in transports of joy and admiration: Holy, holy, holy is the Heart of Jesus! the worthy object of the divine complacency, and of

the homage of heaven and earth! The whole earth is full of Thy glory; let my heart be full also of its love. Amen. [281]

Canon.

O God infinitely holy, if my sins provoke Thee, and make me hateful in Thy sight, look upon the Lamb without spot, Who is going to immolate Himself to take away the sins of the world, and beholding His merits, remember not my ingratitude. Remember only that I have been graciously admitted into the Heart of Thy divine Son. This Heart infinitely merciful prayed for me on Calvary, and will soon renew the sacrifice of itself for me. O my sweet Jesus, how many times have I sinned against Thee? How many times have I despised the interior graces Thou hast bestowed upon me? Oh, how earnestly I now desire a perfect contrition, equal to the greatness of the love that I have offended. But, since it is impossible for my sorrow to equal Thy goodness towards me, I offer the loving contrition of the Heart of my Lord Jesus Christ to supply my insufficiency. Amen.

Consecration.

O my soul, behold thy God, thy Saviour, thy Judge! My God, I adore Thee! My Saviour, I love Thee! My sovereign Judge, I am sorry for ever having offended Thee! O Heart of my Jesus, Whom I believe to be here really present, suffer me not to be separated from Thee during life. Grant that my heart may ever find repose in Thine, that I may die in Thy love, and thus go to contemplate and praise Thee for all eternity. Amen. [282]

After The Consecration.

The heavens are opened: the Holy of holies has descended on the earth: this altar is now the throne where dwells the majesty of the Most High; the angels surround Him, and with the most lively homage of reverence and love, make reparation to Him for the contempt, the neglect, and the indifference of men. O divine Lord, I lay all my petitions at Thy feet; vouchsafe to present them to Thy Father. I pray for the conversion of sinners, the perseverance of the just, and the triumph of our holy religion. O

Jesus, Who didst die for all men, bring back to the fold of Thy Church those who are separated from it. Enlighten all infidels and heretics, bless the efforts of those who labor to convert them. Have pity on the souls of the faithful departed; remit to them their debts, and grant them a place of refreshment, light, and peace. I beseech Thee particularly to have compassion on (name them).

Pater Noster.

O my Father, if it be permitted that a guilty child call by so tender a name a God Whom he hath so often offended, grant that I may ever labor for the glory of Thy holy name, that in all things I may do Thy will, and sigh unceasingly for Thy heavenly kingdom. Let the forgiveness which Thou didst grant Thy murderers be my example in forgiving those who have injured me: give me superiors, both spiritual and temporal, that love Thee, and friends that serve Thee faithfully; and if ever I expose myself to sin, do [283] Thou deliver me from the danger, that I may never outrage Thy loving Heart. Amen.

Agnus Dei.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world! Pure and spotless Victim, Who alone canst satisfy the justice of an offended God, vouchsafe to make me a partaker of the merits of Thy sacrifice! What lessons of humility, meekness, charity and patience dost Thou give me! Impress these virtues upon my heart, that it may be to Thee a pleasant habitation, wherein Thou mayest repose, as in an abode of peace. Amen.

Communion.

O Christ, mighty Lord, most sweet Jesus, my strength and my refuge, defender of my soul, God of my salvation! O Thou in Whom I believe and hope, Thou Whom I love, behold I draw near to Thy throne of grace, I knock at the door of Thy mercy, and beseech Thee to open it for me. Thou Who didst promise entrance into paradise to the penitent thief, bring me, through the most holy wound of Thy side, to the centre of Thy breast, and let

me drink at the fountain of wisdom that flows from Thy Heart. O God of infinite mercy, receive me, enclose me, hide me in the bosom of Thy mercy. Amen.

After Communion.

I have found Him Whom my soul loveth: I possess Him, and will nevermore leave Him. What have I to desire in heaven, and what can I henceforth love upon earth, but Thee, O my God, the God of my heart! O most loving Jesus, were it possible, [284] would fain praise Thee as perfectly, love Thee as ardently, serve Thee as faithfully, please Thee as completely, and contribute to Thy glory as efficiently as do all angels and men collectively and as each one does in particular. O most merciful Lord, God of holiness, vouchsafe to cleanse my heart from all self-love and all sinful affections. Make it a pleasing abode for Thee. Let it become like unto Thy Heart, that Thou mayest delight to dwell in it forever. Amen.

Benediction.

O loving Heart of Jesus, I will not depart till Thou hast blessed me. Bless me in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost! and let Thy blessing descend upon all those for whom I ought to pray. Amen.

Last Gospel.

O eternal Word, Who wast made man that Thou mightest make men the children of God, I thank Thee for this unspeakable grace. How great is the blessing I enjoy, not only of hearing the name, but of being indeed the child of God! Grant, O my sweet Jesus, that I may preserve this blessed title, by faithfully imitating Thy Sacred Heart, and showing myself always filled with love for Thy holy law. If I remain faithful Thou assurest me that I shall be co-heir with Thee, and shall enjoy the happiness which Thou hast purchased for us with Thy precious blood: and this I hope to obtain through Thy infinite mercy. Amen. [285]

After Mass.

Soul of Christ, sanctify me:
Body of Christ, save me:
Blood of Christ, inebriate me:
Water from the side of Christ, wash me:
Passion of Christ, strengthen me:
O good Jesus, hear me:
Within Thy wounds hide me:
Permit me not to be separated from Thee.
From the malignant enemy defend me:
In the hour of my death call me,
And bid me come to Thee;
That, with Thy saints, I may praise Thee
Forever and ever. Amen.

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July. The Precious Blood.

Our Lord shed His blood for our ransom, to buy us from the slavery of the devil and of sin. Not one drop of blood did He reserve for Himself; He shed it all most generously in our behalf. He was the Lamb of God without blemish, Who, according to God's designs for the redemption of mankind, was to be sacrificed. His blood was to be shed on the cross; from five great wounds it was to flow upon the earth, like the sacrifices of the Old Testament. These sufferings were precious in the sight of God, the Father, and gained for us the remission of our sins, the ransom from the slavery of Satan. Every drop of this blood was all powerful, because it represented the sacrifice of a God-man.

How precious are those drops of blood in the chalice on the altar at Mass, when the sacred blood of Christ is offered daily to God for our salvation! How we desire to drink that blood, that we may have life in us, for the Lord has said, Unless you drink of My blood, you shall not have life in you. How this blood flowed in the Garden of Gethsemani, at the scourging, at the crowning with thorns, and at the crucifixion! Precious blood of my Jesus, I adore thee; pour thyself over my soul that I may be washed in the blood of the Lamb.

Considerations and Prayers for Every Day.

First Day.

Unhappy mankind was bound in the slavery and tyranny of Satan, in the shadow of death, without being able to free itself. Jesus,
[287] the Victor over death and hell, came into the world to destroy the kingdom of the prince of darkness, and to set the human race free, so that it might look up once more to God the Father. This great work, so beneficial to our souls, was effected by the shedding of the blood of Christ at the circumcision, and the completion of the sacrifice when He shed the last drop of His blood on the cross. In this sacred blood we have received the power to co-operate with the graces of God, which are to free us; for certainly we must do something on our part to keep this newly-acquired privilege of children of God. Let us, then, feel in our hearts the necessity of a devotion to the precious blood of Our Lord, the cause of our salvation; and continue during this month of July to adore it, and to conceive an unbounded confidence in the almighty power of its intercession.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood of Jesus in satisfaction for my sins, and for the wants of holy Church. Blessed be the precious blood of Jesus, which renders bearable the thorns of earth, redeems our souls, purifies them from their iniquities, and prepares for them an eternal crown. Amen.

Second Day.

When Constantine had become a Christian, he found himself confronted by many enemies of his kingdom, and of our holy religion. He was told to have confidence in the cross, because in this sign Thou shalt conquer.We, too, will conquer by this sacred symbol of our salvation, stained with the blood of Our
[288] Lord; we, too, have the enemies of our liberty and religion before us; we have to fight against the world, that is full of deceits and vanities; we have to make war against the flesh, that

rises frequently against the spirit; we have to fight against the prince of darkness, that goes about like a roaring lion seeking to tear us to pieces. Yes, my dear Jesus, I see that my enemies have great power and activity; give me also the power and activity to oppose my will and intellect against them, so that I may conquer. Thou didst come upon the earth for the purpose of giving me this victory; let me not be conquered and led back into slavery.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Third Day.

We come to understand the value of our soul from the price which was paid for its ransom. When you wish to purchase a precious gem, you judge of its value from its cost. We must judge of the value of our souls, then, by the same standard. It cost the precious blood of Jesus Christ to purchase our souls. Christ would have given it for the possession of only one soul; for even one soul is the likeness of God. The price that is asked for its possession is nothing less than the life and blood of a God-man. Think, then, seriously, that all the goods of the world, its riches, honors, and comforts, are not precious enough to buy your soul; that if you gain these things by the loss of your soul you have gained nothing; that you have been deceived and cheated, and that you got the worst of the bargain. For what doth it profit [289] a man, to gain the whole world and to lose his own soul? You are sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb of God. Even one drop of this blood would be sufficient to redeem mankind, it is so precious in the sight of God the Father, to Whom it is offered.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Fourth Day.

O my soul, where will the thorns, the nails, the cross, the death and blood of your own martyrdom be, when you are asked how you co-operated with the saving power of the blood of Christ? when you have to show what you have done on your part? Jesus suffered so much for us, and we do nothing for His love. Are you going to heaven without prayer, without mortification of the flesh and your passions, without the practise of virtue? The salvation of Christ, instead of being a help to you, will become the source of your damnation. The Israelites, crossing the dried bed of the Red Sea in their flight from the Egyptians, found their liberation, while the Egyptians met with their destruction. So also we shall be happily found and brought to heaven if we apply to our souls the blood of Christ, while we will find ourselves condemned to eternal perdition if we abuse that adorable gift. O my Jesus, let me appreciate the great gift of Thy precious blood.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

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Fifth Day.

Since Almighty God has done so much for us through the sufferings of His divine Son, what are our obligations for all that Christ endured? We should think very much during this month on the great mercy of God. We have already meditated on the Passion of Christ during Lent, and on other occasions have thought of the shedding of the blood of Christ; but this month, especially, we will try to make a particular devotion of our dear Lord's precious blood, and engrave holy sentiments regarding it deeply on our souls. In everything that concerns the spiritual

life we feel the power of the blood of Christ; and when we are thoroughly imbued with the importance of the precious value of the sacred blood, and how great were the sufferings of Our Lord, we will begin to have an idea of how stupendous an undertaking our redemption was. Our Lord will visit with special blessings those who love and honor His sacred blood. You will feel a new life from this sacred blood coursing through your veins, and circulating in your heart and brain. It will give a life of spiritual energy.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Sixth Day.

We ought to imitate the virtues of the Heart of Jesus, from which His sacred blood flowed; and this imitation will produce in us a perfect purity. For what purpose has the sacred blood been offered but to cleanse us from sin and to bring us back to the love [250] of God? It preserves purity in our soul, because it gives us the grace of loving God, and gives us strength to say, I feel within me the energy of the divine blood; and I am ready to make every sacrifice with joy, in return for the one perfect and all-sufficient sacrifice which has been made for me. The nearer we are to the Sacred Heart, and to the influences of the sacred blood of Christ, the fountain of all grace, the more holy we become. Let us then love the virtues which shine so conspicuously in the Heart of Jesus. Let us be generous with God and gentle and indulgent with others, as a reflection of the charity of the Heart of Jesus.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Seventh Day.

The precious blood obtains the forgiveness of our sins. Then with what great eagerness should we seek for this pardon! In what an unhappy state is our soul when stained by sin! By sin death came into the world and into our heart. We were robbed of the grace of God, lost His friendship, and came under the dominion of Satan, which is worse than death, and of which it is true that it were better we had not been born. In all this wreck and misfortune there is but one object to which we can turn, and that is the sacred blood of Christ as it flows from His wounds, and which He offers to the Almighty to condone for our faults, and to restore us to the grace of God. We do not get immunity from
[292] corporal death, which they say mankind would have enjoyed had it not fallen by the sin of our first parents. We are still afflicted by frailty, ignorance, and the inordinate demands of passion; but we have received the greatest gift, which cannot be surpassed by any other: the gift of the sacred blood of Christ.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Eighth Day.

The only thing that is asked of us is a horror of sin. We renounced Satan, sin, and hell at our baptism, but we are only too apt to forget the promises made then. During this month we will recall to ourselves our duty, and impress it deeply upon our souls; we will avoid sin and look upon it with horror, for it is a most loathsome object, hateful to God, and consequently it ought to be hateful to us. Sin was punished in the angels, in Adam, and even in ourselves; we must convince ourselves of this truth. St. Paul says, Jesus has redeemed us with His blood, and for the destruction of sin has given inexhaustible treasures of grace. O

my dear Jesus, when I remember my sins, I would wish to have the courage to ask Thee that I might die at Thy feet in punishment for them; but at least make me really understand that I belong to God, to the angels, that I have renounced Satan, his demons and darkness, and that I must remain faithful to the part I have chosen.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

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Ninth Day.

If we trust in the efficacy of the precious blood, we are sure to remain in the state of redemption, even though severe temptations assail us. The devil will surely attack us; but let us not be dismayed, because we are fortified with supernatural strength by the merits of the blood of Jesus. These temptations will even be a source of glory to us, for St. James says, Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he hath been proved, he shall receive the crown of life. Jas. i. 12. The devil trembles before a soul that is protected by Christ; he flies because he knows that there he will find no human weakness. Remember the Jewish Passover, which was instituted in commemoration of the plague in Egypt: every first-born son was to die on that night, unless the blood of the Lamb was sprinkled on the door-posts; so also will the devil pass the house of our soul, when he finds the blood of the Lamb of God used as a protection. Yes, my dear Jesus, I know that when I am washed in Thy divine blood in the Sacrament of Penance, or when strengthened by the drinking of Thy blood in holy communion, the tempter flies from me because he knows he will be defeated.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Tenth Day.

Sin brings great sorrow and misfortune to a soul. As sin brought all trouble into the world, so it repeats itself in our souls. Have
[294] we not heard of the wages of sin? No sooner have we revolted against the law of God than all the unruly passions of our souls are let loose. Incessant demands are made on our ingenuity to seek for occasions of gratifying our appetites; ambition, vanity, and pride spur us on to every excess. You can well imagine that in such a soul there is no peace nor happiness. God rises in anger against the sinner, the world even strikes us down; we have the sign of Cain on our forehead, and all nature is at enmity with us. Where can you find peace for your soul but in Jesus, the Prince of peace? Who takes us up and leads us to God, where the past is forgotten and innocence reigns once more in our hearts. Let us preserve this peace by a virtuous life, and by observing the Commandments of God. Let us also keep peace with our neighbor; let us love him because he is our brother, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Eleventh Day.

If our heart is to preserve the true, interior peace of God, we must approach the Lord Jesus with the cross, and with the blood that falls on us beneath the cross we must wash away the stains of sin. St. Francisca of Rome had a vision in which she saw many chains issuing from the wounds of Our Lord's sacred body, and

these went out to a multitude of souls and bound them to the Redeemer. She understood that in this attachment was the peace, the happiness, and the victory of many who otherwise would have perished. Let us look for the particular chain intended for [225] us, as we can thereby bind ourselves to the contemplation of the Passion, in which we shall find peace and comfort as long as we remain faithful. Heavenly Father, I offer to Thee, for Thy glory and my salvation, the blood of Jesus; let me appreciate its value in its fulness. Thou, my Jesus, seest the many dangers by which I am surrounded, and as Thou didst at one time command the winds to cease and the waves of the stormy sea to be calm, so watch over me that I may find peace in Thy service and be attached to Thee out of love for that peace which Thou alone canst give.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Twelfth Day.

Our Lord had a great desire to gain our souls. He made it easy for us to approach His sacred wounds, from whence the blood flowed. He instituted the Blessed Sacrament for our nourishment; speaking of this sacred blood, He said: Drink ye all of this; this is My blood; and if any thirst let him come to Me and I will give him to drink. The sacraments are nothing but channels by which the blood of Christ is conveyed to our souls. It was the Passion and sufferings of Christ that gave the sacraments their efficacy. The water of Baptism becomes, as it were, the blood of Christ; the penitential accusation is carried to the presence of the Lord Himself, and by the mouth of the priest He speaks the absolution; the blood of Christ is in reality in the Holy Eucharist. Confirmation makes us strong Christians, because the blood of Christ is there, and the Spirit of God comes to complete the [226]

work of Jesus. What is Extreme Unction but the application of the blood of Christ to the sick, that they may become strong?

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Thirteenth Day.

St. Bernard says of the blood of Christ that it is like a trumpet that calls for mercy; it is a voice that speaks more strongly than Abel's, not for vengeance but for forgiveness. This blood binds the hands of God's justice. We may then hope that the voice of this adorable blood will be raised in our behalf, as it was used to promise the penitent thief eternal happiness. It was with sincere love that Jesus Christ cried to the heavenly Father for us. He came to this world that His blood might always call to God for mercy. His blood was spilled over the surface of the earth, that all mankind might drink of its benefits. Satiated by the precious blood we will really hate sin, we will triumph over our evil passions, we will substitute virtues in their stead. Jesus is the fountain of all graces; it is He that takes such a great interest in us that whatever we do in His name will add to our glory, so that though we may have been poor and despised creatures, by the blood of Christ we have been ennobled and made heirs of the kingdom of God.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

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Fourteenth Day.

When Our Lord died on the cross one of the soldiers pierced His side, to make sure that He was dead. It was a real death, for we know that blood and water poured from that wound. Here we see the water of Baptism applied to our souls; in Baptism we are born again, we become children of God, our sins are forgiven and we have a right to the reward of heaven. We are no longer outcasts, nor an accursed race; we have become children of God. And why? Because we have become the brothers of Jesus Christ, Who is a child of God, the Son of God; it was this Child that made us children too, because from His sacred side on the cross He poured out water and blood over the human race; the curse was taken away from the race of mankind, and they may now go to heaven if they will. But have we preserved this life of grace, this new life of a supernatural order? No, indeed. There is not a human creature on the earth that has been cleansed by the blood of Christ, but has fallen back, and rebelled against God.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Fifteenth Day.

Man's life is a struggle for good from the beginning to the end. We are taken out of wickedness by Baptism, and we are frequently redeemed by penance. We need a sacrament that will give us perseverance. Be thou faithful unto death, is the watchword [298] that St. John cries out to the bishop in the Apocalypse, and I will give thee the crown of life. We are never sure of ourselves; even the sharpest intellect will not be able to say whether he be worthy of God's wrath or of God's love. Therefore Jesus Christ has applied the merits of His sacred blood to the Sacrament of Confirmation, by which we are to be made strong, by which human weakness is to be taken away. After receiving this sacrament what noble works we are capable of! In the olden ages martyrs

died for Christ; mothers saw their children martyred before their eyes, all for the love of Jesus, strengthened by this sacrament. People give up the world and persevere in the heroic practice of virtue by the grace of the precious blood of Jesus.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Sixteenth Day.

How comes it that although we are endowed with virtue from on high, nevertheless we sometimes make the blood of Christ of no avail to us? By Confirmation we ought to be perfect Christians, and still we are far from being such. The reason of our weakness, is that we are addicted to the things of this world, and we are very much inclined to follow the demands of our passions. We do not place implicit confidence in the efficacy of the precious blood; we do not desire to be cured of our maladies; we do not pray to be freed from our evil inclinations. What great strength did not
[299] the saints gather from the precious blood! How strong they were against the devil! How mortified their lives! How sincere in the service of God and all through the power of that sacred blood. How firm the martyrs stood in their testimony for the faith! how many Christians persevere in doing good by means of the graces derived from the adoration of the precious blood! If we would be as they were, we must turn to the suffering Jesus, and adjure Him, by the blood that He shed, to sustain us also in our struggle against the foes of our salvation.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Seventeenth Day.

In nothing is the beauty of the Church more noticeable than in her love of devotions. The devotion to the precious blood becomes manifest on many occasions. She has established the feast of the precious blood, and others more or less intimately united to this sacred practice of piety. Full of divine instincts, her worship grows with all the exuberance of a tropical plant, covering herself with verdure and blossom; she makes devotions of joys and of sorrows; none of the old blossoms fall off, on the contrary new varieties make their appearance. The Church is more beautiful now than she was three centuries ago, and three centuries from the present time new glories will have developed themselves. Every century has given rise to new devotions, according to the needs of the Church. Sometimes a holy man looks at the incarnation in a new light, and a new devotion springs up. The devotion [30] of the Holy Childhood has developed itself into devotion to the Infant of Prague, or has taken a more practical turn in the society of the Holy Childhood for the redemption of heathen children.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Eighteenth Day.

Who were the great worshippers of the precious blood? St. Paul wrote in his epistles most beautifully of the precious blood, and he may be said to be the author of this devotion. It was in this devotion that the power of his apostolate consisted. St. Chrysostom, the great preacher of the East, spoke most touchingly of the precious blood, and of the sufferings of Our Lord. St. Augustine, after his conversion, attributed all his improvement in the supernatural life to the love that Jesus bore him. St. Gertrude's writings are full of the most beautiful sentiments concerning the precious blood. In modern times, St. Catharine of Sienna, the prophetess of the precious blood, singled out this devotion with a

special love, with reference to the needs of her time, to which, in her judgment, sufficient importance had not been given. We read of Frances of the Mother of God, a Carmelite, that these words of the Apocalypse were deeply imprinted in her mind: He hath loved us, and washed away our sins in His blood. Our Lord said to her interiorly, I have shed My blood for your sins, and
[301] now I come in holy communion to wash away the stains which remain. When she had received Our Lord she saw her soul all covered with blood.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Nineteenth Day.

In the life of the Venerable Ann of Jesus, a companion of St. Teresa, we read that at communion her mouth was sensibly filled with very sweet blood, which flowed from the Host. St. Clare of Rimini's holy and mysterious thirst was appeased only by the blood in the Host. Marcella Benci used to serve St. Philip of Neri's Mass, and frequently saw the chalice full of blood. Margaret Beanne the Carmelite saw habitually the blood of Jesus in the souls of men; they were so beautified by it that she could not bear to hear any one censured because of the reverence she felt even for the souls of the wicked, for she saw them covered with the blood of Jesus. Sister Benedict of Egersheim after communion used to feel sensibly Our Lord's blood flowing as a torrent down into the abyss of her soul, and burning away all the remnants of sin, leaving her a most pure vessel of sanctity. Such are some of the examples of the thoughts and experience of the saints in communing with the precious blood, which made them what they were, friends of God and intimate with Jesus Christ, the Spouse of their souls.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

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Twentieth Day.

There is no surer sign of the growth of a special devotion than when the Church erects a confraternity in its honor. These confraternities keep the devotion alive, direct it, and embody all its practices. There is the archconfraternity of the Precious Blood in Rome, and this confraternity forms the keystone of all the confraternities throughout the world. Popes have enriched it with many indulgences, and have given to the Passionists and to the missionaries of the precious blood special blessings. Among the people of Spain we notice particularly the rise and continuance of societies devoted to the honoring of the precious blood. Leo XIII. enriched the societies with many indulgences. Pope Pius IX., of glorious memory, authorized the wearing of the red scapular. When he returned from exile he instituted a new feast distinct from the one celebrated in Lent. So many favors have been granted to it that we receive the impression that it is the special devotion of the Holy See.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Twenty-first Day.

The devotion to the precious blood is especially opportune for our days these days of infidelity and of atheism. It shows that the redemption is due to the efficacy of the precious blood. It throws out into strong light the most intimate relation of the incarnation; it meets the false spirituality which we conceive of the sacred

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humanity of Christ. It is a revelation of the character of God, as well as of the work of Jesus; it brings into our heart the love of the kingdom of God, and thus we begin again to have faith, the right faith as it is given us by the Church. We are aroused to the love of Jesus, and feel sensibly that He is still in the Church, and that His sacred blood is even now performing wonders. O my soul, what unthought-of greatness is in the precious blood of Jesus! how charming is the devotion, and how many souls labor under its benign influence! Let me, O my sweet Jesus, reverence that precious blood, and apply it to my soul for an increase of faith in God and His revelations, in hope for a happy future, and in love for Christ crucified.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Twenty-second Day.

The devotion of the precious blood very materially supports the devotion to the Passion of Our Lord. It furnishes a point of view from which we may regard each separate suffering, each separate wound, and mould it into one universal consideration. It is thus a unity of the devotion to the Passion, as well as a variety of it, besides being in itself an additional devotion. The precious blood brings vividness to the meditation on the Passion. There is no greater devotion than meditation on the Passion; the saints have always made it the help and consolation of their progress. What is consideration of the precious blood but a contemplation [304] of the Passion under another aspect? We bring the entire Passion under the head of one mystery, and still we preserve all the details, so that the Passion and the precious blood are the favorite contemplations of all devout Christians. O dear Jesus crucified, make me love the cross; make me desire to stand beneath the

cross, in order to receive on my soul one drop of that precious blood which is being poured out for my redemption.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Twenty-third Day.

The closest alliance, however, is between the precious blood and the Sacred Heart. The Heart of Jesus is the centre of our affection; it is the source from which the blood of Christ is drawn, the wealth of the Sacred Heart. It is the blood that warms that Heart and makes it beat for our sakes, so that every pulsation is an act of love for the human race. The Heart of Jesus teaches us to hate sin; the precious blood so copiously shed for our redemption inculcates the hatred of sin. We hate sin purely, manfully, and strongly; we do penance, we mortify ourselves, we mourn over our sins and the sins of others. All this is taught by the sacred blood of Our Lord; it is surely a valuable lesson which we ought to learn, since the instruction is given in so forcible a manner, and is so frequently inculcated.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

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Twenty-fourth Day.

There is a virtue which, in the language of the theologians of the Church, is called the angelic virtue: a virtue most pleasing to God. It is chastity. The precious blood makes us chaste according to our state of life; it makes those pure and virginal who practise this devotion and gives them the grace to preserve purity and to

persevere in it. This virtue renders us very pleasing to almighty God, Who loves pure souls. Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God, and chastity is an expression of the purity of the soul. The devil makes the greatest efforts to deprive us of this great treasure. The greatest and most frequent temptation which we have to endure is certainly that against purity. Our body seems to be full of impurity, our imaginations crowded with thoughts of a defiling character. The virtue of purity endears us to Mary, the purest of virgins; she loves those whom God regards with special favor, and to whom He has promised the particular privilege of contemplating Him for all eternity.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Twenty-fifth Day.

How beautiful a virtue is true humility! We love and admire it in others, but we ourselves are far from possessing it. Humility is the foundation on which all other virtues are built. Pride is
[306] a most hateful vice in the sight of God, for He would rather receive a humble sinner than a saint inclined to pride. God resists the proud, and gives His grace to the humble. The devotion of the precious blood will secure humility. Jesus shed His blood amid the greatest humiliations. In the Garden of Olives, bowed to the earth, He poured forth His blood in an agony of shame and horror over the sins of men; He was beaten like a slave in the court of Pilate; the blood poured from His face, wounded by blows and defiled by spittle, and from His head crowned with thorns. It stained the streets of Jerusalem on His way to Calvary; it flowed to the foot of the cross, as He hung and died between two malefactors, where He was considered the most abject of men. Let us learn the lesson of humility from the death of Christ.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Twenty-sixth Day.

Zeal for souls, zeal for the glory of God, was the motive that induced the Son of God to come down from heaven to suffer and die on the cross. Might not we, also, do something for the glory of God and the good of souls, if we had a little zeal towards that end? The apostles learned zeal from the Passion of Our Lord. When the Lord had died on the cross, they became inflamed with zeal and worked in an apostolic manner that souls might be brought to the kingdom of God; suffering became precious in their sight, because they endured it for the good of humanity. We that profess the love of the precious blood must also have zeal for the salvation of souls. What can we do? We can pray; we can [267] offer up our petitions incessantly for some particular individual until we are heard; we can surround people by such influences that their minds will be changed and brought back to God. But frequently we are inactive and inattentive to these means which God has given us; we are not filled with zeal for furthering the devotion to Christ's precious blood, and for the salvation of souls.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Twenty-seventh Day.

As we may do much good by a prudent zeal for the living, we can still more benefit the souls in purgatory by the application of the merits of the precious blood. Those souls are already in the hands of God, undergoing a purification to fit them to enter heaven. They can do nothing for themselves; they must patiently

endure the just punishment that is meted out to them. But the Church teaches us that we can help them, and we are encouraged to use the means which God has placed in our hands. Those who are in purgatory will surely go to heaven, but we can shorten their purification by prayer. Our supplications for the souls in purgatory may be even more productive of good than praying for the living, for these may resist the goodness of God and render themselves unworthy of further graces, while the souls in purgatory, being the friends of God, will readily receive the
[308] benefit of our prayers. Purgatory is an effect of sin, and sin and its effects are effaced by the blood of Christ. The Apostle has said that Jesus loved us, and has given His blood to wash us.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Twenty-eighth Day.

The sacred wounds of Our Lord are those abundant springs from which flow the kindness and charity of God. Many saints have had revelations and visions of this in their ecstatic prayers. St. Gertrude saw streams of blood issuing from the wounds of Our Lord and flowing like rivers through the Church, rendering her fruitful in many heroic virtues. How can we have any merit unless we receive it from Our Lord? for without Him we can do nothing. To do something meritorious, then, we should have recourse to Our Lord in prayer. Our prayers would fall to the ground and be without result, unless helped by the pleading of the precious blood; our works of mortification would be useless, our penance vain attempts for forgiveness, unless the precious blood made them efficacious. As the sun gives light to the world, enlightening and fructifying it, so the precious blood shines on our actions and makes them glow with a supernatural merit. There are some virtues which we may practise to a certain degree, but

how imperfect are the best intentions, without God's love as a motive.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

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Twenty-ninth Day.

Remember that perseverance is the great grace which we are all striving for. It is not a grace that we can merit at any one time, for it is only a continuation of fidelity. It is a very important grace; what does it profit to have gained all possible graces, and to be filled with consolation, when in the end we shall not be counted among the elect of God? He is, of course, interested in your eternal salvation in other words, your final perseverance. But we are living in a state of probation here; it is not possible, except in some special case of extraordinary grace, that we could be possibly in any other state than doubt as regards the future. It is natural for those who are on trial to fear that they will not succeed; there are so many a great deal better than we are that when we compare their excellence with our weak efforts to do right, we feel so inferior that we are afraid of being rejected. Hence it is that we are told to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, lest we may not reach the end for which we have been created.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Thirtieth Day.

Final perseverance can be obtained only through our humble faithfulness to God and continued prayers. When we pray to the Lord, and beg of Him by His precious blood to give us the grace
[310] of perseverance, or when we go to God the Father, and offer Him the sacred blood of Jesus as a sacrifice, that He may give us extraordinary grace to enable us to continue in His service, He is not obliged to give it, but He will, just as a friend who wishes to keep you attached to him gives you many presents and favors. We must also turn to Mary in this doubtful struggle for eternal happiness. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, has much to do with our salvation; we should not despise her help. She supplied, as you may say, the precious blood to Our Lord, by feeding Him with the milk of her breast. Or, as St. Bernard tells us, mixing the milk of the Mother with the blood of the Son, in order to prepare for us a most delicious drink. Mary ceases not to work in heaven for the salvation of souls and for the conversion of poor sinners.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Thirty-first Day.

St. Alphonsus, in speaking of the precious blood, says: "So, then, my Jesus, in order to save my soul, Thou hast prepared a bath of Thine own blood wherein to cleanse it from the filth of its sins. If. then, our souls have been bought by Thy blood, for you are bought with a great price" (1 Cor. vi. 20), it is a sign that Thou lovest them much; and as Thou dost love them, let us pray thus to Thee: "We therefore pray Thee to help Thy servants, whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood." It is true that by my sins I have separated myself from Thee, and have
[311] knowingly lost Thee. But remember, my Jesus, that Thou hast bought me with Thy blood. Ah, may this blood not have been given in vain for me, which was shed with so much grief and so

much love. We ought to read these words over and over again, until they penetrate our souls with that devotion to the precious blood which this great saint possessed, filling all our daily lives with a heavenly sweetness.

Prayer.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood, etc., etc.

Mass in Honor of the Precious Blood.

Introit.

> When the priest goes up to the altar to say Mass, think that the Lord is about to celebrate the Last Supper, during which He instituted the Holy Eucharist, and gave His flesh as food, and His blood as drink, to all the disciples present.

With a confident heart I am about to hear this holy Mass, to offer this holy sacrifice with the priest. I offer it to the Blessed Trinity, as the greatest means to obtain spiritual benefits for myself and those for whom I intend to pray, that we all may receive what is most needful for our body, but especially for our soul. Amen.

Confiteor.

I know, O my God, that I am unworthy to be admitted so closely to the Holy of holies, or to be here during the celebration of the sacred mysteries: I am unworthy on account of my many sins. O my God, I beg pardon for them, and I am sure that I will [312] receive forgiveness. I resolve to live a good life so that, purified, I may look up to the sacred mountain, where resides the God Who renews my youth. Yes, I have sinned against Thee, and against heaven. I am not worthy to be called Thy child. Amen.

Kyrie.

When the priest goes up to the altar and kisses it, remember the infamous kiss of Judas, think of your own infidelities, and cry out nine times with the priest: Lord, have mercy on us, Christ, have mercy on us. With your whole heart and soul join the choirs of angels in singing a hymn of praise to the Almighty, for all the mercies He has shown us by the sufferings and death of His divine Son. Offer up these sufferings for the benefit of the Church, for peace and harmony among nations, that the world may by the death of Christ enjoy a peace that will conduce to the acknowledgment of God's dominion over all mankind, that it may enjoy the benefit of the incarnation and death of the Lord.

Offertory.

I offer to Thee, O my God, with the priest, the bread and wine as did Our Lord, Who wished us to do it in commemoration of Him. I offer to Thee the pains which He endured at the bitter crowning, when the thorns were pressed deep into His sacred head, and the precious blood flowed from the wounds thus made, covering His whole face and disfiguring it so that it no longer resembled a human countenance. I offer to Thee those sighs and secret prayers which He offered, to atone for my wilful distractions in prayer, my waywardness in thought, my unbridled imagination, for my pride and disobedience, for all my errors, and for the errors of heretics and schismatics, that Thou mayest
[313] send them the grace of conversion. Amen.

Gospel.

Remember, O God, the sufferings of the Lord when He was dragged before Caiphas and Pontius Pilate. I offer myself to the guidance of Thy providence; do with me what Thou wilt for Thy glory. May Thy holy Gospel be always a consolation to me in all my troubles, and a guide to my conduct, so that, leading a good Christian life during the remainder of my stay in this world, I may direct my steps to heaven. Amen.

Credo.

I believe in the teachings of the Church; with a full acceptance I have accepted Christianity, let me remain faithful to it under all circumstances. Come to the assistance of my unbelief, that I may firmly profess my faith openly before the world. I believe, especially, in the efficacy of the Passion and the glory of the cross, a humiliation to the people of the world, but a source of comfort and salvation to me. I believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who taught me the articles of the creed. I believe in the Church which He has established. I believe in the forgiveness of my sins through the merits of the Passion and blood of the Lord. Amen.

Lavabo.

Remember, O God, for my sake, the washing of the hands of Pilate, as a sign of the innocence of the Lamb of God and His freedom from sin. Pilate washed his hands as a sign that he was not guilty of the murder of Christ, but I must acknowledge that I have condemned Jesus to death by my sinfulness. My [Illegible] declaration of justice will not suffice, but do Thou declare me pardoned. O my God, let me hear the words: Thy sins are forgiven thee. Amen.

Orate Fratres.

I call to mind the scene when Pilate presented Jesus to the Jewish rabble, all covered with blood, with a crown of thorns on His head, His sacred body torn with the lashes of the scourging, and enveloped in a purple mantle. Pilate says: Behold the man! But the Jews cry out, and oh, how their cruel words sound in my ears, Crucify Him, crucify Him ! Look upon our Jesus, O God, as He stands there, claiming the kindness of some good heart, and through His precious blood have mercy on us. Amen.

Canon.

I will now, O my God, with the angels, bow low before Thee, and cry Holy, holy, holy, God of hosts! The angels continually cry thus to Thee in heaven. I ought to be engaged here on earth in the same occupation. But let me continue to meditate on the

sacred Passion of Thy Son and how He carried His cross. I offer Thee the way of the cross which He made, and all the suffering which He endured during it. He fell three times to the ground, crushed by its weight; stains of blood from His recent scourging marked His path. I see the Cyrenean unwilling to carry the cross for Jesus. Veronica wipes His face, and the women of Jerusalem weep over the cruelty that the Lord had to endure. I offer to
[315] Thee the bitter meeting of Mary and her beloved Son. May I be encouraged, through Christ's Passion, to take the cross on my own shoulders, and carry it with joy. I offer Thee the painful carrying of the cross for all poor Christians who have heavy crosses to bear, and who are bearing them patiently; for the sick, the dying, the poor orphan child, the patient mother who labors, with resignation to Thy holy will, for those dependent on her, and for all who have to suffer on this earth. Let me understand, O my Jesus, the valuable lesson that I deserve to suffer on account of my many sins. Amen.

Elevation Of The Host And Chalice.

I believe, my Jesus, that Thou art now present on this altar; that this bread is now Thy body, and this wine is now Thy blood. Now, O my God, Thy beloved Son has arrived at Calvary. His garments are torn off, and He is nailed to the cross. He is raised, and suspended between heaven and earth, with hands and arms outstretched. There He hangs for three hours, and makes the sacrifice of Himself to Thee, His heavenly Father, for the salvation of the human race. O heavenly Father, look down on this altar and hear the sighs of Thy pleading Son! This is the same sacrifice as that on Calvary: let this Mass, then, have a great spiritual benefit to all on earth. This precious blood is offered up every day on our altars, to obtain pardon for our sins, and new graces for the future. Amen.

Agnus Dei.

I now contemplate Jesus hanging on the cross, His blood flowing from His wounds. I adore Thee on the cross, I listen to

Thy words as Thou dost pray for sinners. This holy sacrifice is [316]
for them: Christ is the willing Victim that is expiating the sins of mankind; He thirsts for souls on the cross. Father Creator, why dost Thou not create new creatures, and satisfy the thirst of Thy divine Son? Thou canst force the wicked to a change of heart, as Thou didst St. Paul. Create a clean heart in me, O my God. But to bring the sacrifice to completion, after the three hours of agony the voice of Jesus is heard exclaiming, It is consummated. All is completed; the sufferings and humiliation of the cross are over. Amen.

Communion.

Would, O my Jesus, that I were in a state to go and unite myself to Thee! At least I will unite myself in a spiritual manner. I should always be so full of love towards Thee as to think ever of Thee, and desire to be closely united to Thee and to have Thee buried in my heart. Let me consider before Thee, O heavenly Father, that the sacrifice of the cross is completed, that Thou hast accepted it, and dost look upon the earth with pity and mercy. Still the cruelty of the Jews is not satisfied. They have one more wound to inflict on the Lord. A soldier with a lance opens the sacred side of Our Lord, to demonstrate to every one that the Victim is really dead. O my God, I offer Thee these last marks of the love of the dead Jesus, the wound in His sacred side, and the drops of blood and water which issue therefrom. O my Jesus, Thy heart is open for my reception. I will take refuge therein, away from the temptations of the world. Give me the grace not to fall into mortal sin, as well as to persevere in my resolution [317]
to avoid even small sins to the end of my life. I pray for the poor souls in purgatory, for my parents, relatives, sisters and brothers. I recommend to the goodness of Thy Sacred Heart all my benefactors, all those who need my prayers, all the poor, the miserable, and the wretched. I pray also for my country; for peace, prosperity, and love among all the nations that have gathered here to make this their fatherland. I pray also for the

conversion of all to the faith, that this may be the kingdom of God here on earth, one sheepfold of Christ, the Good Shepherd. I offer to Thee, O my God, all the sufferings of Jesus for these necessities. Amen.

Conclusion Of The Mass.

In order that this day may be most profitable to me, and to those for whom I have offered this Mass, O heavenly Father, I join myself in spirit in all the Masses that are continually being said all over the world. What great graces are given to mankind by this unceasing succession of oblations of the precious body and blood of Christ! I offer to Thee, also, O my Saviour, all the pious works which are done by so many faithful Christians all over the world. I offer all the confessions, communions, rosaries, and all prayers, as well as all good works of fasting, almsgiving, and penances which are done. I wish to gain all the indulgences which are within my reach to-day, that I may apply them to the souls in purgatory. Now that the priest is about to bless the people in Thy name, do Thou bless me, as well as those for whom I have prayed. Pour out, by the hands of the priest, the blessing of
[318] Thy precious blood with all its merit and innumerable graces, on the souls in purgatory. Purify us from our sins by means of this blessing, and give us strength and courage to do good works. Protect us, Thy children and the heirs of Thy kingdom, and lead us to eternal happiness in company with all the saints in heaven. Amen.

Thanksgiving After Mass.

I thank Thee, O my God, at the end of this Mass, for all the graces which I have received during it. The grace of attention to this holy sacrifice, the grace of faith by which I really saw the dying Jesus offered to God the Father, and His sacred blood applied to the wounds of my soul. I thank Thee for that love which has made me come here, and spend some time in the service of God. May I preserve, to the end of my life, the graces which I have received, so that they may bring me to heaven. The love of God

almighty, the grace of His divine Son, and the imparting of the Holy Ghost, be always with me and all the faithful throughout the world. The power of the precious blood, the treasure of the merits of the Blessed Virgin, and the intercession of all the saints accompany me now to my home, to my daily work, and make all that I say and do faithful to eternal life. Amen.

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Three Offerings of the Precious Blood.

In thanksgiving for the gifts and privileges with which the most holy Virgin Mary, Mother of God, was enriched, more especially those which she received in her immaculate conception.

1. Eternal Father, in union with the most holy and immaculate Virgin, and in her name, and in union with, and in the name of all the blessed in heaven, and of all the elect upon earth, I offer Thee the most precious blood of Jesus Christ, in thanksgiving for the gifts and privileges with which Thou hast enriched Mary, as Thy most obedient daughter, particularly in her immaculate conception. I offer Thee also this precious blood for the conversion of poor sinners, for the propagation and exaltation of Thy holy Church, for the safety and prosperity of our chief pastor, the Bishop of Rome, and according to his intentions.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

2. Eternal and Incarnate Word, in union with the most holy and immaculate Virgin, and in her name, and in union with, and in the name of all the blessed in heaven, and of all the elect upon earth, I offer Thee Thine own most precious blood, in thanksgiving for the gifts and privileges with which Thou hast

enriched Mary, as Thy most loving Mother, particularly in her immaculate conception. I offer Thee also this precious blood for the conversion of poor sinners, for the propagation and exaltation of Thy holy Church, for the safety and prosperity of our chief pastor, the Bishop of Rome, and according to his intentions.

[320] Glory be to the Father, etc.

3. Holy and eternal Spirit, in union with the most holy and immaculate Virgin, and in her name, and in union with, and in the name of all the blessed in heaven, and of all the elect upon earth, I offer Thee the most precious blood of Jesus, in thanksgiving for the gifts and privileges with which Thou hast enriched Mary, as Thy most faithful spouse, particularly in her immaculate conception. I offer Thee also this precious blood for the conversion of poor sinners, for the propagation and exaltation of Thy holy Church, for the safety and prosperity of our chief pastor, the Bishop of Rome, and according to his intentions.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Seven Offerings of the Precious Blood of Jesus.

1. Eternal Father, I offer Thee the merits of the most precious blood of Jesus, Thy beloved Son and my divine Redeemer, for the propagation and exaltation of my dear Mother the holy Church, for the safety and prosperity of her visible head, the holy Roman Pontiff, for the cardinals, bishops and pastors of souls, and for all the ministers of the sanctuary.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Blessed and praised for evermore be Jesus, Who hath saved us with His blood.

2. Eternal Father, I offer Thee the merits of the most precious blood of Jesus, Thy beloved Son and my divine Redeemer, for the peace and concord of kings and Catholic princes, for the [321] humiliation of the enemies of the holy faith, and for the happiness of all Christian people.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Blessed and praised, etc.

3. Eternal Father, I offer Thee the merits of the most precious blood of Jesus, Thy beloved Son and my divine Redeemer, for the repentance of unbelievers, the extirpation of all heresies and the conversion of sinners.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Blessed and praised, etc.

4. Eternal Father, I offer Thee the merits of the most precious blood of Jesus, Thy beloved Son and my divine Redeemer, for all those who shall this day pass to another life, that Thou mayest deliver them from the pains of hell and admit them the more readily to the possession of Thy glory.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Blessed and praised, etc.

5. Eternal Father, I offer Thee the merits of the most precious blood of Jesus, Thy beloved Son and my divine Redeemer, for all my relatives, friends, and enemies, for the poor, the sick, and those in tribulation, and for all those for whom Thou willest I should pray, or knowest that I ought to pray.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Blessed and praised, etc.

6. Eternal Father, I offer Thee the merits of the most precious blood of Jesus, Thy beloved Son and my divine Redeemer, for all those who are lovers of this treasure of His blood, and for all those who join with me in adoring and honoring it, and for all those who try to spread the devotion to it. [322]

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Blessed and praised, etc.

7. Eternal Father, I offer Thee the merits of the most precious blood of Jesus, Thy beloved Son and my divine Redeemer, for all my wants, both spiritual and temporal, for the holy souls in purgatory, and particularly for those, who in their lifetime were most devoted to this price of our redemption, and to the sorrows and pains of our dear Mother, the most holy Mary.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Blessed and praised, etc.

Blessed and exalted be the blood of Jesus, now and always, and through eternity.

Daily Offering.

O my Lord and my God! I commend myself to Thy adorable Heart, and in Thy sacred wounds I resign myself to Thy holy will this day and forever. Include me, O my Lord and my God, in all the holy Masses that have been or will be offered up this day in the whole world. O Lord, I desire to share in all holy communions, all holy Benedictions, in all indulgences, in all the merits and prayers of devout hearts now and forever. O my Lord and my God! I offer Thee all my steps, all my weariness and labors, all my cares and antipathies, all my crosses, sufferings, ignominies, injuries, persecutions, and adversities; these I offer Thee in honor of Thy holy humanity and of Thy most bitter Passion and death; in the merits of all these I include (here mention the names of those for whom you wish to pray in particular), all my relatives, [323] benefactors, friends, enemies, the sick and dying, those who are in temptation or oppressed; all that have commended themselves to my prayers, or for whom I have promised to pray; those to whom I have given scandal, or whom I have in any way enticed

to sin; my parents, sisters, and brothers, who have departed this life, and all the souls of the faithful departed. My crucified Saviour, have mercy on the most suffering and abandoned souls in purgatory, also on me, a poor sinner; give me the grace I daily need to serve Thee faithfully until death. I return Thee thanks, thousands and millions of thanks, for all the favors and benefits which Thou hast heaped on me from the first moment of my existence to the present hour. I pray Thee to preserve me always in Thy holy grace, particularly at the hour of my death. Amen.

Plenary Indulgences For Members of the Confraternity of the Most Precious Blood.

On the day of registration to those who, having confessed and communicated, shall pray according to the intention of the Supreme Pontiff. At the hour of death, after confession and communion; or if this be impossible, to such as being contrite, shall invoke with the lips, or if unable, with the heart, the most sweet name of Jesus. Daily for those, who, with confession and communion, shall make an hour's vocal or mental prayer, or partly one and partly the other, in memory of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the dolors of the most holy Mary, praying as above.

Other Plenary Indulgences.

For which, besides the conditions of confession and communion, a visit is enjoined to any church whatever; and this

visit may, for any reasonable motive, be commuted by the confessor of the individual for some other pious work.

On the first Sunday of July, being the feast of the Precious Blood; Christmas day, the Epiphany, Easter Sunday, the feasts of the Immaculate Conception, Purification, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, and of the most holy Rosary; the feast of the holy apostles Saints Peter and Paul; and on the commemoration of all the faithful departed.

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On the feast of the Circumcision, on all the Fridays of March, on the 28th of March, being the feast of the Sacred Blood in Sta. Maria in Vado at Ferrara, on Holy Thursday, on the day of the Invention of the Holy Cross, on Ascension day, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, and the feast of the most holy Redeemer, the 23d of October.

On the feast of the Annunciation, the Dolors of the most holy Mary, Good Friday, Our Lady of Carmel (July 16th), the Nativity, Seven Dolors (third Sunday of September), and the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin (November 21st).

On the feasts of St. Joseph, St. John Baptist, All Saints, St. Francis Xavier, and of St. Nicholas of Bari.

Once a month on any day they may choose.

Indulgences for all the Faithful, even Such as are not Members.

For such as shall recite the Chaplet of the Precious Blood once in the day, seven years and as many quarantines; and if they recite it daily for a month, a plenary indulgence, having confessed and communicated, on the last day of the month, or any day in the following month. (Pius VII., Oct. 18, 1815.)

The same indulgence can be gained by the recital of thirty-three Our Fathers, meditating at the same time on the seven times Our Lord shed His precious blood; or, by such as

are uninstructed and incompetent to meditate, by the simple recital of the thirty-three Our Fathers. (Gregory XVI., July 5, 1843.)

For the prayer, O most precious blood, etc.placed at the end of the Chaplet, three hundred days' indulgence, once a day.

Chaplet of the Precious Blood.

This chaplet is composed of seven mysteries, in which we meditate upon the seven times in which Jesus Christ for love of us shed blood from His most innocent body; at each mystery, except the last, we are to say five Our Fathers and one Glory be to the Father, thus making up the number of thirty-three Our Fathers in remembrance of the thirty-three years during which the precious blood of Jesus flowed in His veins, before it was all poured out for our salvation. The Chaplet ends with the devout prayer,O most precious blood, etc.

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The Chaplet.

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, etc.

R. As it was, etc.

First Mystery.

The first time our loving Saviour shed His precious blood for us was on the eighth day after His birth, when He was circumcised in order to accomplish the Law of Moses. While, then, we reflect that Jesus did this to satisfy the justice of God for our dissolute lives, let us excite ourselves to true sorrow for them, and promise, with the help of His all-powerful grace, to be henceforth truly chaste in body and in soul.

Five Our Fathers and one Glory.

We beseech Thee, therefore, help Thy servants whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood.

Second Mystery.

Next in the Garden of Olives, Jesus shed His blood for us in such quantity that it bathed the earth around. This took place at the sight of the ingratitude with which men would meet His love. Oh, let us then repent sincerely, because we have hitherto corresponded so illy with the innumerable benefits of Our God, and resolve to make good use of His graces and holy inspirations.

Five Our Fathers, etc.

[326] We beseech, etc.

Third Mystery.

Next, in His cruel scourging, Jesus shed His blood, when His flesh was so torn that rivers of blood flowed from His body in every part, all of which He offered, all the time, to His eternal Father in payment of our impatience and our delicacy. How is it, then, we do not curb our anger and our self-love? Henceforth we will indeed try our very best to bear our troubles well, and, despising ourselves, to take peacefully the injuries which men may do us.

Five Our Fathers, etc.

We beseech, etc.

Fourth Mystery.

Again, from the sacred head of Jesus, blood poured down when it was crowned with thorns, in punishment of our pride and evil thoughts. Shall we, then, continue to nurture haughtiness, foster foul imaginations, and feed the wayward will in our minds? Henceforth let there ever be before our eyes our utter nothingness, our misery and our weakness; and with generous hearts let us resist all the wicked suggestions of the devil.

Five Our Fathers, etc.

We beseech, etc.

Fifth Mystery.

How much of His precious blood did not our loving Lord pour forth from His veins, when laden with the heavy wood of the cross on the mournful way to Calvary, so that the streets and [327] ways of Jerusalem through which He passed were watered with it! This was done in satisfaction for the scandals and the bad examples by which His own creatures had led others astray on the way to ruin. Who can tell how many of us are of this unhappy number? Who knows how many he himself alone has by his own bad example brought down to hell? And have we done anything to remedy this evil? Let us henceforth, at least, endeavor all we can to save souls by word and by example, making ourselves a pattern to all of a good and holy life.

Five Our Fathers, etc.

We beseech, etc.

Sixth Mystery.

Still more copiously the Redeemer of mankind shed blood in His barbarous crucifixion; when His veins being rent and arteries burst, there rushed forth in a torrent from His hands and His feet that saving balm of life eternal, to pay for all the crimes and enormities of the universe. Whoever, after this, would continue in sin, and so renew the cruel crucifixion of the Son of God? Let us weep bitterly for our bad deeds, and let us detest them at the feet of the sacred minister of God; let us amend our evil ways, and henceforth begin a truly Christian life, with the thought ever in our hearts of all the blood which our eternal salvation cost the Saviour of men.

Five Our Fathers, etc.

We beseech, etc.

Seventh Mystery.

Last of all, after His death, when His sacred side was opened, and His loving Heart was wounded, Jesus shed blood, and with [328] the blood there came forth water, to show us how the blood was all poured out to the last drop for our salvation. Oh, the infinite goodness of Our Redeemer! Who will not love Thee,

my Saviour? What heart will not consume itself away for love of Thee, Who hast done all this for our redemption? The tongue wants words to praise Thee; let us, then, invite all creatures upon earth, all angels and all saints in paradise, and most of all, our dear Mother Mary, to bless, to praise, and to celebrate Thy most precious blood. Glory to the blood of Jesus! Glory to the blood of Jesus! now and ever throughout all ages. Amen.

At this last mystery three Our Fathers and one Glory be to the Father, etc., are said to make up the number of thirty-three.

We beseech, etc.

Then the following

Prayer.

O most precious blood of eternal life, the ransom and redemption of the whole universe! the drink and bath of our souls, thou who art ever pleading the cause of men before the throne of God's sovereign mercy! I adore thee most profoundly, and desire, as far as it is in my power, to compensate thee for the insults and affronts which thou art continually receiving at the hands of men, especially of those who rashly dare to blaspheme thee. And who is there that will not bless this blood of infinite value? Who is there that will not feel himself inflamed with love for Jesus, Who shed it? What should I be if I had not been redeemed by this divine blood? What was it that drew thee forth from the veins of
[329] my Lord, even to the last drop? Ah! it was naught else but love. O boundless love, that has given us this balsam of salvation! O balsam beyond price, streaming forth from the well-spring of a boundless love, grant, oh, grant that every heart and tongue may praise, and magnify, and bless thee, now and forever, even unto the day of eternity. Amen.

V. Thou hast redeemed us, O Lord, with Thy blood.

R. And Thou hast made us a kingdom unto Our God.

O almighty and eternal God, Who hast appointed Thy only-begotten Son to be the Redeemer of the world, and hast willed to

be appeased by His blood, grant, we beseech Thee, that we may venerate upon earth the price of our salvation, and be shielded by its might from the evils of this present life, so that we may enjoy it everlastingly in heaven. Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

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August. The Holy Ghost.

We may during this month take up the devotion to the Holy Ghost.

This devotion to the Holy Spirit should be the chief of all devotions, because it was the first that was ever celebrated, and that by no less devout worshippers than the holy apostles and the most holy Mary in the upper room at Jerusalem. It is one which is growing in the hearts of the people, because so much depends for our sanctification on the influence of the graces bestowed on us by God the Holy Ghost. Faith teaches us that the Holy Ghost is the love which the Father and the Son bear one to the other; and therefore the gift of love which the Lord infuses into our souls, and which is the greatest of all gifts, is attributed to the Holy Ghost. St. Paul says, "The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Who is given to us." Rom. v. 5.

The Holy Ghost, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son is called a fire, because His action in our souls purifies us from sin and fills us with divine love. As the action of fire may be said to be irresistible, it is right that the Holy Ghost be represented by that symbol, since He was to give spirit and wisdom to Christians, which all their adversaries should not be able to resist or gainsay.

If we observe the commandments of God, the Holy Spirit will abide with us to enlighten our minds and strengthen our wills, and give us grace to follow Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit will give us an increase of devotion towards the Holy Sacrament of the Altar, and the sacrifice of the Mass, and will pour the charity of God into our hearts.

Considerations and Prayers for Every Day.

First Day.

Be devout to the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. His presence is everywhere, and His power is manifested in all things. [1] His office in the Church is that of lifegiver, and in our souls He is the perfect illumination of the intellect. Without this strength the intellect may be cultivated, but it will be cold and dim. The errors of our mind, its low vices and fragmentary opinions, its distorted judgments, unfounded propositions, and shallow conception of the nature of things, are all defects traceable to our carelessness in the devotion to the Holy Ghost. A pious person devoted to the worship of the Holy Spirit will naturally know God's will and follow it. The degree of his explicit knowledge will still depend on natural gifts and their due cultivation; but with the docility of the heart and the influence of the Holy Ghost, there will dawn on his mind a knowledge which is often superior to that acquired by the intellect alone. Before and after your actions seek light from this divine Teacher, and in all your daily life continue in the consciousness of your dependence on the Holy Ghost.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love.

V. Send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created.

R. And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let Us Pray.

O God, Who didst instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of Thy Holy Spirit, grant us in the same Holy Spirit to relish what is right, and ever to rejoice in His consolation, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

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Second Day.

St. Edward was one day waiting, in a school at Paris, for the arrival of his scholars. He was about to expound to them the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Being tired he fell into a slumber, in which he had a dream. He saw a dove descending towards him; it bore on its back the sacred Host, and laid it on his lips. When he awoke he went to the lecture-room, and began his discourse; all who heard him were struck by the sweetness and clearness of his explanations. It was the devotion to the Holy Ghost that gave a newness and a charm to all he said, and impressed itself not only on his hearers, but also on himself, so that he became full of the unction and fire of the Spirit of God. We will not be disappointed if we solicit the interest of the Holy Ghost in our behalf. In all our work let us look first to this Light of God, which illumines every soul coming into this world, and our actions will be for the glory of God, our minds will become energetic through the purification of our motives, and our whole life will take on a new exterior of humility and perfection.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Third Day.

The Holy Ghost is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity: this is one of the dogmas of the Christian religion; it is the foundation

[333] of our holy faith. In God there are three divine persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Each person, among created intelligences, is a distinct and a separate unity, complete, entire

in itself, but by its limitation making only one individual. But in God the three divine persons have one distinct mode of subsistence, for each possesses in common the whole divine essence. The substance of God belongs to each of the three divine persons. Therefore we say that there are three divine persons in God, not three individuals; for an individual would signify a distinct nature. Accordingly, the Athanasian creed declares, Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. Yet there are not three Gods, but only one God. In speaking of the nature of God's being, we find ourselves necessarily beyond the power of reasoning; we only know that the infinite God is one in essence and three in person.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Fourth Day.

The Holy Ghost is God, one of the three divine persons, as is evident from the Scriptures. The Holy Ghost is joined with the Father and the Son, and therefore He really exists and is called God. All the divine attributes are given Him: omnipresence, omnipotence, and justice. He is therefore God, and proceeds from the Father and the Son; He is the Spirit of God, and also the Spirit of Christ. The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father [134] and the Son as the breath of the life of intelligence and love.

Because you are sons, God hath sent the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying: Abba, Father. Gal. iv. 6. But when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will teach you all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself: but whatsoever things He shall hear He shall speak: ... He shall glorify Me: because He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it to you. All things whatsoever the

Father hath, are Mine. Therefore I said: that He shall receive of Mine, and show it to you. John xvi. 13-15.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Fifth Day.

We cannot understand the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. We cannot understand the persons of the Blessed Trinity, neither the Father, the Son, nor the Holy Ghost; they are infinite. Still we can think of the Blessed Trinity, and guided by what we know through revelation and theology, try to go still further and discover more of the glory surrounding it. One person of the Holy Trinity is as great as the other; there is really no first nor second in dignity or power. There is, however, a marvellous order in the unity of the Trinity, thus expressed in the creed of St. Athanasius: The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is from the Father alone, not made nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is from the Father and the Son, not made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding. Thus
[335] the Holy Trinity exists from all eternity, supremely happy in itself, not needing anything exteriorly to assist in its existence.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Sixth Day.

God begets His Son by knowledge; the Son is the knowledge of the Father, but the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son by way of love. The Father and the Son, by an act of supreme natural love breathe forth the co-eternal Spirit. The Spirit proceeds from

both, the pledge of their mutual affection, and the expression of infinite beatitude. The Father loves the Son with such an infinite love as to breathe forth a divine Spirit through His Son. As St. Bernard says, the Spirit is the sacred kiss of the Father and the Son in their imperturbable peace, their firm coherence, their undivided love, their indivisible unity. The Son proceeds from the Father as the ray from the sun; the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son as the heat from the ray and the sun. The Son as the word, the Holy Ghost as the breath; the Son as the river from the fountain; the Holy Ghost as the lightning from the cloud. These expressions hardly convey what is meant, because the ray is smaller than the sun; while in God the ray is equal, the heat is consubstantial with its source. The word says all, the breath is real, the fire burns always and is never extinguished.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

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Seventh Day.

It will be part of the beatitude of the saints to know something of this generation and procession of the Holy Ghost; they will be filled with gladness inexpressible in the sight of God. They will see God as He is; in their contemplation they will rise higher and higher, and by their studies know more and more of God. As we are charmed with the beauties of knowledge, the attraction of literature, so we will feel greater happiness as we study the being of God in all its depths. O the depths of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how unsearchable His ways! Rom. xi. 33. The Church, in the office and Mass of the feast of the most Holy Trinity repeats the same words, as the expression of her

awe and adoration in the presence of the infinitely unsearchable ways of God in the Trinity. In adoring this life of God, for life it is indeed, we are overwhelmed with awe, and are but able in our astonishment to cry out with the Church, O Blessed Trinity!

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Eighth Day.

The Holy Trinity does all the work exterior to itself by the joint power of all; for the persons of God cannot be separated from the one God. There are certain things which in our human mind we ascribe more to one person than to the other, but all the divine
[337] persons must necessarily be participants in the work of each. For example, the creation is ascribed to the Father, because it seems to be a parental act to call something into existence, and so we say God the Father created us. God the Son redeemed us, and God the Holy Ghost sanctifies us. And still we read that in the creation, The Spirit of the Lord moved over the waters, meaning that God the Father was not only or singly engaged in the creation, but that the other divine persons participated also. The same way, in the creation of man, all the divine persons were engaged in this important work of God's power. Human beings were to know God, and to become the temples of the Holy Ghost; and consequently the Holy Ghost had early in the creation to show His co-operation.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Ninth Day.

Hence, in the beginning of the world, God created a man, framing his body out of clay and dust, but giving him a living soul by breathing upon him. It was the Spirit of God that gave that soul the touch of life and immortality. There is a wonderful similarity between that breathing into man at his creation, and the time when, after the resurrection, the Lord appeared to the apostles and breathed on them, saying: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." St. Athanasius says, "First by the Word of God, man was made. And the Lord breathed into him the Spirit of life, and confirmed him with a participation of His Spirit. The same God confers His Spirit on His disciples, that we may be renovated in the same [383] Spirit in Whom we first were made." No doubt both the natural life, the life of the body, and also the supernatural life, the love of God and participation in His glory, were granted by the Holy Ghost at the creation.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Tenth Day.

The Holy Ghost infuses into our hearts sanctifying grace, by which we become pleasing to God, and we can call Him Our Father. What a great grace this is! to be pleasing to God! We had sinned and had become aliens to God's kindness and grace. We did not live a simple, natural life, for our existence was sinful after the fall of Adam and Eve. But the Holy Spirit came again into our hearts, and we were created new beings. The old scars of sin and condemnation disappeared, and our present supernatural condition is nobler, perhaps, than was the condition of Adam before his fall. It was this consideration which caused the Fathers of the Church, and the Church herself, in her paschal song of the Exultet, to exclaim, O happy fault, which gave the occasion to almighty God to rescue us from eternal death, and to give us

new life, in the resurrection of the Lord. Great, then, is the love of the Holy Ghost for us. He wishes to claim us as His temples.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

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Eleventh Day.

We are, therefore, different from Adam; since the Fall our condition has been changed. Adam at his creation was constituted in the state of grace, placed in that blessed condition by the goodness of the Holy Ghost. The justice which Adam received was the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the soul, which illuminated his mind to such a degree that he not only understood the things about him, but it also gave him a sight of heaven itself, and the perfections of God. Hence Adam, the pure creature, grand and noble as he was, created and gifted by almighty God, was a favored being indeed, and all mankind after him. For we also are created by God, we have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us by Baptism, and therefore are children of God by a still greater reason than Adam was. The power of the Holy Ghost has thus been displayed in the creation of man, in the continuation of his existence, and in all his work up to the present time.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Twelfth Day.

By Adam's disobedience his glory and greatness were swept away. The presence of the Holy Ghost was forfeited, and in His place reigned ignorance, weakness, and passion. Man not

only ignored God, but fell deeper and deeper into a degrading ignorance until he lived a life not far removed from the brute. Man became so weak and unreliable that even if ignorance was [was] removed by education, his will was subject to the allurements of interest and passion. Terrible confusion ensued in the ages after the fall of Adam and Eve. But God had mercy on the human race, and promised a Redeemer, by Whom we were to regain salvation. Instead of falling a prey to the devil after death, man had a means of reinstating himself in the mercy and goodness of God, for, as the Apostle says in his first epistle to Timothy, God will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of truth. We should appreciate highly this work of our redemption. Mankind could do nothing of itself. It deserved to die, and share with the evil spirits eternal damnation, but through the mercy of God it was not consumed.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Thirteenth Day.

Our justification comes from Christ's redemption, by the operation of the Holy Ghost. But you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of Our God. 1 Cor. vi. 11. It is still the operation of the Holy Ghost which brings comfort to our souls. Since the Fall, the Spirit of God has assisted every man that came into the world, so that there never yet was a soul which had not sufficient grace to escape from eternal death, if it only had fidelity to correspond with it. Even heathens may, according to the mercy of God, find the means ready at hand by which to be saved. Every soul is created in the likeness of God; the light [light] of reason shining in the soul is a means of salvation, the whole world reveals the existence of God. Every living soul in the order

of nature, then, has the illumination of God's grace, and by the light of conscience, which is reason, can rightly exercise its will in the performance of duty.We hope in the living God, Who is the Saviour of all men,and especially of the faithful. The work of the Holy Ghost, even in the order of nature that is outside of the Church, is going on, giving to all men grace to be saved.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Fourteenth Day.

When the disciples returned to Jerusalem, after the ascension of Our Lord, they chose for their habitation the cenacle in which the Last Supper had taken place. There they spent the eight days previous to the feast of Pentecost, in a retreat of prayer and meditation. There they waited patiently for the realization of the promise made by Our Lord, that the Paraclete would come. Their souls were filled with that peace which the Lord had given them; they had learned the lesson of charity and submission, they had now one heart and one mind. No doubt, with them in prayer, were Mary the Mother of Jesus and the pious women who also were to receive the Holy Spirit. What a consolation was not the presence of Mary to the apostles! She was now their Mother; Christ Himself desired that she should be their
[342] comfort. The apostles loved the Mother of Jesus, consulted her about the future of the Church, and no doubt learned from her the secrets of divine love that filled her soul, learned from her the love that Jesus bore to His holy Church. They honored her with reverence, because she was the Mother of Him Whom they now knew to be God. It was the beginning of the devotion to the Blessed Virgin a devotion which has continued in the Church ever since with unabated ardor.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Fifteenth Day.

The apostles persevered in prayer in the holy cenacle. They had learned the necessity of prayer from Our Lord Himself. He inculcated it by command and example, and now they put His precepts into execution; they made prayer the chief preparation for the coming of the Holy Ghost. God was present among them, and heard them, for they were assembled in the name of Jesus. These long hours of supplication penetrated heaven and filled the earth with consolation; bringing upon them the graces and benedictions of Jesus. They had time to enter into themselves, and to cure their souls of the weakness of human nature. They had much cause for anxiety. What a battle, and apparently what a hopeless battle, was before them! They were to preach to the world; to conquer and to teach it the maxims of the Christian religion. They knew that the world was not willing to receive the Gospel, and yet they had to observe the injunction of Our Lord, to teach all nations, and to command them to observe all [all] that Christ had taught. The apostles were filled with a great love for the salvation of mankind, and in the cenacle they began to be apostles of prayer, by which they were to be victorious over all difficulties.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Sixteenth Day.

At length the retreat of the apostles was over; they were still assembled in that upper room, the time for the appearance of the

Holy Spirit had arrived, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity was to come in His sevenfold power to dwell in the Church of God forever, as well as in the hearts of all its faithful members. The Holy Ghost came like a mighty wind, and filled the whole house, and descended on those present in the form of fiery tongues. How devoutly did they receive the Holy Spirit! With what acts of adoration did they greet the visible presence of the great Comforter, the Paraclete, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity! For this they had been waiting and praying, for this they had remained away from the distractions of the world, so that they might undisturbed feel the power of God in themselves. The Holy Ghost came in the form of tongues of fire, the same fire of which Our Lord spoke when He exclaimed, *I am come to send fire on the earth, and what is My will but that it be kindled?* It was the fire of charity the charity of Christ, by which we endeavor to save our souls, and the souls of others. [344]

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Seventeenth Day.

The Holy Ghost appeared under the form of tongues of fire, to show us that out of charity we should raise our voice in the propagation and defence of truth. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit obliges us to correct others, and to lead them gently on in the way of salvation. Not only had the apostles this obligation, but the priest must preach, the father and the mother instruct their children, and the master guide those under him. It is this sacred fire that will make the faithful listen with respect to their pastors, and practise their religion; children will be induced to be docile to their parents, and subjects will be respectful to those in authority. This burning fire will purify all men, for the fire of divine love has a power to consume the gnawing vices of

selfishness, indolence, and jealousy; it will burn up the materials on which our passions feed.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Eighteenth Day.

The apostles were certainly in a worthy condition to receive the Holy Ghost; they received Him in His fulness, and the effects of His coming were soon manifest in them. They could no longer contain themselves in silence in that upper chamber; they were [348] compelled to give utterance to the truth. They received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, gifts which are the result of the enlightenment coming from the Spirit of God. We do not receive the Holy Ghost in the form of fiery tongues at Confirmation, but we receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, piety, fortitude, and fear of the Lord. Let us see what these gifts are, that we may know that we possess them, and by our study develop them, that they may not remain idle in our souls. We must stir up the grace that is in us; we must, during this month, pray that these gifts may find opportunities for exercise. The apostles showed in their lives that these gifts were theirs in all perfection. In a lesser or greater degree we may possess them also, for these virtues should be in every Christian soul as a result of the visitation of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Nineteenth Day.

The gift of understanding enables us to appreciate the beauty of all revealed truths. It is not like faith, by which we implicitly

accept God's revelation, but it gives us the reasons for making an act of faith; it will show us that our faith is true, because it shows us on what foundation the truth rests. Even after Our Lord's resurrection the disciples showed that they did not understand what they had been told. They did not understand the Scriptures,
[346] for Our Lord had to upbraid the apostles for their incredulity and hardness of heart. Did He not reproach the two disciples returning to Emmaus with a slowness of understanding, because they were still wavering in the faith of the crucified Jesus? The apostles needed the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, in order to comprehend the Scriptures and the prophecies made concerning their Master. The gift of understanding shows us the necessity of virtues in ourselves, so that we may be willing to study them and to acquire them; it shows us the goodness of others and makes us appreciate their labors; it gives us insight into the order of things, that we may submit ourselves to authority and be docile to the teachings of the Church.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Twentieth Day.

The gift of wisdom is a superior discernment of good and evil; it gives men a real taste and predilection for all that is good and holy, all that is connected with God and divine things; it turns their eyes to God, and teaches them to look at everything from God's point of view. It makes them love prayer, recollection, good conversation, and good reading. This is a great gift of the Holy Ghost, and one that seems to prefigure our predestination, because it places before our minds so vividly the necessity of doing good in order to go to heaven. How little of this heavenly wisdom do we generally possess! Wise enough are we in the
[347] ways of the world; we know how to make money, and to hoard

it up; but we care little how to gain spiritual treasures. Do we not class ourselves with the children of the world by our smartness in gathering earthly goods? Our Lord said the children of the world were wiser in their generation than the children of light. He praises them, not to have us imitate them, but to put us on our guard against the false wisdom which is so easily acquired. The apostles, in the beginning of their election to the apostolic life, had not that heavenly wisdom, for they had very worldly ideas about the kingdom which they thought Jesus was to establish on earth.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Twenty-first Day.

Knowledge is the possession of truth. When our mind is well stored with information we are said to have knowledge. The same may be said of spiritual knowledge, only it refers to spiritual things. We have knowledge, then, in a spiritual sense, when we put together our experiences and draw practical conclusions from them when we realize that God created the world, and that we were created to save our souls. Hence we ought to use the world, not for our own exclusive enjoyment, nor for the purpose of amassing wealth, but for the greater glory of God. We know that we were placed on the earth, intelligent beings, to praise and serve God. It was in virtue of this knowledge that St. Ignatius declared that all the world around him recalled God to him. We too must see God in all things, and never lose sight [Pg 300] of the end of our creation; those who love the world for its own sake cannot love God; we cannot serve God and Mammon; we know from our own bitter experience that as soon as we love the world, we have lost the love of God, and without the love of God it is impossible to go to heaven. The absence of this

spiritual knowledge makes us impatient because we have not all the things we want, and we resist His holy will.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Twenty-second Day.

The gift of counsel contains all that is good in human prudence, and much more. It leads us always to pause and to turn our thoughts to God before we act; we avoid precipitation, rashness, and inconsiderate impulses. It makes us calm and deliberate, and teaches us never to act in any important matter without seeking guidance from God. This gift also shows us that it is God's will to run counter to what the world considers prudent. So Abraham did when he left his home at God's command, and went to the land which God chose for him, where the people of God were to live together and he was to be their spiritual as well as their real father. So David, when a poor boy, went out at God's command to fight the giant, armed only with a stone and sling. Judith was moved by the same impulse when she went to the camp of Holofernes, and brought his head back into the city. It is also our duty that when we know the will of God we do it generously, no
[349] matter what difficulties may beset our paths. The gift of counsel will also put into our mouth that encouragement for others which will help them to lead a life of virtue and patience, remembering that the trials of life last but a short time.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Twenty-third Day.

The Holy Ghost also infuses into our soul the gift of piety that loyal, tender, filial affection towards God as Our Father. You have received, says St. Paul, the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: Abba, Father. Rom. viii. 15. By this sacred gift we forget ourselves and cling only to God, Who is our support and help. We love God, and serve Him with alacrity, because He is Our Father in heaven. If I am a son of God, loyal to my Father in heaven, every act of mine, every thought, is centred in Him. Such was the intense love of the apostles for Our Lord; from the time when He chose them, the virtue of piety was implanted in them, though it was only perfected after the death of Christ. It was after the ascension of Our Lord, when the Holy Spirit had fully inspired this virtue in their souls, that they began to have a filial affection towards Our Lord, a keen attachment of love and affection. Do we realize the meaning of the gift of piety? We ought to be anxious to possess this virtue, because it makes the burden of the service of God easy: where there is love, there is no labor. [350]

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Twenty-fourth Day.

The gift of fortitude is necessary in some degree to one who is anxious to save his soul. All Christians are called on, at some time or other, to endure in the practice of their religion things for which mere human courage will not suffice. Those who desire a high place in heaven have a hard struggle before them, a struggle which would be beyond the power of many of us if we did not rely on the Holy Ghost. The gift of fortitude is the power to be strong of soul as the athlete is strong of body; for as a man hardens and develops his frame by all sorts of physical exercises, so also should the soul develop the good that is in her which is

the highest good by spiritual exercises. Of her own power she is not able to do great things, but by the work of God the Holy Ghost she can do them. We can bear heavy sorrows with patience and resignation; we can rise out of vices and evil habits by means of fortitude, when without this virtue we would remain slaves of Satan. How pusillanimous were the apostles in the beginning of their apostolic career; there was a disgraceful weakness exhibited at the Passion of Our Lord. Peter denied Our Lord, and the rest fled and hid themselves.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

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Twenty-fifth Day.

The gift on which we wish to meditate to-day in honor of the giver, the Holy Ghost, is the fear of the Lord. Remember that it is said that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; we need then this holy gift, that by it we may remain in subjection and reverence to the adorable majesty of God. We acknowledge our littleness and leave ourselves entirely in the hands of God; we are afraid of committing sin, we are cautious, lest by an act or thought we may offend almighty God; we are careful to submit ourselves to His holy will; we see our faults, and we lament that we are so full of sin, when we ought, with His grace, to improve in His service. We must stand in dread of the Judgment and also of ourselves, because we fall so readily into sin that we know not whether we are worthy of love or hatred from almighty God; but when we fall it is our own fault, for we depend too much on ourselves; we are wicked because we prefer evil to good, and would rather serve the devil than God. Let us learn this salutary fear of God, and acquire a delicacy of conscience.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Twenty-sixth Day.

We have now meditated on the gifts of the Holy Ghost. We see how generous the adorable Spirit is. He is constantly giving Himself and yet is never exhausted, so that we are rich indeed by the goodness of the Holy Ghost. Our mind is enlightened, [352] and we pray to the Holy Spirit to open our hearts and to enkindle in them the fire of divine love. Before all our actions we call on the sacred Spirit to help us, so that our actions may be done well, an honor to God and a source of merit to ourselves. On the feast of Pentecost we celebrate other gifts: as the gift of language, which is the means by which the Gospel is spread all over the world. Again was given by the Holy Ghost the gift of healing. The first Christians were able to work miracles. We have lost confidence; had we the same strong faith many wonders would also happen at our bidding.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Twenty-seventh Day.

The Holy Ghost has also other gifts in store for us, gifts which are called fruits as if from this divine tree were growing a variety of different virtues, diffused from united efforts. There must be some result from this expenditure of power, and when we are good Christians we will certainly enjoy these gifts and fruits: they will grow on the tree of the Holy Ghost and will be reproduced in our hearts. These fruits are twelve in number: Charity, joy,

peace, patience, benignity, goodness, long-suffering, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, and chastity. Charity is a love and kindness towards all mankind; we love all the members of the human family and we are interested in their welfare; we are continually searching for means to help them, and all for the one
[353] purpose: the good of their immortal souls. By this virtue we are moved to share our goods with others, contenting ourselves with what is necessary. Another beautiful fruit of the Holy Ghost is eternal joy. Our souls are continually rejoicing in God, Who is our great reward.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Twenty-eighth Day.

Peace is a gift of the Holy Ghost, somewhat similar to joy; if we have peace nothing can disturb our soul; even if we are afflicted we are not out of humor, for we see that it is the will of God, Who is our kind Father, and that everything is for our special benefit. We are at peace with our fellow-creatures, for we are not actuated by inordinate ambition, nor by grasping avarice, so that we are loved by all. Patience is a gift of the Holy Spirit by which we endure the ills of the flesh without a murmur and with resignation. What a beautiful virtue and gift we have in this. We love the virtue in others, and we must endeavor to possess it also in ourselves, so as to be a spectacle of patience to men and angels. With benignity, goodness, and mildness, we meet others and charm them with our kindness; they are virtues that result from the thorough practice of charity; it is the combination of these virtues that makes true Christian politeness. What a beautiful world this would be if every one in it would be imbued with these sentiments.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

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Twenty-ninth Day.

Faith is a holy gift of trust in God, in His holy revelation, in the Church, her precepts and teaching, her discipline, and her devotions. We realize and form our conduct on these matters of faith, so that they become the foundation of our hope and our consolation in trials. God becomes to us a living reality, not a vague speculation; and the Church the representative of God on earth, the spouse of Jesus Christ. The just man lives by faith and in the faith; he is full of the trust, the justice, and the mercy of God. Modesty is a fruit of the possession of the Holy Ghost, because by it we are retired, unassuming, caring nothing for the show and allurements of the world. Prayer, meditation, and pious reading should be our favorite occupations, in which we would find a great deal of pleasure; our duties would be well performed, because we would set our whole mind on them in all the quietness of our soul. Continency and chastity are also the result of the presence in our soul of the Holy Spirit; we abhor the pleasures of sensuality, and keep ourselves pure from all contamination, according to the state of life which we have chosen or in which we find ourselves.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Thirtieth Day.

The fruits and gifts of the Holy Ghost may be easily seen in the effects the apostles experienced at the coming of the Paraclete. As we noticed, the apostles were rather worldly in

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their perceptions of the divine intentions; they manifested their frailty in many ways during the life of Christ, so that they were even publicly rebuked by Our Lord. But now they have become apostolic men; they love poverty, and are content to work at their humble trade in order not to be a burden on the newly made converts. As St. Peter asserts, He desired the money of no man. They love sufferings, from which they had so often shrank before. They understand that to suffer for Christ was great glory and consolation they who before had been narrow, selfish, and ready to condemn others, now become full of charity to all the world. Into their heart the Spirit of love has descended, and their motto becomes charity towards others. The charity of Christ is the one motive of all they think and do.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Thirty-first Day.

We see another great change in the apostles by means of the presence of the Holy Ghost; they surprise us by the bold stand they take before the Jewish authorities. We know they were timid and cowardly at the apprehension of Our Lord, and were almost scandalized at His death on the cross. Now they challenge the Jews with a freedom of speech that the chief priests are unable to explain; they face the wrath of the Jewish council, the Sanhedrim; and undismayed they say, Judge for yourselves if
[356] it be just in the sight of God to hear you, rather than God. If then the apostles become such perfect men by the influence of the Holy Ghost, is it not worth our while also to remain in prayer and meditation on the power of the Holy Ghost, in order that we too may be changed from such weaklings and become strong Christians? How little have we in us of this Holy Spirit, how unwilling we are to suffer, how prone to avoid all that is opposed

to our natural inclinations! This should be different; and it can only be different by heeding the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. With this intention and for this purpose let us devote some time, now and then, to the stirring up within us of the grace of the Holy Ghost.

Prayer.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, etc., etc.

Litany of the Holy Ghost.

(For Private Devotion Only).

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Holy Ghost, hear us.
Holy Ghost, graciously hear us.
God the Father of heaven, Have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, Have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost, Have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, Have mercy on us.
Holy Ghost, Who proceedest from the Father and the Son, Have mercy on us.
Holy Ghost, co-equal with the Father and the Son, Have mercy on us.
Promise of the Father, most loving and most bountiful, Have mercy on us.
Gift of the most high God, Have mercy on us.
Ray of heavenly light, Have mercy on us.
Author of all good, Have mercy on us.
Source of living water, Have mercy on us. [357]

Consuming fire, Have mercy on us.
Burning love, Have mercy on us.
Spiritual unction, Have mercy on us.
Spirit of truth and of power, Have mercy on us.
Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, Have mercy on us.
Spirit of counsel and of fortitude, Have mercy on us.
Spirit of knowledge and of piety, Have mercy on us.
Spirit of the fear of the Lord, Have mercy on us.
Spirit of compunction and of penance, Have mercy on us.
Spirit of grace and of prayer, Have mercy on us.
Spirit of charity, peace, and joy, Have mercy on us.
Spirit of patience, longanimity, and goodness, Have mercy on us.
Spirit of benignity, mildness and fidelity, Have mercy on us.
Spirit of modesty, continence, and chastity, Have mercy on us.
Spirit of adoption of the sons of God, Have mercy on us.
Holy Ghost, the Comforter, Have mercy on us.
Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier, Have mercy on us.
Who in the beginning didst move over the waters, Have mercy on us.
By Whose inspiration spake the holy men of God, Have mercy on us.
Who didst overshadow Mary, Have mercy on us.
Who didst co-operate in the miraculous conception of the Son of God, Have mercy on us.
Who didst descend upon Him at His baptism, Have mercy on us.
Who, on the day of Pentecost, didst appear in fiery tongues upon the disciples of the Lord, Have mercy on us.
By Whom we are also born again, Have mercy on us.
Who dwellest in us, Have mercy on us.
Who governest the Church, Have mercy on us.
Who fillest the whole world, Have mercy on us.

Holy Ghost, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst renew the face of the earth, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst shed abroad Thy light into our hearts, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst write Thy law in our hearts, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst inflame them with the fire of Thy love, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst open to us the treasures of Thy grace, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst teach us to ask for them according to Thy will, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst enlighten us with Thy heavenly inspirations, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst keep us to Thyself by Thy powerful attractions, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst grant to us the knowledge alone necessary, We beseech Thee, hear us.

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That Thou wouldst help us to love and bear with each other, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst lead us in the way of Thy commandments, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst make us obedient to Thy inspirations, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst teach us to pray, and Thyself pray within us, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst clothe us with love and compassion towards our brethren, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst inspire us with a horror of evil, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst direct us in the practice of good, We beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst give us the grace of all virtues, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst cause us to persevere in justice, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst be Thyself our everlasting reward, We beseech Thee, hear us.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Spare us, O Lord!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Graciously hear us, O Lord!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Have mercy on us, O Lord!
Holy Ghost, hear us,
Holy Ghost, graciously hear us.

V. Create a clean heart in us, O God.
R. And renew a right spirit within us.
Let Us Pray.

Grant, O merciful Father, that Thy divine Spirit may enlighten, inflame, and cleanse our hearts; that He may penetrate us with His heavenly dew, and make us fruitful in good works. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Hymns to the Holy Ghost.

Veni, Creator Spiritus.

Come, O Creator, Spirit blest,
And in our souls take up Thy rest;
Come with Thy grace and heavenly aid
To fill the hearts which Thou hast made.

Great Paraclete, to Thee we cry,
O highest gift of God most high,
O Fount of life, O Fire of love,
And sweet anointing from above.

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Thou in thy sevenfold gifts art known;
The finger of God's hand we own;
The promise of the Father Thou,
Who dost the tongue with pow'r endow.

Our senses kindle from above,
And make our hearts o'erflow with love;
With patience firm and virtue high
The weakness of our flesh supply.

Drive far from us the foe we dread,
And grant us Thy true peace instead;
So shall we not, with Thee for guide,
Turn from the path of life aside.

Oh, may Thy grace on us bestow
The Father and the Son to know,
And Thee through endless times confess'd
Of both th' eternal Spirit blest.

All glory, while the ages run,
Be to the Father and the Son
Who rose from death; the same to Thee,
O Holy Ghost, eternally! Amen.

Come, Holy Ghost.

Come, Holy Ghost, send down those beams,
Which sweetly flow in silent streams
From Thy bright throne above.
Come, Thou, the Father of the poor,
Thou bounteous source of all our store;
Come, fire our hearts with love.

Come, Thou, of comforters the best,
Come, Thou, the soul's delightful guest,
The pilgrim's sweet relief.
Thou art our rest in toil and sweat,
Refreshment in excessive heat,
And solace in our grief.

O sacred Light, shoot home Thy darts,
Oh, pierce the centre of these hearts,
[360] Whose faith aspires to Thee.
Without Thy Godhead nothing can
Have any price or worth in man;
Nothing can harmless be.

Lord, wash our sinful stains away,
Water from heaven our barren clay;
Our wounds and bruises heal.
To Thy sweet yoke our stiff necks bend,
To inflame our cold hearts Thy fire send;
Our wandering feet repel.

Oh, grant Thy faithful, dearest Lord,
Whose only hope is Thy sure word;
The seven gifts of Thy Spirit.
Grant us in life to obey Thy grace,
Grant us in death to see Thy face;
And endless joys inherit. Amen.

Act Of Oblation To The Holy Ghost.

On my knees, before the great cloud of witnesses, I offer myself, soul and body, to Thee, eternal Spirit of God. I adore the brightness of Thy purity; the unerring keenness of Thy justice; and the might of Thy love. Thou art the strength and the light of my soul. In Thee I live and move and am. I desire never to grieve Thee by unfaithfulness to grace; and I pray with all my heart to be kept from the smallest sin against Thee. Make me faithful in every thought: and grant that I may always listen to Thy voice, and watch for Thy light, and follow Thy gracious inspirations. I cling to Thee, and give myself to Thee, and ask Thee by Thy compassion to watch over me in my weakness. Holding the pierced feet of Jesus, and looking at His five wounds and trusting to His precious blood, and adoring His opened side and stricken Heart, I implore Thee, adorable Spirit, helper of my infirmity, so [061] to keep me in Thy grace that I may never sin against Thee with the sin which Thou canst not forgive. Give me grace, O Holy Ghost, Spirit of the Father and the Son, to say to Thee, always and everywhere, speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth. Amen.

The Office of the Holy Ghost.

At Matins.

V. The grace of the Holy Ghost illuminate our senses and hearts.

R. Amen.

V. O Lord, open Thou my lips.

R. And my mouth shall declare Thy praise.

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn.

The Holy Ghost our souls invest
With grace that does o'ershade the best
Of Virgin maids, when from the spheres
An angel came to greet her ears.
The Word divine did flesh become,
And fruitful made a virgin womb.

Ant. Come, Holy Ghost, replenish the hearts of Thy faithful, and kindle in them the fire of Thy love.

V. Send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created.

R. And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Prayer.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, that the virtue of Thy Holy Spirit may be present within us, which may both purify our hearts, and defend us from all adversities; through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who with Thee and the same Holy Ghost liveth and
[362] reigneth. Amen.

At Prime.

V. The grace of, etc. (as before).

Hymn.

Christ, born of Mary, that blest Maid,
Was crucified, was dead, was laid
Within a tomb, from whence He rose,
And did His person soon disclose
To His disciples, in whose sight
He soar'd above the starry height.

The anthem, verse, response, and prayer as before.

At Tierce.

V. The grace of, etc. (as before).

Hymn.

God sent from heaven the Holy Ghost
Upon the day of Pentecost;
He did the apostles' minds inspire,
Inflaming them with tongues of fire.
He would not have them orphans left,
When of the sight of Christ bereft.

The anthem, verse, response, and prayer as before.

At Sext.

V. The grace of, etc. (as before).

Hymn.

With sevenfold grace God did enrich
The apostles, then, by means of which
They did both speak and understand
The language of each distant land.
To preach Christ's faith they then disperse
Themselves throughout the universe.

The anthem, verse, response, and prayer as before.

At None.

V. The grace of, etc. (as before). [363]

Hymn.

The consoling Spirit He
Entitled was true charity,
The gift of God, a fire inflamed,
The vivifying fountain named,
A spiritual unction, sevenfold grace,
A free gift of celestial race.

The anthem, verse, response, and prayer as before.

At Vespers.

V. The grace of, etc. (as before).

Hymn.

The right hand finger of Our Lord,
His spiritual power to us afford
A safe defence against all evil,
That harm'd we be not by the devil.
Protect us, nourish us, and bring
Us under shelter of Thy wing.

The anthem, verse, response, and prayer as before.

At Compline.

V. The grace of, etc. (as before).

V. Convert us, O God Our Saviour:

R. And avert Thy anger from us.

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me. Glory be to the Father, etc.

Hymn.

Vouchsafe, O holy Paraclete,
To pour into our souls Thy light,
And to direct us in our ways,
That when to judgment God shall raise
The sleeping world, He bid us stand
Upon His right and saving hand.

The anthem, verse, response, and prayer as before. [364]
Commendation.

These hours canonical, to Thee,
O Holy Ghost, addressed be,
With piously devoted heart.
That to our souls Thou mayest impart
Thy inspirations, and that we
May live in heaven eternally. Amen.

Novena to the Holy Ghost.

First Day: Fruits Of Charity And Joy.

Veni Creator.

Let us prostrate ourselves before the majesty of the most Holy Trinity, and uniting our dispositions with those of our blessed Lady and the holy apostles in the upper room at Jerusalem, let us say one Our Father and one Hail Mary, to obtain, by the merits of Jesus ascended, the fruits of the Holy Ghost charity and joy.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

O most holy Spirit, the Paraclete, we adore Thee with all humility; and with the most lively affections of our hearts, we beseech Thee to assist us in this Thy novena, that we may rightly prepare ourselves to receive Thy heavenly gifts. We cannot, O divine Spirit, receive Thee without Thine own aid preventing

us. Without Thee we cannot please Thee. Do Thou then, Who didst prepare the heart of Mary to receive the Word Incarnate, vouchsafe so to dispose our hearts that we may happily conceive the blessed flames of Thy love. Amen.

O let us fall and worship Him,
The love of Sire and Son,
The consubstantial breath of God,
The co-eternal One!

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Ah! see, how like the Incarnate Word,
His blessed self He lowers
To dwell with us invisibly,
And make His riches ours.

Most loving Spirit! Mighty God!
Sweet must Thy presence be,
If loss of Jesus can be gain,
So long as we have Thee!

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, and kindle in them the fire of Thy love.

V. Send forth Thy spirit, and they shall be created.

R. And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Burn, O Lord, with the fire of Thy Holy Spirit our reins and our hearts, that we may serve Thee with chaste bodies, and please Thee with clean hearts; through Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the unity of the same. Amen.

May the blessing of almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, descend upon us now, and abide with us always. Amen.

Second Day: Fruits Of Peace And Patience.

Veni Creator.

Let us prostrate ourselves before the majesty of the most Holy Trinity, and uniting our dispositions with those of our blessed Lady and the holy apostles in the upper room at Jerusalem, let us say one Our Father and one Hail Mary, to obtain, by the

merits of Jesus ascended, the fruits of the Holy Ghost grace and patience.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

O sweetest and most dear Mother Mary, behold us at thy feet, and having kissed them a thousand times with the lips of our [306] hearts, we humbly implore of thee a favor more needful for us than all else in the world. Since thou art the spouse of the Holy Ghost, the dispenser of His treasures, and His sweet stewardess, since thou hast been enriched beyond all other creatures with His heavenly gifts, obtain for us, as thou didst obtain for the apostles, His coming into our hearts; and for this end obtain for us the grace to imitate, so far as in us lies, the examples of thy humility, thy purity, thy charity. Amen.

O let us fall and worship Him, etc.

Come, Holy Spirit, etc.

V. and R. Send forth Thy Spirit, etc.

O God, to Whom every heart is open and every will speaketh, and from Whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the infusion of the Holy Ghost, that we may perfectly love Thee and worthily praise Thee; through Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the unity of the same. Amen.

May the blessing, etc.

Third Day: Fruits Of Benignity And Goodness.

Veni Creator.

Let us prostrate ourselves before the majesty of the most Holy Trinity, and uniting our dispositions with those of our blessed Lady and the holy apostles in the upper room at Jerusalem, let us say one Our Father and one Hail Mary, to obtain, by the merits of Jesus ascended, the fruits of the Holy Ghost benignity and goodness.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

Most holy prince of the apostles, blessed St. Peter, behold us at thy feet, to implore thy aid in obtaining the Holy Spirit. We, indeed, have been unfaithful to Our Redeemer, not three times [307]

only, as thou wert, but thousands and thousands of times; so that we could not hope that the spotless Dove would vouchsafe to descend into our poor souls, stained with so many sins; yet thine example, blessed apostle, gives us boldness. Thou didst weep bitterly, and with thy tears wert so cleaned as to receive all the gifts of the divine Paraclete. We too desire to bewail our sins with bitterest grief like thine, while we humbly implore thine intercession to obtain for us, first of all, cleanness of heart, and then the gift of the Holy Ghost, for which we yearn most earnestly. Amen.

O let us fall and worship Him, etc.

Come, Holy Spirit, etc.

V. and R. Send forth Thy Spirit, etc.

O God, Who hast taught the hearts of Thy faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us by the same Spirit to think the things that be right, and ever to rejoice in His consolations; through the same Jesus Christ. In the unity of the same. Amen.

May the blessing, etc.

Fourth Day: Fruits Of Long-Suffering And Mildness.

Veni Creator.

Let us prostrate ourselves before the majesty of the most Holy Trinity, and uniting our dispositions with those of our blessed Lady and the holy apostles in the upper room at Jerusalem, let us say one Our Father and one Hail Mary, to obtain, by the merits of Jesus ascended, the fruits of the Holy Ghost, long-suffering and mildness.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

[368] O blessed and happy apostles of Our Lord, who in the upper room did receive the Holy Spirit with such fulness that thou wert sweetly inebriated with divine love, we congratulate thee with the most humble and lively affection, and contemplate thy graces with a holy envy. We beseech thee, by that love which thou dost bear the Holy Spirit, Who thus filled thee with His special benedictions, obtain for us efficacious aid rightly to practise that

brotherly concord, that continual prayer, and that tender devotion to Mary, whereby we can obtain, even as thou didst obtain, the coming of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

O let us fall and worship Him, etc.

Come, Holy Spirit, etc.

V. and R. Send forth Thy Spirit, etc.

May the infusion of the Holy Spirit, O Lord, purify our hearts, and by the inward sprinkling of His gracious dew make them fertile in all good works; through Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the unity of the same. Amen.

May the blessing, etc.

Fifth Day: Fruits Of Faith And Modesty.

Veni Creator.

Let us prostrate ourselves before the majesty of the most Holy Trinity, and uniting our dispositions with those of our blessed Lady and the holy apostles in the upper room at Jerusalem, let us say one Our Father and one Hail Mary, to obtain, by the merits of Jesus ascended, the fruits of the Holy Ghost, faith and modesty.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

O eternal Father, how shall we ever bless and praise Thee sufficiently, or thank Thy goodness as we ought? A thousand times blessed be Thine infinite charity, Thine infinite providence, and [169] Thine infinite mercy, which moved Thee to repair our miseries, and to give unto us a gift wherein is contained all the good that proceedeth from Thee! Thou hast given us also the Holy Ghost, Who proceedeth from Thy will as Thine uncreated love. What can we seek for more? And what shall we give unto Thee for so great a gift? O Lord, vouchsafe, we beseech Thee, of Thy clemency to take for Thine own all our understanding, all our will, all ourselves, and that little for all eternity. Amen.

O let us fall and worship Him, etc.

Come, Holy Spirit, etc.

V. and R. Send forth Thy Spirit, etc.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, that the Paraclete, Who proceedeth from Thee, may enlighten our minds, and, according to the promise of Thy Son, may lead us into all truth; through Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the unity of the same. Amen.

May the blessing, etc.

Sixth Day: Fruits Of Continence And Chastity.

Veni Creator.

Let us prostrate ourselves before the majesty of the most Holy Trinity, and uniting our dispositions with those of our blessed Lady and the holy apostles in the upper room at Jerusalem, let us say one Our Father and one Hail Mary, to obtain, by the merits of Jesus ascended, the fruits of the Holy Ghost continence and chastity.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

Most holy, most divine Spirit, if there be any souls in the world more needful of Thine aid than others, it is surely ours, [370] blinded by passions, chilled with obstinate lukewarmness, and defiled with a thousand imperfections. Come, then, O divine Spirit! come and enlighten us; kindle our fervor, and destroy in us all that is displeasing in Thy sight. The greater our miseries are, so much the more glorious will be Thy triumph over our perversity. Come and create in us new hearts, which shall have all for God, and nothing for the world. Create in us clean hearts, O God. Amen.

O let us fall and worship Him, etc.

Come, Holy Spirit, etc.

V. and R. Send forth Thy Spirit, etc.

Grant unto Thy Church, O merciful God, that she, being gathered together in the Holy Spirit, may be in no wise disturbed by the incursions of her enemies; through Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the unity of the same. Amen.

May the blessing, etc.

Seventh Day: Descent Of The Holy Ghost Upon Mary At The Annunciation.

Veni Creator.

Let us prostrate ourselves before the majesty of the most Holy Trinity, and uniting our dispositions with those of our blessed Lady and the holy apostles in the upper room at Jerusalem, let us say one Our Father and one Hail Mary in honor of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the ever-blessed Mother of God at the Annunciation.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

Most divine Spirit, the Paraclete, we hardly dare to beseech Thee to come into our souls, knowing well how sinful and defiled they are. It seems an intolerable boldness to invite God, no less a one than God! to be a guest in a lodging so unclean. [371] Yet Thou vouchsafest graciously to reassure us by that infinite goodness of Thine, whereby Thou dost dispose with Thy prevenient graces those hearts which Thou dost condescend to honor with Thy presence. O blessed Spirit, deign to come into us, and delay not Thy gracious coming, while we cease not calling upon Thee and beseeching Thee to console us with Thy long-expected coming. Amen.

O let us fall and worship Him, etc.

Come, Holy Spirit, etc.

V. and R. Send forth Thy Spirit, etc.

We beseech Thee of Thy goodness, O Lord, to pour into our minds the Holy Spirit, by Whose wisdom we were created, and by Whose providence we are ruled; through Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the unity of the same. Amen.

May the blessing, etc.

Eighth Day: Descent Of The Holy Ghost Upon Jesus At The Jordan.

Veni Creator.

Let us prostrate ourselves before the majesty of the most Holy Trinity, and uniting our dispositions with those of our blessed Lady and the holy apostles in the upper room at Jerusalem, let us

say one Our Father and one Hail Mary in honor of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Jesus at the Jordan.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

Most adorable Trinity, we venture with all humility and awe to approach the lofty throne of your exalted majesty; with our heads prostrated in the dust we adore you, and give you endless thanks for the immense blessings which you have bestowed on us miserable men. We thank Thee, O eternal Father, and Thee, O divine Son, for the gift which you have given us of the Holy Ghost; for in giving us this Love, Who proceedeth from you, you have given us your own selves. We thank Thee, O Holy Ghost, Who art at once the gift and the giver of all gifts, and we most earnestly beseech Thee to give us Thyself. No other gift but Thine own self can satisfy our souls, and having Thee alone we shall have all things. But what can we give Thee in exchange for so great benefits? O blessed Spirit, vouchsafe of Thy mercy to accept for all eternity all our thoughts, all our affections, and all ourselves. Amen.

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O let us fall and worship Him, etc.

Come, Holy Spirit, etc.

V. and R. Send forth Thy Spirit, etc.

Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that we may burn with that fire of the Holy Ghost which Our Lord Jesus Christ sent upon the earth, and which He desired to be vehemently enkindled; through Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the unity of the same. Amen.

May the blessing, etc.

Ninth Day: Transfiguration And Ascension Of Our Lord, And The Manifestations Of The Holy Ghost.

Veni Creator.

Let us prostrate ourselves before the majesty of the most Holy Trinity, and uniting our dispositions with those of our blessed Lady and the holy apostles in the upper room at Jerusalem, let us say one Our Father and one Hail Mary in honor of the transfiguration and ascension of our most dear Lord and Saviour

Jesus Christ, and of the ineffable love of the Holy Ghost in all [373]
His manifestations to His creatures.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

Most holy Virgin and exalted Mother of God, who wast above all creatures disposed to receive the Holy Ghost, and who didst receive Him with greater fulness than all others; dispose, we beseech thee, by thy gracious aid, our cold hearts for the approaching solemnity of Pentecost. We fly to thee, most benignant Mother of sinners, that thou mayest obtain for us a lively contrition for our sins; so that although we cannot receive the Holy Ghost, as innocent, like thyself, yet may we receive Him as true penitents, together with those Gentile penitents who received Him in the upper room. Grant this, most holy Mother, not for our merits, for we have none, but out of thine own exceeding goodness, and that great love which thou bearest to the same blessed Spirit, Who hast chosen thee for His Spouse. Amen.

O let us fall and worship Him, etc.

Come, Holy Spirit, etc.

V. and R. Send forth Thy Spirit, etc.

Grant, we beseech Thee, almighty God, that the splendor of Thy brightness may shine upon us; and that the light of Thy light may, by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, confirm the hearts of those who by grace are regenerate; through Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the unity of the same. Amen.

May the blessing of almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, descend upon us, and remain with us always. Amen.

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September. The Immaculate Heart of Mary.

This month is generally devoted to the consideration of the Heart of Mary and her Seven Dolors. Not only should we have a special devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, but there are good reasons for us to have a devotion to the heart of Mary, so full of love for us, and to her dolors in connection with the redemption of mankind. Her life was full of sorrow, because she was actuated by the same sentiments as Our Lord in His desire to redeem us from the slavery of Satan. What heart, in fact, has ever been so intimately identified with that of Jesus as was Mary's? He died on the cross, and Mary stood beneath it, faithful to the end.

Our Lord, in His thirty years' ministry, labored among the people, preaching and healing the sick, and Mary was certainly in perfect sympathy with Him in His great work. We are struck with the adorable goodness of His divine Heart, and for the same reason we are attracted to the heart of Mary.

We will, then, during this month of September, pray to the heart of our beloved Mother, setting before our minds the goodness of that loving heart towards her children in this vale of tears. Let us love and honor these two hearts so intimately united; let us go to God the Father through the Heart of Jesus: and to the divine Saviour through the heart of Mary. We can obtain all things from the Father and the Holy Ghost through the Heart of Jesus; and all things from the Son through the heart of His blessed Mother.

Considerations and Prayers for Every Day.

First Day.

Nowhere in the Old Testament, do we approach God more closely than in the book of Job, where we see the great prophet of God enduring so patiently the many sufferings that God has [375] permitted; and nowhere do we recognize Him as the great Father good and kind to His children as in the same book. Job was a figure of Christ. There is something very holy in suffering endured in compliance to the will of God. To-day, then, we are to begin to think of Mary's sorrowful heart, and we will contemplate how the mysterious ways of Providence, the love of God, His mercy and kindness, inflicts chastisements on the Mother of His much loved Son. In the silence of the thirty years of Christ on earth, in the silence of the hours of agony on the cross, and in the silence of Mary underneath the cross, we will see the silence of a heart filled with sorrow, which God is imposing on His children for the good of mankind. The Church sets before our minds the seven sorrows of Mary, telling us the principal causes of her great grief in the life of Jesus.

Prayer.

O heart of Mary, I offer, I consecrate to thee my heart! Thou shalt be the object of my veneration, love and confidence; I will pay thee my devotions every day; I will celebrate thy feasts with joy; I will proclaim thy greatness and thy goodness without ceasing. I will neglect no means of obtaining for thee the honor and the homage which are due unto thee. I will bring all the thoughts and affections of my heart into conformity with thine, and I will make it my duty to imitate thy virtues, especially thy purity and thy humility. Vouchsafe, O Mary, to open thy heart and receive me therein. Amen.

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Second Day.

Mary's sole enjoyment in this world was the presence of her divine Son. One never reads of her enjoying what the world calls recreation. The life of Mary was full of deep love and holy virtue, and when trials came she patiently and sweetly endured them for the love of God. It was meet, she knew, that she should suffer, for her intimate connection with the Son of God made suffering necessary. The first sword of sorrow which pierced her heart were the words of Simeon in the Temple. When the days of her purification were passed, Mary, according to the Law of Moses, came to the Temple, bearing in her arms the Infant Jesus. The spirit of God manifested in Jesus and Mary was a spirit of obedience to the Law of the time in which they lived. In comparison to Mary, the angels' purity became dim, and still she subjected herself to the ceremony of purification. The law presupposed impurity, but in Mary we know that there was not the least stain of sin or imperfection. Humbly she carried the Lord to the Temple; and humbly, too, Joseph walked by her side, bearing the two turtle doves for a sacrifice and a ransom for the Child Jesus, which was also according to the Law.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Third Day.

The aged arms of the feeble old priest embraced the Child, and all turned to enter the building. Simeon bore the weight of the
[377] Creator of heaven and earth, yet stood erect, strengthened and consoled. The advent of that Child must have given the old man a manifestation of the greatness and the glory of heaven, and unspeakable joy must have shone forth from his countenance. Then old Simeon remembered the revelation which he had received from the Holy Spirit: that he would not see death until he had held in his arms the anointed of the Lord; and now he bears Him,

a feeble child. He finds it hard to return that precious burden to Mary, who stands there with motherly solicitude, yearning to receive back again her beloved Child. But the flood-gates of thanks to almighty God have been opened, and Simeon's heart and lips break forth in a most sublime and prophetic song. Zachary sang his Benedictus at the circumcision of St. John; Mary sang her Magnificat at Elizabeth's home, and now Simeon pours forth his soul in a sublime prayer: Now Thou dost dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word in peace: because my eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples: a light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Fourth Day.

But now he changes his words of joy into a sorrowful prophecy; the aged priest proceeds: Behold, this Child is set for the fall and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted: and thy own soul a sword shall pierce that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed. Mary was silent, but [378] a cloud of fear for the future passed over her, as Simeon foretold all that was to afflict her. This was her first sorrow: to be told that her Child was to be set for the fall and redemption of many. A sea of trouble flooded the soul of Mary; it seemed as if Jesus Himself was causing that sorrow, and sent it directly into her heart. But Mary was brave, as she was through all her sorrows; there was no change in her. The Light of the world had burst out, in the arms of Simeon, and then followed a dreadful darkness. Suddenly Mary found herself far from the joys of Bethlehem in the darkness of Golgotha, but she was just as resigned in her sorrow as she was content in her joy. Mary understood now that

the life of her divine Son was to be a constant martyrdom, and that the end of it would be the death on the cross.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Fifth Day.

This was the great sacrifice that Mary made of her beloved Son. She was resigned to the will of God, though she knew the unavoidable future. She had given to God a sacrifice in every way equal to God; never had such a sacrifice been made from the beginning of the world. She had surpassed the angels in constant prayer, she had made a more acceptable offering than the ancient priests of God: because here was offered to God, Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, and the equal of God
[379] the Father. It was in sympathy with her divine Son and out of love for mankind that Mary offered this holy sacrifice. He was her Son, and yet, from this moment, she was not to possess Him as her own; she was only to guard the Victim for the day of the great sacrifice. Mary knew that it was not for her joy and consolation that Jesus was born; it was for a higher purpose that He came into the world. She resigned all the joy His coming brought to her, and offered Him a sacrifice to almighty God. Her heart is full of wounds as she sees the persecutions of the Jews, the infidelity and hardness of heart of many.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Sixth Day.

What lessons may we draw from the first sorrow of Mary, from the prophecy of Simeon, which changed her whole future life?

The sorrows of Mary lasted all her lifetime; she suffered without looking for consolation; she suffered in the depth of her heart, supported only by God's goodness. Mary's griefs were intimately united to the sufferings of Jesus; her sorrows were caused by His sufferings, and with these Mary was in perfect sympathy. It is in this way that we should live, and suffer our trials and troubles in perfect union with those of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Saviour. We can make of them a perfect sacrifice to God, simply because they are connected with a little pain. We must consider ourselves happy if God chastises us in this world, because He intends to make us better; we suffer because we have sinned; sin claims a punishment and we should be satisfied to be punished for our sins, and to give some atonement for them; they can hardly be [331] called sacrifices when they are well-merited punishments. Still it is possible, even while we justly suffer for our sins, to make our sufferings more meritorious by uniting them to those of Our Lord. With joy we can look up to the Mother of sorrows, and suffer, like her, with patience and resignation.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Seventh Day.

The second sword of sorrow that pierced the heart of Mary was the flight into Egypt. Simeon was the author and instrument in the hand of God of the first sorrow; Joseph was the great figure in her second sorrow. It seems to heighten whatever sufferings we may have to undergo when they are caused by those whom we love. This was the case now, and this sword of sorrow was so much the more cruel as the visitation did not seem to come from God, but from the cruelty of men. In this sorrow the hand of man was raised against the Lord, to put Him out of the way. It was like the crucifixion on Mount Calvary, for His death was intended,

and on Calvary really executed. Mary and Joseph had to make arrangements for the hasty journey to an unknown country, in order to guard the Infant Jesus from the persecutions of Herod. Mary had to go to a country where there was no worship of the true God; there were temples only of impure idolatry. Alone, destitute, and wandering about, there was no human consolation in this exile; she was deprived of the practice of her religion,
[381] her spirit yearned after the courts of the house of God, with the multitude of worshippers gathered there on feast days; she loved the ceremonies of the old synagogue. In this secret sorrow she passed the days of her exile, until God relieved her by permitting her to return.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Eighth Day.

The most sorrowful feeling produced in the heart of Mary by her exile in Egypt, was caused by the thought of the hatred man had conceived against the Lord. This adorable Child carefully concealed every manifestation of His divine power. There was never on this earth a more lovable object than this Child, and yet man had turned against Him from the very first moment of His birth. It caused her heart great suffering to see that mankind did not appreciate the presence of the Incarnate Word; that it neglected the consideration of God's goodness towards it. But how much more does she suffer when she beholds Him an object of persecution! He is a fugitive from the society of those very people whom He comes to save. All this Mary must have felt; for she loved her divine Son with a great natural love, and watched over Him with motherly solicitude. She loved Him also with a divine love, for she knew He was the Son of God, the Redeemer of mankind. This second sword of sorrow was not the transient

realization of a mystery, which took place and then was over. No, it was a lasting sorrow, spreading itself over her whole life, for that persecution lasted until He died on the cross amid the shouts of an unfeeling people. [382]

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Ninth Day.

The flight into Egypt has ever been a fruitful source of meditation for devout souls; it is a beautiful but at the same time a sorrowful event in the life of Christ. We, the descendants of the heathens, date God's visitation to us from this time, because Our Lord fled from His own people and visited those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death. With His presence He sanctified the heathen country, and with it all the dark continents of the world where God's name was not known. Amid these benighted people He, at least for a time, found a refuge and found peace. The three Wise Men had departed for their own country without notifying Herod of the success of their search for the King of Jerusalem. This stirred up his cruel spirit, and with a murderous will he tried to destroy the Child. The streets of Bethlehem were stained with the blood of the little ones, but the Child Jesus, as we know, was not harmed. What a sorrow was caused by the coming of Christ! Mary knew of it, for the sound of the wailings of desolate mothers had been carried to her ears, and her heart must have been touched by their cries. But to these children what a happy day it was, on which they gave their lives for the Infant Jesus! It was their baptism of blood; the world was in sorrow, but there was joy in heaven.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

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Tenth Day.

At the command of the angel, Mary and Joseph took the Child, and promptly entered upon their journey to Egypt. Without anxiety for the future, they were in no trepidation at leaving Bethlehem. Mary wrapped the Child in clothing to protect Him from the cold and pressed Him to her bosom; they then went forth into the starlit night. Poverty has not many preparations to make. The secret path which they took in this flight was one indicated by Providence. They at length arrived on the way that led to the desert, passed the boundaries of the land of Palestine, and wandered then, quietly on, until they appeared but moving specks on the wide expanse of the sands. Joseph and Mary cared tenderly for the Infant Jesus on their journey. He was the object of their continual love. Only scanty provisions had they taken with them, and water was scarce in such a region. At last they came to the shores of the Red Sea, and saw the waters that rolled between their own country and their destination. The Holy Family remained several years in Egypt, until the cruel tyrant, Herod, had died.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Eleventh Day.

The angel of the Lord again came to Joseph, and bade him take the Child and its Mother and return to the land of Israel, for those who had sought after His life were dead. Nobody took much

[384] notice of their departure; the Holy Family were too insignificant

from a human point of view to trouble any one. They made the journey back again through the desert with the same difficulties besetting the way, until at length their eyes fell on the hills of their own country: that land which God had chosen for His people. They would gladly have entered Jerusalem on their way to Nazareth, but Archelaus, the son of Herod, was reigning there, and Joseph considered it prudent to avoid that city. No doubt he had recourse to prayer for enlightenment what to do, and had received a response from heaven that he should continue without delay his journey to Galilee; then their journeyings were to be at an end, and they could live peaceably and without fear in Nazareth, a home chosen by God for the sojourn of His divine Son for nearly thirty years.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Twelfth Day.

In this sorrow of the Blessed Virgin, her flight into Egypt, we should call to our mind first of all, the poverty and destitution of the Holy Family in their exile. We would not be her devout and loving children, nor would we be followers of the Lord, unless we showed a sympathy for the sufferings endured during this event of Our Lord's life; unless we impressed them on our minds by pious meditation. This poverty which the Blessed Virgin endured was a part of her sorrows, and we, her children, will not forget what she must have felt for Our Lord in these reduced [336] circumstances. Think of the hot winds of the desert, and the thirst they could not quench when, weary and footsore, they travelled on through that sandy waste. Another great concern of Mary's was, that the sins of mankind had deprived God of His glory in the incarnation of His divine Son. Good souls feel this very much, that God is not known and honored as He ought to be; still

there is no comparison between the feelings of the saints and that of the Blessed Virgin. She lived a divine life, and was intimately concerned in the providence of God, and so felt the ingratitude of man all the more.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Thirteenth Day.

What lesson may we draw from this second sorrow of Mary in Egypt? An important one is this, that sufferings and trials, if they come from God, are far better for us than great consolations. To be well convinced of this truth we must be thoroughly imbued with a spirit of faith. Even pious people rebel when they think they suffer without having deserved it. How many, instead of profiting by tribulations, become almost blasphemous in their murmuring against God! We may be sure that the little troubles sent us by God, rightly endured, are better for our spiritual welfare than hours of prayer in which the feeling of consolation has a prominent part; who knows whether this luxury which our [386] souls enjoy is not the object that we look for, without regard to our real good or the glory of God?

We also learn from the flight into Egypt that we must not question the designs of Providence in our sufferings. Would we find it amiss if God had worked miracles so that the Holy Family might at least have comfort? But no, He seemed to afflict them without mercy.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Fourteenth Day.

The third sorrow that our blessed Mother endured was the loss of the Child Jesus for three days. According to the Law, the Jews living in the neighborhood of the holy city had to make a pilgrimage three times a year, in order to celebrate the great feasts. They had to go on the feast of the Pasch, which was instituted to commemorate the deliverance from the bondage of Egypt; the second feast was that of the weeks, corresponding to our Pentecost, and the third feast was the feast of the tabernacles, where the devout of the nation thanked God for all the mercies shown them during the year. It was at one of these feasts of the Passover, or Pasch, that Jesus, Mary, and Joseph journeyed to Jerusalem. The Pasch must have been a feast of peculiar significance to the members of the Holy Family, for they knew what it really meant to them. There was to come a Pasch at which the principal actor of the feast would be Jesus, Our Lord. He certainly had that last Passover before His mind, and no doubt St. Joseph was also informed of the future. Mary, certainly, [337] could not be ignorant of that great event in the future life of her divine Son.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Fifteenth Day.

As they journeyed on to Jerusalem, that future Passover of the sorrowful Passion must have been pictured vividly in their minds. They saw the boy of twelve years at their side, and they loved the Saviour of mankind with a sincere, adoring love; more and more did they love their good Jesus, Who was already making a sacrifice of Himself to His heavenly Father. They remained during the days of the feast in the neighborhood of the Temple, fulfilling the duties of their religion; and when the time came for their departure, Mary and Joseph travelled separately, Joseph

with the men and Mary with the women. Mary thought that Jesus was with Joseph, and Joseph thought that He was with Mary. They journeyed a whole day without being aware of His absence; but when evening came and they, on inquiry, found that the Child was not with them, they were overwhelmed with grief. They returned to Jerusalem, and for three days sought Him through the city; at length, on the third day, they went to the Temple, and there they found the divine Child, sitting among the doctors, as the Scriptures say, teaching them, and asking them questions.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

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Sixteenth Day.

During the days of His sojourn in Jerusalem, what was the occupation of the Lord? He prayed long and fervently in that Temple, in that Holy of holies, in that house which His Father had chosen as His dwelling-place on earth. Our Lord's whole occupation was prayer. He prayed for the people of God, that they might acknowledge Him as the Redeemer of mankind. The doctors of the Law were there, picturing to themselves and to their audience the greatness of the coming Messias, from the very Scriptures which described His humiliations and modesty. Did Our Lord set them right by making them explain the discrepancies which they could not help noticing in the prophecies? The modesty of the Lord won all hearts, and so His time passed in the service of God. Mary and Joseph ran with joy to their beloved Son, and the Mother, embracing Him, remonstrated with Him, saying: Son, why hast Thou done so to us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee, sorrowing. Then He answered: Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business? He then went home

to Nazareth with them, there to continue to do the will of His Father.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Seventeenth Day.

The sorrow of this event consisted mainly in the fact that Mary and Joseph had lost, perhaps through their own fault, the Child Jesus. They did not know whether it would be according to di[339] vine Providence that He would ever return to them; they thought that perhaps He had gone to the desert, as had St. John. This separation caused Mary terrible agony. It shows us how hard it is to lose Jesus, Our Lord, because He is absolutely necessary to us. By sin we lose Jesus; by love we regain Him, and the danger that we may again lose Him is enough to make us feel very sad. Mary's great suffering in this separation makes us understand the magnitude of the evil of losing Jesus. But how little do we feel that separation, especially when it is caused by our sins! It is always our own fault when Jesus goes away from us. He would not leave us, only that we force Him from us, and the means we use to conquer God, to make Him capitulate, is sin. To bring Him back again we must be active in our search, regret the evil we have done, and weep tears of real sorrow. Thus we invite our friend Jesus back again into our soul.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Eighteenth Day.

Let us now consider the fourth sword of sorrow which pierced the heart of Mary. No wonder we venerate in Mary a goodness

of heart so great. We have seen how this noble heart has been moved by the contemplation of the future sorrows of her Son; how she was so intimately united with Him, that she suffered for our sake as He did. And we know that Our Lord suffered and died for no other cause than our redemption. In the fourth
[390] sorrow we come closer to the Passion. We are transferred to the time when Jesus, after the Last Supper, was apprehended by the cohort, judged by Pilate, and delivered over to the Jews for crucifixion. The cross was laid on His bleeding shoulders, and, crushed under its weight, He painfully makes His way towards Calvary in company, or rather in a procession of curiosity-seekers, of friends and of foes; the object of derision to some, of pity to others. On His journey He meets His holy Mother. The cruel soldiers allow the meeting, and a temporary rest. A painful scene takes place between the Mother, and the Son Who is being led to execution.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Nineteenth Day.

Mary enjoyed the wonderful grace of being intimately united with Our Lord in His sufferings. She was present in spirit when Jesus was in the agony in the Garden of Gethsemani. She knew of the betrayal of Judas; she felt the ingratitude of that apostle, and the pain it gave the good Master. Mary sympathized with Jesus when He was scourged and cruelly treated the night of His Passion. She could count the strokes of the scourges; she saw the soldiers crown Him with thorns and strike Him in the face. She knew that Our Lord was placed before the people that they might look on His miserable condition, and feel compassion for Him; and she heard the voice of Pilate, Behold the man! She
[391] heard the mob demand His death, not satisfied by the tortures

inflicted upon Him. Into the depths of her soul went the cry, Crucify Him, crucify Him! His blood be upon us, and upon our children. St. John, the beloved disciple, came at last to the Blessed Virgin, and brought the news of the condemnation of the Lord and of His immediate crucifixion; they went out to meet Him in His painful journey to Calvary.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Twentieth Day.

We have seen how sufferings of the Lord were communicated to Mary. Mary's tears are mingled with His. Have we no share in them? Are we not to think of them, and feel them? We have been the cause of Mary's sufferings, because being sinners we brought about the death of Jesus Christ. Should we not then, when we have recognized this fact, make the contemplation a source of shame, repentance, and sorrow? We have been the cause of this grief to Mary, and certainly we should, at least, have a devotion to her sorrowful heart. How can we do this better than by performing all our daily actions for the greater glory of God? Every day is a step nearer eternity, and every day we should meet Jesus, and work with Him. When we are in doubt and perplexity Jesus approaches us of His own accord, as He did the disciples on their way to Emmaus. What crosses shall we meet on our way each day? We know not. But this we know, that when we meet Jesus, we will meet our cross, for He is bearing His. How many meet the Lord, but turn away from Him when they see Him in [302] such a pitiable condition? They would rather be with Him in His joy than in His sorrow.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Twenty-first Day.

The world is a mystery. Life, death, time, good, evil and miseries, are mysteries to us. The crucifix is the solution of them all. It is a consoling contemplation when we are in trouble. When we have sinned it brings tears of repentance to our eyes, and gives us the hope of salvation; it is a source of love; it is a light in darkness; it is a solemn exhortation without words. O blessed cross, cause of the fifth sorrow to Mary! help us to have a joy in the cross in this life, that we may be led by it to a happy eternity. The way of the cross is now ended; the summit of Mount Calvary is reached about midday. The city of David is close by and the crown of glory of this city is now to be taken away. But the life of Christ is to crown it by its end, making it a still holier city than it ever has been. The soldiers tear the garments off the body of Jesus, and prepare for the execution by nailing Him to the cross. Mary hears the strokes of the hammer as the nails are driven through His hands and feet into the wood. Every stroke is a dreadful wound inflicted on her sorrowing heart; who should feel it more than this Mother witnessing the execution of her Son?

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

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Twenty-second Day.

The first hour of the three during which the Lord hung on the cross was passed in silent endurance; in prayer, in offering the sacrifice of His life for all mankind. Then darkness begins to gather. Mary approaches the cross, and stands near the suffering Saviour. The executioners mock Him, they cast lots for His garments; their cruel words and their coarse jokes fall on Mary's ears

and fill her soul with pain. Mary was to see and feel everything, as well as the Lord. The whole hour passed, and Jesus was silent; the second hour began its martyrdom and we hear the voice of Christ, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do, a prayer which soothed the heart of Mary, for it was the voice of mercy. The third hour Jesus began to grow weaker; the loss of blood produced a great thirst, and He cried out, I thirst. And Mary knew that Jesus thirsted for souls; and that she could help this thirst by her prayers. Thus during those three hours Mary stood beneath the cross; it was the fifth sword of sorrow that pierced her soul.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Twenty-third Day.

At this time Mary became our Mother, for Jesus recommended us to her in the person of St. John; it was His last will and testament; it was the end of thirty years' communication between Mother and Son. Mary, like Jesus, had at heart the salvation [324] of mankind, and now she feels authorized to have an interest in all humanity. She takes all under her protection; new sources of inexhaustible love were opened in her heart. Our Lord gave her the grace to love humankind as He loved them. Another circumstance to be considered in the sword of sorrow which Mary endured beneath the cross was her silence. She did not faint, nor cry out in despair. She was perfectly resigned to the will of God. What God demanded of her she performed without a murmur, and so she stood at her sorrowful post, determined to do His holy will as she had done it all her life; the more God asked of her, the more she was willing to give.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Twenty-fourth Day.

There is a great lesson in this sorrow of Mary: that we must learn how to bear our crosses in this life. We must not throw them away; we must not come down from Calvary until we are crucified, and then we and the cross are inseparable. Calvary is a place where much impatience is manifested; many go up well enough, and carry their cross with perseverance, but when it comes to lie down on that cross, and be nailed to it, they go away again, forgetting their duty, though it was duty that brought them that far; they are only half-crucified souls. We do not rob them of the merit of what they have done, but they might have done more. They have lost their courage because they did not observe
[395] the silence that Jesus preserved in His crucifixion; they were too much distracted; silence is the atmosphere of the cross. We shall contemplate two individuals on Calvary: Jesus and Mary. They teach us how to die. Jesus would certainly have spared His Mother the scenes of His sufferings unless it were good for her to witness them. She is to be with Jesus in His hour of death; she is also to be with us in our last hour. Then we too will thirst, and our soul will yearn for strength, which we will draw from the last sacraments and from Mary's presence.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Twenty-fifth Day.

We can never understand the crucifixion unless we study it under Mary's guidance, because she is part of it and it cannot be represented without her. Oh, let us have a filial pity for her in her sorrows; let us feel a sympathy for her, especially as she stands beneath the cross. Let us pray to this sorrowful Mother, and imitate her in the very important lesson there taught: that is, to

pray for the poor departing souls. Every moment, throughout the world, several souls pass from this life; it is their last opportunity to make their peace with God. Let us have the devotion, which is so charitable, to pray for the departing souls and recommend them to the mercy of God. If our prayers may be effective for a special grace in their regard, why should we not pray with fervor and for the love of God? Send Mary to them; she is continually saving souls. We also should be zealous to save them by frequently praying to God for this intention.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Twenty-sixth Day.

The sixth sorrow in the life of the Blessed Virgin was the taking down of Our Lord from the cross. We read in the Scriptures, They shall look upon Him Whom they have pierced. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus boldly, as is said, went to Pilate, and demanded the body of Christ, that they might give Him a decent burial. They drew the nails from the wounds of the hands and feet of Our Lord, and respectfully took Him down from the cross and placed Him in the arms of Mary. With great respect did these men and their servants approach the cross and handle the body. Who can describe their feelings during the pious work in which they were engaged? It was like the respect and adoration we show to the Blessed Sacrament. Each instrument of the Passion, still moist with the blood of Jesus, was laid near the sorrowful Mother, who kissed them and preserved them. Who had a better right to them? They were the first and holiest relics which the Church venerated. Now the body has been lowered far enough, that St. John may let His head rest on his shoulder. Mary knelt, and stretching out her arms she received the precious weight of His body on her breast. At last she held Him again, Whom as an

[397] Infant she had fondled in her arms! O Mary, now thou lookest upon the beautiful but disfigured face of thy Jesus!

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Twenty-seventh Day.

We must admire in Mary her wonderful steadfastness in her terrible sorrows. She might have allowed herself to be so overwhelmed with grief and despair that she would break out into shrieks and lamentations to relieve her heart; but she was a silent, kind, sweet sufferer. The saints have always loved the Passion of Our Lord, and have become familiar with it. Mary was familiar with it; she had suffered just this very torture, long before receiving the body of her beloved Son in her arms after the crucifixion. She knew it was the will of God, and that was the only thing she regarded. She was resigned to its operations. We too must think of the Passion of Our Lord, and meditate upon it until we grow as familiar with it, and love it, as did the saints. Why should we do so? Because we have sinned, and by sin have caused all these sufferings to Our Lord and to His blessed Mother, Mary. She was innocent of the sufferings of her Son; she had never committed a fault. We, who are guilty of sin, ought to do penance, ought to suffer, and be resigned to both.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

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Twenty-eighth Day.

The burial of Our Lord was the source of the seventh sorrow of Mary. When the tomb had been prepared, the sheets spread out, and the ointments placed, Joseph, Nicodemus, John, Magdalen, and Mary, the Mother, in the depth of the night wended their way slowly from the height of Calvary, to the burial place of Joseph, which was just outside the walls of the city. Everything at the burial proceeded with great care and caution and in silence, the scene lit up by the dim light of a solitary torch. There lay the body, pale in death; the eyes closed, the lips set. All bent down in adoration before that adorable body. Joseph, then, with the help of the others, rolled the stone to the mouth of the tomb, and silently went to the city. Mary and John again visited the place of crucifixion, and gathered up the nails and crown of thorns; they also, that Friday night, went into the city of Jerusalem. The guard of soldiers sent by Pilate were already at the tomb, and sealed the stone so that the least interference might be detected.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Twenty-ninth Day.

What was particularly sorrowful, in this seventh affliction, was the great sense of desertion that Mary felt, as if left by God; her good and adorable Son gone from her sight and buried. The days of the Passion, the death and the burial, must have so exhausted the life of the good Virgin that now she was near giving up the spirit. Every suffering that she had to endure seemed to culminate in this supreme moment. It is the last sword of Simeon's prophecy. No one can describe the sufferings of Mary, and no one can describe the sanctity with which she bore up in all these trials. But, O Simeon, thou didst assert that having seen the Lord, thou wert now ready to leave this world. But this last sorrow did not announce the end to Mary; she was to suffer on for years. There

seems to be nothing human or frail in Mary's sufferings. Her character grows upon us, in nobility most exalted, and in patience never wavering. Man shows his feebleness at some time, but Mary seemed to grow stronger, purer, and more beautiful.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Thirtieth Day.

What lessons are we to learn from this seventh sorrow of Mary, the culmination of all her troubles and trials? One is that we should love God and be faithful to Him, with a more unselfish attachment. Mary left the tomb in which Our Lord was hidden from her sight without a murmur, resigned to the will of God. She might have persuaded herself that she should remain there, but God desired it otherwise, and she departed from the place which held her all. It is hard, but true, that God's will must be done in everything. Another lesson from the contemplation of
[400] the sorrow caused by the separation from Our Lord was the bitterness of the separation. Oh, how bitter it is to be away from Jesus! Is there anything to make up for that loss? Terrible is the darkness of the hour when Christ is absent. It is a hell upon earth. And thus we have made a history of the life of Mary, and have followed her through her wearisome pain, until now we leave her ripe for heaven. The time has come in which God will call her to an eternity of honor and glory.

Prayer.

O Heart of Mary, I offer, etc., etc.

Exercise in Honor of the Sorrowful Heart of Mary.

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

1. O most sorrowful Mary, I compassionate the grief of thy tender heart at the prophecy of the holy old man Simeon. O beloved Mother, through that afflicted heart obtain for me the virtue of humility and the gift of the holy fear of God.

Hail Mary.

2. O most sorrowful Mary, I compassionate those afflictions which thy most sensitive heart endured during the flight into Egypt and the dwelling there. O beloved Mother, by thy deeply troubled heart obtain for me the virtue of liberality, especially towards the poor, and the true gift of piety.

Hail Mary.

3. O most sorrowful Mary, I compassionate that intense [p. 1] distress which thy anxious heart experienced in the loss of thy dearest Jesus. O beloved Mother, by that deeply troubled heart obtain for me the virtue of chastity and the gift of knowledge.

Hail Mary.

4. O most sorrowful Mary, I compassionate the consternation which thy maternal heart experienced when thou didst meet Jesus bearing His cross. O beloved Mother, by that deeply troubled heart obtain for me the virtue of patience and the gift of fortitude.

Hail Mary.

5. O most sorrowful Mary, I compassionate that martyrdom which thy generous heart endured in witnessing the last agony of Jesus. O beloved Mother, by that martyred heart obtain for me the virtue of temperance and the gift of counsel.

Hail Mary.

6. O most sorrowful Mary, I compassionate that wound which thy mournful heart endured from the lance which tore the side of Jesus and wounded His most loving Heart. O beloved Mother, by thy pierced heart obtain for me the virtue of fraternal charity and the gift of understanding.

Hail Mary.

7. O most sorrowful Mary, I compassionate the convulsion which thy most loving heart experienced at the burial of Jesus. O beloved Mother, by this extreme grief of thy sacred heart obtain for me the virtue of diligence and the gift of wisdom.

Hail Mary.

V. Pray for us, O most sorrowful Virgin.

[402] R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray.

Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, that the Blessed Virgin Mary, Thy Mother, may intercede for us with Thy clemency, now and at the hour of our death, who at the hour of Thy Passion was pierced in her most holy soul by the sword of sorrow; grant this, O Jesus Christ, Saviour of the world, Who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, world without end. Amen.

A perpetual indulgence of three hundred days, applicable to the dead, to all Christians every time they shall recite the above exercise in honor of the sorrowful heart of the most holy Virgin.

Rosary or Chaplet of the Seven Dolors.

Act Of Contrition.

O my Lord, Thou Who alone art most worthy of my love, behold me standing before Thy divine presence utterly overwhelmed by the many grievous injuries I have done Thee. I ask Thy pardon for them with my whole heart, repenting of them purely for love of Thee, and, at the thought of Thy great goodness, hating and loathing them above all other evils of this life. As I would rather have died a thousand times than have offended Thee, so now I am most firmly resolved to lose my life rather than offend Thee again. My crucified Jesus, I firmly purpose to cleanse my soul as soon as possible by Thy most precious blood in the Sacrament of Penance. And thou, most tender Virgin, Mother of mercy and Refuge of sinners, do thou obtain for me the pardon of sin by virtue of thy bitter pains[403] whilst praying according to the mind of so many holy Pontiffs in order to obtain the indulgences granted to this, thy holy Rosary, I hope thereby to obtain remission of all pains due to my sins. Amen.

First Dolor: The prophecy of Simeon. One Our Father and seven Hail Marys.

Second Dolor: The flight into Egypt. One Our Father and seven Hail Marys.

Third Dolor: The loss of Jesus. One Our Father and seven Hail Marys.

Fourth Dolor: Her meeting Jesus carrying His cross. One Our Father and seven Hail Marys.

Fifth Dolor: Her standing beneath the cross on Calvary. One Our Father and seven Hail Marys.

Sixth Dolor: Her receiving on her lap the sacred body of Jesus. One Our Father and seven Hail Marys.

Seventh Dolor: Her witnessing the burial of the sacred body of Her Son. One Our Father and seven Hail Marys.

In honor of the tears shed by Our Lady in these dolors, three Hail Marys.

V. Pray for us, O most sorrowful Virgin.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray.

Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, that the Blessed Virgin, Thy Mother, may intercede for us with Thy clemency, now and at the hour of our death, who in the hour of Thy Passion was pierced in her most holy soul by the sword of sorrow; grant this, O Jesus Christ, Saviour of the world, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, world without end. Amen.

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October. The Angels.

Both in the Old and in the New Testaments the Holy Scriptures teach us that the angels exist and protect us: many examples are cited and facts related, from which we may conclude that this is so. True, we do not see the angels, and rare are the actual manifestations of their power, or their existence; hence some people deny that order of spirits.

But by a merciful dispensation of divine Providence, we know that the angels are active among us, that they shield us from evil, and draw heavenly favors upon us. They are ever ready to serve God; there are also spirits who care for each individual on earth guardian angels.

Suarez is of opinion that Our Lord, in His adorable humanity, had a number of angels to wait on Him. Our guardian angel does his work not less effectively, for Our Lord tells us to be in dread of scandalizing a child, because of his angel who is always at his side.

At the time of the birth of Our Lord a multitude of the heavenly choir sang, Glory to God on high, and peace to men of good-will. During this month we celebrate the feast of the angel guardian; it has been considered so important that the whole month is set aside to the devotion of the angels. The Church encourages us in this devotion, for in the breviary she has authorized a votive office in honor of these heavenly spirits, on every Monday when there is no special festival to be celebrated, so that we may be continually reminded of the great truth that our guardian angel is always at our side.

Considerations and Prayers for Every Day.

First Day.

[405] The name angel means a messenger; this name is given to these spirits because they have been used by almighty God for that duty; they have been sent by God to disclose His will to man. God could, of course, do His will by His own power. He needs no angel, but for that matter He needs no creature. Still, in His infinite kindness, He called rational creatures into existence, and has given them a most honorable employment. Their ordinary work is like what our own will be, or like that of the saints now in heaven: to see, love, bless, and enjoy God forever by a blessed immortality. Penetrate, then, in your mind, the eternity of time, when God in His love created pure rational creatures, who had a spirit like His own, intelligence unencumbered with a body, and having no necessities. He placed them near His throne in heaven, and now they announce in their celestial adornments the omnipotence, love, and wisdom of their almighty Creator. They sing perpetually of the sanctity of God, and render Him glory. Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God of armies. Hence the Council of Lateran teaches authoritatively, God created together, at the beginning of time, out of nothing, both classes of creatures, spiritual and corporal, the angelic and material, and then the human.

Prayer.

O angel of God, my guardian dear,
To whom His love commits me here.
Ever this day be at my side,
To light, to guard, to rule, and guide.

Second Day.

God, says the great preacher Bossuet, wished to create spirits like Himself, pure and immaterial, living by intelligence and love. [406] Spirits that would know and love Him as He knows Himself and loves Himself, and who would be happy in simply knowing and loving this first great Being. For that very reason they bear on their natures a divine character, after God's image and likeness. O God, who can doubt that Thou could create spirits without a body? or is there need of a body that one might understand, love and be happy? Thou, O God, Who art Thyself a pure spirit, art Thou not incorporal and immaterial? Are not intelligence and love spiritual and immaterial operations, which can be exercised without a body? The creation of the angels, then, was a manifestation of God's omnipotence, as it is also omnipotence to call human individuals into existence, and to give them knowledge, so that they can serve and glorify God.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Third Day.

The angels are part of the universal creation outside of God, and were created in the beginning of time. St. Thomas, the great theologian, saysThe angels are a part of the universal creation, and form a regular grade in that creation.Now no part can be perfect when separated from its belongings, and we are sure God's works are perfect; but the angelic world would have stood by itself, separated and isolated from the rest of creation, if it had been made before the sensible world. The number of angels is very great. God did not stint Himself in giving lavishly of [407] His benefits. These pure spirits inhabit space, and move about in choirs of immense numbers. Thousands upon thousands

ministered to Him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before Him. Dan. vii. 10. These figures certainly point to an almost infinite number. Count if you can the sands on the seashore, the stars in the firmament, and when you think you have reached a definite calculation, you are far below the real existing number. God pours out lavishly the abundance of His omnipotence and love. Prodigality is a characteristic of all the divine works. We cannot meditate on the countless multitude of the angels without astonishment.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Fourth Day.

God has not made all the angels alike. We know from the Scriptures that there are distinctions which we do not exactly understand. Some are angels, others archangels, others dominations, virtues, etc. St. Jerome writes, "Among the invisible creatures there is a manifold and an indefinite diversity." It is natural to suppose that not only did God exert His omnipotence in the production of myriads of beautiful spirits, not only did He make them the most perfect of their kind for the purpose for which they were intended, but that He also diversified them. God almighty not only gave these intellectual beings existence, but He also gave them a knowledge by which, with their own
[408] intelligence, they could rise to a most exalted contemplation of His infinity. What glory do not these intelligent beings bring to God's throne! What beautiful homage do they not pour forth in His presence! What exultation there must be in their study of God, constantly discovering something new and unnoticed, going deeper and deeper into the depths of the wonders of God! Let us also rejoice with the angels, and love to study the adorable

perfections of God: let us be fond of reading of and hearing about God.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Fifth Day.

The angels speak to one another, and their conversation is concerning holy things. The Scriptures tell us that the seraphim cry one to another, Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of hosts! Isa. vi. 3. The angels also speak to God in prayer and adoration; they praise His power, they extol His majesty, they beseech His clemency, they consult His wisdom. And they can also speak to men, as the archangel Gabriel did to Mary. Faber tells us, in wonderful words, what he thought of the power of the angels:

Cast your eye over that outspread ocean, whose shores lie so faintly and far off in the almost infinite distance. It gleams like restless silver, quivering with life, and yet such multitudinous life! It flashes the light with intolerable magnificence. Its unity is numberless, its life is purest light. Into the bosom of its vastness the glory of God shines down, and the universe is illuminated with its refulgence. It is an ocean of life. Who can count [409] the sum of being that is there? Who but God can fathom its unsearchable caverns? What created eye but is dazzled with the blazing splendor of its capacious surface? Grand storms of voiceless praise hang over it forever, whose very silence thrills the soul of the human saints.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Sixth Day.

The power of the angels is immense. The Scriptures tell us that they destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, by raining fire and brimstone upon them. They destroyed the army of Sennacherib, when every soldier felt the keen edge of the angel's sword; they strangled the first-born of the Egyptian people in one night. The devil, by permission from God, raised storms that tore down the houses in which Job's sons and daughters were feasting, burying all in the ruins. He afflicted Job with a most filthy disease, and robbed him of all his possessions to try to make him revolt against God. When Our Lord freed those who were possessed by the devil, the evil spirit asked to be permitted to enter a herd of swine, and when it had received the permission the swine rushed headlong down the hill into the sea and were destroyed. If then, the power of these spirits is so great for evil, the angels are more powerful for good. We will be friends with our good angels whom God has sent to perform favors for us, favors both temporal and spiritual; we will hate the devil, and with the help
[410] of God's grace resist his power.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Seventh Day.

The angelic world is most beautiful. St. Augustine says in his City of God, The angelic world in its natural dignity surpasses all other things the Lord has made. Consider this intelligence by which they know so many things so perfectly, the great power by which they can do good to their fellow-creatures, the brightness of those wonderful spirits shining like the glorious luminaries of our universe, the wonderful gifts which almighty God furnished them, and we have a picture of such harmonious glory that all the beauty of the world, all the magnificent actions of the human kind, dwindle into insignificance before this great creation of

angelic spirits. In Ezechiel we read of the admirable beauty of the devil that had fallen: Thou wast the seal of resemblance, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou wast in the pleasures of the paradise of God: every precious stone was thy covering ... gold the work of thy beauty: ... Thou wast a cherub stretching out thy wings and covering, and I set thee in the holy mountain of God, thou hast walked in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day of thy creation, until iniquity was found in thee. Ezech. 12-15. And Isaias the prophet exclaimed with regret at the fall of Lucifer: How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, who didst arise as the morning.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

[411]

Eighth Day.

Faber speaks in the following terms of the rational creatures of God, including men and angels: God became a King by becoming a Creator. Thus He gained an empire over which His insatiable love might rule. Nature is very beautiful, whether we think of angelic or human nature. Created nature is a shadow of the uncreated nature, so real and so bright that we cannot think of it without exceeding reverence. Yet God created neither men nor angels in a state of nature. This is, to my mind, the most wonderful and most suggestive thing which we know about God. He would have no reasonable nature, even from the very first, which should not be partaker of His divine nature. This is the very meaning of the state of grace. He would not have it to breathe for one instant in a merely natural way. The very act of creation was full of fondness, of paternal jealousy. O that majesty of God, which seems clothed with such wonderful tranquillity in the eternity before the creation!

Prayer.
O angel of God, etc., etc.

Ninth day.

Not only do the angels praise almighty God, pray to Him, and converse with Him, but they do it much more effectually than we do because of their greater purity, and because they know God better than we do. Hence the question might be asked, what
[412] do the angels know of God, and of religion as it is among us? The answer is that they know what we know, and much more; still there are some things too great because too infinite, even for the intelligence of angels. Can the angels understand God? No, indeed. God is infinite, and no finite mind can comprehend Him. They know that God is one, because even we, in our inferior intelligence, know that there can be but one God; they know too, that there are three divine persons, but it will ever remain a mystery to them as well as to us, because it is a truth of such infinite dimensions; but they understand it much more distinctly than we do. It is probable that the angels knew the mystery of the incarnation by divine revelation, and they believed in it. St. Thomas and other theologians are of opinion that the bad angels fell because they would not submit to the belief in the hypostatic union. It was therefore fitting, for the glory and honor of the Son of God, Who was to be made flesh, that the angels should know this mystery.

Prayer.
O angel of God, etc., etc.

Tenth Day.

Father Faber speaks thus of their knowledge of the precious blood during their term of probation: The angels wonder more than man at the goodness of God in sending us His divine Son to die for us, because they understand it better. From the very first He invited the angels to adore it. He made their adoration a double exercise of humility of humility towards Himself, and of humility towards us, their fellow-creatures. It was the test [313] to which He put their loyalty. He showed them His beloved Son, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, in His sacred humanity, united to a nature lower than theirs, and in that lower nature crowned their King and Head, to be worshipped by them with absolute and unconditional adoration. The Son of a human Mother was to be their head, and that daughter of Eve to be herself their Queen. He showed them in that blood the source of all their graces. The precious blood was as the dew of the whole kingdom of the angels. Well, then, may the angels claim to sing the song of the Lamb: to Whose outpoured human life they also owed so much.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Eleventh Day.

The angels merited the crown of a happy eternity in union with God: For he also, that striveth for the mastery, is not crowned except he striveth lawfully. Tim. ii. 5. Such is the law of God, not only for men but for angels also. Pope Gelasius says, That the angels were so constituted as to merit an increase of eternal glory, is sufficiently indicated by the fact that they stood in need of nothing more, that none of them could have committed evil. And St. Prosper says of their trial, It was the action of the will of the holy angels, that while their companions with their own free will rebelled, they themselves remained faithful in the

[414] dignity wherein God had placed them; and hence it came to pass by a divine and most just judgment, that what was only up to that a holy desire of remaining with God, became thereafter a voluntary and a most blessed necessity of remaining with Him forever. We too should strive continually to merit our crown in heaven; we are placed on trial here on this earth, a place of pilgrimage, and we should remain faithful to the conditions of that trial until our journey is over.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Twelfth Day.

Almighty God loved His angels, and made them His friends and favorites. The Blessed Virgin is placed above them all, as the Church on the day of her assumption proclaims. She is exalted above the choirs of angels in the heavenly kingdom. Here we have to adore the liberality of almighty God, and the mysterious and adorable way in which He distributes His gifts. He fashions the angels in a natural order, and endows them with greater natural perfections than others. Next He raises them in the first instant of creation to the supernatural order by the gift of sanctifying grace. Then comes the time of probation, and He confirms the good forever in glory, bestows on them the beatific vision, happiness, enlightenment, and splendor according to their acts, but still more in proportion to the natural powers, dignity, and excellence of His own divine hand. Here indeed is the potter and the potter's clay spoken of by St. Paul. To man God acts

[415] differently: But the foolish things of the world hath God chosen that He may confound the wise: and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the strong ... that no flesh should glory in His sight. 2 Cor. i. 27-29.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Thirteenth Day.

Oh, what a glory, what a happiness and consolation, were granted to the angels when they had done the will of God! God received His faithful followers with goodness and love, and introduced them into His place of glory, and there He manifested Himself to them and will do so for all eternity. And so the beautiful life of the angels in heaven may furnish us with ample materials for meditation. Our Lord calls our attention to them when He bids us pray that we may do His will on earth, as do the angels in heaven. Faber says,Grace is a better portion than nature for loving God; by grace God can communicate Himself to us supernaturally, by it He gets more love from us, and makes us more able to love Him. O that we had the hearts to know the meaning of this! Surely His love of us should be our measure of love for Him. Well might St. Francis run about the woods crying out, Oh, God is not known! God is not loved! The angels will ever remain in heaven, loving and honoring God, in supreme happiness, in the infinite light of God Himself. Let us also, as some saints have done, offer to God the love of the first choir of seraphim in reparation for all the outrages going on in the world. [416]

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Fourteenth Day.

We have seen the great reward the good angels received for remaining faithful to God. What did the bad angels lose by their infidelity? It was to them a final impenitence, which means the

loss of the power of ever turning to God; which will in its turn be an eternal regret at the loss of God. Listen to the sentence of the reprobate: Depart from Me, ye accursed, into everlasting flames, which was prepared for Satan and his angels. In Holy Scripture we often read of the worm that gnaws and dies not; by this is meant the continual anguish and grief of a soul which has lost God a passionate regret that will seize on it, and never leave it, because the loss is an everlasting one. God spoke, and the depths of hell sprang into existence. Bossuet says that the curse of God against the reprobate contains within itself an imprecation against the unhappy soul, which tears out from the minutest fibres of its being all the capacity it once had to receive enjoyment from bliss, as well as the power to perform the least good action capable of meriting any mercy. This example of the fall of the angels should strike terror into our hearts, and should incite us to pray to the good angels, especially to our guardian angel, so that we may ever remain faithful to the service of God.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

[417]

Fifteenth Day.

It is an inexhaustible subject, the marvels which theology teaches of the holy angels; who can properly describe the power of these pure spirits, the greatness of their intelligence, the fire of their holy love? Their graces, their powers, their gifts, their operations, their works, are so diversified that it is with difficulty the mind of man can conceive them and intelligibly speak of them. In several places in the Scriptures we read of the choirs of angels, archangels, principalities, powers, virtues, dominations, thrones, cherubim, seraphim. Dionysius teaches that there are three orders

of angels three superior, three inferior and three middle: the superior, cherubim, seraphim, and thrones; the middle, dominations, principalities, and powers; the inferior, virtues, archangels and angels. These names are given to them, not for their own sake but for ours; and the individual orders are called from the gifts of grace which they possess. O that we realized that our future eternity is to be with the angels in heaven; that our glory depends on our life here; greater glory for greater work! We should strive to deserve a great place in heaven for the glory of God.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Sixteenth Day.

The angels are engaged in praising and loving God; what this really includes who can tell? or it means a variety of occupation and the greatest liberty of using their free will for the glory of [418] God. The angels occupy themselves according to the meaning of their names. God, in His relations to Himself, is represented by seraphim, cherubim and thrones angels that are devoted to His service particularly; who rejoice not so much in doing their own will, as they are happy in the close association with the splendor of God in heaven. A seraph is a great, pure angel, who shines and burns in honor of God. He represents the love of God; that great love for His creatures which is forever active in our behalf. The seraphs are put in the highest place, as created representations of that wonderful attribute, the charity of God for Himself. The cherubim are placed second; they represent knowledge and wisdom: He was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world.This is Jesus, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, represented by the cherubim. The thrones

represent God in His majesty, sitting on His throne of glory in heaven.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Seventeenth Day.

Thus we may say that the seraphim represents the Holy Ghost; the cherubim, the Word, the Son of God; the thrones, the Father. These choirs of angels are in the immediate presence of God. They are before His throne, and they see Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell over them. M. Olier says: The seraphim proceed from God, as
[419] flames proceed from a furnace, and their circle surround Him as with a fiery blaze. The cherubim are the rays of the divine wisdom, and are, so to say, the eyes of God, under which He seems to regard Himself, and all the external world. The thrones are the image of His sanctity. This hierarchy expresses the three great perfections which we adore in God, namely: His love, His knowledge, and His holiness. These typify also those beautiful operations of grace whereby God draws to Himself intelligent beings; by detaching them from creatures and attaching them to Himself, enlightening them interiorly by His heavenly wisdom, so that they freely follow the guidance of God, and making His throne in their hearts, in their affections, abides there forever.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Eighteenth Day.

Let us consider to-day the angels of the second choir. They are the dominations, principalities and powers. Again their names

are given to them for the virtues they represent, and not from their angelic nature. The three choirs of the first hierarchy were typical of the essential acts of God. The three of the second represent the external acts of God. The dominations represent the power of God. He is the absolute Lord of the universe; He is the Creator, the Maker, and therefore the possessor of all that is. The principalities govern the world, under God, and according to His divine providence. By Me kings reign, and lawgivers decree just things. Hence the duty of this choir of angels is to praise [420] God for the wisdom displayed in His ruling and legislating of the external creation. The angels of power put the laws of God into execution. They reward and punish; they are the representatives of executive power. They praise God in the power manifested in the carrying out of the laws impressed on the material and spiritual world. Should we not learn from these angels to praise the Almighty in all He has done?

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Nineteenth Day.

The third choir of the hierarchy of the angels are the virtues, archangels, and angels. The virtues are the first of these, and represent the acts of God towards individuals. Those works of God which surpass the power of man, such as miracles, or inward movements of grace, are performed by the virtues of the Most High; they hold an intermediate station between heaven and earth. Archangels are the great messengers, whom God has sent to His intelligent creation. The name is given because the goodness and kindness of God have distinguished them from the myriads of other angels, and given them an office, that of bearing to men the words of God; they also carry the prayers of the faithful on earth, and lay them before God's throne in heaven;

and they are sent to conduct souls to the portals of heavenly bliss. The archangels have the duty of protecting the Church; those who occupy high positions in the Church or State are said to be under
[421] the guidance of an archangel. In this manner the higher grade of archangels represents the higher degree of providence shown by God towards individuals. Let us unite ourselves with the choir of the archangels and praise God in them those glorious spirits, that have so perfectly conveyed God's messages to men.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Twentieth Day.

It is a belief which we may prove from the Scriptures, which is corroborated by many facts in the history of the world, and by the belief of ancient people, that God governs the world, even the natural world, through the agency of spirits; to each of whom He was pleased to depute certain offices. He made use of the good angels to maintain order in general, to watch over empires, to protect men, to carry His blessings to them, and to be the executives of His justice. Everywhere Scripture recalls this wonderful ministry of the angels; and there is not an epoch of time in which such a tradition did not exist. We read in the Gospel that Our Lord Himself was tempted by the devil, the fallen angel. Our blessed Lord teaches us that little children are dearer to Him than they are to their own mothers, and He has appointed angels to be their guardians. So great is a human soul in the eyes of God. We have to struggle not alone against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against those who have dominion in this world, and against evil spirits scattered in the air. But in
[422] this struggle we shall be assisted by the good spirits, whom God commissions to look after His beloved creatures.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Twenty-first Day.

In the book of the Apocalypse, we read of the activity of the angels. We see them coming from heaven to earth; they bring down from almighty God orders for salvation as well as for punishment; hence the angels are called ministering spirits, sent for the ministry of our salvation. Especially may we conceive that in the service of the Church the angels are particularly active. We that there are angels who intervene in the oblation, and bear it to the sublime altar of Jesus Christ, angels who are called angels of prayer, and who present before God the petitions of the faithful. St. Michael is the defender of the Church. The ancient Jewish people were protected by St. Michael, also. Other nations had their superior spirits, which are mentioned in the Scriptures as protectors; for the prophet Daniel speaks of the prince of the Greeks, the prince of the Persians, angels who preside spiritually and invisibly over these nations. Are we not also important as a nation, in the designs of God? Whom has God appointed over the affairs of our country? We know there is such a spirit; let us pray to him even without knowing him, for we are sure that our prayers will reach the one appointed by God to protect us.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

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Twenty-second Day.

To each man an angel is appointed for his care: this we can prove from the Scriptures.Their angels in heaven always see the face

of My Father Who is in heaven. Matt. xviii. 10. St. Paul says, Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them, who shall receive the inheritance of salvation? Heb. i. 14. Fallen man needed some help, and almighty God entrusted him to the care of the angels. Even God's power, God's wisdom, and God's mercy demand it. First of all, the power of God demanded that the angels should not only serve Him, but serve His glory in His creatures. God's wisdom demanded that each human being coming into the world should receive a guardian; for the devil has great power over us, and we would not be able to battle against the devil or the flesh without help. God desires to preserve His work: hence God's mercy moves Him in favor of the fallen or those in danger of a fall, like unto a mother full of tenderness for her children. God gave His only Son for the redemption of mankind; precious, indeed, then, is this human soul, if worthy to be purchased by the blood of the Lamb; certainly precious enough, too, to be guarded with care by a superior intelligence.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Twenty-third Day.

Not only the just, but also sinners, have guardian angels. Indeed
[424] it would appear that sinners and infidels need them more, for the sinner is so wayward, and yet God in His kindness wishes to bring him back to good ways, and so the gentle persuasion of a guiding spirit is necessary. The Scriptures do not limit the attendance of the guardian angels to those only who are in a state of grace; therefore it is likely that even after sin the ministering angel remains. While we are good we hardly need the presence of a good spirit; it is when we have turned to evil that we need that precious guide. The belief that a guardian angel attends us ought to impress itself deeply on our minds; we are never alone,

we are taken care of by the ministers of God Our Father, and we have nothing to fear. Even though the world has turned against us, and we are surrounded by trouble on all sides, we are sure that this angel will bring comfort to us. Children should be taught from their early childhood that a guardian angel attends them; it will have a very good effect in shaping their lives.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Twenty-fourth Day.

The guardian angels have certain duties to perform, and we can put them down in this wise. First, the angel guardian defends us from all evil. He can put thoughts into our minds which will put us on our guard against sin. Second, the angels oppose the cunning of the devil, who wants to destroy us. The devil argues in a very crafty manner, and unless we are strengthened by the love and the goodness of God we would be led astray by the [372] devil's superior intelligence. But our guardian angel brings light to the mind, and holds the soul in the desire of good. Third, they offer our prayers to almighty God, as we read in the Apocalypse,

There was given to [the angel] much incense, ... and the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel.

Our angel intercedes for us with God with a personal and special interest, and we, on account of our great sinfulness, need an angel to help us to obtain grace and mercy from almighty God.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Twenty-fifth Day.

We do most assuredly deserve punishment from God, because we do not behave ourselves as we should; like a naughty child, who, notwithstanding good advice and most tender interest, will go wrong, be obstinate and sulky. The good mother chastises the child in the same manner the spirit of God shows his disapprobation, in a gentle manner, for the angel of light would not resort to force, as the demon does in his attacks. We ought to be glad that we have a spirit of wisdom about us that will tell us of our sins; that excites the qualms of conscience, and will give us no rest until we make our peace with God. We often turn a deaf ear to the entreaties of the good spirit; we trample our conscience under foot and abuse it, bring up reasons to combat its correction: we
[426] argue with ourselves in obstinacy, and being left alone, who will gain the victory? The devil and our evil inclinations will gain the day assuredly. Docility to the interior voice is a necessary quality for a good life; to listen to God and spiritual influences ought to be, to say the least, the very natural consequence of a rational soul, tending to God with all its power.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Twenty-sixth Day.

The influence of the angels in bringing us to heaven should be marvellous for that purpose. They have been assigned to our service, to bring our wandering spirits back to God. What a glorious conquest when an angel can snatch a soul from eternal perdition by his prayers and exertions! If the devil is active to gain us, would it not be against reason that the good angel would stand back and remain inactive? The last hours of a man, his judgment, and entrance into heaven, are the moments of the great and final duties of the guardian spirits; and if the soul be detained in purgatory, then the duty of the angel will be to offer the prayers

of friends, relatives and of the Church to almighty God for the good of that soul. And perhaps by the kind possibility of the mercy of God, the angel will descend into the fires of purgatory and will speak consoling, comforting, and encouraging words to the soul whose greatest torment is the separation from God for a time, until its purgation is complete.

Prayer.

O angel of God. etc., etc.

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Twenty-seventh Day.

St. Bonaventure has written extensively on the holy angels, and has meditated on their ways. It was a useful practice to him and helped to sanctify him. He gives us twelve effects consequent to the duty of taking care of us, which these angel guardians manifest and perform. First, they accuse of sin, as we read in Judges ii. 1. Second, they absolve from the debt of sin by inspiring sorrow in the soul, and a firm purpose of amendment. Third, they remove the obstacles that stand in the way of doing good; for the angels strangled the first-born of the Egyptians, who opposed the going away of the Israelites. Fourth, they drive away demons, as is related in the twelfth chapter, of Tobias. Fifth, they teach us in matters of religion. Sixth, they reveal the secrets of God to us. Can I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? Gen. xviii. 17. Seventh, they console us. Eighth, they strengthen us in the way of God. Ninth, they convey and bring back, as we read in Tobias, I will conduct him thither and bring him back to thee. Tenth, they overthrow our enemies Is. xxxvii. Eleventh, they mitigate the violence of temptations. Twelfth, they pray for us, and bear our prayers to God.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Twenty-eighth Day.

During this month we have thought of the nature of the angels,
[428] and their work for human kind; now let us reflect on what we ought to do in return for these attentions. Ought we let them pass, accept them as a matter of course, and pay no attention to them? Many do this. Yet we owe them something. How much, is left almost to our own generosity. We certainly owe them friendship; they are our friends, and are solicitous for our welfare. If I have a friend that does a great deal for me, supplies my wants, and satisfies every wish of mine, I am certainly proud of his friendship, and I will seek every opportunity to be in his company. So should we treat our truest friends, our guardian angels. We should also reverence the angels, because they are greater beings than we are; they are the favorites and friends of God. Then we must have a devotion to them. This devotion we are endeavoring to practice during the month of October.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Twenty-ninth Day.

What goodness does not God evince in giving us angels to watch over us! The princes of earth choose the most learned to train the heirs to the crown; and God gives us guides full of wisdom, science, and purity. He has deputed the princes of His court to watch over us. What high ideas we should conceive of our dignity, then, and how we should realize that we are called to great sanctity! Even a mother's love cannot equal the angels',

and when we go to heaven we will be astonished on reviewing their services. St. Bernard exclaims, O excess of goodness! [429] and love! O admirable condescension! He has given His angels charge over us. The great God of heaven and earth has sent those elevated dignitaries of His heavenly court to watch over us, poor miserable sinners. Why does He do this? What can be His object in so caring for us? It is to His goodness alone we owe all. Let us prove ourselves grateful, then, to Him and to His holy angels, and may we one day join them in their songs of praise and gladness!

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Thirtieth Day.

St. Bernard teaches that we ought to honor and respect our angels on account of their excellence; to love them for their care of us, and to have recourse to them in all our necessities. However weak or miserable we may be, or however terrible the dangers that surround us, we should not fear under the protection of such guardians. There is no better way of securing the protection of the angels than by avoiding all sin, but particularly mortal sin; for when we are at enmity with God they are ready to exterminate us at His command. But they will ever prove faithful friends to the servants of God. How can the angels help loving and aiding those whom they know are dear to God? Our guardian angels often ward off accidents that would cut us off unprepared; after interceding for us to prevent God from calling us out of life, they try to make us bring forth worthy fruits of penance. O holy angels, I entreat you to extend your special care to me during [430] the rest of my life, that I may live in God's friendship and die in His love.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Thirty-first Day.

When the figure of this world shall have passed away, the angels will come and call us to judgment; every human being will then rise again, and hasten to the valley of Jehosaphat. The good will go to the right side, the wicked to the left, the separation made by the angels. Then will the Lord appear in the glory of heaven, surrounded by His angels, and the judgment will take place. Happy shall we be if we are judged to be as pure as the angels, and will ascend with them to paradise, ever to be associated with them. Then will come our exceeding great reward; we shall see God face to face for all eternity. We shall form choirs for the praise of the Almighty, alternating with the angels. We shall know God, love Him, rejoice in Him, and praise Him. Then, for the first time, we shall love God above all things, our joy shall be without measure because we shall have a particular joy for everything that is in God. We will praise God with all our heart, with all our strength, with all our power, with all our faculties. Happy are they that live in Thy house, O Lord, for they will praise Thee forever and ever. Here youth never grows old; here there is life that knows no end, beauty that never fades, love that never cools, joy that never ceases. Let us then, while on earth, lead the life of angels, be as pure as they, as obedient to God's [431] will as they, and pray to them daily that they help us to this much-desired perfection.

Prayer.

O angel of God, etc., etc.

Litany of the Holy Guardian Angel.

(For Private Devotion Only).

Lord, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
God the Father of heaven, Have mercy on us
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, Have mercy on us
God the Holy Ghost, Have mercy on us
Holy Trinity, one God, Have mercy on us
Holy Mary, Queen of angels, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my guardian, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my prince, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my monitor, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my counsellor, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my defender, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my steward, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my friend, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my negotiator, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my intercessor, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my patron, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my director, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my ruler, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my protector, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my comforter, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my teacher, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my shepherd, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my witness, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my helper, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my watcher, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my conductor, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my preserver, Pray for us.
Holy Angel, my instructor, Pray for us.

[432] Holy Angel, my enlightener, Pray for us.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Spare us, O Lord!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Graciously hear us, O Lord!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Have mercy on us, O Lord!
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.

V. Pray for us, O holy guardian angel,
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.
Let Us Pray.

Almighty, everlasting God, Who in the counsel of Thy ineffable goodness hast appointed to all the faithful from their mother's womb, a special guardian angel of their body and soul; grant that I may love and honor him whom Thou hast so mercifully given me, that protected by the bounty of Thy grace, and by his assistance, I may merit to behold, with him and all the angelic host, the glory of Thy countenance in the heavenly country. Who livest and reignest world without end. Amen.

Special Prayers.

Prayer To The Guardian Angel.

Angel of God, who art my guardian, enlighten, guard, direct, and govern me, who have been committed to thee by the supernal clemency. Amen.

Prayers To St. Michael, St. Gabriel, And St. Raphael.

Glorious St. Michael! prince of the heavenly host, protector of the universal Church, defend us against all our enemies, visible and invisible. Do not permit that we should ever fall under their tyranny.

St. Gabriel! thou who art justly called the strength of God, since thou hast been chosen to announce to many the mystery of the incarnation, in which the Almighty has displayed the power of His arms, make us know the treasure contained in the person of the Son of God, and be our protector with His august Mother.

[Illegible]

St. Raphael! charitable guide of travellers, thou who, by divine virtue, dost effect miraculous cures, deign to guide us in the pilgrimage of this life, and heal the maladies of our souls and bodies. All ye orders of blessed spirits, be our defenders and protectors during our life and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Act Of Consecration To Our Guardian Angel.

Angel of God! prince of heaven, watchful guardian, faithful guide, charitable pastor, I rejoice that God has created thee with so many perfections; that He has sanctified thee by His grace, and crowned thee with glory, after having persevered in His service. May God be praised forever for all He has done for thee! Be thou blessed for all the good thou hast procured me and my companions. I abandon to thee my body, soul, memory, understanding, will, inclination, and senses. Govern all, dispose of all, purify, enlighten, perfect all. Beg Our Lord to shed upon me and my companions His abundant benedictions; that, persevering until death in His grace, we may deserve to possess Him eternally with thee in glory. Amen.

Prayer To The Holy Angels During The Month Of October.

O pure and happy spirits, whom the Almighty selected to become
[434] the angels and guardians of men! we most humbly prostrate ourselves before you, to thank you for the charity and zeal with which you execute this commission. Alas! how many pass a long life without ever thanking that invisible friend to whom they a thousand times owe its preservation! O charitable guardians of those souls for whom Christ died! O burning spirits, who cannot but love those whom Jesus eternally loved, permit us to address you in behalf of all those committed to your care, and to implore for them all, in general, a grateful sense of your many favors, and the grace to profit by your charitable assistance. O angels of those happy infants, who are as yet without spot before God, preserve their innocence, we earnestly conjure you. Angels of youth, who are exposed to so many dangers, conduct them in safety to the bosom of God, as Tobias was conducted back to his father. Angels of those who are employed in the instruction of youth, animate them with your zeal and love; teach them to emulate your purity and incessant view of God, that they may worthily and successfully co-operate with the invisible guardians of their young charges. O angels of the clergy, who have the eternal Gospel to preach, present their words, their actions, and their intentions to God, and purify them in that fire of love which consumes you. Angels of infidels, whom the true faith has never enlightened, intercede for them; that, practising what they know, they may at length discover the hidden secrets of the kingdom of God. O angels of all those who, throughout the world, are deprived of religious instruction, open for them some source of salvation; raise up some one to break for them the bread of the
[435] Word. And you, O guardian angels of sinners, charitable guides of those unhappy mortals, whose persistence in sin would embitter even your unutterable joys were you not established in the

peace of God, oh, join us, we ardently beseech you, in imploring their conversion. Angels of all those who at this moment struggle in the agonies of death, strengthen, encourage and defend them against the attacks of their infernal enemies. O faithful guides, holy spirits, ardent adorers of the Divinity, guardian angels of all creatures! protect us all, teach us to love, to pray, to combat on earth, and rather obtain for us instant death than permit us to commit one mortal sin. Amen.

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November. The Souls in Purgatory.

A truly Christian soul will, during this month, think with love of the faithful departed. There is nothing more pleasing to God, or more profitable to ourselves, than the practice of praying for the souls in purgatory, that He may relieve their sufferings and speedily admit them to His glory. We see our friends dropping from the ranks of the living, and entering that state which is so mysterious. The Church tells us that we can help them on their way to heaven by our prayers, if they have been detained in purgatory to atone to God's justice for their transgressions.

St. Alphonsus says,It is a duty, for Christian charity commands us to relieve our neighbors who stand in need of our assistance; but who among all our neighbors have so great need of our help as these holy prisoners, deprived for a time of the sight of God? Many indulgences, both plenary and partial, are applicable to them; let us gain them, so that the mercy of God may be moved in their favor. Let us also remember the poor souls who have no one to pray for them. And in return these blessed souls will not neglect to obtain for us many graces from God, particularly the grace of eternal life.

Considerations and Prayers for Every Day.

First Day.

Often meditate on the sufferings of the souls in purgatory. The thought will inspire you with the proper and holy fear of God's justice, which requires expiation in purgatory for sins unatoned for in this life. It will also move you to have compassion on the [e37] poor souls, and to relieve them by your good works. The souls in purgatory endure dreadful punishments; it is the opinion of theologians that they suffer the pains of fire. They also suffer the pain of loss, which is more severe than that of sense. You should ask yourselves: Shall we suffer these dreadful pains in purgatory, or shall we escape them? Let us take warning from the unhappy souls who are to be miserable for eternity, and cultivate a salutary fear of God's justice and so avoid sin. Let the happiness of the saints encourage us to lead virtuous lives, and confide in the mercy and goodness of God. Standing between the eternity of happiness and the eternity of misery, we must make our choice. Through God's grace and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin and the members of the heavenly court, let us resolve, in future, to avoid not only mortal but also venial sin. Let us resolve also to atone for our past sins, and pay the debt which we owe to God's justice, so that when our souls are separated from our bodies we may go at once to enjoy God in heaven.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, the souls of all the faithful departed from the bonds of their sins; and by the assistance of Thy grace may they escape the sentence of condemnation, and enjoy the bliss of eternal light. Amen.

Second Day.

We are told that few of those who save their souls, except children who have not lost their baptismal innocence, go to heaven without passing through purgatory. How many are surprised [e38] by death in venial sin! how many who receive forgiveness for

the guilt of mortal sin still owe some temporal debt for it! how few leave this life without some stain on their souls! Yet every stain must be wiped away, every farthing of the debt paid, before the soul can leave the prison of purgatory. We have no time to lose, death may be at our doors. Why not now use the means of avoiding purgatory? Why do we count a suffering in the future which in the present we would be in no way ready to accept, but would employ every effort to escape? How soon must we leave this world never to return! How soon will day and night have no meaning for us! Our bodies, mouldered into dust, will come to life again only at the sound of the last trumpet, and then only for judgment. Friends who love us, possessions on which we have set our hearts, will be taken from us. We will leave as we came, alone. Why, then, attach ourselves to those things in such a way as to bring upon us the displeasure of God, and the sufferings which His displeasure entails? Better far to live here with the thought of the bitterness which goes with wrongdoing and a sense of security for the future, than thoughtlessly to incur the punishment which is to be found in purgatory.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Third Day.

The earth is only a vast cemetery. Our ancestors are mixed up with its clay, whether they lie beneath the surface or have had
[439] their ashes scattered to the four winds. How soon were they forgotten! Of all the generations which have gone before us how few individuals are known! Of some history tells the noble deeds, of others the dark ones. The really wise and great men of every age are the virtuous, now the friends of God. Their names come down to us in benediction. History may record the names of the wicked, but their memory is held in execration. What

matters it to all those who are dead whether men speak of them or not? The one thing of importance is how God has regarded their lives. We too will soon be forgotten. The birds that will sing near our graves will be listened to and admired by the visitor to the cemetery, but we will not receive even a passing thought. Even those for whom our hearts throbbed with anxiety, those for whose happiness we strove with so much labor, will scarcely think of us. We will have been gathered to the dead, our term of activity will have passed, our day will have ended, and with it all interest in us will also end. We will be one of the millions laid away in the cemetery. Has this thought no meaning for us? It ought to suggest the importance of giving more attention to that which God had in view in creating us. Not ambitious of what men may think of us, but ambitious of securing that which we alone can obtain for ourselves, happiness in the life to come. Then will our lonely and forgotten condition matter very little.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

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Fourth Day.

You have, perhaps, stood at the grave, and seen the earth cover the remains of a dear one. It may have been the remains of the most beloved one you ever knew. Oh, how you stood in need of consolation! There were moments when you felt as if your heart must break. Yet when faith came to your aid, and you remembered that the separation was only for a time, that the moment of reunion would come, and you would again see the dear one, only purified, glorified, and free from all the blemishes life on earth entails, there was an awakening, a consolation, a strengthening, which no other thought could bring. With this

new feeling came the resolve to help the one gone by such gifts as your love would dictate and your faith direct. What if that dear one was condemned to tarry in a place of purgation? What if you by your good works and prayers could assist, but instead spent your time in fruitless lament and regrets? Then it was that you felt all your old love quicken, and the eagerness which had led you to care for the loved one in life, received a new incentive. You recollected that the time in which he could help himself had passed, and he had to rely entirely on the good services of his friends that the hand of God was to lay heavy upon him until the full measure of expiation had been paid. There is comfort in the reflection that we can still be of service to those we loved in life; we can be charitable to them, and improve ourselves by the practice of that charity. The true Christian mourns his friends, but he mourns over them, not with a vain hope, but with a prayerful
[441] appeal to the throne of mercy.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Fifth Day.

The doctrine of purgatory implies two truths. First, that after a mortal sin is forgiven in the Sacrament of Penance, and the eternal punishment due to it is remitted, there still remains some debt of temporal punishment to pay, either in this life by deeds of penance or in the next in purgatory. Second, even venial sins are a stain which prevent the soul from entering into heaven. These stains, therefore, must first be wiped off, if the soul is to enter the abode of all holiness. Now, purgatory is the place where the souls predestined to eternal glory are detained for a time, and this period is fixed by God's justice for the purpose of expiation and purification, until they are quite worthy of the everlasting bliss prepared for them. Until the end of the world, until the last

Day of Judgment, there will be an intermediate place between heaven and hell. Heaven is the place where only the just and holy are admitted. Hell is the dungeon into whose depths are plunged the souls of the impious and unrepenting. But purgatory lies between the two, and is meant to receive for a time those souls of the just who will require some further purification. And I am hurrying to one or the other place. Which shall it be? Whichever it is it will be of my own making and choice. God is now giving me time and opportunities sufficient to gain the one and avoid the other. Let me reflect whither my course is leading me. Let me do it now to-morrow may be too late. God has given me [642] only one life in which to accomplish my salvation. According to the eternal decree that life will end at the appointed time.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Sixth Day.

The Church is the mystical body of Jesus Christ, of which He is the Head, and all the faithful are the members. It is divided into three parts: the Church Militant on earth, consisting of the faithful who are still fighting for their faith and struggling for their salvation; the Church Triumphant, consisting of the saints in heaven; and finally, the Church Suffering, consisting of the souls in purgatory. All the dead, then, who die in the Lord, belong to the great mysterious body of Christ, either as members glorified already, or as still awaiting the glory to come. But all are united among themselves and form one great communion of saints. Therefore when we consider what faith teaches us concerning the Church Suffering, or purgatory, we cannot help exclaiming: O faith! how beautiful thou art! How touching is the communion of saints! We children of the Church Militant stretch forth one hand towards our brethren of the Church Triumphant for

help and protection; and with the other extended we supplicate by our prayers, our alms, and patient sufferings, that the time of probation for our brethren of the Church Suffering may be shortened. We feel they entreat us to alleviate their torments, and their gratitude for our good services will incline them to help us
[443] in our infirmities and weakness. How often does this thought occupy our attention? It should engage us frequently. As we are now so once were the souls in purgatory; as they are now so we hope to be for once in purgatory it means that heaven is within our reach.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Seventh Day.

The Bible, in its very first pages, shows us that a custom of praying for the dead existed among the people of the earliest centuries. This implies the existence of purgatory, because it stands to reason that we do not pray either for the saints in heaven or for the damned in hell. For, says St. Thomas Aquinas, those prayers would be useless and in vain, if there were no purgatory, because prayers cannot be offered up for those who have already arrived at their end, but only for those who have not yet reached their final destiny. When Jacob and Joseph were about to depart from this world they earnestly besought those who stood around their death-beds, especially their own children, to convey their mortal remains to Palestine. For those pious patriarchs well knew that their descendants there would offer sacrifices of expiation, and they hoped these offerings would gain for them the longed-for peace and rest. On the announcement of the death of Saul all the inhabitants of Jabes imposed upon themselves a seven days' fast. The inspired poet-king takes part, not only in the sorrow, but also in the sacrifices. He himself sings in touching, elevated strain,

the doctrine of purgatory, when describing the inexpressible joy [444] and delight of those souls who have happily passed through the fire and water of tribulation, and have arrived at the ardently longed-for joy and refreshment of the Lord. The prophet Micheas says: I shall arise, when I sit in darkness, the Lord is my light. I will bear the wrath of the Lord because I have sinned against Him, until He judge my cause and execute judgment for me: He will bring me forth into the light, I shall behold His justice.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Eighth Day.

Instructed by holy and exalted prophets, the people of Israel, from the earliest times, made sacrifices and offerings for the dead, and thereby clearly showed their belief in purgatory. The records of all the past centuries referring to the subject clearly show that not the smallest doubt can be entertained on this point. When the star of the Jewish civilization began to fade, the heroic line of the Machabees gathered all their force once more together, in order to inaugurate a new epoch of power and glory. In the description of their noble and heroic actions we come across the unmistakable proof of their universal tradition and belief. Judas, the mighty hero, having lost a great number of soldiers in battle, did not confine himself to merely giving them an honorable burial. He commanded a collection to be made, and sent the sum to Jerusalem for a sacrifice to be offered for the fallen heroes. Holy Scripture concludes the narrative with the [445] words: It is therefore a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins—that is from all temporal punishment due to those sins. This thought is justly called holy, because it springs from a holy source, that of faith and charity. It is called wholesome, in the first place to the

poor souls themselves, because it comforts and encourages them in their sufferings, in the next place to those who pray for them, because they increase their own merits thereby, and gain new, faithful friends in heaven.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Ninth Day.

The Holy Scriptures imply, in the narration of the action of the great leader Judas, the existence of purgatory, or some such place of purification in the next world, where the souls of the departed can be assisted by our prayers and sacrifices, and be cleansed from their sins. Certainly it would have been impossible, in such heavy time of war, to gather from the people such large sums of money, or to all at once introduce an innovation in religious practice of that kind, if this belief in purgatory had not been long and firmly implanted in their hearts. All the passages from the Old Testament clearly prove the truth of the Catholic doctrine, which teaches us that there exists a place for the purification of such souls as die in a state of grace, but have not yet fully
[446] expiated all their sins; and that those souls can be delivered by the prayers and good works of the faithful. The son of Sirach bears witness to the same when he says: A gift hath grace in the sight of all the living, and restrain not grace from the dead, which means that we should pay our dead the last respects and offer up sacrifices for them. This passage supports the general belief of the Jews, that we can assist the departed by good works. The Jews even now believe in the existence of some place of purification, and are in the habit of praying for their dead. The Jewish belief in purgatory rested on a very firm foundation.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Tenth Day.

In the fulness of time the divine Saviour Jesus Christ appeared on earth. While disowning in His teaching all the false theories and erroneous traditions of Scribes and Pharisees, while condemning with the greatest precision their errors on the subject of death and resurrection, He never uttered one syllable against the general belief in purgatory, or against the public practice of praying for the dead. On the contrary He left it just as it existed under the Old Law. Could the Son of God, Who had come down to make known the will of His Father, have acted thus if this were not a holy, just, and pious custom? The Redeemer did not find it necessary to give lengthy proofs of the existence of this place of punishment. It was enough to simply remind the people of it. For, in truth, He addressed a people who had never entertained [illegible] the smallest doubt on the subject. In one of His sermons He unmistakably alludes to purgatory, where He speaks of a prison from which no one can be delivered except on the payment of the full debt. What other prison but purgatory can here be meant? Heaven cannot be meant, and out of hell there is no redemption. The Gospels have preserved another saying of the Son of God which presupposes the existence of purgatory: And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come. There are, then, sins which can be atoned for in the next world.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Eleventh Day.

With regard to the doctrine of purgatory the apostles taught as their divine Master did. St. Paul says: For other foundation no

man can lay but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be manifest; for the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide, which he hath built thereon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work burn he shall suffer loss: but
[448] he himself shall be saved, but so as by fire1 Cor. iii. 12. He who appears before the Judgment Seat of God with works still stained and imperfect, will reach indeed his happy end, but not before those stains and imperfections have been cleared away by a process which is like unto the crucible of fire. The fire which the Apostle speaks of cannot be the fire of tribulation, or the sufferings of this life; for he speaks of a fire which burns on the Judgment Day; that is, after this life. Again, it cannot mean the mere ordeal of the Judgment, because here the soul is not only tried, but also burns and suffers from the burning. Nor can it mean the fire of hell, because he who burns in the fire will come out of it and be saved, which cannot be said of those in hell. The Apostle could only have had the fire of purgatory in view, that fire which burns for the purification of souls not quite spotless, and which will continue until the Day of General Judgment.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Twelfth Day.

Tradition excludes every doubt, even the least shadow of doubt, as to the existence of purgatory. We have testimony from a whole army of renowned writers of the Church: Sts. Augustine, Chrysostom, Epiphanius, Jerome, Cyril, Gregory, up to Tertullian who lived in the second century. The tradition is contained

not only in the writings of the Holy Fathers, but also in the practice of the Church reaching down to the apostolic age, according [449] to which prayers and sacrifices were at all times offered up to God for the souls of the departed. Tertullian speaks of the sacrifices for the dead as of an apostolic tradition, and St. John Damascene says, in his sermon on the dead: "The apostles and disciples of our divine Saviour, who had seen the eternal Word with their own eyes, and had converted the multitudes of the living world, taught that in the awful, immaculate and life-giving mysteries of the Eucharist, remembrance should be made of those who died in the Lord. In confirmation of it he alleges the testimony of St. John Chrysostom in these words: "That John, who on account of his eloquence was called the golden-mouthed, teaches that not inconsiderately or accidentally was it ordained by those wise disciples of God and transmitted to the Church, that the priest should offer prayers for the dead in the celebration of the awful divine mysteries.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Thirteenth Day.

We will now hear from the great St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. I am quoting from his treatise on the care for the dead. Mark how beautifully he writes: We read in the book of Machabees that there were sacrifices offered up for the dead, but even if there had been no mention made of the subject in the pages of the Old Testament, the authority of the Church would be sufficient as manifested in her practice, according to which the priest at the altar makes commemoration of the faithful departed. "By her [450] funeral rites, offices and commemorations of the dead, as well as her ancient Ordos, the Catholic Church has at all times clearly and definitely testified to, and declared her belief in, the existence of

purgatory. Further, she has solemnly declared it an article of faith in several Councils as, for instance, in the General Council of Trent, which defines that there is a purgatory, and that the faithful can come to the assistance of the souls suffering therein by their prayers, and oblations of the most holy sacrifice of the Mass. And it even threatens with excommunication from the Church all those who maintain that every penitent sinner, having received justification, is forgiven as to his guilt and eternal punishment in such a way that there remains no temporal punishment to be expiated in purgatory.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Fourteenth Day.

What a touching proof we have of the faith in the intercession of the living for the dead, in the story of the life of St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine! As her son stood by the bedside of his dying mother, and with difficulty tried to restrain his tears, Monica said to him: Only one thing I beg of thee; remember me always at the altar of God, wherever thou dost chance to be. St. Augustine, therefore, often offered up the holy sacrifice for his mother, and in his Confessions he entreats God in the following touching prayer: O God, grant that all Thy servants,
[451] who are my brothers and to whom I have dedicated this book, grant that all who read these prayers may, in their prayers before Thy altar, think of Thy handmaid, my dearest mother, and pray for her in loving remembrance. When St. Paul says that at the mention of the sacred name of Jesus every knee shall bend in heaven, on earth and under the earth, by this last expression under the earth, according to the general opinion of the Holy Fathers of the Church, he pointed to that temporal, intermediate place, wherein imperfect souls must abide until they are purified

from all stain of sin, but even yet, while still there, are united in common adoration with the saints who are in the full enjoyment of heaven, as well as with all the Christians of the Church Militant on earth. But St. Paul teaches us no less by example to offer up prayers and petitions to God almighty for the souls of those who have died in the Lord.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Fifteenth Day.

We may, without great difficulty, infer the existence of purgatory from the truths known by faith. Our faith teaches us that in the Sacrament of Penance our sins are forgiven, together with the eternal punishment due to them. The temporal punishment due to them is not always forgiven, however, and consequently it remains to be endured either in this world or in the next. Call to mind the examples of David, Moses, Peter and Mary Magdalene. They were all forgiven their sins and the eternal punishment due [402] to them, and yet how much did those dear servants of God bewail their offences during their whole lives and expiate the temporal punishment due to them! Again there is another argument and ground on which our reason demands the existence of a purgatory. It may be that a soul just departed this life is free from all mortal sin even free from all temporal punishment due to grievous sin, but perhaps not free from certain light and venial sins, which, though not destroying the grace of God in the soul, still darken and stain its full splendor. It may be that all those venial sins are atoned for and wiped away by the patiently borne agony of death, but how often it happens that the Christian is suddenly surprised by death in different forms, and when least expecting it. It would be contrary to God's mercy and justice to cast that soul into hell, or to receive it at once into heaven.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Sixteenth Day.

The doctrine that sinners, even after the guilt and eternal punishment due to sin are remitted, have still, as a rule, to satisfy the justice of God in some way, has been acknowledged by the Church both in deed and by express word. By deed, because of her severe penitential discipline in the early days of the Church, because of the works of penance enjoined in the confessional, and the granting at all times of indulgences. By express word because of the definition of the Council of Trent. Now if according to
[453] the certain doctrine of faith, some temporal satisfaction remains to be made after the remission of sin and eternal punishment, what, we ask, will become of those souls who are suddenly called away before they have done such penance as their sins required before they have given full satisfaction? Into heaven, where nothing impure can enter, they cannot be received until the full debt is paid. Into hell they cannot be cast, because they died in a state of grace and are friends and children of God. Therefore, reason says, there must be a place where those just and holy, though not yet thoroughly cleansed souls, must linger till purified completely, and fully worthy of God's sacred presence. Were it otherwise our reason would be darkened and troubled by doubts, either as to the justice or as to the infinite mercy of God. Reason tells us that there is a state of virtue not good enough for heaven, and a state of vice not bad enough for hell. Common sense tells us that there is a difference between sin and sin, and that consequently there must be a difference in the punishment.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Seventeenth Day.

The souls in purgatory suffer. They are sent there to suffer. They are detained there to suffer. The time of action is gone; the time of passive suffering has come. Their whole existence, or life, is, as it were, taken up with suffering. What are they suffering? Of what kind and character are their sufferings? The pains of purgatory are just the same as the torments of hell, with the [The] exception of eternity and despair. The difference between the two is, that the pains of purgatory come to an end, and are not severed from the sweet hope of eternal happiness. Like the pains of hell, so also the pains of purgatory are of two kinds. They are the pain of loss and the pain of sense. These two kinds of pain correspond to the twofold disorder contained in every sin. For every sin is first of all an aversion or turning away from God, the highest and uncreated good, either a complete aversion as in the case of mortal sin, or a partial aversion as in the case of venial sin. Second, every sin is a conversion to, or a turning towards, a created, real or apparent good as our highest good, which is, of course, a disorderly conversion. Now this twofold inordinateness must be expiated by a twofold corresponding punishment. For wherein a man sins, says the Scripture, therein is he punished.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Eighteenth Day.

Man sins, and thus turns away from God; the punishment, therefore, must be an eternal or temporary deprivation of God, the highest good of man. He sins, and thus turns towards a created good, and derives pleasure and satisfaction from it; the punishment, therefore, for this illicit, sensual pleasure, is the pain of sense, the pain inflicted by created things. Now fire is a pain

of sense; and it is a doctrine sufficiently warranted by Scripture
[455] and tradition, that the fire of purgatory is a real fire, by which the souls are chastised and purified. The Holy Fathers explain that the greatest imaginable sufferings here on earth, the most dreadful martyrdom of the holy confessors of Christ, the worst pains of the most terrible illness, can bear no comparison with the torments and pains suffered by the poor souls in purgatory. Well known is the exclamation of St. Augustine: Here burn, here cut, here crucify, but spare me in eternity, O God! The sufferings of this life can be soothed by consolation, can be softened by many distractions; now and again there is a respite granted to the greatest sufferer, and time heals many woes. But the sufferings of purgatory continue without any alleviation or interruption.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Nineteenth Day.

According to the writings of the Fathers, the pain of loss is the greatest of all the pains of purgatory. Together with the bitter remembrance of having done evil and omitted to do good, is the consciousness of being deprived of the beatific vision, than which there can be no greater pain. St. Alphonsus says: Far greater than the pains of the senses are the pains of loss arising from the deprivation of the presence of God. Because the poor souls are inflamed with not only the natural, but the supernatural love of God, they are almost violently drawn towards Him, their supreme good; and because they have the consciousness of being debarred from perfect union with God by their own sins and
[456] imperfections, they feel such exceeding great pain that it would kill them were it possible for them to die. Therefore, says St. Chrysostom, is this pain of loss greater than that of sense, and the greatest of all pains. A thousand fires of hell could

not produce greater pain than that which is caused by the fully realized loss of God. Here on earth, while confined in their bodies of sin, their souls could not enjoy the beatific vision; but once delivered from their mortal bodies, the time is come when they are able to see God, Who would be their everlasting joy were it not for their own fault. It is this pain of separation that makes the pain of purgatory a cleansing fire in the fullest sense of the word.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Twentieth Day.

In this valley of tears the sighs of holy persons are full of pain and sorrow, of pining after God and heaven. How painful must have been this burning love and yearning desire in such souls as St. Paul's, St. Augustine's and St. Teresa's! Yet what was their suffering compared to the consuming fire of yearning in the souls of purgatory? For, however much we may pine after God, our only good, still while on earth we have many things that comfort us and deaden our pain. The very burden of our body, the distracting events of life, the possibility of great age, or larger store of merit, all these things are so many means of comfort to us. But the poor souls in purgatory have none of these consolations; there is nothing to assuage their pain of yearning and unfulfilled desire. More than the panting hart do they thirst [357] after the fountain of eternal light and life. This unspeakable thirst is, in their case, all pure pain, unmingled with any soothing alloy. Oh, what a burning sea of sorrow those poor souls are plunged into! Flames within, flames without, flames all around them! Were it not that God's omnipotent hand upheld them, their spirit would almost be consumed by those flames of fire. As you have noticed I have left you to draw from the proofs, as also

from the description of the flames of purgatory, your own pious deductions and resolutions. But now I ask is there a doctrine in the Church which calls for more serious and pious consideration than this belief in purgatory, for your own spiritual benefit, and then for the help you can afford those whom God's justice has condemned there?

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Twenty-first Day.

It has always been a doctrine of the Church, no less than a practice, that by our prayers and good works we can help the souls in purgatory. For the Church not only taught the doctrine, but from the earliest times encouraged the faithful to offer up the holy sacrifice for them. It was at the great Council of Trent that the doctrine became an article of faith. We are united to them in the communion of saints. This community is like the members of one body. As in the body all the members help each other, so in
[458] the communion of saints all have a share in the common goods, as the Psalmist says, I am a partaker with all them that fear Thee. If Christ could make vicarious atonement to His heavenly Father for our sins, and the eternal punishment due to them, then, also, the members of the community founded by Him can, through His power and merits, assist and make satisfaction for one another as regards the temporal punishment due to their sins. So that, as the Apostle says, the abundance of one may supply the want of the other, so that there may be an equality. The souls in purgatory, then, since they are souls departed in the love of God, belong with us to that great brotherhood, the communion of saints. So we can come to their assistance, and by our efforts help to discharge the debt they are still owing to God's justice. Or united to them by the bonds of love, we form as it were one

person. We pass the value of our good works to them, and our heavenly Father looks upon the price we pay for them as if paid by themselves.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Twenty-second Day.

Let us consider more particularly by what means we can assist the poor souls. We can greatly and powerfully assist them, and the holy Council of Trent expressly points out the means we should use. It says particularly that the faithful can help the poor souls detained in purgatory by their prayers, and by the most holy sacrifice of the Mass. This, as you will perhaps observe, has been said several times already in this book. True, but it is in order [459] that I may point out the conditions which are required to make those means effective that I again speak of them now. What is necessary, primarily, is that we have the intention of helping the poor souls, otherwise our good works are all put down to our own account, or if we do not stand in need of them, they are put into what is called the treasury of the Church, and then they are beyond our disposition. It is not, however, necessary to make a new intention before every action. It is sufficient to make once for all an intention of doing certain things for the sake of the suffering souls, and then not withdrawing it again. Still it is advisable to renew it now and again, as for instance at morning prayers or at Mass. It is necessary to be in a state of grace if we wish to help the souls by our good works or by our own personal prayers, penance, indulgences, and so forth. He who is in a state of sin cannot make satisfaction for himself; how then can he do so for others? How can he who is a captive redeem himself, or give freedom to others?

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Twenty-third Day.

The giving of alms for the benefit of the souls in purgatory, is one of the means over which the Fathers of the Church grew eloquent. Nor indeed is it necessary to make use of the sayings of the early Fathers, for we can find abundant proof of the efficacy
[460] of alms related in the Holy Scriptures. The angel Raphael said to Tobias: Alms delivereth from death, and the same is that which purgeth away sins, and maketh to find mercy and life everlasting. Elsewhere we find: Water quencheth a flaming fire, and alms resisteth sinBut let us listen to the Fathers of the Church. St. Leo writes:Alms atone for sin, destroy death, and extinguish the flames of eternal fireSt. Chrysostom calls alms-giving a heavenly ladder, leading to God's right hand, and a sure refuge for those who give as well as for those who receive. St. Paulinus praises a Roman nobleman, who on the death of his beloved wife assembled all the poor and destitute of the city in St. Peter's Church, and distributed food among them in order to comfort and help her whose loss he bewailed. And St. Hieronymus, speaking of the same nobleman, says that while other husbands adorn their wife's graves with violets, roses and lilies, this one pours the balm of alms over the sacred dust and venerable remains of his beloved wife. The petition for alms from the worthy poor is like the knocking at your door of a poor soul in purgatory.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Twenty-fourth Day.

What a beautiful Catholic practice is this of giving of the goods which the good God has entrusted to us, for the benefit of the poor souls! Could we not also set aside something for such a noble purpose? The alms we give to the poor souls in purgatory may be likened to so many checks signed by names dear to [p441] God, and which when presented He will not dishonor. When it is difficult for us to give money in alms, we can at least give other things of less value even things that are no longer of use to us. How many things there are in our homes that are not of the least use to us, which if given in alms for the suffering souls might be of the greatest benefit to us as well as to them! We give them in alms to the poor and forsaken ones on earth, that they may benefit them as well as the poor forsaken souls in purgatory. Perhaps you have a list of debtors, and perhaps in that list there are many from whom you never expect to recover anything. Why not make a promise, in case of the recovery of certain sums, to give half to the deserving poor for the benefit of the suffering souls in purgatory? It is not impossible that the guardian angel of purgatory may help to restore to us money otherwise lost. Remember it is not the wealthy alone who can give alms for this purpose, but the poor as well; at least they can give their good-will. Do you remember that the angels sang at the birth of the Redeemer "Peace on earth to men of good-will"?

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Twenty-fifth Day.

We have the authority of Holy Scripture for the efficacy of prayers: It is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead. It is holy because it is most pleasing to God; it is wholesome because we have reason to believe that through the infinite mercy and compassion of His Sacred Heart, Our Lord accepts [p442]

prayers offered in atonement for the sins of those suffering in purgatory. If the prayers we offer for temporal goods are often heard and granted, how much more so when we offer them for spiritual goods, for the souls tenderly loved by God? Well might St. Augustine say: One cannot conceive a holier or more wholesome practice than praying for the dead. The Imitation of Christ has the following: Full of love and charity, we must remember in our prayers the souls of the faithful departed, but particularly the souls of our parents, friends and relations, and those who have been our benefactors on earth. For that is a work of real love and charity. As we entertain the most earnest hopes that we shall be remembered when we shall have departed this life, we ought to make every effort in our power to assist them to arrive speedily at their promised abode of bliss, and by our prayers shorten the weary days of their pilgrimage in purgatory. And we must remember that every one who actively assists in the deliverance of these poor souls, gains for himself the greatest advantages. By offering his prayers for their eternal repose, he by no means loses the fruits of those prayers, for they are remembered to him, and are before him when his time comes to die. And moreover one is rewarded even in this life for such prayers.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Twenty-sixth Day.

[463] The holy sacrifice of the Mass is the surest and most effectual means we possess for procuring the eternal repose and happiness of the departed. The sacrament of love, the revelation of unity, and the bond of friendship, says St. Augustine. We pray for all who have departed this life, with the most confident conviction that the prayers at the altar are the most profitable to them, as

St. Cyril. And again: Supposing a king who was offended by a subject has banished him from his kingdom, and the friends of the outlaw wish to restore him to the king's favor, and for that purpose form a deputation to the royal personage, and presenting a costly gift, venture to plead for pardon for the offender; would not the king comply with their request, and either grant the pardon, or mitigate the punishment to some extent? Well, in like manner we, although sinners, plead for pardon from the King of heaven and earth for our banished friends, and with much surer hopes of success, for the gift we offer is not an earthly crown, but is the body and blood of His own well-beloved Son, Who has bled for the sins of the whole world. The holy sacrifice is, I again repeat, the most effectual and the most powerful means we have for assisting the suffering souls in purgatory.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Twenty-seventh Day.

Let me now suggest how you may act and pray during the holy sacrifice. At the Confiteor let us imagine the souls in the depths of purgatory; place ourselves in the midst of them and hearken to their entreaties for help. At the Elevation let us say: O my [464] God, in memory of the painful death Thou didst endure, have compassion on these poor souls for whom I pray. O my God, behold Thy precious blood, which was shed for their deliverance. Oh, let the saving fruits of this precious blood come to the poor souls, let its cleansing streams flow into purgatory. Remember with what great love Thou didst shed it for Thy elect, so many of whom are now languishing in the fiery dungeon. We can fix our eyes on the crucifix placed over the altar; it will help us to make our supplications more direct. The thorn-crowned head will remind us of our superiors, spiritual and temporal, perhaps

in purgatory. The wounded right hand our parents, friends and benefactors. The left hand the souls of those who have wished to do us harm in life. Nor would it be amiss, while contemplating the wound in Our Saviour's side, to recommend one's own soul. At the Communion when we see the sacred Host in the hands of the priest, let us consider that it is the body of Him Who commanded us to pray for the dead. For it is He Who said: If you ask the Father anything in My name He will give it to you. Let us remind Him of His words, and implore Him by His love. This is a favorable moment to have our prayers heard.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Twenty-eighth Day.

The Catholic doctrine of the intercession of the saints must not be lost sight of in this series of thoughts on the November devotion.

[465] In our wants, personal wants, spiritual and temporal, we, true to our Catholic instinct, first address ourselves to our Mother Mary for help. We must not forget her in the matter of the poor souls. Mary's loving heart is not less loving for the souls in purgatory than it was for the same souls while in life. How can she abandon them? She never abandons a sinner on earth. For a stronger reason she does not forget the souls of the just. Mary loves them still, for her love is eternal. She is the Mother of Him Who said, I was in prison and ye visited Me; of Him Who descended into hell. Therefore it is an opinion well worthy of acceptance and respect, founded on trustworthy revelations and authentic declarations, that the Blessed Virgin assists in a most special manner the souls in purgatory. They are souls and are poor, and therefore the Blessed Virgin loves them. They are souls and are suffering; souls are the magnet of Mary's heart. Priceless is the value of a soul, and no one has better shown it than Our Lord

Himself. Satan, by offering Him the whole world, could not prevail upon Him to fall down; but by trying to rob Him of souls he caused Him to bow down even to the earth under the weight of the cross. But, after Jesus, who could better know the value of a soul than Mary, who comes next to Him in the work He did for souls?

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Twenty-ninth Day.

Mary stood by when her Son died for the redemption of souls. But through her whole holy life she had constantly before her [406] mind the work He had come to accomplish. Now she sees those souls red with the divine blood by which they were purchased. She lives in the joys of heaven, to which all souls are likewise destined. Her Son gave His life for the souls of men; but she as Mother gave her Son for that purpose. Therefore the love of her heart embraces also purgatory; and therefore she is also the loving Mother of the souls in purgatory. The woman in the Gospel who so eagerly and persistently sought after her lost groat, is but a faint symbol of the love of Mary for the souls which she has lost though only for a time which she sees separated from heaven, from her Son, and from herself, and suffering in the flames of fire. She burns with love for those poor souls, well remembering the words of her divine Son, when He said that even a cup of water given in His name would be rewarded with the joy of heaven. And if Jesus, while hanging on the cross, cried out,I thirst, which, according to the opinion of the Holy Fathers, meant thirst for souls, can we suppose that Mary will not satisfy His desire, and still His thirst? Those who love and truly serve this most gentle Mother can indeed be

called fortunate, for not alone here on earth, but also hereafter in purgatory, will she be their helper and comforter.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

Thirtieth Day.

[467] All the great servants of God had a great devotion to the souls in purgatory, as we have seen. But as Our Lady is Queen of the heavenly host, we cannot better conclude the treatment of the month than by giving the last consideration to her. Mary loves the poor souls in purgatory, because she has gone through a fire of tribulation not in punishment for her sins, for she had none but that she might have more compassion for us, and be more fully entitled to the name by which she is so well known, Comforter of the afflicted. For this reason her life was a sea of sorrow; for this reason she endured tribulation, poverty, exile, and persecution. For this reason she suffered tortures of mind and soul, in the three days' loss of her Child, and in the more tragic separation on the cross. All these sufferings were a real purgatory to her. Let us therefore venerate Mary, and beg of her even now, while we still sojourn in this valley of tears, to daily increase our ardor and give us perseverance in good works, to obtain for us a happy death. But the best means to obtain this grace is to imitate the love of the Blessed Virgin for the poor souls. Let us try and be zealous in the cause of the poor souls, and often have recourse to this Mother of mercy for the same purpose. In the recitation of the holy Rosary we have a spiritual bunch of roses, which we can often offer to her for the faithful departed. Let us scatter these spiritual roses plentifully over the graves of our departed parents and friends. Mary, the Mother of poor souls, will find them fragrant, and not only accept our

offering but also protect and guard us when our turn comes to die.

Prayer.

Release, O Lord, etc., etc.

[468]

Mass for the Souls in Purgatory.

Before Mass.

O merciful Lord, we offer Thee the precious blood of the spotless Lamb, in behalf of the suffering souls in purgatory, whose sole desire is to see and glorify Thee in heaven. Open to them, O Lord, the infinite treasures of Thy merits; apply to them the fruits of Thy Passion and death, and through the adorable sacrifice of the Mass, release them from the debt due to Thy sovereign justice. Amen.

Confiteor.

We confess our sins, O merciful God, in humility and sorrow of heart, and we acknowledge that in Thy sight no one living is justified. Woe to us, if Thou judge us according to Thy justice. To appease Thy anger, O Lord, we recur to the unbloody sacrifice of Him Who was nailed to the cross for our salvation, and who ceases not to intercede for us in heaven. O God of all clemency! forgive us our sins, we entreat Thee, and forgive also the sins committed by our deceased brethren, in the days of their mortal pilgrimage. Let Thy mercy prevail over Thy justice, and let the voice of the blood of Jesus plead more loudly for pardon than the voice of our iniquities cries for vengeance. Amen.

Introit.

Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. To Thee is due the hymn, O God, in Sion,

and to Thee shall the vow be paid in Jerusalem. O Lord, hear my [469]
prayer: to Thee shall all flesh come. Amen.

Kyrie.

O Jesus, show that Thou art the God of mercy, and take pity on the suffering souls who sigh and weep for the day of their deliverance. Oh, admit them without delay into Thy bosom!

Collect.

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, give to the souls of Thy servants departed the remission of all their sins; that through pious supplications they may obtain that pardon which they have always desired. Amen.

Epistle.

And we will not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that you be not sorrowful, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again: even so them who have slept through Jesus, will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you in the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them who have slept. For the Lord Himself shall come down from heaven with commandment, and with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead who are in Christ, shall rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, shall be taken up together with them in the clouds to meet Christ, into the air, and so shall we be always with the Lord. Wherefore
[470] comfort ye one another with these words.1 Thess. 12-17.

Gradual.

The sorrows of death have compassed me: and the perils of hell have found me. I met with trouble and sorrow: and I called on the name of the Lord. O Lord, deliver my soul: The Lord is merciful and just, and now Our God showeth mercy. The Lord is the keeper of little ones: I was humbled, and He delivered me. Ps. cxiv. 3-6. Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. Amen.

Gospel.

Martha, therefore, said to Jesus: Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But now also I know that whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee. Jesus saith to her: Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith to Him: I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection, at the last day. Jesus said to her: I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live: And every one that liveth, and believeth in Me, shall not die forever. Believest thou this? She saith to Him: Yea, Lord, I have believed that Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, Who art come into this world.John xi. 21-27.

Offertory.

Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver the souls of the faithful departed from the flames of hell, and from the deep pit. Deliver them from the lion's mouth, lest hell swallow them; lest they fall into darkness. And let the standard-bearer, St. [471] Michael, bring them into holy light, which Thou didst promise of old to Abraham and his posterity. We offer Thee, O Lord, a sacrifice of praise and prayer: accept them in behalf of the souls we commemorate this day, and let them pass from death to life, which Thou didst promise of old to Abraham and His posterity. Remember, O Lord, Thy compassion, and Thy tender mercies, which are from the beginning. For ourselves also we pray: O favor I have asked of Thee, and this I will seek; that I may dwell in Thy house all the days of my life. That I may see Thy beauty, and dwell forever in Thy temple. Amen.

Secret.

Have mercy, we beseech Thee, O Lord, on the souls of Thy servants [name them], for whom we offer this Victim of praise, humbly beseeching Thy majesty, that by this sacrifice they may arrive at rest eternal, through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Preface.

It is truly just, and reasonable, and salutary, to return Thee thanks at all times, and in all places, O almighty Father, eternal

God. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord, and through His merits, we hope for a glorious resurrection; so that if the sentence of death alarm and deject, the promise of immortality consoles and animates us; for to Thy faithful servants death is only a passage from this life to a better. Therefore we unite with all the blessed citizens of the heavenly country in singing a hymn to Thy glory,
[472] and saying without ceasing: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth: heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; His blood pleads for pardon, and His voice rises ever to the throne of mercy in behalf of His miserable creatures. Amen.

Canon.

O Father almighty, Whose kind providence extendeth to all creation, cast an eye of pity on the souls that ardently love Thee, and whose greatest suffering is to be separated from Thee. Remember, O Lord, that they are the work of Thy hands, and that they have been purchased by the infinite merits of Thy Son, Jesus Christ. Oh, will not the sound of that sweet name move Thee to pity and forgiveness? We offer in their behalf, the precious blood which streamed from the sacred side of our dying Redeemer on the cross; we offer Thee the powerful intercession of the most blessed Mother of Jesus and Queen of martyrs; we offer Thee the prayers of St. Joseph, St. Peter, St. Paul, and all the saints, together with the earnest supplications of Thy Church on earth; and we beseech Thee to take pity on the souls Thou lovest so tenderly. Show them Thy glory, receive them into Thy heart, and inundate them with that torrent of bliss, of which Thou art the inexhaustible fountain. Amen.

Elevation.

O sacred Host! Victim of man's salvation! be propitious to us and hear our prayers. Precious blood of Jesus, shed to wash away the sins of mankind, sanctify our soul, and plead for mercy
[473] for the souls in purgatory! Amen.

Pater Noster.

O divine Jesus! at Whose name every knee doth bend, in heaven, on earth, and in hell! Sovereign Judge of the living and the dead! may Thy name be honored by the deliverance of the souls for whom we pray. May the gates of heaven be open to receive them, and may Thy will, which desires the salvation of all men, be this day perfectly done in their regard. Grant that, after having been fed on the bread of sorrow, they may be fed with the living bread of heaven in the possession of Thyself. We implore Thy forgiveness of the sins of our parents, friends, and benefactors, particularly of the sins to which we unhappily have been accessory. Preserve us from those avenging flames, which we have but too well merited by our repeated abuse of grace, our tepidity in Thy service, and our negligence in resisting temptation. Deliver us from sin, the greatest of all evils, and enable us to feel and understand that it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Amen.

Agnus Dei.

Lamb of God, Who by death didst trample on the devil, about to seize his helpless prey, have mercy on the souls in purgatory! Lamb of God, Who wast offered as a sacrifice of expiation, that by Thy death we might be rescued from the slavery of sin, have mercy on the souls in purgatory! Lamb of God, Who wast immolated for love of us that we might pass from the region of malediction to the true land of promise, grant eternal rest to the souls in purgatory! Amen. [474]

Communion.

May eternal light shine on them, O Lord, together with Thy saints forever, for Thou art merciful. Grant them, O Lord, eternal rest, and let perpetual light shine upon them. Amen.

Post-Communion.

O God, Who willest that while we pray for the souls in purgatory, we should at the same time remember the most essential of our duties, grant us through Thy infinite merits and unbounded charity, the pardon of our past negligences. We will not defer the

all-important duty of penance, lest it soon be too late to discharge our debts to Thee. We will fervently and perseveringly pray for the souls in purgatory, and apply to them also the fruits of our almsdeeds and exercises of mortification. O bountiful God! bless these resolutions, and strengthen us to observe them faithfully. Amen.

Last Gospel.

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the Last Day I shall rise out of the earth: and I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God. Whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. This my hope is laid up in my bosom. Job xix. 25-27. After having sat in darkness, and dwelt amidst the shades of death, we shall rise to the contemplation of eternal life forever. In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped: let me never be confounded. Amen.

[475]

The Litany of the Saints.

Ant. Remember not, O Lord, our offences, nor those of our parents; neither take Thou vengeance of our sins.

Lord, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
God the Father of heaven, Have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Ghost, Have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, Have mercy on us.
Holy Mary, Pray for us.
Holy Mother of God, Pray for us.
Holy Virgin of virgins, Pray for us.
Saint Michael, Pray for us.
Saint Gabriel, Pray for us.
Saint Raphael, Pray for us.
All ye holy angels and archangels, Pray for us.
All ye holy orders of blessed spirits, Pray for us.
Saint John Baptist, Pray for us.
Saint Joseph, Pray for us.
All ye holy patriarchs and prophets, Pray for us.
Saint Peter, Pray for us.
Saint Paul, Pray for us.
Saint Andrew, Pray for us.
Saint James, Pray for us.
Saint John, Pray for us.
Saint Thomas, Pray for us.
Saint James, Pray for us.
Saint Philip, Pray for us.
Saint Bartholomew, Pray for us.
Saint Matthew, Pray for us.
Saint Simon, Pray for us.
Saint Thaddeus, Pray for us.
Saint Matthias, Pray for us.
Saint Barnabas, Pray for us.
Saint Luke, Pray for us. [476]
Saint Mark, Pray for us.
All ye holy apostles and evangelists, Pray for us.
All ye holy disciples of the Lord, Pray for us.
All ye holy innocents, Pray for us.
St. Stephen, Pray for us.
St. Lawrence, Pray for us.

St. Vincent, Pray for us.
SS. Fabian and Sebastian, Pray for us.
SS. John and Paul, Pray for us.
SS. Cosmas and Damian, Pray for us.
SS. Gervase and Protase, Pray for us.
All ye holy martyrs, Pray for us.
Saint Sylvester, Pray for us.
Saint Gregory, Pray for us.
Saint Ambrose, Pray for us.
Saint Augustine, Pray for us.
Saint Jerome, Pray for us.
Saint Martin, Pray for us.
Saint Nicholas, Pray for us.
All ye holy bishops and confessors, Pray for us.
All ye holy doctors, Pray for us.
Saint Anthony, Pray for us.
Saint Benedict, Pray for us.
Saint Bernard, Pray for us.
Saint Dominic, Pray for us.
Saint Francis, Pray for us.
All ye holy priests and Levites, Pray for us.
All ye holy monks and hermits, Pray for us.
Saint Mary Magdalen, Pray for us.
Saint Agatha, Pray for us.
Saint Lucy, Pray for us.
Saint Agnes, Pray for us.
Saint Cecilia, Pray for us.
Saint Catharine, Pray for us.
Saint Anastasia, Pray for us.
All ye holy virgins and widows, Pray for us.
All ye holy men and women, saints of God, Make intercession for us.
Be merciful, Spare us, O Lord.
Be merciful, Graciously hear us, O Lord.

From all dangers that threaten us, O Lord, deliver us.
From all evil, O Lord, deliver us.
From all sin, O Lord, deliver us.
From Thy wrath, O Lord, deliver us. [477]
From all dangers that threaten us, O Lord, deliver us.
From the scourge of earthquakes, O Lord, deliver us.
From sudden and unlooked-for death, O Lord, deliver us.
From the snares of the devil, O Lord, deliver us.
From anger, hatred, and every evil will, O Lord, deliver us.
From the spirit of fornication, O Lord, deliver us.
From lightning and tempest, O Lord, deliver us.
From everlasting death, O Lord, deliver us.
Through the mystery of Thy holy incarnation, O Lord, deliver us.
Through Thy coming, O Lord, deliver us.
Through Thy nativity, O Lord, deliver us.
Through Thy baptism and holy fasting, O Lord, deliver us.
Through Thy cross and Passion, O Lord, deliver us.
Through Thy death and burial, O Lord, deliver us.
Through Thy holy resurrection, O Lord, deliver us.
Through Thine admirable ascension, O Lord, deliver us.
Through the coming of the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, O Lord, deliver us.
In the day of judgment, O Lord, deliver us.
We sinners, beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst spare us, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst pardon us, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst bring us to true penance, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to govern and preserve Thy holy Church, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to preserve our Apostolic Prelate, and all orders of the Church in holy religion, We beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to humble the enemies of holy Church, We beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to give peace and true concord to Christian kings and princes, We beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to grant peace and unity to all Christian people, We beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to confirm and preserve us in Thy holy service, We beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst lift up our minds to heavenly desires, We beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst render eternal blessings to all our benefactors, We beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst deliver our souls and the souls of our brethren, relations, and benefactors, from eternal damnation, We beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to give and preserve the fruits of
[478] the earth, We beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to grant eternal rest to all the faithful departed, We beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe graciously to hear us, We beseech Thee, hear us.

Son of God, We beseech Thee, hear us.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Spare us, O Lord!

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Graciously hear us, O Lord!

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Have mercy on us!

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father (secretly).

V. And lead us not into temptation,

R. But deliver us from evil.

Psalm LXIX.

Deus in Adjutorium.

O God, come to my assistance: O Lord, make haste to help me.

Let them be confounded and ashamed that seek after my soul.

Let them be turned backward, and blush for shame that desire evils unto me.

Let them be straightway turned backward, blushing for shame, that say to me: 'Tis well, 'tis well.

Let all that seek Thee be joyful and glad in Thee: and let such as love Thy salvation say always, The Lord be magnified.

But I am needy and poor: O God, help me.

Thou art my helper and my deliverer: O Lord, make no long delay. [479]

Glory be, etc.

V. Save Thy servants,

R. Who hope in Thee, O my God.

V. Be unto us, O Lord, a tower of strength.

R. From the face of the enemy.

V. Let not the enemy prevail against us.

R. Nor the son of iniquity approach to hurt us.

V. O Lord, deal not with us according to our sins.

R. Neither requite us according to our iniquities.

V. Let us pray for our Sovereign Pontiff [N.].

R. The Lord preserve him and give him life, and make him blessed upon the earth, and deliver him not up to the will of his enemies.

V. Let us pray for our benefactors.

R. Vouchsafe, O Lord, for Thy name's sake, to reward with eternal life all them that do us good. Amen.

V. Let us pray for the faithful departed.

R. Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord; and let perpetual light shine upon them.

V. Let them rest in peace.

R. Amen.

V. For our absent brethren.

R. Save Thy servants, who hope in Thee, O my God.

V. Send them help, O Lord, from the sanctuary.

R. And defend them out of Sion.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

Let Us Pray.

O God, Whose property is always to have mercy and to spare,
[480] receive our humble petition, that we, and all Thy servants who are bound by the chain of sin, may, by the compassion of Thy goodness, mercifully be absolved.

Graciously hear, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the prayers of Thy suppliants, and forgive the sins of them that confess to Thee; that, in Thy bounty, Thou mayest grant us both pardon and peace.

Show forth upon us, O Lord, in Thy mercy, Thy unspeakable loving kindness; that Thou mayest both loose us from all our sins and deliver us from the punishments which we deserve for them.

O God, Who by sin art offended, and by penance pacified, mercifully regard the prayers of Thy people making supplication to Thee, and turn away the scourges of Thine anger, which we deserve for our sins.

Almighty, everlasting God, have mercy upon Thy servant [N.], our Sovereign Pontiff, and direct him, according to Thy clemency, into the way of everlasting salvation; that by Thy grace he may both desire those things that are pleasing to Thee and perform them with all his strength.

O God, from Whom all holy desires, all right counsels, and all just works do come, give unto Thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that our hearts being devoted to Thy

commandments, and the fear of our enemies being taken away, our times, by Thy protection, may be peaceful.

Inflame, O Lord, our reins and heart with the fire of the Holy Ghost; that we may serve Thee with a chaste body, and please Thee with a clean heart.

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, give to the souls of Thy servants departed the remission of all their sins; that through pious supplications they may obtain the pardon [481] which they have always desired.

Prompt, we beseech Thee, O Lord, our actions by Thy inspirations, and further them with Thy continual help; that every prayer and work of ours may always begin from Thee, and through Thee be likewise ended.

Almighty, everlasting God, Who hast dominion over the living and the dead, and art merciful to all whom Thou foreknowest will be Thine by faith and works: we humbly beseech Thee that they for whom we intend to pour forth our prayers, whether this present world still detain them in the flesh, or the world to come hath already received them stripped of their mortal bodies, may, by the grace of Thy loving kindness, and by the intercession of all the saints, obtain the remission of all their sins. Through Thy Son Jesus Christ Our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

R. Amen.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

V. May the almighty and merciful Lord graciously hear us.

R. Amen.

V. And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

R. Amen.

The Seven Penitential Psalms.

Ant. Remember not, O Lord, our offences, nor those of our parents, and take not revenge on our sins.

Psalm VI.

Domine ne in furore.

O Lord, rebuke me not in Thy indignation, nor chastise me in Thy wrath.

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak: heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled.

And my soul is troubled exceedingly: but Thou, O Lord, how long?

Turn to me, O Lord, and deliver my soul: Oh, save me for Thy mercy's sake.

For there is no one in death that is mindful of Thee: and who shall confess to Thee in hell?

I have labored in my groanings, every night I will wash my bed: I will water my couch with my tears.

My eye is troubled through indignation: I have grown old amongst all my enemies.

Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity: for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.

The Lord hath heard my supplication: the Lord hath received my prayer.

Let all my enemies be ashamed, and be very much troubled: let them be turned back, and be ashamed very speedily.

[483] Glory be to the Father, etc.

Psalm XXXI.

Beati quorum.

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord hath not imputed sin, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

Because I was silent my bones grew old, whilst I cried out all the day long.

For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me: I am turned in my anguish whilst the thorn is fastened.

I have acknowledged my sin to Thee, and my injustice I have not concealed.

I said I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord; and Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin.

For this shall every one that is holy pray to Thee in a seasonable time.

And yet in a flood of many waters, they shall not come nigh unto Him.

Thou art my refuge from the trouble which hath encompassed me: my joy, deliver me from them that surround me.

I will give thee understanding, and I will instruct thee in this way in which thou shalt go: I will fix My eyes upon thee.

Do not become like the horse and the mule, which have no understanding.

With bit and bridle bind fast their jaws, who come not near unto Thee.

Many are the scourges of the sinner, but mercy shall encompass him that hopeth in the Lord. [484]

Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, ye just: and glory, all ye right of heart.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Psalm XXXVII.

Domine ne in furore.

Rebuke me not, O Lord, in Thy indignation; nor chastise me in Thy wrath.

For Thy arrows are fastened in me: and Thy hand hath been strong upon me.

There is no health in my flesh, because of Thy wrath: there is no peace in my bones, because of my sins.

For my iniquities are gone over my head: and, as a heavy burden, are become heavy upon me.

My sores are putrefied and corrupted, because of my foolishness.

I am become miserable, and am bowed down, even to the end; I walked sorrowfully all the day long.

For my loins are filled with illusions; and there is no health in my flesh.

I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly: I roared with the groaning of my heart.

Lord, all my desire is before Thee, and my groaning is not hidden from Thee.

My heart is troubled, my strength hath left me, and the light of my eyes itself is not with me.

My friends and my neighbors have drawn near, and stood against me.

And they that were near me stood afar off: and they that sought
[485] my soul used violence.

And they that sought evils to me spoke vain things, and studied deceits all the day long.

But I, as a deaf man, heard not: and as a dumb man not opening his mouth.

And I became as a man that heareth not: and that hath no reproofs in his mouth.

For in Thee, O Lord, have I hoped: Thou wilt hear me, O Lord, my God.

For I said: Lest, at any time, my enemies rejoice over me; and whilst my feet are moved, they speak great things against me.

For I am ready for scourges: and my sorrow is continually before me.

For I will declare my iniquity: and I will think for my sin.

But my enemies live, and are stronger than I: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.

They that render evil for good have detracted me, because I followed goodness.

Forsake me not, O Lord, my God: do not Thou depart from me. Attend unto my help, O Lord, the God of my salvation.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Psalm L.

Miserere.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy.

And according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies, blot out my iniquity.

Wash me yet more from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. [486]

For I know my iniquity, and my sin is always before me.

To Thee only have I sinned, and have done evil before Thee: that Thou mayest be justified in Thy words, and mayest overcome when Thou art judged.

For, behold, I was conceived in iniquities; and in sins did my mother conceive me.

For, behold, Thou hast loved truth: the uncertain and hidden things of Thy wisdom Thou hast made manifest to me.

Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop and I shall be cleansed: Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

To my hearing Thou shalt give joy and gladness; and the bones that have been humbled shall rejoice.

Turn away Thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Create a clean heart in me, O God: and renew a right spirit within my bowels.

Cast me not away from Thy face; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and strengthen me with a perfect spirit.

I will teach the unjust Thy ways: and the wicked shall be converted to Thee.

Deliver me from blood, O God, Thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall extol Thy justice.

O Lord, Thou wilt open my lips: and my mouth shall declare Thy praise.

For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I would indeed have given it: with burnt-offerings Thou wilt not be delighted.

A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit: a contrite and humbled
[487] heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.

Deal favorably, O Lord, in Thy good-will with Sion: that the walls of Jerusalem may be built up.

Then shalt Thou accept the sacrifice of justice, oblations and whole burnt-offerings: then shall they lay calves upon Thy altar.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Psalm CI.

Domine exaudi.

Hear, O Lord, my prayer: and let my cry come to Thee.

Turn not away Thy face from me: in the day when I am in trouble incline Thy ear to me.

In what day soever I shall call upon Thee, hear me speedily.

For my days are vanished like smoke: and my bones are grown dry like fuel for the fire.

I am smitten as grass, and my heart is withered, because I forgot to eat my bread.

Through the voice of my groaning, my bone hath cleaved to my flesh.

I am become like to a pelican of the wilderness: I am like a night-raven in the house.

I have watched, and become as a sparrow, all alone on the house-top.

All the day long my enemies reproached me: and they that praised me did swear against me.

For I did eat ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping.

Because of Thy anger and indignation: for having lifted me up, Thou hast thrown me down.

My days have declined like a shadow, and I am withered like grass. [488]

But Thou, O Lord, endurest forever: and Thy memorial for all generations.

Thou shalt arise and have mercy on Sion: for it is time to have mercy on it, for the time is come.

For the stones thereof have pleased Thy servants: and they shall have pity on the earth thereof.

And the Gentiles shall fear Thy name, O Lord, and all the kings of the earth Thy glory.

For the Lord hath built up Sion: and He shall be seen in His glory.

He hath had regard to the prayer of the humble: and He hath not despised their petition.

Let these things be written unto another generation: and the people that shall be created shall praise the Lord.

Because He has looked forth from His high sanctuary: from heaven the Lord hath looked upon the earth.

That He might hear the groans of them that are in fetters: that He might release the children of the slain.

That they might declare the name of the Lord in Sion, and His praise in Jerusalem.

When the people assemble together, and the kings, to serve the Lord.

He answered Him in the way of his strength: Declare unto me the fewness of my days.

Call me not away in the midst of my days: Thy years are unto generation and generation.

In the beginning, O Lord, Thou foundest the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thy hands.

They shall perish, but Thou remainest: and all of them shall grow old like a garment:

[489] And as a vesture Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed. But Thou art always the self-same, and Thy years shall not fail.

The children of Thy servants shall continue: and their seed shall be directed forever.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Psalm CXXIX.

De profundis.

Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice.

Let Thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If Thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities, Lord, who shall stand?

For with Thee there is merciful forgiveness; and by reason of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord!

My soul hath relied on His word: my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

From the morning watch even until night, let Israel hope in the Lord.

Because with the Lord there is mercy: and with Him plentiful redemption.

And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Psalm CXLII.

Domine exaudi.

Hear, O Lord, my prayer: give ear to my supplication in Thy
[490] truth: hear me in Thy justice.

And enter not into judgment with Thy servant: for in Thy sight no man living shall be justified.

For the enemy hath persecuted my soul: he hath brought down my life to the earth.

He hath made me to dwell in the darkness as those that have been dead of old: and my spirit is in anguish within me: my heart within me is troubled.

I remembered the days of old, I meditated on all Thy works: I meditated upon the works of Thy hands.

I stretched forth my hands to Thee: my soul is as earth without water unto Thee.

Hear me speedily, O Lord: my spirit hath fainted away.

Turn not away Thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

Cause me to hear Thy mercy in the morning: for in Thee have I hoped.

Make the way known to me, wherein I should walk: for I have lifted up my soul to Thee.

Deliver me from my enemies, O Lord; to Thee have I fled: teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.

Thy good Spirit shall lead me into the right land: and for Thy name's sake, O Lord, Thou wilt quicken me in Thy justice.

Thou wilt bring my soul out of trouble: and in Thy mercy Thou wilt destroy my enemies.

And Thou wilt cut off all them that afflict my soul: for I am Thy servant.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Ant. Remember not, O Lord, our offences, nor those of our parents, and take not revenge of our sins.

[491]

Efficacious Prayers for the Souls in Purgatory.

A Daily Exercise For The Relief Of The Poor Souls.

O most loving God, Father of mercies, God of infinite goodness, behold me humbly prostrate before Thy throne; I pray and

beseech Thee to have pity on the holy souls that are in the pains of purgatory. Cast on them a look of mercy, free them from their pains, and put them in possession of the inheritance of heaven. Remember that they are the work of Thy hands, redeemed by the most precious blood of Thy divine Son Jesus: deal with them according to Thine infinite mercy. Hear, O Lord, the prayer I make to Thee with all confidence, through the merits of the Passion and death of Thy most dear Son Jesus, that they may be consoled, and may enjoy without delay that immortal glory which Thou hast prepared for Thine elect. O merciful Lord, have pity upon them, according to our trust in Thee. Amen.

Prayers.

1. O most sweet Jesus, through the sweat of blood which Thou didst suffer in the Garden of Gethsemani, have pity upon the holy souls in purgatory, and in particular upon the one which was most devout to the most Holy Trinity.

[492] Have pity upon them, O Jesus, have pity upon them.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Eternal rest, etc.

O turn to Jesus, Mother! turn,
And call Him by His tenderest names;
Pray for the holy souls that burn
This hour amid the cleansing flames.

2. O most sweet Jesus, through the torments which Thou didst suffer in Thy most cruel scourging, have pity upon those dear souls, and particularly upon the one which was the most devout to Thy most amiable Heart.

Have pity upon them, O Jesus, have pity upon them.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Eternal rest, etc.

O turn to Jesus, etc.

3. O most sweet Jesus, through the pangs which Thou didst suffer in Thy most painful crowning with thorns, have pity upon those dear souls, and particularly upon the one which was most devout to the immaculate heart of Mary.

Have pity upon them, O Jesus, have pity upon them.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Eternal rest, etc.

O turn to Jesus, etc.

4. O most sweet Jesus, through the afflictions which Thou didst suffer in carrying the cross to Calvary, have pity upon those dear souls, and particularly upon the one which is nearest to its departure from that most painful prison.

Have pity upon them, O Jesus, have pity upon them.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Eternal rest, etc.

O turn to Jesus, etc.

5. O most sweet Jesus, through the tortures which Thou didst suffer in Thy most cruel crucifixion, have pity upon those dear [403] souls, and especially upon that one which Thou knowest to be of them all the most destitute of special suffrages.

Have pity upon them, O Jesus, have pity upon them.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Eternal rest, etc.

O turn to Jesus, etc.

6. O most sweet Jesus, through the pains which Thou didst suffer in the most bitter agony which Thou didst undergo upon the cross, have pity upon those dear souls, and particularly upon the one which among them all would be the last to depart out of such excruciating pains.

Have pity upon them, O Jesus, have pity upon them.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Eternal rest, etc.

O turn to Jesus, etc.

7. O most sweet Jesus, through that intense anguish which Thou didst suffer, when Thou didst breathe out Thy blessed soul, have pity upon those dear souls, and particularly upon the one which has the greatest claims on me for help.

Have pity upon them, O Jesus, have pity upon them.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Eternal rest, etc.

O Mary, let thy Son no more
His lingering spouses thus expect:
God's children to their God restore,
And to the Spirit His elect.

They are the children of thy tears;
Then hasten, Mother, to their aid;
In pity think each hour appears
An age while glory is delayed.

[494]

Pray, then, as thou hast ever prayed;
Angels and souls, all look to thee;
God waits thy prayers, for He hath made
Those prayers His law of charity.

O turn to Jesus, Mother! turn,
And call Him by His tenderest names;
Pray for the holy souls that burn
This hour amid the cleansing flames.

Supplication To The Most Holy Mary.

To thee, O most holy Virgin Mary, my Mother, I turn in supplication, and through that sword which pierced thy heart, when thou didst behold thy beloved Son Jesus Christ bow down His head and give up the ghost, I pray and implore thee, with the greatest confidence, to succor the poor holy souls in purgatory, and particularly those of which an especial commemoration has been made. O Mother of sorrows, O Queen of martyrs, for the love of Jesus Who died for us upon the cross, do thou with thy powerful prayers give succor also unto us, who are in danger not only of falling into purgatory, but even of losing ourselves forever. O Mary, our dear Mother, Mother of grace, Mother of mercy, have pity upon us.

Ejaculation to be repeated every day during the Octave.

O eternal Father, through the most precious blood of Jesus, and through the most bitter dolors of Mary, have pity and mercy upon the holy souls in purgatory. Amen.

Prayers for Each Day for the Souls in Purgatory.

For Sunday.

O Lord God almighty, I pray Thee, by the precious blood which Thy divine Son Jesus shed in the Garden; set free the [434] souls in purgatory, and, among them all, especially the one which is most friendless, and conduct it to Thy glory, where it may praise Thee and bless Thee for eternity. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

Psalm, De Profundis.

Prayer.

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, grant to the souls of Thy servants departed the remission of all their sins, that through pious supplications they may obtain that pardon which they have always desired; Who livest and reignest with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

V. Eternal rest give to them, O Lord.

R. And let perpetual light shine upon them.

V. May they rest in peace.

R. Amen.

Monday.

O Lord God almighty, I pray Thee, through the precious blood which Thy divine Son Jesus shed in His cruel scourging; set free the souls in purgatory, and, among them all, especially the one which is nearest to its entry into Thy glory, in order that it

may speedily begin to praise Thee and to bless Thee for eternity. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

Psalm,De Profundis

O God, the Creator, etc., etc.

Tuesday.

O Lord God almighty, I supplicate Thee, through the precious
[496] blood which Thy divine Son Jesus shed in His bitter crowning with thorns; set free the souls in purgatory, and in particular, among them all, the one which would have to be the last to depart from such grievous pains, to the end that it may not delay so long to praise Thee in Thy glory, and to bless Thee forever. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

Psalm,De Profundis

O God, the Creator, etc., etc.

Wednesday.

O Lord God almighty, I pray Thee, through the precious blood which Thy divine Son Jesus shed through the streets of Jerusalem, in carrying the cross on His sacred shoulders; set free the souls in purgatory, and especially the one which is the richest in merits before Thee, in order that in the sublime height of glory which it expects, it may loudly praise Thee and bless Thee forever. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

Psalm,De Profundis

O God, the Creator, etc., etc.

Thursday.

O Lord God almighty, I supplicate Thee, through the precious body and blood of Thy divine Son Jesus, which He Himself on the eve of His Passion gave erewhile for meat and drink to His dear apostles, and left to all His Church as a perpetual sacrifice and lifegiving food for His faithful; set free the souls in purgatory, and most of all the one most devout to this mystery
[497] of infinite love; in order that it may praise Thee for it with Thy

divine Son, and with the Holy Ghost in Thy glory forever. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

Psalm,De Profundis

O God, the Creator, etc., etc.

Friday.

O Lord God almighty, I pray Thee, through the precious blood which Thy divine Son Jesus shed on this day on the altar of the cross, especially from His most holy hands and feet; set free the souls in purgatory, and especially the one for which I ought most to pray to Thee; in order that it may not be owing to my fault that Thou dost not quickly take it to praise Thee in Thy glory, and to bless Thee forever. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

Psalm,De Profundis

O God, the Creator, etc., etc.

Saturday.

O Lord God almighty, I supplicate Thee, through the precious blood which poured forth from the side of Thy divine Son Jesus, in the sight and to the exceeding suffering of His most holy Mother; set free the souls in purgatory, and especially, among them all, the one which was most devout to this great Queen; in order that it may speedily come to Thy glory to praise Thee in her, and her in Thee for all eternity. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

Psalm,De Profundis

O God, the Creator, etc., etc.

Indulgence of a hundred days each time; applicable to the dead.

An Invocation of the Most Holy Trinity for the Souls in Purgatory.

O God of all goodness, Father of mercies, Who, at the prayers and fastings of Thy faithful people, didst vouchsafe to send Thy angels to break asunder the fetters of Thy holy apostle Peter, and to open the doors of his prison; hear even also on this day the prayers and supplications of Thy Church, and send Thy angel to the souls for whom we pray, that, the doors of their prison being opened wide, they may be happily received into the bosom of Thy mercy.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, etc., etc.

O Son of God, Saviour of souls, Who didst refresh the three children in the burning fiery furnace, pour down upon the souls that cry to Thee from the flames, Thy heavenly dew. Thy precious blood alone can quench the flames of purgatory; oh, let it now flow down upon these suffering souls, and do Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon them.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, etc., etc.

O Spirit of love, have compassion on the cruel torment which these souls endure, that are filled with the purest charity, and, aspiring without ceasing towards their God, cry aloud in their distress, I thirst: I thirst after my God! and yet cannot attain unto the object of their love, nor receive the least drop of that torrent of pure delights. O Holy Spirit, grant that, having felt the fiercest pangs of love, they may taste its heavenly delights in a
[499] blessed eternity. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, etc., etc.

Prayer that may be used by Surviving Friends.

Grant, O Lord, we beseech Thee, that while we lament the departure of Thy servant, we may always remember that we are most certainly to follow him [her]. Give us grace to prepare for that last hour by a good and holy life, that we may not be taken

unprepared by sudden death, but may be ever on the watch, that, when Thou shalt call, we may go forth to meet the Bridegroom, and enter with Him into glory everlasting. Through the same Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

O most wise and merciful Lord, Who hast ordained this life as a passage to the future, confining our repentance to the time of our pilgrimage here, and reserving for hereafter the state of punishment and reward; vouchsafe to us who are yet alive, and have still the opportunity of reconciliation with Thee, the grace so to watch over all our actions, and to correct every slightest wandering from the true way to heaven, that we may not be surprised with our sins uncancelled or our duties unfulfilled; but when our bodies shall go down into the grave, our souls may ascend to Thee, and dwell with Thee forever in the mansions of eternal bliss. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord and only Saviour. Amen.

Litany of the Faithful Departed.

(For Private Devotion Only).

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us. [500]
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
God the Father of heaven, Have mercy on the suffering souls.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, Have mercy on the suffering souls.
God the Holy Ghost, Have mercy on the suffering souls.
Holy Trinity, one God, Have mercy on the suffering souls.
Holy Mary, Pray for the suffering souls.

Holy Mother of God, Pray for the suffering souls.
Holy Virgin of virgins, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. Michael, Pray for the suffering souls.
All ye holy angels and archangels, Pray for the suffering souls.
All ye choirs of celestial spirits, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. John the Baptist, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. Joseph, Pray for the suffering souls.
All ye holy patriarchs and prophets, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. Peter, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. Paul, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. John, Pray for the suffering souls.
All ye holy apostles and evangelists, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. Stephen, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. Laurence, Pray for the suffering souls.
All ye holy martyrs, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. Gregory, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. Ambrose, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. Augustine, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. Jerome, Pray for the suffering souls.
All ye holy pontiffs and confessors, Pray for the suffering souls.
All ye holy doctors, Pray for the suffering souls.
All ye holy priests and Levites, Pray for the suffering souls.
All ye holy monks and hermits, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. Mary Magdalen, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. Catharine, Pray for the suffering souls.
St. Barbara, Pray for the suffering souls.
All ye holy virgins and widows, Pray for the suffering souls.
All ye saints of God, Pray for the suffering souls.
Be merciful unto them,
Pardon them, O Lord.
Be merciful unto them,
Hear us, O Lord.
[501] From all evil, O Lord, deliver them.
From Thy wrath, O Lord, deliver them.

From the rigor of Thy justice, O Lord, deliver them.
From the gnawing worm of conscience, O Lord, deliver them.
From fearful darkness, O Lord, deliver them.
From their mourning and tears, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy incarnation, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy nativity, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thine own sweet name, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy baptism and holy fasting, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy most profound humility, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy perfect submission, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy infinite love, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy anguish and torment, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy bloody sweat, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy bonds and chains, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy crown of thorns, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy ignominious death, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy sacred wounds, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy cross and bitter Passion, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thy glorious resurrection, O Lord, deliver them.
By Thine admirable ascension, O Lord, deliver them.
By the coming of the Paraclete, O Lord, deliver them.

In the day of judgment, We beseech Thee, hear us.
Sinners as we are, We beseech Thee, hear us.
Thou Who didst absolve the adulteress, and pardon the good thief, We beseech Thee, hear us.
Thou Who savest by Thy grace, We beseech Thee, hear us.
Thou Who hast the keys of death and of hell, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That it may please Thee to deliver our parents, friends, and benefactors from tormenting flames, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That it may please Thee to deliver all the faithful departed, We beseech Thee, hear us.

That it may please Thee to have mercy on all those who have none in this world to remember or pray for them, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That it may please Thee to have mercy on all, and to deliver them from their pains, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That it may please Thee to fulfil their desires, We beseech Thee, hear us.
That it may please Thee to admit them amongst Thine elect, We beseech Thee, hear us.
King of dreadful majesty, We beseech Thee, hear us.
Son of God, We beseech Thee, hear us.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Give them
[502] rest!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Give them rest!
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, Give them eternal rest!
Jesus Christ, hear us.
Jesus Christ, graciously hear us.

Our Father, etc.

V. From the gate of hell.

R. O Lord, preserve their souls.

Let Us Pray.

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, give to the souls of Thy servants departed the remission of all their sins, to the end that they may obtain, by the humble supplications of Thy Church, that pardon which they have always desired of Thy mercy. Thou Who, being God, livest and reignest forever and ever. Amen.

V. Give them, O Lord, eternal rest.

R. And let perpetual light shine upon them.

V. May they rest in peace.

R. Amen.

Psalm CXXIX.

De Profundis.

Out of the depths I have cried unto Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice.

Let Thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If Thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities: Lord, who shall stand?

For with Thee there is merciful forgiveness: and by reason of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord.

My soul hath relied on His word: my soul hath hoped in the Lord. [503]

From the morning watch even until night: let Israel hope in the Lord.

For with the Lord there is mercy: and with Him plentiful redemption.

And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

V. Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord.

R. And let perpetual light shine upon them.

V. May they rest in peace.

R. Amen.

An indulgence of fifty days can be gained thrice in the same day by all the faithful who shall devoutly recite the De Profundis, with the versicles and responses. Plenary indulgence once a year, after confession and communion.

[504]

December. Advent.

Christ Jesus, Whom we are going to seek this month, has two thrones: one of grace and one of justice. While we live we can always approach the throne of grace. This throne is placed for our refuge, and the pardon of our sins. Ask and you shall receive; if your sins are as black as jet, they shall be made white as snow.

When we approach the throne of God's mercy, love and grace, we must come deeply penetrated with the knowledge, Without Me you can do nothing. John xv. 5. We have not the grace, nor the strength, nor the willingness, nor the intelligence to do good of ourselves without the help of Jesus. Let us then go with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace.

Let us have great confidence in God's mercy; let us feel, in the depths of our hearts, a conviction that the only source whence a poor sinner can expect effectual help is from God's love. Although He should kill me I will trust in Him. We need aid, and we will get that help without fail.

The Church shows her wisdom by not showing us the manger during Advent; for one entire month she tells us, Prepare yourselves that you may be fit to approach the Infant Jesus at the time of His birth. You must prepare your heart by meditation, by a lively faith, a fervent love, a true humility, a sweetness of character, and a spirit of penance and recollection. On Christmas day the Lord is not born corporally, as He was at Bethlehem; but He will be born spiritually in our hearts, if they have been well prepared for His reception.

Considerations and Prayers for Every Day.

First Day.

Advent is the season in which we are taught to look forward to the coming of Our Lord into the world at Christmas, and also to [605] His second coming at the end of time, to judge the living and the dead. His first coming was to seek and to save that which was lost; the second will be to gather in the fruits of His labors, the souls that are saved. The sacred time of Advent is therefore a preparation for Christmas, established by the Church, and at the same time it leads us to look for the coming of Christ at the end, and to conform our lives to the life of Christ, so that when we meet Him on the Last Day it will not be in fear and trembling, but with joy, because we have been selected to return with Him to heaven. We will, then, with alacrity enter into this employment during this month, knowing that if we have prepared well for His first coming, we shall be in a fit state to receive Him at His second advent. The time of Advent, according to the Church, is a time of penance, not so great as Lent, but the spirit should be the same. Every morning, if possible, attend Mass in honor of the coming of Christ, and on Fridays impose a slight penance on yourself.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, vouchsafe to reduce Thy incarnated divinity and most divine humanity to the humiliating state of birth and infancy: grant that we, acknowledging Thy infinite wisdom in Thy infancy, Thy power in Thy weakness, and Thy majesty in Thy littleness, may adore Thee, a little one on earth, and behold Thee great in heaven. Who livest and reignest with God the Father, in unity with the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

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Second Day.

Of all the miracles in the world, never was there one to be compared to that of the coming of the Son of God on earth, in the humble form of a child. It was a miracle so entirely above our reasoning, that unless we knew it by faith established by revelation, we would say it was impossible and believe it as little as many of the unbelieving Jews did. That the infinite God should take the form of a poor creature: that God should so unite Himself to that creature of His, as to assume its lowliness, clad in the dust and clay of the earth, is a very great miracle. It was, however, the infinite power of the Almighty that did this. For us men, and for our salvation, He came down from heaven. He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross. Who can now refuse to believe in the love of God for His creatures? Men looking at life in a certain light, have doubted God's goodness to humanity; but let them once contemplate the world from our point of view and they will necessarily admit that He loved us to excess, and that He still continues to love us. Oh, shall we not then return Him love for love?

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Third Day.

What was it that induced God to work such a miracle in behalf of mankind, as to send His only-begotten Son to this world? It
[507] was man's sin. From all eternity the Blessed Trinity had decreed

that in consequence of sin there was a necessity of redemption; that the eternal Word should be born into the world, if man was not to be left to the fate of everlasting perdition. Man could not redeem himself; an angel could not give sufficient satisfaction; none but God Himself could offer atonement for man. Hence, God, in His great goodness and mercy, resolved to do this work of redemption. He provides a remedy for all the sins and follies of men, even before they are committed. We do the harm, and God has to undo it. Has He not often thus averted from me the consequences due to my evil deeds? What have I done in my life but wickedness, and very little good? My life has been so filled with iniquity, that shame fills my heart when I think of the past. I have not only to bear the sins of Adam and Eve, but I have to atone for my own sins. So great have these sins been, that the Son of God had to descend very low to reach our level.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Fourth Day.

The Fathers of the Church, and the Church herself, exclaim, O happy fault, that caused the Word to be made flesh, and to dwell among us! O happy transgression, which earned a Redeemer such as this! We gained more than we lost. Adam and Eve were perfect for a time in the sight of God, but when they fell, they lost all. Then came the redemption, and we were admitted into the Church of God, a fountain so full of graces, by means of [448] the sacraments. Our places were secured in heaven by the blood of the Lamb. What a great gift was that blood of Jesus Christ, poured over our soul! What a glorious wound was that which was cured by so adorable a power! We have hope once more, again we breathe freely in the bright trust of being children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. So that from the time

of Adam and Eve, there had been a hope in the human breast that God would come to redeem mankind. Adam and all his children were ever looking and praying for His coming; and now during Advent we are preparing for the coming of Him Who is to rejoice every heart. Come quickly, O Lord Jesus.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Fifth Day.

The children of Adam had to lament the deadly effects of the evil they had committed. As generation followed generation, thicker grew the darkness in the minds and hearts of the people, and farther and farther away did they wander from that eternal Light, which was to guide them to heaven. Thus it is that sin goes on, spreading its painful consequences throughout the world, even long after the evil-doer is dead and gone. Gradually the world lost all regard for virtue, or for God, until it became so wicked that unless the Redeemer appeared when He did, mankind would have been plunged into absolute barbarism, and worked its own
[509] destruction. If I had lived then, what kind of a human being would I have been? who even now, while enjoying the light of civilization and the freedom with which God has enriched me, am such a poor specimen of a Christian. I who have been made by God, for God, and in the image of God.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Sixth Day.

Our life is a circle. We came from God, and to God we must return. If we have deserted Him we must go back, if our life is

to be a success in the end. We can never find repose or lasting satisfaction in anything but God. Until we make Him the end and aim of our life, we shall feel that we are wandering about in the dark. This was the case with the world, which had gone from its Creator; deeper and deeper it sank in the mire of iniquity. We must do as Christ bids us,—Seek ye first the kingdom of God. We seek Him by a thorough preparation for His coming, for He will come to meet us, and will be ready to receive us and take us back into His affection. God comes to us repeatedly in life; but we do not know His fulness. Yet it is a sad loss that we are so blind. It is the only real misery in life, that we are meeting God every day, and do not know Him when we meet Him.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

[510]

Seventh Day.

At length, on the distant horizon, can be discerned the dawn of the Sun that has been so long desired to enlighten the world. The happy Mother of the Messias was to be born before He could come. This is the eve of the feast of the Immaculate Conception; the earth has now a pledge that the coming of the Messias will no longer be delayed, the Son of man is near at hand. The conception of Mary takes place under the direct providence of God; she receives the breath of life from God, without any stain of sin. The feast of the Blessed Virgin's Immaculate Conception is the most solemn of all those which the Church celebrates during the holy season of Advent. We will, then, honor the feast of the Blessed Virgin with joy. The intention of the feast is not only to celebrate the anniversary of the happy moment in which began, in the womb of the pious Ann, the life of the ever glorious

Virgin Mary: but also to honor the sublime privilege by which Mary was preserved from the stain of original sin, which, by the curse of God on our first parents, darkened the souls of all the descendants of Adam and Eve at the very first moment of their conception.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Eighth Day.

The faith of the Catholic Church on the conception of Mary, is this: that, at the very instant when God united the soul of Mary, [511] which He had created with a special regard to the Mother of His divine Son, to the body which it was to animate, this ever blessed soul not only did not contract the stain of that curse which defiles every human soul, but was filled with an immeasurable grace, which rendered it from that moment the mirror of sanctity of God Himself, as far as this is possible to a creature. It was due to His own infinite sanctity that God should suspend, in this instance, the law which His divine justice had passed upon all the children of Adam. The relations which Mary was to bear to the divinity could not be reconciled with her undergoing the humiliations of man's punishment. She was not only the Daughter of the eternal Father: she was destined also to become the very Mother of the Son, and the Bride of the Holy Ghost. Nothing defiled could be permitted to enter, even for the shortest time, that sacred structure.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Ninth Day.

St. Anselm, a Doctor of the Church, tells us, in his time, when the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception had not yet been declared, that, It was just that this holy Virgin should be adorned with the greatest purity which can be conceived, after that of God Himself, since God the Father was to give her as her Child that only-begotten Son, Whom He loved as Himself, as being begotten to Him from His own bosom, and this in such a manner that the self-same Son of God was by nature the Son of both God [502] the Father, and of this Blessed Virgin. This same Son chose her to be substantially His Mother: and the Holy Ghost willed that in her womb He would operate the conception and birth of Him from Whom He Himself proceeded. When we remember that Mary is the Mother of God, so far from being surprised at the privileges which we see the Church giving her, we approve of all. That the Almighty would shower down upon her the choicest graces of heaven, and by special privileges distinguish her from all the children of God, seems only just. Mary was so surrounded and strengthened by grace that she never committed the least sin during her life.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Tenth Day.

The closeness of the tie between Mother and Son gave Mary all the privileges and distinctions which she enjoys. This closeness was to unite the Son of God with Mary, and was to elicit from Him the most tender love and the most filial reverence. All this had been present to the thought of God from all eternity, and the conclusion forces itself upon our mind, that therefore the divine Word had, for His future Mother, a love infinitely greater than that which He bore for all other creatures. Mary's honor was infinitely dear to Him, because she was to be His Mother, chosen

to be so by His eternal and merciful decrees. The Son's love protected the Mother. She, indeed, in her sublime humility, willingly
[513] submitted to whatever the rest of God's creatures had brought on themselves, and obeyed every tittle of those laws which were never meant for her.O Mary, O marvellous, mystical creature! O resplendent mote, lost almost to view in the upper light of the supernal fountains! Who can sufficiently abase himself before thee, and weep for the want of love to love thee rightly, thou whom the Word so loved eternally?(Faber.)

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Eleventh Day.

Mary was conceived without sin, because the eternal Father would not do less for the second Eve than He had done for the first; yet the latter was created, as was also the first Adam, in the state of original justice, which she forfeited by her disobedience. The Son of God would not permit that Mary, from whom He was to take the nature of man, should be deprived of that gift which He had given to Eve. The Holy Ghost, Who was to overshadow Mary, and through whose operation she was to become the Mother of the Incarnate Word, would not permit that foul stain of sin in which we are all conceived to rest even for an instant on His Bride. All men were to contract the sin of Adam. The sentence was universal, the condemnation went out against all the race; but God's own Mother could not be included. God, Who is the Author of that law; God, Who was free to make it as He willed, had power to save her from its effects; His omnipotence
[514] could exempt her, and it was nothing more than proper, even according to our frail reason, that she was exempted.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Twelfth Day.

Certainly God's omnipotence came into active operation when He created the soul of Mary. When Adam and Eve stood before Him in the garden of paradise, the Lord said to the woman, Why hast thou done this? She replied, The serpent deceived me, and I did eat. Then God was angry, and turning to the serpent He said, I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head. Thus was salvation promised to the human race, under the form of a victory over Satan, and it is to be gained by the woman. The second Eve is to be worthy of the second Adam, conquering Satan and sin. The human race is one day to be avenged, not only by God made man, but also by the woman miraculously exempted from every sin, in whom the primeval creation, which was in justice and holiness, will thus reappear, as though original sin had never been committed. Raise up your hands then, ye children of Adam, and shake off your chains. On this day of the Immaculate Conception the humiliation which weighed you down so heavily is annihilated.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

[515]

Thirteenth Day.

The dignity of the human race is well portrayed when we see that God so blessed its members. The Lord loves the human race, and was pleased to be called the Son of man. He still loves this guilty earth, since He has deigned to enlighten it with one of the brightest rays of His Mother's glory. How the world ought to exult on this feast of the Immaculate Conception! The present generation will never forget the enthusiasm with which the entire

universe received the tidings of the definition of the dogma. It was an event of mysterious importance, which thus marks this second half of our century, and we shall look forward to the future with confidence. For the Holy Ghost bids us tremble for the days when truths are diminished among the children of men. He would consequently have us look on these times as blessed by God, in which we receive an increase of truth, and an increase both in light and authority. The Church always professed belief in the Immaculate Conception; it is not a new doctrine. She had always kept the 8th of December as the feast of the conception of Mary. Now we add, Immaculate Conception.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Fourteenth Day.

There have been no new doctrines added to the dogmas of the Church. People are sometimes scandalized when they hear, from [516] Protestant and infidel sources, that the Church is continually adding to her faith without any warrant from God. Such, however, is not a fact. The present living Church can add nothing to the revelation of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. St. Bernard and the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas, both teach that the Church cannot celebrate the feast of what is not holy. From time immemorial the feast of the Immaculate Conception has been celebrated; it was considered holy then, and is now no new doctrine. The nativity of the same holy Virgin is kept as a solemnity in the Church, because Mary was born full of grace. Therefore, had the first moment of Mary's existence been one of sin, as that of all the other children of Adam, it never could have been made the subject of reverence by the Church. O Mary, thou bright ray of hope, penetrate our hearts, that we may rejoice

in thy motherhood; thou art the dearest, purest, holiest Mother, whom we love most tenderly.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Fifteenth Day.

How thy gentle light gladdens our weary eyes, sweet Mother! Generations had followed generations on this earth of ours; men looked up to heaven through their tears, hoping to see on the horizon the Star which they had been told should disperse the gloomy horrors of the world's darkness. O thou fair Morning Star, which dost shed thy blessed rays on the sea, and dost bring calm after long stormy night, prepare our eyes, that they may behold the divine Sun which will soon follow in thy path, and [517] give to the world His reign of light. To see Jesus in truth our hearts must be pure; purify them, then, O Mother, especially during this sacred time of Advent, that we, the children of the Church, reflecting on the jealous care wherewith God preserved thee from every stain of sin, because thou wast to be the Mother of His divine Son, might prepare to receive this same Jesus by the most perfect renouncing of every sin, and every attachment to it. Cease not to bless and protect all these that honor thy great privilege of being conceived without sin. May this feast fit us for the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. Thou art all beautiful, O Mary, and there is no stain of sin in thee.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Sixteenth Day.

The Church cries out a welcome to the advent of Christ, during this time; making us feel as if we sat in darkness, as if we were as degraded as was man before the coming of the Messias: O Wisdom, she cries out, Who camest forth from the mouth of the Most High, reaching in Thy strength from end to end, and sweetly disposing all things, come teach us the way of prudence. The first title given to Jesus is that of Wisdom, the eternal Wisdom of God, and the source of all wisdom to men for all time. The eternal Word disposes all things sweetly: everything that happens in heaven and on earth is arranged by Him, not unkindly, nor harshly, but sweetly. We invite Him to
[518] come and teach us the ways of prudence, because where there is prudence all must be well. Teach me, O Jesus, the lesson of prudence, which will guide me safely to the kingdom of heaven. The prophet Micheas says of the Child to be born in Bethlehem:

His going forth is from the beginning from the days of eternity.

O divine Wisdom, how strong art Thou, in thus reaching Thine ends by means which are infallible though hidden!

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Seventeenth Day.

O Adonai and Leader of the house of Israel, Who didst appear to Moses in the fire of the flaming bush, and didst give him the Law on Sinai, come and save us with a stretched forth arm! O sovereign, almighty Lord, come to redeem us! Heretofore Thou didst show Thyself to Moses in a fiery bush, Thou didst give Thy Law to Thy people amidst thunder and lightning on Mount Sinai; come and redeem us now in the goodness of Thy Heart, in kindness and love. Thy chaste Mother, having heard the emperor's edict, which obliges her and Joseph, her spouse, to repair to Bethlehem, prepares everything needful for Thy divine

birth. She makes ready the humble swaddling-clothes which are to cover and protect Thee from the cold of that midnight hour. Thus it is that Thou willest to deliver us from the slavery of pride, and to show man that Thy divine arm is never stronger than when he thinks it powerless. Everything is prepared for Thy reception, except our hearts, which still await Thy holy grace, which is to [519] change them, and make them fit temples for Thy abode.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Eighteenth Day.

The expectation of the birth of Our Lord is a fact which is celebrated throughout the Church. The expectation of the world is now at its greatest tension. Nobody knows whether the event of the birth of Christ is going to take place to-day, or to-morrow; but soon it will be accomplished. Everything is in readiness; the earth groans for need of the Lord, the holy people pray that they may see the great day; we, too, on this feast, will pray for the coming of the Lord. We wish with all our hearts that the Messias would come. Most just indeed it is, O holy Mother of God, that we should unite in that ardent desire thou hadst to see Him, Who had been concealed for nine months in thy chaste womb; to know the features of the Son of the heavenly Father; to come to that blissful hour of His birth, which will give glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace to men of good-will. Yes, dear Mother, the time is fast approaching, though not fast enough to satisfy thy desires and ours. Make us, O Mary, redouble our attention to this great mystery; complete our preparation by thy powerful prayers for us, that when His hour has come, Jesus may find no obstacle to His entry into our hearts. [520]

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Nineteenth Day.

O Root of Jesse, Who standest as the standard of the people, before Whom kings shall not open their lips; to Whom the nations shall pray, come and deliver us: tarry now no more. At length, O Son of Jesse, Thou art approaching the city of Thy ancestors! The ark of the Lord has arisen, and is journeying with the God that is in her to the place of rest. How beautiful are thy steps, O thou daughter of the Prince, now that thou art bringing to the cities of Juda their salvation! The angels escort thee, heaven delights in thee, and earth thrills with joy to bear thus upon itself, its Creator and its Queen. Blessed is the womb of the Virgin Mary, which bore the invisible God; there did He deign to dwell, Whom even thrones cannot hold, and she bore Him as a light weight. Our hearts, O Mary, are with thee. Like thy royal ancestor, David, we will enter not into the dwelling, our house, nor go up to bed whereon we lie, nor give sleep to our eyes, nor rest to our temples, until we have found the place in our hearts for the Lord Whom thou bearest, a tabernacle for this God of Jacob. Then will be silenced the enemies of thy name, and nations will offer thee their prayers.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

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Twentieth Day.

O Key of David and Sceptre of the house of Israel! Who openest and no man shutteth; Who shuttest and no man openeth; come and lead the captive from prison, sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death. O Gabriel! blest messenger of heaven, thou camest through closed doors, and didst announce the word

Thou shalt conceive and bear a Son, and He shall be called Emmanuel! O Jesus, Son of David, heir to his throne and his power, Thou art now passing over, on Thy way to Bethlehem, the land that once was the kingdom of Thy ancestors, but now is tributary to the Gentiles. Not an inch of this ground about Bethlehem, historic for many centuries, but has witnessed the miracles of the justice and mercy of Jehovah, Thy Father, to the people of that Old Covenant which is so soon to end. Before long, when Thou hast come from beneath the virginal cloud which now hides Thee, Thou wilt pass along this same road, doing good, healing all manner of sickness and every infirmity; and yet having not whereon to lay Thy head. Thou art now about to come forth, Thou art now to shine in the midst of this world's darkness. Open the gates then, with this all powerful Key of David.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Twenty-first Day.

Orient Splendor of eternal light, and Sun of justice! Come and enlighten them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death. [22] O Jesus, bright light from heaven, the brightness of God Himself, the Splendor of the early Sun: we welcome Thee. We need Thy light, for we sit in darkness: all are in darkness who commit sin, and the world is full of sin. Jesus, the great Sun, must rise over this darkness, that it may be dissipated, and a new life may be infused into it; then the angel of darkness will fly away; then will grow the life of light. Nothing prospers in darkness; man sleeps and does not work, plants fade and die; so that, O Light of the splendid Orient, arise in our hearts! We beseech Thee, O God, to remove from us all that resists Thee, so that with a believing heart we may in such a manner bring forth the branches of Thy

gifts bestowed on us, that the root of humility may never dry up within us.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Twenty-second Day.

O King of nations and their desired One, the corner-stone that joinest the two walls! Come and save man, whom Thou didst form out of slime. O King of peace! Thou wast born before all ages! come by the golden gate; visit those whom Thou hast redeemed, and lead them back to the place from whence they fell by sin. The journey of Our Lord to Bethlehem is nearly over, and our blessed Mother is engrossed entirely in the expectation of the coming of her divine Son. She adores His majesty; she gives thanks for His mercy; she rejoices that she has been chosen
[523] for the sublime ministry of motherhood towards the Son of God. Mary longs for that happy day when her eyes will look upon Him, and yet she fears that moment, too. How will she be able to serve her God in His human life? How will she dare to raise Him up in her arms the King of nations, and she but a humble Virgin? When she reflects that the hour is approaching in which she is to see the Light of the world, her heart almost fails her, for on the one hand she knows that she bears her God, and on the other she is full of love because she is His Mother. Come, then, speedily we beseech Thee, come and save us!

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Twenty-third Day.

O Emmanuel, Our King and Lawgiver, the expectation of the Gentiles and their Saviour, come and save us, O Lord, Our God! O Jerusalem, city of the great God! lift up thine eyes round about, and see thy Lord, for He is coming to loose thee from thy chains. As Mary and Joseph passed Jerusalem they surely did not omit to visit the Temple of the Lord. This was the first visit which Our Lord paid to His Father's house. Then was fulfilled for the first time the prophecy of Aggeus. Great shall be the glory of this last house, more than of the first. Now was standing in this second Temple the Ark of the New Covenant, greater by far than the Ark of Moses. The angels that lived in the Temple were roused to special prayer on that occasion. Mary and Joseph, when their devotions were ended, hastened on their way in order that they might seek suitable shelter, but they were to be disappointed everywhere. Thus Jesus Christ, the Son of God, comes into the world.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who didst, for the love of us, etc., etc.

Twenty-fourth Day.

Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem. They knocked at several doors for admittance or for information, but were invariably turned away; for great was the crowd that was going the same way. The rich had their houses engaged; the poor had to look for shelter in any place. Joseph, mindful of Mary, his spouse, was much concerned for her comfort, and he did the best he could. After great industry he at last found a cave where she might have shelter from the open sky, and the darkness and chilliness of the night. This holy eve is indeed full of grace and hope, and we ought to spend it in spiritual communion and joy. Let us enter into the spirit of the Church, and prepare ourselves in all the joy of our hearts to meet the Saviour Who is about to be born to us.

Let us dispose our hearts with great simplicity, for to-morrow we shall see the glory of God. Let us delight in the thought that before we lie down again to rest, we shall see the promised Redeemer born in the solemn midnight. Sanctify yourselves to-day, and be prepared, because in the morning you shall see
[525] the majesty of God among you.

Prayer.

O God, Who makest us to rejoice in the yearly expectation of the feast of the redemption: grant that we, who joyfully receive Thy only-begotten Son as a Redeemer, may behold without fear the same Lord Jesus Christ, coming as our Judge: Who livest and reignest world without end. Amen.

Special Devotions to Mary, the Mother of Jesus, during the Time of Advent.

The devotion of the forty Hail Marys, which St. Catharine of Bologna introduced, has been enriched by Pope Pius VII. An indulgence of forty days is granted to the faithful who recite it during the month of December.

Daily Prayer.

O Mary, great Mother of Our God, and merciful intercessor for us poor sinners! we throw ourselves humbly at thy feet, and we beg thee by the sacred blood of Thy divine Son, which He has shed for us, and by the prayers of St. Catharine of Bologna, that thou wilt infuse into our hearts the true spirit of devotion in this little exercise and give us the grace to imitate the virtues of that saint, under whose protection we say this prayer. Think not of our unworthiness and our ingratitude, but let us feel the depth of thy great love for us; and in the contemplation of the love

with which thou didst consider thy servant Catharine, obtain for us from God the remission of our sins, that we have a cause to expect the grace of God for our salvation. Amen. [526]

Prayer For Each Day.

Let us now take this devotion of this saint of God, Catharine, and every day during this month before Christmas, say a prayer in preparation for the coming of Christ, by reciting forty Hail Marys in honor of the great Mother of God, who was so well prepared to receive the Lord at His birth. We will have sorrow for our sins, for that will purify our souls, which is a necessary quality for the reception of the Lord at His coming.

The First Ten Hail Marys.

After each Hail Mary say:

Blessed be the hour, O Mary, in which thou becamest the Mother of Jesus, the Son of God.

Then consider the great mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God, the greatest miracle of God's mercy, also the great dignity of Mary in the Christian world and in heaven, because she became the Mother of God and yet remained a Virgin.

The Second Ten Hail Marys.

After each Hail Mary say:

Blessed be the hour, O Mary, in which thou didst give birth to Jesus, the Son of God.

Then consider the humility of Mary, the Queen of heaven, who was content with the will of God and became the Mother of God in a lowly stable.

The Third Ten Hail Marys.

After each Hail Mary say:

Blessed be the hour, O Mary, in which thou didst nourish and care for the Child Jesus.

Then consider the solicitude of Mary, with which she looked after the Child Jesus in all the temporal necessities of a newly born infant, when, according to His own will, He was not able

to help Himself. She loved that Child, and spent upon it her
[527] tenderest care.

The Fourth Ten Hail Marys.

After each Hail Mary say:

Blessed be the hour, O Mary, in which thou didst screen Jesus, the Son of God, from the persecution of Herod.

Consider here that as soon as Jesus was born He became the object of the persecution of men. Herod sought to murder Him, and Mary had to take the Child and flee into Egypt.

Daily Prayer After These Devotions.

Praised be God, that we have undertaken this devotion according to the instruction of St. Catharine. We beg of thee, Mary, Mother of the expected Child, and Queen of angels, that thou deignest to obtain for us especially two graces. First, to really bewail our sins and our past infidelities, and second to attain after our death eternal salvation. We will cry out from the bottom of our heart according to the example of Catharine: Turn then, Mary, thine eyes of mercy towards us, and after this, our exile, show us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O blessed, O pious, O sweet Virgin Mary!

Then recite the Litany of the Blessed Virgin.[1]

V. Make us worthy to praise thee, O Blessed Virgin, Mother of my God.

R. That I may have power against my enemies.

Let Us Pray.

O God, Who, after the announcement of the angel, didst create
[528] a body for Thy divine Son in the bosom of the Blessed Virgin Mary, grant us the grace that we, who acknowledge her great privilege, may be assisted by her intercession. We pray Thee, O God almighty, that Thou mayest purify our hearts and consciences by Thy heavenly visitation, that Thy divine Son Jesus Christ, when He shall come with all the saints, may find a fitting

[1] Page 234.

habitation prepared for Him. Who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.

Mass for Advent.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Introibo.

O Jesus, the true and infinite sacrifice, I adore Thee in the Blessed Sacrament, and I make an offering of Thy sacred body, which Thou didst deliver for us unto death on the cross, and Thy sacred blood, which Thou didst shed for our sins, in union with the priest who is about to say Mass. Eternal and merciful Father, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as Our Father! With the priest I offer Thee a pure, holy, immaculate sacrifice, the sacred bread of eternal life, the chalice of salvation, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, Thy Son. Deign to accept it, and be merciful to me a sinner. In the spirit of humility and with a contrite heart, I acknowledge, O my God, that I have sinned often and grievously in thought, word, and deed, through my most grievous fault. I know I have been guilty, and I beg pardon of Thee, O heavenly Father, through Thy infinite mercy, through the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, and through the intercession [529] of all the saints. Amen.

The Priest Ascends The Altar.

O ye saints whose relics are kept on the altar, and all ye saints and servants of God in heaven, let me unite with thee in praising, loving and adoring Our God in the Sacrament of the Altar! Pray for all those who are assembled here; pray that we may be heard and that we ourselves cry out, Lord, have mercy on us! Christ, have mercy on us! Lord, have mercy on us! Amen.

Gloria.

Glory to God in the highest! Glory, praise, and adoration to the Most High, the one true God, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be for all eternity. Lord God, upon Thee I place all my trust. Save me from every danger, and keep me from every evil. The eyes of all are upon Thee, O Lord, and Thou givest them food; Thou fillest all that there is with Thy benediction. I praise thee, also, O Mary, Mother of God, and thank thee for all that I owe thee. Who is it Whom we adore in the Blessed Sacrament but Jesus, thy Son, Who took flesh and blood from thee! What a joy must not thy heart experience when thou seest so many devout worshippers surrounding the throne of the majesty of Jesus, hidden in the consecrated bread on our altars! Do thou also, O dear Mother, sing with us the praises of that Jesus, for Whose coming we are preparing during Advent.
[530] Amen.

Collects.

Give us, O God, the grace daily to feel the advent of Our Lord upon our altars, as we expect Him to be born in our hearts at Christmas-time. Grant that we may also be prepared to meet Him, the Judge, at the end of time, and may find Him propitious; through the same Jesus Christ Our Lord. O God, Who didst leave with us, under the consecrated species, a memory of Thy sufferings, give us the grace that by our ardent faith we may adore Thee in this Holy Sacrament, and become worthy fruits of Thy holy Passion and death. Amen.

Epistle.

Accept, O God, this holy sacrifice in thanksgiving for the institution of the Blessed Sacrament. For in possessing the Blessed Sacrament we possess heaven and earth, our cares are taken away, and we have Jesus, Who cries continually to us: Come to Me, all you who are heavily laden, and I will refresh you. My dear Jesus, make me worthy to praise Thee with all the angels and elect in Thy kingdom. Let me serve Thee worthily here on this earth, so that I may one day share Thy glory in heaven.

Amen.

Gospel.

Jesus, divine Physician of our souls! how can we sufficiently thank Thee for having become man, and for having dwelt among men? To perpetuate Thy coming, Thou hast remained on our altars in the Holy Sacrament. Thou hast preached the Gospel to us poor creatures, and hast made us acquainted with the secrets of [531] heaven. Oh, that we would always listen to Thy Word, and apply it to our life, regulating all our actions on the principles of divine wisdom manifested therein! Let Thy holy Gospel and Thy holy teaching be a light to our lives in the darkness in which we walk, on account of our prejudices, passions, and evil inclinations, and when we take this light for our guide, we are sure that we will come happily to the end for which we were created. Amen.

Credo.

I believe in one God, and in three divine persons in that Godhead. I believe in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God of God, Light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not made; consubstantial with the Father by Whom all things were made, Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary and was made man! He was crucified also for us, suffered under Pontius Pilate, and was buried. The third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of the Father: and He is to come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead: of His kingdom there shall be no end. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son: Who together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified: Who spoke by the prophets. And one holy Catholic [532] and Apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I expect the resurrection of the dead, and the life of

the world to come. Amen.

Offertory.

I adore Thee, O my God, and in union with the priest, offer Thee this sacrifice for Thy honor and glory, in thanksgiving for all the benefits conferred upon myself and upon the world; and in satisfaction for my many sins, and the sins of other men. Accept, O Lord, of this holocaust, which is no other than Thy divine Son, at once made Priest and Victim, offering and offered, and apply His saving merits to my needy soul. Be comforted, O my heart, Jesus sacrifices Himself for thee. Amen.

Lavabo.

O my Jesus, would that I could take Thee to witness of the holiness of my life and the innocence of my heart! But it is in Thy mercy only that I place all my hope; my consolation is in meditating on Thy promises to the penitent heart, and Thy faithfulness in performing them. Confounded at all that I have committed to this day, and encouraged by the favors Thou hast bestowed upon me, I can but promise to correspond better with Thy graces than I have hitherto done. I will purify myself more and more with the tears of penance; I will bless Thee as I do this day, and I will sing of the wonders of Thy power and of Thy mercy. Amen.

Orate Fratres.

[533] The creature can offer nothing to the Creator that can be worthy of His acceptance. I unite myself, therefore, to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, Who alone can merit anything in my behalf. I desire nothing but through Him and with Him. I have no wish beyond Him. O God of mercy, I seek nothing but Thy love! Graciously accept of the sacrifice of my heart and my whole self and may it, like the sacrifice of Jesus, be pleasing to Thee and unite us to Him. Amen.

Preface.

Lift up, O Lord, do Thou Thyself lift up my heart to Thee! Take from it all unholy thoughts, all earthly affections! Lift

it wholly up to heaven, where Thou art worthily adored, and to the altar, where Thou art about to manifest Thyself to me. My life is but one continual succession of Thy mercies; let it be one continual succession of thanksgivings. And as Thou art now about to renew the greatest of all sacrifices, is it not meet that I should burst forth into expressions of heartfelt gratitude? Suffer me, then, to join my feeble voice with the voices of all the heavenly spirits, and in union with them, say, in a transport of joy and admiration: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! Amen.

Consecration.

Bow down your body and soul in solemn adoration; make an act of faith in the real presence of your Saviour's body and blood, soul and divinity, under the sacramental veils. Offer your whole [134] self to Him, and through Him to His Father; beg that your heart and soul may be happily changed into Him.

Elevation Of The Host.

(Here the bell is rung thrice).

Hail, true body, born of the Virgin Mary, which didst truly suffer and was immolated on the cross for man, Whose side was pierced, and from which flowed water and blood; may we have a foretaste of Thee in the last agony of death. O kind, O loving One, Jesus, Son of Mary, have mercy on me! Amen.

Elevation Of The Chalice.

Saviour of the world, save us, for by Thy cross and by Thy blood Thou hast redeemed us! Help us, we beseech Thee, O Our God! Amen. Have mercy on me, dear Jesus, and grant that Thy blood may not be shed in vain for me, I humbly beseech Thee. Amen.

Pater Noster.

Our Father, Who reignest in heaven, come and reign in my soul; come and sanctify it by Thy presence; come and subject

it to Thy holy will, and render it obedient to the inspirations of Thy grace. Extinguish in my heart every feeling of hatred and revenge; forgive me, as I forgive. Grant me such wisdom and such strength that I may triumph over all temptations. Deliver me from all those evils which oppress me, and under which I
[535] groan, being burdened. I come to Thee as a child to his father to be fed; as a subject to his prince to be protected; as one afflicted to his only succor, to be consoled and comforted. Amen.

Agnus Dei.

In saying to Thy apostles, Peace I leave to you, My peace I give to you, Thou hast promised, O Lord, to all Thy Church, that peace which the world cannot give—peace with Thee, and peace with ourselves. Let nothing, O Lord, ever interrupt this holy peace; let nothing separate us from Thee, to Whom we heartily desire to be united, through the Blessed Sacrament of peace and reconciliation. Let this food of angels strengthen us in every Christian duty, so that we nevermore yield under temptations, or fall into common weaknesses.

Domine, Non Sum Dignus.

God can only be worthy of receiving God; how, then, can a soul so sinful as mine merit so great a happiness! But Thou, O Lord, regardest not Thy greatness, but Thy mercy. Thou willest that I come to Thee, as one sick to a physician who can heal him; as one poor to his rich lord who can assist. O God of love, behold at Thy feet the poorest, the most infirm of Thy creatures. Unite me to Thyself, and I shall become rich and whole in Thy sight. Work, I beseech Thee, this miracle, worthy of Thy omnipotence and charity.

Act Of Spiritual Communion.

For Those Who do not Intend to Communicate.

O my most loving Saviour, since I cannot have the happiness
[536] of receiving Thee this day, suffer me to gather up the precious crumbs that fall from Thy table, and to unite myself to Thy divine Heart by faith, hope, and charity. I confess I do not deserve the

children's bread; but I venture humbly to declare that, away from Thee, my soul is dried up with thirst, and my heart cast down with faintness. Come, then, into me, O my divine Jesus! come into my mind, to illuminate it with Thy light; come into my heart, to enkindle in it the fire of Thy love, and to unite it so intimately with Thine own, that it may be no more I that live, but Thou that livest in me and reignest in me forever.

Last Gospel.

O eternal Word, speak to my soul, which adores Thee in profound silence! Thou Who art the great Creator of all things, abandon not, I beseech Thee, Thine own creature! be Thou my life, my light, and my all! O Light eternal! enlighten me as to this present life, and in the life to come. Reign in me as in Thine own inheritance; for Thou, O Lord, hast made me; Thou hast redeemed me. May I ever be Thine!

After Mass.

Accept, O most gracious God, this, our service; whatever, by Thy grace, we may have performed with diligence, in Thy clemency regard; and what we have done with negligence, mercifully pardon, through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen. May the blessing of almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, descend upon us now, and remain with us forever. Amen.

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To Be Said Throughout Advent.

Ant. The Holy Ghost shall come down upon thee, O Mary: fear not: thou shalt bear within thy womb the Son of God. Alleluia.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

Let Us Pray.

O God, Who wast pleased that Thy Word should take flesh in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and didst make it known unto her by the message of an angel; grant that we, Thy suppliants, who truly believe her to be the Mother of God, may through her intercession find help with Thee. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Litany for Christmas.

(For Private Devotion Only).

Glory be to God on high.
And peace on earth to men of good will.
We praise Thee.
We bless Thee.
We adore Thee.
We glorify Thee; we give Thee thanks for Thy great glory.
Lord God, heavenly King, Father almighty.
Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son.
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, Who takest away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.
Who takest away the sins of the world,
Hear our prayers.
Who sitteth at the right hand of the Father,
Have mercy on us.
For Thou only art holy,
Thou only art Our Lord. [538]

Thou only, O Jesus Christ, art most high, together with the Holy Ghost, in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.
Blessed Jesus, true God and man, born in the form of a helpless infant.
Praise and glory be to Thee forever.
Blessed Jesus, Who, having the heavens for Thy throne, didst yet choose a poor stable for Thine abode.
Praise and glory be to Thee forever.
Blessed Jesus, Who, being God incomprehensible, wast pleased, in love to us, to be wrapped up in swaddling-clothes and laid in a manger.
Praise and glory be to Thee forever.
Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because He hath visited and wrought the redemption of His people.
And hath raised up a horn of salvation to us in the house of David His servant.
As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who are from the beginning.
Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us.
To perform mercy to our fathers, and to remember His holy testament.
The oath, which He swore to Abraham our father, that He would grant to us.
That being delivered from the hand of our enemies, we may serve Him without fear.
In holiness and justice before Him all our days.
Through the bowels of the mercy of Our God, in which the Orient from on high hath visited us.
To enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; to direct our feet into the way of peace.

Glory be to the Father, etc.
Let Us Pray.

O eternal God, Father almighty, Who in compassion to lost man didst send Thine only Son to become His Redeemer from that unhappy state; grant, we beseech Thee, that we, who are here assembled to acknowledge the mercy of this time, may find the benefit of it in our souls, in the pardon of all our sins. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, etc.

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Crown of the Twelve Stars, Or Rosary of the Immaculate Conception.

Let us praise and bless the most Holy Trinity, for having shown to us the Virgin Mary clothed with the sun, with the moon beneath her feet, and with a mysterious crown of twelve stars upon her head.

R. Forever and forever. Amen.

Let us praise and bless the divine Father, for having chosen her as His daughter.

R. Amen. Our Father, etc.

Praised be the divine Father, for having predestined her to be the Mother of His divine Son.

R. Amen. Hail Mary, etc.

Praised be the divine Father, for having preserved her from all sin in her conception.

R. Amen. Hail Mary, etc.

Praised be the divine Father, for having adorned her with the highest gifts in her nativity.

R. Amen. Hail Mary, etc.

Praised be the divine Father, for having given her St. Joseph as a most pure spouse and companion.

R. Amen. Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, etc.

Let us praise and bless the divine Son, for having chosen her for His Mother.

R. Amen. Our Father, etc.

Praised be the divine Son, for having become incarnate in her womb, and for having remained there nine months. [540]

R. Amen. Hail Mary, etc.

Praised be the divine Son, for having been born of her, and for having given her the milk wherewith to nourish Him.

R. Amen. Hail Mary, etc.

Praised be the divine Son, for having been pleased in His childhood to be educated by her.

R. Amen. Hail Mary, etc.

Praised be the divine Son, for having revealed to her the mysteries of the redemption of the world.

R. Amen. Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, etc.

Let us praise and bless the Holy Ghost, for having taken her for His spouse.

R. Amen. Our Father, etc.

Praised be the Holy Ghost, for having revealed to her for the first time His name of Holy Ghost.

R. Amen. Hail Mary, etc.

Praised be the Holy Ghost, through Whose operation she was at once Virgin and Mother.

R. Amen. Hail Mary, etc.

Praised be the Holy Ghost, through Whose power she became the living temple of the most Holy Trinity.

R. Amen. Hail Mary, etc.

Praised be the Holy Ghost, by Whom she was exalted in heaven above all creatures.

R. Amen. Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, etc.

For the holy Catholic Church, for the propagation of the faith, for peace among Christian princes, and for the extirpation of heresies, let us say

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The Salve Regina.

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eye of mercy towards us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus; O clement, O pious, O sweet Virgin Mary.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Novena In Preparation for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.[2]

An indulgence of three hundred days each day; plenary once on the feast, or during the octave. Applicable to the dead. (Pius VII.).

To be Said Every Day.

Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, and kindle within them the fire of Thy love.

V. Send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created.

R. And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let Us Pray.

O God, Who hast taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of Thy Holy Spirit, grant to us in the same spirit to relish what is right, and ever to rejoice in His consolation. Prevent our actions, we beseech Thee, O Lord, by Thy inspiration, and further them by Thy continual help: that every prayer and work of ours may begin from Thee, and by Thee be happily ended, through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the same spirit, God, world without end. Amen.

Preparatory Prayer.

(To be Said Every Day.)[2]

O most pure Virgin, conceived without sin, and from that very first instant entirely beautiful and without spot, O glorious Mary, full of grace, and Mother of my God, Queen of angels and of men, I humbly worship thee as Mother of my Saviour. Inasmuch as God has taught me by the esteem He has for thee, and by His respect and submission towards thee, what honors and homage I ought to render thee, deign, I beseech thee, to accept this novena which I consecrate to thee. Thou art the secure refuge of penitent sinners, and I therefore may rightly have recourse to thee; thou art the Mother of mercy, and therefore thou canst not but be melted into tenderness by my miseries; thou, after Jesus Christ, art all my hope; thou canst not, then, but be pleased with the tender confidence which I have in thee. Make me worthy to be called thy child, that I may be able to say with confidence, Show thyself to be a Mother.

Following this prayer on each day, nine Hail Marys and a Glory be to the Father are to be said, and then the following:

[543]

First Day.

Behold me at thy most holy feet, O immaculate Virgin. I rejoice with thee exceedingly that from all eternity thou hast been chosen to be the Mother of the eternal Word, and been preserved

[2] This novena is begun on the twenty-ninth of November.

from original sin. I thank and bless the most Holy Trinity for having enriched thee with these privileges in thy conception; and I humbly implore thee to obtain for me grace to overcome those sad effects which original sin has wrought in me. Ah, do thou enable me to conquer them, and nevermore to cease to love my God.

Here is to be recited the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, or the following:

Hymn.
V. Thou art all fair, O Mary.
R. Thou art all fair, O Mary.
V. And the original stain is not in thee.
R. And the original stain is not in thee.
V. Thou art the glory of Jerusalem.
R. Thou art the joy of Israel.
V. Thou our people's special honor.
R. Thou the advocate of sinners.
V. O Mary.
R. O Mary.
V. Virgin prudent above all.
R. Mother too most merciful.
V. Pray thou for us.
R. Intercede for us with Jesus Christ Our Lord.
[544] V. In thy conception, holy Virgin, thou wast immaculate.
R. Pray for us to the Father, Whose Son thou didst bring forth.
Let Us Pray.

O God, Who by the Virgin's immaculate conception didst prepare a worthy dwelling for Thy Son, we beseech Thee, that Thou, Who, by the death of that same Son of Thine, foreseen by Thee, didst preserve her from every stain, wouldst grant that by her intercession we also may be purified, and so come to Thee.

Second Day.

Come, O Holy Spirit, etc.

O most pure Virgin, etc.

O Mary, immaculate lily of purity, I congratulate thee that from the very first instant of thy conception thou wast filled with grace, and also that the perfect use of reason was conferred upon thee. I thank and adore the most Holy Trinity for having imparted to thee graces so sublime; and I am utterly confounded before thee to see myself so poor in grace. Do thou, who wast so entirely filled with heavenly grace, give some portion of it to my soul, and make me a partaker of the treasures of thy immaculate conception.

Here the Litany or Hymn is to be said.

Third Day.

Come, O Holy Spirit, etc.

O most pure Virgin, etc.

O Mary, mystical rose of purity, I rejoice with thee that thou didst gloriously triumph in thy immaculate conception over the [545] infernal serpent, and that thou wast conceived without stain of original sin. I thank and praise with all my heart the most Holy Trinity for having granted to thee such a privilege; and I implore thee to obtain for me courage to overcome every device of the infernal enemy, and not to stain my soul with sin. Ah, do thou always assist me; and let me, under thy protection, ever triumph over the common enemies of our eternal salvation.

Here the Litany or the Hymn is to be said.

Fourth Day.

Come, O Holy Spirit, etc.

O most pure Virgin, etc.

O immaculate Virgin Mary, mirror of purity, I rejoice with the utmost joy to see that the most sublime and perfect virtues have been from thy first conception infused into thee, and with them all the gifts of the Holy Spirit. I thank and praise the most

Holy Trinity for having favored thee with these privileges; and I implore thee, O gracious Mother, to obtain for me the practice of virtues, and to render me thus worthy to receive the gifts and the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Here the Litany or the Hymn is to be said.

Fifth Day.

Come, O Holy Spirit, etc.

O most pure Virgin, etc.

O Mary, bright moon of purity, I congratulate thee, inasmuch as the mystery of thy immaculate conception was the beginning
[546] of the salvation of all the human race and the joy of the whole world. I thank and bless the most Holy Trinity for having so exalted and glorified thy person; and I implore thee to obtain for me grace to know how to profit by the Passion and death of thy Jesus, and that the blood shed upon the cross may not be unavailing for me, but that I may live holily and be saved.

Here the Litany or the Hymn is to be said.

Sixth Day.

Come, O Holy Spirit, etc.

O most pure Virgin, etc.

O immaculate Mary, most resplendent star of purity, I rejoice with thee that thy immaculate conception has brought a most exceeding joy to all the angels of paradise. I thank and bless the most Holy Trinity for having enriched thee with so beautiful a privilege. Ah, grant that I may enter one day into a participation of that joy, and may be able, in the company of the angels, to praise and bless thee for eternity.

Here the Litany or the Hymn is to be said.

Seventh Day.

Come, O Holy Spirit, etc.

O most pure Virgin, etc.

O immaculate Mary, rising morn of purity, I rejoice with thee, and am glad that in the moment of thy conception thou wast confirmed in grace and made incapable of sin. I thank and extol the most Holy Trinity for having distinguished thee alone with this special privilege. Ah, obtain for me, O holy Virgin, an [547] entire and constant abhorrence of sin above every other evil, and that I may sooner die than commit it any more.

Here the Litany or the Hymn is to be said.

Eighth Day.

Come, O Holy Spirit, etc.

O most pure Virgin, etc.

O Virgin Mary, sun without spot, I congratulate thee, and rejoice that in thy conception a greater and more abundant grace was bestowed upon thee than all the angels and saints possessed in the fulness of their merits. I thank and admire the sovereign goodness of the most Holy Trinity in having enriched thee with this privilege. Ah, enable me to correspond to divine grace, and nevermore abuse it! Change my heart, and let me from this moment begin to amend my life.

Here the Litany or the Hymn is to be said.

Ninth Day.

Come, O Holy Spirit, etc.

O most pure Virgin, etc.

O immaculate Virgin and Mother Mary, living light of holiness and model of purity, thou, when scarcely yet conceived, didst profoundly adore God and thank Him, because by thy means, the ancient curse being taken away, the fulness of blessing was coming upon the children of Adam. Ah, let this blessing enkindle in my heart a love of God! Do thou inflame it, that I may love Him constantly, and then enjoy Him eternally in paradise, where

I may be able to thank Him more ardently for the singular [548] privileges granted to thee, and behold thee also crowned as thou art with such exceeding glory.

Here the Litany or the Hymn is to be said.

Novena In Preparation For Christmas.[3]

1. Eternal Father, I offer to Thy honor and glory, and for my own salvation, and for the salvation of all the world, the mystery of the birth of our divine Saviour.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

2. Eternal Father, I offer to Thy honor and glory, and for my eternal salvation, the sufferings of the most holy Virgin and of St. Joseph in that long and weary journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem; I offer Thee their anxiety of heart when they found no place wherein to shelter themselves, when the Saviour of the world was to be born.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

3. Eternal Father, I offer to Thy honor and glory, and for my eternal salvation, the stable where Jesus was born, the hard straw which served Him for a bed, the cold He suffered, the swaddling-clothes which bound Him, the tears He shed, and His tender infant cries.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

4. Eternal Father, I offer to Thy honor and glory, and for my eternal salvation, the pain which the holy Child Jesus felt in His tender infant body when He submitted it to the keen knife of [549] circumcision; I offer Thee that precious blood which then first He shed for the salvation of the whole race of man.

[3] The novena is begun on the sixteenth day of the month.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

5. Eternal Father, I offer to Thy honor and glory, and for my eternal salvation, the humility, mortification, patience, charity, all the virtues of the Child Jesus; and I thank Thee, and I love Thee, and I bless Thee without end, for this ineffable mystery of the incarnation of the divine Word.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

V. The Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt among us.

Let Us Pray.

O God, Whose only-begotten Son was made manifest to us in the substance of our flesh; grant, we beseech Thee, that through Him our souls may be inwardly renewed, Whom our eyes have seen externally like unto ourselves; Who livest and reignest with Thee forever and ever. Amen.

An indulgence of one year, to be gained each day of this novena, which may be made either in public or private, nine days previous to the twenty-fifth day of any month; provided that the faithful assist at it with a contrite heart (Pius IX.).

The Ordinary of the Mass.

[Transcriber's Note: This section was printed in two columns, with Latin on the left and English on the right. In this e-book, the Latin and English are rendered in successive paragraphs.]

The Asperges.

While the priest sprinkles holy water, the following Anthems are sung:

Ant. Asperges me, Domine, hyssopo, et mundabor: lavabis me, et super nivem dealbabor.

Ant. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be cleansed: Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.

Ps. Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.

(Ps. Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy.)

V. Gloria Patri, etc.

(V. Glory be to the Father, etc.)

Ant. Asperges me, etc.

(Ant. Thou shalt sprinkle, etc.)

The priest, returning to the foot of the altar, says:

V. Ostende nobis, Domine, misericordiam tuam.

(V. Show us, O Lord, Thy mercy.)

R. Et salutare tuum da nobis.

(R. And grant us Thy salvation.)

V. Domine, exaudi orationem meam.

(V. O Lord, hear my prayer.)

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.
(R. And let my cry come unto Thee.) [551]
V. Dominus vobiscum.
(V. The Lord be with you.)
R. Et cum spiritu tuo.
(R. And with thy spirit.)
Oremus.
(Let Us Pray)

Exaudi nos, Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, æterne Deus: et mittere digneris sanctum angelum tuum de cœlis, qui custodiat, foveat, protegat, visitet, atque defendat omnes habitantes in hoc habitaculo. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

(Graciously hear us, O Lord, Father almighty, eternal God: and vouchsafe to send Thy holy angel from heaven, who may keep, cherish, protect, visit, and defend all who dwell in this habitation. Through Christ Our Lord.)

R. Amen.
The Vidi Aquam.

From Easter to Whit-Sunday, inclusively, instead of the foregoing Antiphon the following is sung, and Alleluia is added to the versicles and responses.

Ant. Vidi aquam egredientem de templo, a latere dextro. Alleluia! Et omnes ad quos pervenit aqua ista, salvi facti sunt, et dicent: Alleluia.

(Ant. I saw water coming forth from the temple, on the right side. Alleluia. And all those to whom this water came were saved, and shall say: Alleluia.)

Ps. Confitemini Domino, quoniam bonus: quoniam in sæculum misericordia ejus.

(Ps. Give praise to the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever.) [552]

V. Gloria Patri, etc.
(V. Glory be to the Father, etc.)

Ant. Vidi aquam, etc.
(Ant. I saw water, etc.)
The Holy Mass.

The priest, standing at the foot of the altar, bows down, signs himself with the sign of the cross, and says:

In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.
(In the name of the Father, and of the Son, etc.)

Then, joining his hands, he says:

S. Introibo ad altare Dei.
(P. I will go in to the altar of God.)
M. Ad Deum, qui lætificat juventutem meam.
(R. To God, Who giveth joy to my youth.)

In Masses for the dead and from Passion Sunday to Holy Saturday the following Psalm is omitted.

Psalm XLII.

S. Judica me, Deus, et discerne causam meam de gente non sancta: ab homine iniquo et doloso erue me.

(P. Judge me, O God, and distinguish my cause from the nation that is not holy: from the unjust and deceitful man deliver me.)

M. Quia tu es, Deus, fortitudo mea, quare me repulisti? et quare tristis incedo dum affligit me inimicus?

(R. Since Thou, O God, art my strength, why hast Thou cast me off? and why do I go sorrowful while the enemy afflicteth me?)

S. Emitte lucem tuam et veritatem tuam: ipsa me deduxerunt et adduxerunt in montem sanctum tuum, et in tabernacula tua.

(P. Send forth Thy light and Thy truth: they have conducted me, and brought me to Thy holy mount, and into Thy tabernacles.)

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M. Et introibo ad altare Dei: ad Deum, qui lætificat juventutem meam.

(R. And I will go in to the altar of God: to God, Who giveth joy to my youth.)

S. Confitebor tibi in cithara, Deus, Deus meus: quare tristis es, anima mea? et quare conturbas me?

(P. I will praise Thee on the harp, O God, my God: why art thou sad, my soul? and why dost thou disquiet me?)

M. Spera in Deo, quoniam adhuc confitebor illi: salutare vultus mei, et Deus meus.

(R. Hope in God, for I will still give praise to Him, the salvation of my countenance, and my God.)

S. Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.

(P. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.)

M. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc et semper, et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

(R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.)

S. Introibo ad altare Dei.

(P. I will go in to the altar of God.)

M. Ad Deum, qui lætificat juventutem meam.

(R. To God, Who giveth joy to my youth.)

S. Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini.

(P. Our help is in the name of the Lord.)

M. Qui fecit cSlum et terram.

(R. Who made heaven and earth.)

S. Confiteor, etc.

(P. I confess, etc.) [554]

M. Misereatur tui omnipotens Deus, et dimissis peccatis tuis, perducat te ad vitam æternam.

(R. May almighty God be merciful to thee, and forgiving thee thy sins, bring thee to everlasting life.)

S. Amen.

(P. Amen.)

M. Confiteor Deo omnipotenti, beatæ Mariæ semper virgini, beato Michaeli Archangelo, beato Joanni Baptistæ, sanctis Apostolis Petro et Paulo, omnibus sanctis, et tibi, Pater, quia peccavi nimis cogitatione, verbo et opere: mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa. Ideo precor beatam Mariam semper virginem, beatum Michaelem archangelum, beatum Joannem Baptistam, sanctos Apostolos Petrum et Paulum, omnes sanctos, et te Pater, orare pro me ad Dominum Deum nostrum.

(R. I confess to almighty God, to blessed Mary, ever virgin, to blessed Michael the archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy apostles Peter and Paul, to all the saints, and to you, father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed: through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I beseech the blessed Mary, ever virgin, blessed Michael the archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and all the saints, and you, father, to pray to the Lord, Our God, for me.)

S. Misereatur vestri omnipotens Deus, et dimissis peccatis vestris perducat vos ad vitam æternam.

(P. May the almighty God be merciful unto you, and forgiving
[555] you your sins bring you to life everlasting.)

M. Amen.

(R. Amen.)

S. Indulgentiam, absolutionem, et remissionem peccatorum nostrorum tribuat nobis omnipotens et misericors Dominus.

(P. May the almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, absolution, and remission of our sins.)

M. Amen.

(R. Amen.)

S. Deus, tu conversus vivificabis nos.

(P. Thou, O God, being turned toward us, wilt enliven us.)

M. Et plebs tua lætabitur in te.

(R. And Thy people will rejoice in Thee.)

S. Ostende nobis, Domine, misericordiam tuam.
(P. Show us, O Lord, Thy mercy.)
M. Et salutare tuum da nobis.
(R. And grant us Thy salvation.)
S. Domine, exaudi orationem meam.
(P. O Lord, hear my prayer.)
M. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.
(R. And let my cry come to Thee.)
S. Dominus vobiscum.
(P. The Lord be with you.)
M. Et cum spiritu tuo.
(R. And with thy spirit.)

The priest first extends and then joins his hands, saying audibly Oremus, and ascending the altar, he says secretly:

Aufer a nobis, quæsumus, Domine, iniquitates nostras: ut ad sancta sanctorum puris mereamur mentibus introire. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

(Take away from us our iniquities, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that we may be worthy to enter with pure minds into the Holy of holies. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.) [556]

He then bows over the altar, and says:

Oramus te, Domine, per merita sanctorum tuorum, quorum reliquiæ hic sunt, et omnium sanctorum tuorum, ut indulgere digneris omnia peccata mea. Amen.

(We beseech Thee, O Lord, by the merits of Thy saints whose relics are here, and of all the saints, that Thou wouldst vouchsafe to forgive me all my sins. Amen.)

At solemn High Mass the priest receives the censer from the deacon, and incenses the altar, and then returns it to the deacon, who incenses the priest only. Then the priest turns to the book and reads the Introit, which varies according to the

seasons and feasts. The following Introit is from the Mass of the most Holy Trinity:

Benedicta sit sancta Trinitas, atque indivisa Unitas: confitebimur ei, quia fecit nobiscum misericordiam suam.

(Blessed be the Holy Trinity and undivided Unity: we will praise Him, because He has shown us His mercy.)

Ps. Domine, Dominus noster, quam admirabile est nomen tuum in universa terra!

(Ps. O Lord, Our God, how wonderful is Thy name over the utmost boundaries of the earth!)

V. Gloria Patri, etc. Benedicta, etc.

(V. Glory be to the Father, etc. Blessed, etc.)

S. Kyrie eleison.

(P. Lord, have mercy on us.)

M. Kyrie eleison.

(R. Lord, have mercy on us.)

S. Kyrie eleison.

(P. Lord, have mercy on us.)

M. Christe eleison.

[557] (R. Christ, have mercy on us.)

S. Christe eleison.

(P. Christ, have mercy on us.)

M. Christe eleison.

(R. Christ, have mercy on us.)

S. Kyrie eleison.

(P. Lord, have mercy on us.)

M. Kyrie eleison.

(R. Lord, have mercy on us.)

S. Kyrie eleison.

(P. Lord, have mercy on us.)

The Gloria in excelsis is omitted in Masses for the dead and in certain Masses during Advent and Lent.

Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis. Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam: Domine Deus, Rex cælestis, Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe; Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris: qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus sanctus: tu solus Dominus: tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe; cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

(Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace to men of good will. We praise Thee. We bless Thee. We adore Thee. We glorify Thee. We give Thee thanks for Thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father almighty. O Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father. Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Who takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayers. Who sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord, Thou only art most high, O Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Ghost in the glory of God the Father. Amen.) [558]

V. Dominus vobiscum.

(V. The Lord be with you.)

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

(R. And with thy spirit.)

Then follow the Collects, prayers proper for the feast or season. The following is from the Mass of the most Holy Trinity, as are all the varying prayers and Scripture texts that occur henceforth in this Mass.

Let Us Pray.

O almighty and everlasting God, Who hast granted Thy servants, in the confession of the true faith, to acknowledge the glory of an eternal Trinity, and in the power of majesty to adore

a Unity: we beseech Thee that, by the strength of this faith, we may be defended from all adversity. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the union of the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

Let Us Pray.

Preserve us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, from all dangers of body and soul; and by the intercession of the glorious and blessed [559] Mary, ever virgin. Mother of God, of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, of St. Joseph, and all the saints, grant us, in Thy mercy, health and peace, that, adversities and errors being removed, Thy Church may serve Thee with a pure and undisturbed devotion. Through, etc.

Epistle.

(Rom. xi. 33-36.)

O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how unsearchable His ways! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him, and recompense shall be made him. For of Him, and by Him, and in Him are all things. To Him be glory forever.

R. Deo gratias!

(R. Thanks be to God!)

Gradual.

(Daniel iii.)

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who beholdest the deep, and sittest on the cherubim.

V. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, in the firmament of heaven, and worthy of praise forever. Alleluia, Alleluia!

At solemn Mass the deacon places the book of Gospels on the altar, and the celebrant blesses the incense. The deacon, with joined hands, says:

Munda cor meum, ac labia mea, omnipotens Deus, qui labia Isaiæ prophetæ calculo mundasti ignito: ita me tua grata miseratione dignare mundare, ut sanctum Evangelium tuum digne valeam nuntiare. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

(Cleanse my heart and my lips, O almighty God, Who didst cleanse the lips of the prophet Isaias with a burning coal: vouch- [560] safe so to cleanse me by Thy gracious mercy that I may be able worthily to proclaim Thy holy Gospel. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.)

Then he takes the book from the altar, and, kneeling before the priest, asks his blessing. The priest answers:

Dominus sit in corde tuo et in labiis tuis, ut digne et competenter annunties Evangelium suum. Amen.

(The Lord be in thy heart and on thy lips, that thou mayest worthily and in becoming manner announce His Gospel. Amen.)

V. Dominus vobiscum.

(V. The Lord be with you.)

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

(R. And with thy spirit.)

Initium (vel sequentia) sancti Evangelii secundum N.

(The beginning (or continuation) of the holy Gospel according to N.)

R. Gloria tibi, Domine.

(R. Glory be to Thee, O Lord.)

Gospel.

(Matt. xxviii.)

At that time, Jesus said to His disciples: All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even [561] to the consummation of the world.

R. Laus tibi, Christe!

(R. Praise be to Thee, O Christ!)

The Nicene Creed.

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem cæli et terræ, visibilium omnium, et invisibilium. Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum: et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula: Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero: genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri, per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem descendit de cælis. Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto, ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis, sub Pontio Pilato passus, et sepultus est. Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum scripturas; et ascendit in cælum, sedet ad dexteram Patris; et iterum venturus est cum gloria, judicare vivos et mortuos; cujus regni non erit finis. Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex Patre Filioque procedit; qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur; qui locutus est per prophetas. Et unam sanctam Catholicam et Apostolicam Ecclesiam. Confiteor unum Baptisma in remissionem peccatorum. Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum, et vitam venturi sæculi. Amen.

(I believe in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages: God of God, light of light, true God of true God; begotten, not made; consubstantial to the Father, by Whom all things were made. Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and became incarnate by the Holy Ghost, of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. He was crucified also for us, suffered under Pontius Pilate, and was buried. And the third day He arose again, according to the Scriptures; and
[562] ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and He is to come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; of Whose kingdom there shall be no end. And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, Who proceedeth from the

Father and the Son; Who together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified; Who spoke by the prophets. And one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I expect the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.)

Turning to the people the priest says:

V. Dominus vobiscum.
(V. The Lord be with you.)
R. Et cum spiritu tuo.
(R. And with thy spirit.)
V. Oremus.
(V. Let us pray.)
Offertory.

Blessed be God the Father, and the only-begotten Son of God, as likewise the Holy Ghost, for He has shown mercy to us. [563]

Offering up the Host, the priest says:

Suscipe, sancte Pater, omnipotens, æterne Deus, hanc immaculatam Hostiam, quam ego indignus famulus tuus offero tibi, Deo meo vivo et vero, pro innumerabilibus peccatis, et offensionibus et negligentiis meis, et pro omnibus circumstantibus; sed et pro omnibus fidelibus Christianis, vivis atque defunctis; ut mihi et illis proficiat ad salutem, in vitam æternam. Amen.

(Accept, O holy Father, almighty and eternal God, this unspotted Host, which I, Thy unworthy servant, offer unto Thee, my living and true God, for my innumerable sins, offences, and negligences, and for all here present; as also for all faithful Christians, both living and dead; that it may avail both me and them unto life everlasting. Amen.)

Pouring the water and wine into the chalice, he says:

Deus, qui humanæ substantiæ dignitatem mirabiliter condidisti, et mirabilius reformasti: da nobis per hujus aquæ et vini mysterium, ejus divinitatis esse consortes, qui humanitatis nostræ fieri dignatus est particeps, Jesus Christus, Filius tuus, Dominus noster: qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus Sancti, Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

(O God, Who in creating human nature hast wonderfully dignified it, and still more wonderfully reformed it: grant that by the mystery of this water and wine we may be made partakers of His divine nature Who vouchsafed to become partaker of our human nature: Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord, Who liveth and
[564] reigneth with Thee in the unity, etc.)

Offering the chalice, the priest says:

Offerimus tibi, Domine, calicem salutaris, tuam deprecantes clementiam, ut in conspectu divinæ majestatis tuæ, pro nostra et totius mundi salute cum odore suavitatis ascendat. Amen.

(We offer unto Thee, O Lord, the chalice of salvation, beseeching Thy clemency that it may ascend before Thy divine majesty as a sweet odor for our salvation and for that of the whole world. Amen.)

Bowing down, the priest says:

In spiritu humilitatis et in animo contrito suscipiamur a te, Domine; et sic fiat sacrificium nostrum in conspectu tuo hodie, ut placeat tibi, Domine Deus.

(Accept us, O Lord, in the spirit of humility and contrition of heart; and grant that the sacrifice we offer in Thy sight this day may be pleasing to Thee, O Lord God.)

Blessing the Host and chalice, the priest says:

Veni, sanctificator, omnipotens, æterne Deus, et benedic hoc sacrificium tuo sancto nomini præparatum.

(Come, O almighty and eternal God, the sanctifier, and bless this sacrifice, prepared for the glory of Thy holy name.)

Going to the Epistle side of the altar, the priest washes his hands, and recites the following verses of

Psalm XXV.

Lavabo inter innocentes manus meas; et circumdabo altare tuum, Domine.

(I will wash my hands among the innocent; and will compass Thy altar, O Lord.)

Ut audiam vocem laudis; et enarrem universa mirabilia tua.

(That I may hear the voice of Thy praise, and tell of all Thy wondrous works.) [565]

Domine, dilexi decorem domus tuæ, et locum habitationis gloriæ tuæ.

(I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth.)

Ne perdas cum impiis Deus, animam meam, et cum viris sanguinum vitam meam.

(Take not away my soul with the wicked, nor my life with bloody men.)

In quorum manibus iniquitates sunt: dextera eorum repleta est muneribus.

(In whose hands are iniquities; their right hand is filled with gifts.)

Ego autem in innocentia mea ingressus sum: redime me, et miserere mei.

(But I have walked in my innocence: redeem me, and have mercy on me.)

Pes meus stetit in directo: in ecclesiis benedicam te, Domine.

(My foot has stood in the direct way; in the churches I will bless Thee, O Lord.)

Gloria Patri, etc.

(Glory be to the Father, etc.)

Returning and bowing before the middle of the altar, he says:

Suscipe, sancta Trinitas, hanc oblationem, quam tibi offerimus ob memoriam Passionis, resurrectionis, et ascensionis Jesu Christi Domini nostri, et in honorem beatæ Mariæ semper virginis, et beati Joannis Baptistæ, et sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, et istorum, et omnium sanctorum; ut illis proficiat ad honorem, nobis autem ad salutem; et illi pro nobis intercedere dignentur in cœlis, quorum memoriam agimus in terris. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

(Receive, O Holy Trinity, this oblation, which we make to Thee in memory of the Passion, resurrection, and ascension of
[566] Our Lord Jesus Christ, and in honor of the blessed Mary, ever virgin, of blessed John Baptist, the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and of all the saints; that it may be available to their honor and our salvation; and that they may vouchsafe to intercede for us in heaven whose memory we celebrate on earth. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.)

Turning towards the people, he says:

Orate, fratres, ut meum ac vestrum sacrificium acceptabile fiat apud Deum Patrem omnipotentem.

(Brethren, pray that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father almighty.)

R. Suscipiat Dominus sacrificium de manibus tuis ad laudem et gloriam nominis sui, ad utilitatem quoque nostram, totiusque Ecclesiæ suæ sanctæ.

(R. May the Lord receive the sacrifice from thy hands, to the praise and glory of His name, to our benefit, and to that of all His holy Church.)

The priest answers in a low voice, Amen. He then reads:

The Secret Prayers.

Sanctify, we beseech Thee, O Lord Our God, by the invocation of Thy holy name, the victim of this oblation; and by it make us ourselves an eternal offering to Thee. Through, etc. [567]

Graciously hear us, O God Our Saviour, that by the virtue of this sacrament Thou mayest defend us from all enemies, of both soul and body; grant us grace in this life and glory in the next. Who livest and reignest with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost.

He concludes by saying aloud:

Per omnia sæcula sæculorum.
(World without end.)
R. Amen.
(R. Amen.)
V. Dominus vobiscum.
(V. The Lord be with you.)
R. Et cum spiritu tuo.
(R. And with thy spirit.)
V. Sursum corda.
(V. Lift up your hearts.)
R. Habemus ad Dominum.
(R. We have lifted them up to the Lord.)
V. Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro.
(V. Let us give thanks to the Lord Our God.)
R. Dignum et justum est.
(R. It is meet and just.)
The Preface.

Vere dignum et justum est, æquum et salutare, nos tibi semper, et ubique gratias agere, Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, æterne Deus. Qui cum unigenito Filio tuo et Spiritu Sancto unus es Deus, unus es Dominus: non in unius singularitate personæ, sed in unius trinitate substantiæ. Quod enim de tua gloria, revelante te, credimus, hoc de Filio tuo, hoc de Spiritu Sancto, sine differentia discretionis sentimus. Ut in confessione veræ

sempiternæque Deitatis, et in Personis proprietas, et in essentia unitas, et in majestate adoretur æqualitas. Quam laudant angeli atque archangeli, cherubim quoque ac seraphim, qui non cessant clamare quotidie, una voce dicentes:

(It is truly meet and just, right and available to salvation, that we should always and in all places give thanks to Thee, O holy Lord, Father almighty, eternal God. Who together with Thy only-begotten Son and the Holy Ghost art one God and one Lord: not in a singularity of one person, but in a trinity of one substance. For what we believe of Thy glory, as Thou hast revealed the same, we believe of Thy Son and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or distinction. So that in confession of the true and eternal Deity we adore a distinction in the persons, and unity in the essence, and an equality in the majesty. Whom the angels and archangels, the cherubim also and seraphim, praise,
[568] and cease not daily to cry out with one voice, saying:)

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt cSli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis.

(Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest.)

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

(Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.)

The Canon of the Mass.

Te igitur, clementissime Pater, per Jesum Christum Filium tuum Dominum nostrum, supplices rogamus ac petimus, uti accepta habeas, et benedicas, hæc dona, hæc munera, hæc sancta sacrificia illibata, imprimis quæ tibi offerimus pro Ecclesia tua sancta Catholica, quam pacificare, custodire, adunare, et regere digneris toto orbe terrarum, una cum famulo tuo Papa nostro N., et Antistite nostro N., et omnibus orthodoxis, atque Catholicæ et Apostolicæ fidei cultoribus.

[569] (We therefore humbly pray and beseech Thee, most merciful Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord, to accept and

bless these gifts, these presents, these holy unspotted sacrifices, which, in the first place, we offer Thee for Thy holy Catholic Church, to which vouchsafe to grant peace, as also to preserve, unite, and govern it throughout the world; together with Thy servant N., our Pope, and our bishop N., as also all orthodox believers and professors of the Catholic and apostolic faith.)

Commemoration of the Living.

Memento, Domine, famulorum famularumque tuarum, N. et N. Et omnium circumstantium, quorum tibi fides cognita est et nota devotio, pro quibus tibi offerimus, vel qui tibi offerunt hoc sacrificium laudis, pro se, suisque omnibus, pro redemptione animarum suarum, pro spe salutis et incolumitatis suæ, tibique reddunt vota sua, æterno Deo vivi et vero.

(Remember, O Lord, Thy servants of both sexes, N. and N. And all here present whose faith and devotion are known unto Thee, for whom we offer, or who offer up to Thee, this sacrifice of praise, for themselves, their families, and friends, for the redemption of their souls, for the health and salvation they hope for, and for which they now pay their vows to Thee, the eternal, living, and true God.) [570]

Communicantes, et memoriam venerantes, imprimis gloriosæ semper Virginis Mariæ, Genitricis Dei et Domini nostri Jesu Christi: sed et beatorum apostolorum ac martyrum tuorum, Petri et Pauli, Andreæ, Jacobi, Joannis, Thomæ, Jacobi, Philippi, Bartholomæi, Matthæi, Simonis et Thaddæi: Lini, Cleti, Clementis, Xysti, Cornelii, Cypriani, Laurentii, Chrysogoni, Joannis et Pauli, Cosmæ et Damiani, et omnium sanctorum tuorum: quorum meritis precibusque concedas, ut in omnibus protectionis tuæ muniamur auxilio. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

(Communicating with, and honoring in the first place, the memory of the ever-glorious Virgin Mary, Mother of Our Lord and God, Jesus Christ, as also of the blessed apostles and martyrs, Peter and Paul, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, James, Philip,

Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon, and Thaddeus: Linus, Cletus, Clement, Xystus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian, and of all Thy saints, through whose merits and prayers grant that we may be always defended by the help of Thy protection. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.)

Hanc igitur oblationem servitutis nostræ, sed et cunctæ familiæ tuæ, quæsumus, Domine, ut placatus accipias; diesque nostros in tua pace disponas, atque ab æterna damnatione nos eripi, et in electorum tuorum jubeas grege numerari. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

(We therefore beseech Thee, O Lord, graciously to accept this oblation of our servitude, as also of Thy whole family, and to dispose of our days in Thy peace; preserve us from eternal damnation, and rank us in the number of Thine elect. Through [571] Christ Our Lord. Amen.)

Quam oblationem tu, Deus, in omnibus, quæsumus, benedictam, adscriptam, ratam, rationabilem, acceptabilemque facere digneris: ut nobis corpus et sanguis fiat dilectissimi Filii tui Domini nostri Jesu Christi.

(Which oblation to Thou, O God, vouchsafe in all respects to bless, approve, ratify, and accept, that it may be made for us the body and blood of Thy most beloved Son, Jesus Christ Our Lord.)

The Consecration.

Qui pridie quam pateretur, accepit panem in sanctas ac venerabiles manus suas, et elevatis oculis suis hunc, ad te Deum Patrem suum omnipotentem, tibi gratias agens, benedixit, fregit, deditque discipulis suis, dicens: Accipite, et manducate ex hoc omnes: Hoc est enim corpus meum.

Simili modo postquam cenatum est, accipiens et hunc præclarum calicem in sanctas ac venerabiles manus suas, item tibi gratias agens, benedixit, deditque discipulis suis, dicens: Accipite, et bibite ex eo omnes: Hic est enim calix sanguinis

mei, novi et æterni testamenti: mysterium fidei: qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum. Hæc [572] quotiescunque feceritis, in mei memoriam facietis.

After the consecration and elevation the priest proceeds:

Unde et memores, Domine, nos servi tui, sed et plebs tua sancta, ejusdem Christi Filii tui Domini nostri tam beatæ Passionis, necnon et ab inferis resurrectionis, sed et in cœlos gloriosæ ascensionis, offerimus præclaræ majestati tuæ, de tuis donis ac datis, Hostiam puram, Hostiam sanctam, Hostiam immaculatam, panem sanctum vitæ æternæ, et calicem salutis perpetuæ.

(Wherefore, O Lord, we, Thy servants, as also Thy holy people, calling to mind the blessed Passion of the same Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord, His resurrection from the dead and admirable ascension into heaven, offer unto Thy most excellent majesty, of Thy gifts bestowed, a pure Host, a holy Host, an unspotted Host, the holy bread of eternal life, and chalice of everlasting salvation.)

Supra quæ propitio ac sereno vultu respicere digneris, et accepta habere, sicuti accepta habere dignatus es munera pueri tui justi Abel, et sacrificium Patriarchæ nostri Abrahæ, et quod tibi obtulit summus sacerdos tuus Melchisedech, sanctum sacrificium immaculatam, hostiam.

(Upon which vouchsafe to look with a propitious and serene countenance, and to accept them, as Thou wert graciously pleased to accept the gifts of Thy just servant Abel, and the sacrifice of our patriarch Abraham, and that which Thy high priest Melchisedech offered to Thee, a holy sacrifice and an unspotted victim.) [573]

Supplices te rogamus, omnipotens Deus, jube hæc perferri per manus sancti angeli tui in sublime altare tuum, in conspectu divinæ majestatis tuæ, ut quotquot ex hac altaris participatione, sacro-sanctum Filii tui corpus et sanguinem sumpserimus, omni benedictione cœlesti, et gratia repleamur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

(Most humbly do we beseech Thee, almighty God, to command these things to be carried by the hands of Thy holy angel to the altar on high, in sight of Thy divine majesty, that as many as shall partake of the most sacred body and blood of Thy Son at this altar may be filled with every heavenly grace and blessing. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.)

Commemoration of the Dead.

Memento etiam, Domine, famulorum famularumque tuarum N. et N., qui nos præcesserunt cum signo fidei, et dormiunt in somno pacis.

(Be mindful, O Lord, of Thy servants N. and N., who are gone before us with the sign of faith, and rest in the sleep of peace.)

> Here the priest, with hands joined, prays for such of the dead as he wishes to pray for in particular. Then, extending his hands, he continues:

Ipsis, Domine, et omnibus in Christo quiescentibus, locum refrigerii, lucis et pacis, ut indulgeas, deprecamur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

(To these, O Lord, and and to all that sleep in Christ, grant, we beseech Thee, a place of refreshment, light, and peace. Through
[574] the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.)

Nobis quoque, peccatoribus, famulis tuis, de multitudine miserationum tuarum sperantibus, partem aliquam et societatem donare digneris cum tuis sanctis apostolis et martyribus: cum Joanne, Stephano, Matthia, Barnaba, Ignatio, Alexandro, Marcellino, Petro, Felicitate, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucia, Agnete, Cæcilia, Anastasia, et omnibus sanctis tuis: intra quorum nos consortium, non æstimator meriti, sed veniæ, quæsumus, largitor admitte. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

(Also to us sinners, Thy servants, confiding in the multitude of Thy mercies, vouchsafe to grant some part and fellowship with Thy holy apostles and martyrs: with John, Stephen, Matthias, Barnabas, Ignatius, Alexander, Marcellinus, Peter, Felicitas,

Perpetua, Agatha, Lucia, Agnes, Cecilia, Anastasia, and all Thy saints; into whose company we beseech Thee to admit us, not in consideration of our merit, but of Thy own pardon. Through Christ Our Lord.)

Per quem hæc omnia, Domine, semper bona creas, sanctificas, vivificas, benedicis et præstas nobis.

(By Whom, O Lord, Thou dost always create, bless, quicken, and give us all these good things,)

Per ipsum, et cum ipso, et in ipso est tibi, Deo Patri omnipotenti, in unitate Spiritus Sancti, omnis honor et gloria.

(By Him, and with Him, and in Him, is to Thee, God the Father almighty, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory.)

Per omnia sæcula sæculorum.

(Forever and ever.)

R. Amen.

(R. Amen.) [575]

Oremus.

(Let us pray).

The Pater Noster.

Præceptis salutaribus moniti et divina institutione formati, audemus dicere:

(Instructed by Thy saving precepts, and following Thy divine directions, we presume to say:)

Pater noster, qui es in cælis, sanctificetur nomen tuum; adveniat regnum tuum; fiat voluntas tua sicut in cælo et in terra. Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie; et dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.

(Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation.)

R. Sed libera nos a malo.

(R. But deliver us from evil.)

S. Amen.

(P. Amen.)

Libera nos, quæsumus, Domine, ab omnibus malis, præteritis, præsentibus et futuris: et intercedente beata et gloriosa semper virgine Dei Genitrice Maria, cum beatis apostolis tuis Petro et Paulo, atque Andrea, et omnibus sanctis, da propitius pacem in diebus nostris: ut ope misericordiæ tuæ adjuti, et a peccato simus semper liberi, et ab omni perturbatione securi. Per eundem Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus Sancti Deus: per omnia sæcula sæculorum.

(Deliver us, we beseech Thee, O Lord, from all evils, past, present, and to come: and by the intercession of the blessed and glorious Mary, ever virgin, Mother of God, and of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and Andrew, and of all the saints, mer-
[576] cifully grant peace in our days, that through the assistance of Thy mercy we may be always free from sin, and secure from all disturbance. Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord, Who with Thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth God: world without end.)

R. Amen.

(R. Amen.)

V. Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum.

(V. The peace of the Lord be always with you.)

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

(R. And with thy spirit.)

The priest puts a particle of the Host into the chalice, saying:

Hæc commixtio et consecratio corporis et sanguinis Domini nostri Jesu Christi fiat accipientibus nobis in vitam æternam. Amen.

(May this mixture and consecration of the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ be to us who receive it effectual to eternal life. Amen.)

The priest strikes his breast three times, saying:

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis.
(Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.)
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis.
(Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.)
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona nobis pacem.
(Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world: give us peace.) [577]

In Masses of Requiem, instead of Miserere nobis is said: Dona eis requiem, Grant them rest; and instead of Dona nobis pacem is said: Dona eis requiem sempiternam, Grant them eternal rest. The priest does not strike his breast, nor does he say the first of the following prayers:

Domine Jesu Christe, qui dixisti apostolis tuis: Pacem relinquo vobis, pacem meam do vobis, ne respicias peccata mea, sed fidem Ecclesiæ tuæ, eamque secundum voluntatem tuam pacificare et coadunare digneris. Qui vivis et regnas, Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.
(Lord Jesus Christ, Who saidst to Thy apostles, I leave you peace, I give you My peace: regard not my sins, but the faith of Thy Church, and grant her that peace and unity which is agreeable to Thy will. Who livest and reignest forever and ever. Amen.)
Domine Jesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi, qui ex voluntate Patris, co-operante Spiritu Sancto, per mortem tuam mundum vivificasti, libera me per hoc sacro-sanctum corpus et sanguinem tuum

ab omnibus iniquitatibus meis, et universis malis: et fac me tuis semper inhærere mandatis, et a te nunquam separari permittas. Qui cum eodem Deo Patre et Spiritu Sancto vivis et regnas, Deus, in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

(Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, Who, according to the will of Thy Father, hast by Thy death, through the cooperation of the Holy Ghost, given life to the world: deliver me by this, Thy most sacred body and blood from all my iniquities, and from all evils; and make me always adhere to Thy commandments; and never suffer me to be separated from Thee. Who livest and reignest with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, [578] forever and ever. Amen.)

Perceptio corporis tui, Domine Jesu Christe, quod ego indignus sumere præsumo, non mihi proveniat in judicium et condemnationem, sed pro tua pietate prosit mihi ad tutamentum mentis et corporis, et ad medelam percipiendam. Qui vivis et regnas cum Deo Patre in unitate Spiritus Sancti, Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

(Grant that the participation of Thy body, O Lord Jesus Christ, which I, though unworthy, presume to receive, may not turn to my judgment and condemnation, but through Thy mercy be a safeguard and remedy, both to soul and body. Who livest and reignest with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, forever and ever. Amen.)

Taking the Host in his hands, and making a genuflection, he says:

Panem cœlestem accipiam, et nomen Domini invocabo.

(I will take the heavenly bread, and call on the name of the Lord.)

Striking his breast with humility and devotion, the priest says thrice:

Domine, non sum dignus ut intres sub tectum meum; sed tantum dic verbo, et sanabitur anima mea.

(Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof: say but the word, and my soul shall be healed.) [579]

Before receiving the sacred Host he says:

Corpus Domini nostri Jesu Christi custodiat animam meam in vitam æternam. Amen.

(May the body of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul to life everlasting. Amen.)

After receiving the sacred Host:

Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus quæ retribuit mihi? Calicem salutaris accipiam, et nomen Domini invocabo. Laudans invocabo Dominum, et ab inimicis meis salvus ero.

(What return shall I make the Lord for all He has given to me? I will take the chalice of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. Praising, I will call upon the Lord, and shall be saved from my enemies.)

Before receiving the sacred blood:

Sanguis Domini nostri Jesu Christi custodiat animam meam in vitam æternam. Amen.

(May the blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul to life everlasting. Amen.)

After receiving the sacred blood:

Quod ore sumpsimus, Domine, pura mente capiamus; et de munere temporali fiat nobis remedium sempiternum.

(Grant, O Lord, that what we have taken with our mouth we may receive with a pure mind; that of a temporal gift it may become to us an eternal remedy.) [580]

At the ablution:

Corpus tuum, Domine, quod sumpsi, et sanguis quem potavi, adhæreat visceribus meis: et præsta, ut in me non remaneat scelerum macula, quem pura et sancta refecerunt sacramenta. Qui vivis et regnas in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

(May Thy body, O Lord, which I have received, and Thy blood, which I drank, cleave to my bowels; and grant that no stain of sin may remain in me, who have been refreshed with pure and holy sacraments. Who livest and reignest forever. Amen.)

The Post Communion.

We bless the God of heaven, and we will praise Him in the sight of all the living: because He hath shown us His mercy.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

(V. The Lord be with you.)

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

(R. And with thy spirit.)

Let Us Pray.

May the receiving of this sacrament, O Lord, Our God, avail to the salvation of body and soul, together with the confession of an everlasting Holy Trinity, and of the undivided unity thereof. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

Let Us Pray.

May the oblation of this divine sacrament, we beseech Thee,
[581] O Lord, both cleanse and defend us; and by the intercession of the blessed Mary, the virgin Mother of God, of St. Joseph, of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and of all the saints, free us from all sin, and deliver us from all adversity. Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

(V. The Lord be with you.)

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.
(R. And with thy spirit.)
V. Ite, missa est.
(V. Go, you are dismissed.)
R. Deo gratias.
(R. Thanks be to God.)

When the Gloria in excelsis has been omitted:

V. Benedicamus Domino.
(V. Let us praise the Lord.)
R. Deo gratias.
(R. Thanks be to God.)

In Masses of Requiem

V. Requiescant in pace.
(V. May they rest in peace.)
R. Amen.
(R. Amen.)

Before the blessing:

Placeat tibi sancta Trinitas, obsequium servitutis meæ; et præsta, ut sacrificium quod oculis tuæ majestatis indignus obtuli, tibi sit acceptabile, mihique et omnibus pro quibus illud obtuli sit, te miserante, propitiabile. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

(Let the performance of my homage be pleasing to Thee, O Holy Trinity; and grant that the sacrifice which I, unworthy as I am, have offered up in the sight of Thy majesty, may be acceptable to Thee, and by Thy mercy be a propitiation for me [512] and for all for whom I have offered it. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.)

The blessing, which is not given in Masses of Requiem

Benedicat vos omnipotens Deus, Pater, et Filius, et Spiritus Sanctus.

(May almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, bless you.)

R. Amen.

(R. Amen.)

The Last Gospel.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

(V. The Lord be with you.)

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

(R. And with thy spirit.)

S. Initium sancti Evangelii secundum Joannem.

(P. The beginning of the Gospel according to St. John.)

R. Gloria tibi, Domine.

(R. Glory be to Thee, O Lord.)

In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum. Hoc erat in principio apud Deum. Omnia per ipsum facta sunt, et sine ipso factum est nihil quod factum est. In ipso vita erat, et vita erat lux hominum; et lux in tenebris lucet, et tenebræ eam non comprehenderunt.

(In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him: and without Him was made nothing that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men: and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did
[583] not comprehend it.)

Fuit homo missus a Deo, cui nomen erat Joannes. Hic venit in testimonium, ut testimonium perhiberet de lumine, ut omnes crederent per illum. Non erat ille lux; sed ut testimonium perhiberet de lumine. Erat lux vera quæ illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum. In mundo erat, et mundus per ipsum factus est, et mundus eum non cognovit. In propria venit, et sui eum non receperunt. Quotquot autem receperunt eum, dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri; his qui credunt in nomine ejus,

qui non ex sanguinibus, neque ex voluntate carnis, neque ex voluntate viri, sed ex Deo nati sunt.T ET VERBUM CARO FACTUM EST, et habitavit in nobis: et vidimus gloriam ejus, gloriam quasi unigeniti a Patre, plenum gratiæ et veritatis.

(There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness to give testimony of the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to give testimony of the light. That was the true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them He gave power to be made the sons of God; to them that believe in His name, who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH, and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, as it were the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.) [584]

R. Deo gratias.

(R. Thanks be to God.)

[585]

Vespers for Sundays.

Vespers are a part of the Divine Offices recited daily by the priests. They consist of five psalms, a chapter, a hymn, the canticle of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Magnificat, and an Antiphon to the Blessed Mother of God, which differs according to the season. Although there is no express commandment to assist at Vespers, yet every good Catholic will make it his duty to attend when he can.

Pater noster, etc. Ave Maria, etc.

(Our Father, etc. Hail Mary, etc.)

P. Deus, in adjutorium meum intende.

(P. Incline unto my aid, O God.)

R. Domine, ad adjuvandum me festina.

(R. O Lord, make haste to help me.)

V. Gloria Patri, et Filio, * et Spiritui Sancto.

(V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.)

R. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, * et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen. Alleluia.

(R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia.)

In Lent. Laus tibi, Domine, Rex æternæ gloriæ.

(In Lent. Praise be to Thee, O King of eternal glory.)

Psalm CIX.

Dixit Dominus Domino meo: * sede a dextris meis.

[586] (The Lord said to my Lord: Sit Thou at My right hand.)

Donec ponam nimicos tuos * scabellum pedum tuorum.

(Until I make Thy enemies: Thy footstool.)

Virgam virtutis tuæ emittet Dominus ex Sion: * dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.

(The Lord will send forth the sceptre of Thy power out of Sion: rule Thou in the midst of Thy enemies.)

Tecum principium in die virtutis tuæ in splendoribus sanctorum: * ex utero ante luciferum genui te.

(With Thee is the principality in the day of Thy strength, in the brightness of the saints: from the womb before the day star I begot Thee.)

Juravit Dominus, et non pœnitebit eum: * tu es sacerdos in æternum, secundum ordinem Melchisedech.

(The Lord hath sworn, and He will not repent: Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech.)

Dominus a dextris tuis * confregit in die iræ suæ reges.

(The Lord, at Thy right hand, hath broken kings in the day of His wrath.)

Judicabit in nationibus, implebit ruinas: * conquassabit capita in terra multorum.

(He shall judge among nations, He shall fill ruins: He shall crush the heads in the land of many.)

De torrente in via bibet, * propterea exaltabit caput.

(He shall drink of the torrent in the way: therefore shall He lift up the head.)

Gloria Patri, etc.

(Glory be to the Father, etc.) [587]

Psalm CX.

Confitebor tibi, Domine, in toto corde meo: * in concilio justorum, et congregatione.

(I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart: in the council of the just, and in the congregation.)

Magna opera Domini: * exquisita in omnes voluntates ejus.

(Great are the works of the Lord: sought out according to all His wills.)

Confessio et magnificentia opus ejus, * et justitia ejus manet in sæculum sæculi.

(His work is praise and magnificence: and His justice continueth forever and ever.)

Memoriam fecit mirabilium suorum, misericors et miserator Dominus: * escam dedit timentibus se.

(He hath made a remembrance of His wonderful works, being a merciful and gracious Lord: He hath given food to them that fear Him.)

Memor erit in sæculum testamenti sui: * virtutem operum suorum annuntiabit populo suo:

(He will be mindful forever of His covenant: He will show forth to His people the power of His works:)

Ut det illis hæreditatem Gentium: * opera manuum ejus veritas et judicium.

(That He may give them the inheritance of the Gentiles: the works of His hands are truth and judgment.)

Fidelia omnia mandata ejus, confirmata in sæculum sæculi, * facta in veritate et æquitate.

(All His commandments are faithful, confirmed forever and
[588] ever: made in truth and equity.)

Redemptionem misit populo suo: * mandavit in æternum testamentum suum.

(He hath sent redemption to His people: He hath commanded His covenant forever.)

Sanctum et terribile nomen ejus: * initium sapientiæ timor Domini.

(Holy and terrible is His name: the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.)

Intellectus bonus omnibus facientibus eum: * laudatio ejus manet in sæculum sæculi.

(A good understanding to all that do it: His praise continueth forever and ever.)

Gloria Patri, etc.

(Glory, etc.)

Psalm CXI.

Beatus vir qui timet Dominum: * in mandatis ejus volet nimis.

(Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord: he shall delight exceedingly in His commandments.)

Potens in terra erit semen ejus: * generatio rectorum benedicetur.

(His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the righteous shall be blessed.)

Gloria et divitiæ in domo ejus: * et justitia ejus manet in sæculum sæculi.

(Glory and wealth shall be in his house: and his justice remaineth forever and ever.)

Exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis: * misericors, et miserator, et justus.

(To the righteous a light has sprung up in darkness: he is merciful, and compassionate, and just.)

Jucundus homo qui miseretur et commodat, disponet sermones suos in judicio: * quia in æternum non commovebitur.

(Acceptable is the man that showeth mercy and lendeth; he shall order his words with judgment: because he shall not be moved forever.) [589]

In memoria æterna erit justus: * ab auditione mala non timebit.

(The just shall be in everlasting remembrance: he shall not fear the evil hearing.)

Paratum cor ejus sperare in Domino, confirmatum est cor ejus: * non commovebitur, donec despiciat inimicos suos.

(His heart is ready to hope in the Lord, his heart is strengthened: he shall not be moved until he look over his enemies.)

Dispersit, dedit pauperibus: justitia ejus manet in sæculum sæculi: * cornu ejus exaltabitur in gloria.

(He hath distributed, he hath given to the poor: his justice remaineth forever and ever, his horn shall be exalted in glory.)

Peccator videbit, et irascetur, dentibus suis fremet et tabescet: * desiderium peccatorum peribit.

(The wicked shall see, and shall be angry; he shall gnash with his teeth and pine away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.)

Gloria Patri, etc.

(Glory, etc.)

Psalm CXII.

Laudate, pueri, Dominum: * laudate nomen Domini.

(Praise the Lord, ye children: praise ye the name of the Lord.)

Sit nomen Domini benedictum, * ex hoc nunc et usque in sæculum.

(Blessed be the name of the Lord: from henceforth, now, and forever.)

A solis ortu usque ad occasum, * laudabile nomen Domini.

(From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same: [590] the name of the Lord is worthy of praise.)

Excelsus super omnes gentes Dominus: * et super cœlos gloria ejus.

(The Lord is high above all nations: and His glory above the heavens.)

Quis sicut Dominus Deus noster, qui in altis habitat: * et humilia respicit in cœlo et in terra?

(Who is like the Lord our God, Who dwelleth on high: and looketh down on the low things in heaven and in earth?)

Suscitans a terra inopem, * et de stercore erigens pauperem;

(Raising up the needy from the earth, and lifting up the poor out of the dung-hill;)

Ut collocet eum cum principibus: * cum principibus populi sui.

(That He may place him with princes: with the princes of His people.)

Qui habitare facit sterilem in domo: * matrem filiorum lætantem.

(Who maketh a barren woman to dwell in a house: the joyful mother of children.)

Gloria Patri, etc.

(Glory, etc.)

Psalm CXIII.

In exitu Israel de Ægypto: * domus Jacob de populo barbaro:

(When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a barbarous people:)

Facta est Judæa sanctificatio ejus, * Israel potestas ejus.

Judea was made his sanctuary, Israel his dominion. [591]

Mare vidit, et fugit: * Jordanis conversus est retrorsum.

(The sea saw and fled: Jordan was turned back.)

Montes exultaverunt ut arietes: * et colles sicut agni ovium.

(The mountains skipped like rams: and the hills like the lambs of the flock.)

Quid est tibi, mare, quod fugisti? * et tu, Jordanis, quia conversus es retrorsum?

(What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou didst flee? and thou, O Jordan, that thou wast turned back?)

Montes, exultastis sicut arietes? * et colles sicut agni ovium?

(Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams: and ye hills like the lambs of the flock?)

A facie Domini mota est terra: * a facie Dei Jacob.

(At the presence of the Lord the earth was moved: at the presence of the God of Jacob.)

Qui convertit petram in stagna aquarum: * et rupem in fontes aquarum.

(Who turned the rock into pools of water: and the stony hills into fountains of waters.)

Non nobis, Domine, non nobis: * sed nomini tuo da gloriam.

(Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us: but to Thy name give glory.)

Super misericordia tua, et veritate tua: * ne quando dicant Gentes: ubi est Deus eorum?

(For Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake: lest the Gentiles should say, Where is their God?)

Deus autem noster in cSlo: * omnia quæcumque voluit, fecit.

But Our God is in heaven: He hath done all things whatsoever
[592] He would.

Simulacra Gentium argentum et aurum, * opera manuum hominum.

(The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold: the work of the hands of men.)

Os habent, et non loquentur: * oculos habent, et non videbunt.

(They have mouths and speak not: they have eyes and see not.)

Aures habent, et non audient: * nares habent, et non odorabunt.

(They have ears and hear not: they have noses and smell not.)

Manus habent, et non palpabunt: pedes habent, et non ambulabunt: * non clamabunt in gutture suo.

(They have hands and feel not: they have feet and walk not, neither shall they cry out through their throats.)

Similes illis fiant qui faciunt ea: * et omnes qui confidunt in eis.

(Let them that make them become like unto them: and such as trust in them.)

Domus Israel speravit in Domino: * adjutor eorum et protector eorum est.

(The house of Israel hath hoped in the Lord: He is their helper and their protector.)

Domus Aaron speravit in Domino: * adjutor eorum et protector eorum est.

(The house of Aaron hath hoped in the Lord: He is their helper and their protector.)

Qui timent Dominum, speraverunt in Domino: * adjutor eorum et protector eorum est.

(They that fear the Lord have hoped in the Lord: He is their helper and their protector.)

Dominus memor fuit nostri: * et benedixit nobis.

The Lord hath been mindful of us: and hath blessed us. [593]

Benedixit domui Israel: * benedixit domui Aaron.

(He hath blessed the house of Israel: He hath blessed the house of Aaron.)

Benedixit omnibus qui timent Dominum, * pusillis cum majoribus.

(He hath blessed all that fear the Lord: both little and great.)

Adjiciat Dominus super vos: * super vos, et super filios vestros.

(May the Lord add blessings upon you: upon you and upon your children.)

Benedicti vos a Domino: * qui fecit cSlum et terram.

(Blessed be you of the Lord; Who made heaven and earth.)

CSlum cSli Domino; * terram autem dedit filiis hominum.

(The heaven of heavens is the Lord's: but the earth He hath given to the children of men.)

Non mortui laudabunt te, Domine: * neque omnes qui descendunt in infernum.

(The dead shall not praise Thee, O Lord: nor any of them that go down to hell.)

Sed nos qui vivimus, benedicimus Domino: * ex hoc nunc, et usque in sæculum.

(But we that live bless the Lord: from this time, now and forever.)

Gloria Patri, etc.

(Glory, etc.)

Instead of 113, Psalm 116 is often sung.

Psalm CXVI.

Laudate Dominum, omnes Gentes: * laudate eum, omnes populi.

Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise Him, all ye people. [594]

Quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia ejus: * et veritas Domini manet in æternum.

(Because His mercy is confirmed upon us: and the truth of the Lord remaineth forever.)

Gloria Patri, etc.

(Glory, etc.)

The Capitulum.

Benedictus Deus et Pater Domini nostri Jesu Christi, Pater misericordiarum, et Deus totius consolationis, qui consolatur nos in omni tribulatione nostra.

(Blessed be the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, Who comforteth us in all our tribulations.)

R. Deo gratias.

(R. Thanks be to God.)

Here is usually sung a hymn appropriate to the season of the year.

Hymn For Sunday.

Lucis Creator optime,
Lucem dierum proferens,
Primordiis lucis novæ,
Mundi parans originem.

(O great Creator of the light,
Who, from the darksome womb of night,
Broughtst forth new light at nature's birth,
To shine upon the face of earth.)

Qui mane junctum vesperi
Diem vocari præcipis;
Illabitur tetrum chaos,
Audi preces cum fletibus.

(Who, by the morn and evening ray,
Hast measured time and called it day,
Whilst sable night involves the spheres,
Vouchsafe to hear our prayers and tears.)

[595]

Ne mens gravata crimine,
Vitæ sit exul munere,
Dum nil perenne cogitat,
Seseque culpis illigat.

(Lest our frail mind, with sin defiled,
From gifts of life should be exiled,
Whilst on no heavenly thing she thinks,
But twines herself in Satan's links.)

CSleste pulset ostium:
Vitale tollat præmium:
Vitemus omne noxium:
Purgemus omne pessimum.

(Oh, may she soar to heaven above,
The happy seat of light and love;
Meantime all sinful actions shun,
And purge the foul ones she hath done.)

Præsta, Pater piissime,
Patrique compar unice,
Cum Spiritu Paraclito,
Regnans per omne sæculum. Amen.

(This prayer, most gracious Father, hear,
Thy equal Son incline His ear,
Who, with the Holy Ghost and Thee,
Doth live and reign eternally. Amen.)

The Magnificat,

Or Canticle of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Magnificat * anima mea Dominum.

[596] (My soul doth magnify the Lord;)

Et exultavit spiritus meus * in Deo salutari meo.

(And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.)

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ: * ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.

(Because He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid: for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.)

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est: * et sanctum nomen ejus.

(For He that is mighty hath done great things to me: and holy is His name.)

Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies, * timentibus eum.

(And His mercy is from generation to generation: to them that fear Him.)

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo: * dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

(He hath showed might in His arm: He hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.)

Deposuit potentes de sede, * et exaltavit humiles.

(He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble.)

Esurientes implevit bonis: * et divites dimisit inanes.

(He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich He hath sent away empty.)

Suscepit Israel puerum suum: * recordatus misericordiæ suæ.

(He hath received Israel His servant: being mindful of His mercy.)

Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros: * Abraham, et semini ejus in sæcula.

(As He spoke to our fathers: to Abraham, and to his seed forever.)

Gloria Patri, etc.

(Glory, etc.) [597]

For theMagnificat, Pope Leo XIII. granted an indulgence of 100 days, to be gained by reciting it devoutly and with contrite heart once a day. (September 20, 1879.)

Then follows the prayer, which is different every day.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

(V. The Lord be with you.)

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

(R. And with thy spirit.)

V. Benedicamus Domino.

(V. Let us bless the Lord.)

R. Deo gratias.

(R. Thanks be to God.)

V. Fidelium animæ, per misericordiam Dei, requiescant in pace.

(V. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.)

R. Amen.

(R. Amen.)

Pater noster, etc. (secreto).

(Our Father (in secret).)

V. Dominus det nobis suam pacem.

(V. May the Lord grant us His peace.)

R. Et vitam æternam. Amen.

(R. And life everlasting. Amen.)

Then is sung one of the following anthems, according to the time.

From Advent to the Purification.

Alma Redemptoris Mater, quæ pervia cæli
Porta manes, et stella maris, succurre cadenti,
Surgere qui curat populo: tu quæ genuisti,

(Mother of Jesus, heaven's open gate,
Star of the sea, support the fallen state
Of mortals; thou whose womb thy Maker bore,)

[598]

Natura mirante, tuum sanctum genitorem:
Virgo prius ac posterius: Gabrielis ab ore,
Sumens illud ave, peccatorum miserere.

(And yet, strange thing, a virgin as before:
Who didst from Gabriel's hail this news receive;
Repenting sinners by thy prayers relieve.)

In Advent.

V. Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariæ.

(V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.)

R. Et concepit de Spiritu Sancto.

(R. And she conceived of the Holy Ghost.)

Oremus.

(Let Us Pray)

Gratiam tuam quæsumus, Domine, mentibus nostris infunde, ut qui, angelo nuntiante, Christi Filii tui incarnationem cognovimus, per Passionem ejus et crucem, ad resurrectionis gloriam perducamur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum.

(Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, has been made known by the message of an angel, may, by His Passion and cross, be brought to the glory of His resurrection. Through the same Christ Our Lord.)

R. Amen.

[599]

(R. Amen.)

After Advent.

V. Post partum virgo inviolata permansisti.
(V. After childbirth thou didst remain a pure virgin.)
R. Dei genitrix, intercede pro nobis.
(R. Mother of God, intercede for us.)
Oremus.
(Let Us Pray)

Deus, qui salutis æternæ beatæ Mariæ virginitate fecunda humano generi præmia præstitisti: tribue quæsumus, ut ipsam pro nobis intercedere sentiamus, per quam meruimus Auctorem vitæ suscipere, Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum. Secundum

(O God, Who, by the fruitful virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, hast given to mankind the rewards of eternal salvation: grant, we beseech Thee, that we may be sensible of the benefits of her intercession, by whom we have received the Author of life, Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son.)

R. Amen.
(R. Amen.)
From The Purification Till Easter.

Ave, Regina Cælorum!
Ave, Domina angelorum!
Salve, radix! salve, porta!
Ex qua mundo lux est orta.

(Hail, Mary, queen of heavenly spheres!
Hail, whom the angelic host reveres!
Hail, fruitful root! hail, sacred gate!
Whence the world's light derives its date.)

[600]

Gaude, Virgo gloriosa,
Super omnes speciosa,
Vale, O valde decora,
Et pro nobis Christum exora.

(O glorious Maid, with beauty blest,
May joys eternal fill thy breast!
Thus, crowned with beauty and with joy,
Thy prayers with Christ for us employ.)

V. Dignare me laudare te, Virgo sacrata.
(V. Vouchsafe, O sacred Virgin, to accept my praises.)
R. Da mihi virtutem contra hostes tuos.
(R. Give me power against thy enemies.)
Oremus.
(Let Us Pray)

Concede, misericors Deus, fragilitati nostræ præsidium; ut qui sanctæ Dei genitricis memoriam agimus, intercessionis ejus auxilio a nostris iniquitatibus resurgamus. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum.

(Grant us, O merciful God, strength against all our weakness; that we, who celebrate the memory of the holy Mother of God, may, by the help of her intercession, rise again from our iniquities. Through the same Christ Our Lord.)

R. Amen.
(R. Amen.)

From Easter Till Trinity Sunday.

Regina Cœli, lætare! Alleluia.
(O Queen of heaven, rejoice, Alleluia.)
Quia quem meruisti portare, Alleluia,
[601] (For He Whom thou didst deserve to bear, Alleluia,)
Resurrexit, sicut dixit. Alleluia.
(Is risen again, as He said. Alleluia.)
Ora pro nobis Deum. Alleluia.
(Pray for us to God. Alleluia.)
V. Gaude et lætare, Virgo Maria. Alleluia.
(V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary. Alleluia.)
R. Quia surrexit Dominus vere. Alleluia.
(R. Because Our Lord is truly risen. Alleluia.)

Oremus.

(Let Us Pray)

Deus qui, per resurrectionem Filii tui, Domini nostri Jesu Christi, mundum lætificare dignatus es; præsta, quæsumus, ut per ejus genitricem Virginem Mariam perpetuæ capiamus gaudia vitæ. Per eundem Christum, etc.

(O God, Who, by the resurrection of Thy Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, hast been pleased to fill the world with joy: grant, we beseech Thee, that by the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may receive the joys of eternal life. Through, etc.)

R. Amen.

(R. Amen.)

From Trinity Sunday Till Advent.

Salve, Regina, mater misericordiæ, vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra salve. Ad te clamamus, exules filii Hevæ. Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes, in hac lacrymarum valle. Eia ergo, advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte. Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui nobis post hoc exilium ostende, O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria!

(Hail to the Queen who reigns above, Mother of clemency and love! Hail, thou our hope, life, sweetness! We, Eve's banished children, cry to thee. We, from this wretched vale of tears, Send sighs and groans unto thy ears; Oh, then, sweet advocate, bestow A pitying look on us below! After this exile let us see Our blessed Jesus, born of thee. O merciful, O pious Maid, O gracious Mary, lend thy aid!) [602]

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genitrix.

(V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.)

R. Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi.

(R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.)

Oremus.

(Let Us Pray)

Omnipotens, sempiterne Deus, qui gloriosæ Virginis Matris Mariæ corpus et animam, ut dignum Filii tui habitaculum effici

mereretur, Spiritu Sancto co-operante præparasti; da, ut cujus commemoratione lætamur ejus pin intercessione ab instantibus malis, et a morte perpetua liberemur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum.

Almighty and eternal God, Who, by the co-operation of the Holy Ghost, didst prepare the body and the soul of the glorious Virgin Mother Mary, that she might become a worthy habitation for Thy Son: grant that, as with joy we celebrate her memory, so, by her pious intercession, we may be delivered from present
[603] evils and eternal death. Through the same Christ Our Lord.

R. Amen.

(R. Amen.)

S. Divinum auxilium maneat semper nobiscum.

(P. May the divine assistance always remain with us.)

R. Amen.

(R. Amen.)

Exposition and Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament.

When the priest opens the tabernacle, and incenses the Blessed Sacrament, is sung the hymn:

O salutaris Hostia,
Quæ cœli pandis ostium;
Bella premunt hostilia,
Da robur, fer auxilium.
Uni trinoque Domino
Sit sempiterna gloria,
Qui vitam sine termino
Nobis donet in patria.
Amen.

(O saving Victim, opening wide
The gate of heaven to man below!
Our foes press on from every side;
Thine aid supply, Thy strength bestow.

To Thy great name be endless praise,
Immortal Godhead, one in three!
Oh, grant us endless length of days
In our true native land with Thee.
Amen.)

[604]

Then is sung the hymn, Tantum ergo Sacramentum

Tantum ergo Sacramentum
Veneremur cernui:
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui;
Præstet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui.

(Down in adoration falling,
Lo! the sacred Host we hail:
Lo! o'er ancient forms departing,
Newer rites of grace prevail;
Faith for all defects supplying
Where the feeble senses fail.)

Genitori Genitoque
Laus et jubilatio,
Salus, honor, virtus quoque
Sit et benedictio:
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio.

(To the everlasting Father,
And the Son Who reigns on high,
With the Holy Ghost proceeding
Forth from each eternally,
Be salvation, honor, blessing,
Might and endless majesty!)

V. Panem de Cælo præstitisti eis. [Alleluia.]
(V. Thou didst give them bread from heaven. [Alleluia.])
R. Omne delectamentum in se habentem. [Alleluia.]
(R. Containing in itself all sweetness. [Alleluia.])
Oremus.
(Let Us Pray)

Deus, qui nobis sub Sacramento mirabili, Passionis tuæ memoriam reliquisti: tribue, quæsumus, ita nos corporis et sanguinis tui sacra mysteria venerari, ut redemptionis tuæ fructum in nobis jugiter sentiamus. Qui vivis, etc. Amen.

(O God, Who, under a wonderful sacrament, hast left us a memorial of Thy Passion: grant us, we beseech Thee, so to venerate the sacred mysteries of Thy body and blood that we may ever feel within us the fruit of Thy redemption. Who livest, etc. Amen.)

[605]

Here the Benediction is given with the Blessed Sacrament, all bowing down in profound adoration.

Adoremus in æternum Sanctissimum Sacramentum!
(May we forever adore the Most Holy Sacrament!)

[606]

Devotions for Confession and Communion.

Confession.

Before Confession.

A Prayer For Sincere Contrition.

I have now, O my God! aided by Thy grace, endeavored to discover the number of my transgressions, and have examined, to the best of my power, the state of my conscience. But, alas! O Judge of the living and the dead! how far different is my judgment from Thine! How many offences are still perhaps hidden from my view, though perfectly known to Thee! But, my God! as I am persuaded it is not so much a knowledge of their number, as sorrow for their deformity, that Thou requirest, I now earnestly implore of Thee to give me that lively, sincere, efficacious contrition, which I know is a necessary condition of my pardon. My heart was formed by Thee, Thou alone canst change it; it is in Thy hands, and though most ungrateful, most insensible, it is not too obdurate for Thee to penetrate and soften. One drop of Thy adorable blood, one of those precious tears which my offences drew from Thy eyes, would suffice to produce in my soul the most lively contrition. Ah! look on me, eternal Light! and my understanding will be enlightened to conceive the enormity of sin; touch my heart, and it will be broken with sorrow for having
[607] ever offended Thee. Convert me, and I shall be converted; for my destruction, my misery, and my misfortune, is from myself,

but my salvation must come from Thee, O my most merciful Father! from Thee, Whom I have so ungratefully abandoned, and so grievously offended.

Act of Contrition For Those Who Are Guilty of Mortal Sin.

O infinite majesty of my God! I am so full of shame at the sight of the ingratitude and malice of which I find myself guilty before Thee, that I dare not raise my eyes to heaven. I confess, O most gracious and merciful Lord, that by the multitude and enormity of my sins I have deserved to be abandoned by Thee, and condemned to eternal torments. Ah, unhappy being that I am, how can I have dared to offend Thee! Can it be, O my Saviour, that I have trampled under foot Thy blood, by which I was redeemed; and that I have thus renewed the pains of Thy Passion and of Thy death! Ah, why, why did I not die at once, rather than displease Thee! How could I dare to offend against Thee, Who art infinite goodness, wisdom, and beauty!... Thee, Who art perfection itself!... Thee, Who art my God, my Creator, my beginning, my end, my happiness, my all!... Thee, from Whom I have received my being, my life, and all that I am!... Thee, Who hast guided and protected me with the tenderest love under the shadow of Thy wings!... Thee, Who hast adopted me for Thy child, and made me heir to Thy eternal kingdom!... Thee, Who hast redeemed me by Thy most precious blood, and hast so often nourished me with Thy most sacred body and blood [503] in the Sacrament of the Eucharist! And yet, notwithstanding these, Thy great and manifold blessings, I have offended Thee, O my God! I have abandoned Thee, to league with Thy enemies against Thee. I have preferred a vile gratification to Thy love. Oh, ingratitude! Oh, delusion! Oh, madness! Ah, when shall I detest my sins as much as they deserve! O my sweet and merciful Lord Jesus, of Whose goodness there is no end, and of Whose mercy the treasure is infinite, have pity on me, and save my soul! Pardon me, O most bountiful Lord, pardon me, I entreat Thee, by the merit of Thy bitter Passion and death! Remember not

my iniquities, but regard Thy infinite mercy. I promise that, by the help of Thy grace, I will never fall into them again. From this very moment I break all the ties that bind me to the world, to the flesh, to the devil, and to sin. I am from this moment firmly resolved to trample under foot all worldly vanities, and to consecrate myself entirely to Thy holy love. Oh, never allow me to fall back into my old habits of sin! Never permit that honors, or interest, or pleasure, or pride, or the love of life, or the fear of death, or any other motive, shall cause me to swerve from Thy divine commands. Grant that I may keep them with my whole heart, though it should cost me the sacrifice of my life, and of all I hold dearest in the world.

Ah, what has been my folly and my wickedness in having so often and so grievously offended my God, my heavenly Father, my gracious and loving Redeemer! What ingratitude, what an excess of malice! At the very moment I was receiving with one
[609] hand the greatest favors and graces from this my most tender and merciful Lord, with the other I was plunging a dagger into His bosom I was crucifying Him again within my soul! I have sold myself to the devil for a worthless pleasure; I have renounced the kingdom of heaven and all the joys of paradise for a trifling enjoyment; I have signed the decree for my eternal damnation to gratify my pride; I have condemned myself to suffer an eternity of torments and all the agonies of hell, to indulge an unworthy passion! Ah, who will give to my eyes a fountain of tears, that I may weep and lament over my sins!

O my divine Redeemer, Whose love I have unhappily despised, Whose blood I have trodden under foot, Whose wounds I have reopened, and Whose death I have renewed by my sins! How can I present myself before Thee after so great an excess of ingratitude and malice! O my gracious Saviour, what hadst Thou done to me that I should treat Thee so cruelly! Thou hast reconciled me to Thy Father by Thy death, and I have again drawn down upon myself His indignation by repeated sins. Thou

hast snatched me from the slavery of the devil, and I have again entangled myself in his snares. Thou hast healed my wounds, and I have inflicted fresh ones on myself. Thou hast delivered me from the eternal flames of hell, to which I was condemned by my sins, and I have cast myself into them again. Thou hast obtained heaven for me, and I have sold the right which Thou didst purchase at the price of Thy blood, for a trifling pleasure, for a corruptible crown. Is it possible to conceive folly, stupidity, malice, equal to mine! I confess it here before Thee, O Lord; I detest it from the depths of my soul; and resolve to die a [610] thousand times rather than fall again into it. Ah, wilt Thou reject a contrite and humble sinner, when Thou didst come down from heaven to call sinners to repentance? Wilt Thou refuse to receive this strayed sheep which returns from his wanderings, after Thou hast sought him so long, to bring him back to the fold? Wilt Thou reject this prodigal child, who comes to throw himself at Thy feet, after Thou hast so much grieved over his loss? Wilt Thou leave me forever to groan under the insupportable weight of sin, when Thou didst invite all those who are burdened to cast their load at Thy feet? Thou didst absolve the sinful woman when, kneeling before Thee, she implored Thy mercy; Thou didst remit the sins of the publican when he humbled himself in Thy Temple; Thou didst pardon the good thief when he acknowledged Thy power on the cross; and shall I be the only one to whom Thou wilt refuse grace? No, my adorable Saviour, not so. I trust that, however unworthy I have made myself of pardon, yet Thou wilt grant it to me, and that Thy precious blood will appease Thy Father's wrath against me, and wash away the stain of my sins. Offer it, then, to Him for me, O Lord, and apply it so effectually to me that I may be entirely cleansed, and may be judged worthy to enter into the blessed mansions, where nothing defiled can be admitted. Amen.

Act Of Contrition For Venial Sin.

Prostrate at Thy feet, O Lord, I ask Thy pardon for all the

failings and negligences which my frailty, my ignorance, and my
[611] malice have caused me to commit against Thy infinite majesty, especially for all those which I have perpetrated since my last confession. I am confounded, Lord, when I remember their number, and how much I have displeased and offended Thee by them. Ah, how little do I love Thee! how little do I love my neighbor! With what coldness, with what cowardice have I attended to Thy service! How much on the contrary have I yielded to self-love, and how much I still retain of affection for creatures! Oh, how rarely do I enter into myself, and think seriously of Thee! How filled with distractions are my prayers, my meditations, and all my exercises of devotion! How much vanity enters into all my actions! how much attachment to my own will, my own ease, and my own convenience! Ah, Lord, draw me, I entreat Thee, out of the abyss of my misery, and purify me from the multitude of my sins. Art thou not overwhelmed with shame, O my soul, at the sight of the many offences which thou hast committed against thy sovereign Lord? Is it thus that thou servest a God of infinite majesty? Is this what thou hast promised Him so often, and to which thou art engaged by the holiness of thy vocation? Knowest thou not that the least sin is an offence to the infinite majesty of God, that it contains an infinite malice, that it is an evil which insults and offends thy most loving Father, thy most bountiful Saviour, thy most sweet and merciful Lord? Ah, if thou didst but know what venial sin really is; if thou didst but comprehend the stain which it produces upon thee, the deformity, the wounds it occasions in the eyes of God; the torment which it draws upon it in the other life, the danger to which it exposes thy salvation,
[612] thou wouldst give a thousand lives, if thou hadst them, rather than sully thy conscience with it. Thou feelest a difficulty in conceiving a bitter sorrow for thy ordinary faults, because they are venial; but this arises from thy want of light. The saints, to whom God communicated in abundance His supernatural inspirations, wept day and night bitterly over their faults, which were

slighter than those thou dost commit daily.

It is enough, O my God, that slight as these sins appear, they have displeased and offended Thee, to induce me to conceive an extreme horror for them, and to make me employ all my efforts to correct them. I love Thee, O God of love; I praise and glorify Thee, O infinite majesty! O purity of heart, which cannot endure any attachment or affection to the slightest sin, how lovely art thou! How happy is he who is possessed of thee, for thou renderest us favorites of God, thou makest our souls temples of the Holy Ghost, and dost draw down upon us all the graces and blessings of heaven! I will omit no pains that I may obtain thee in future. But it is from Thee alone, O Lord, that I may hope for this happiness: I am too weak to aspire after it by my own efforts. Thou alone canst enrich me with a gift so precious; grant it to me, I pray Thee, O my God. Amen.

Good Resolutions.

Since I have had the misfortune to offend Thee, O my God, and that I cannot recall the past, I resolve at least, with the assistance of Thy grace, to repair it by henceforth carefully avoiding all that displeases Thee. I will shun sin, with its sources and occasions, particularly those sins into which my natural frailty most [513] frequently leads me. I will adopt the means suggested by Thy minister for the correction of my faults, listening to his words as if spoken by Thyself. I know, O my God, what I should have to apprehend from the severity of Thy justice, if Thy anger had not been appeased by the merits of Jesus Christ. I feel that Thou wilt not reject the prayer of Thine innocent Son, Whose blood pleads for me, His guilty creature. In this hope, O God of goodness! I present myself at Thy tribunal, there to accuse myself of my sins, entirely, sincerely, and humbly, with full confidence that Thou wilt ratify in heaven the absolution pronounced on earth. Holy Virgin! Mother of grace and mercy! Refuge of sinners! intercede for me, that in this confession I may receive full pardon for the past, and grace to avoid sin in future. My good angel! who hast

been the witness of my transgressions, help me to rise from my evil habits, and obtain for me strength against future relapses. Amen.

After Confession.

Prayer After Confession.

Can I persuade myself, O Lord! that, criminal as I was a few moments since, I am now, by the grace of the sacrament, purified from my sins! God of mercy! Who, by the absolution pronounced by Thy minister, hast cleansed me from my iniquities, and restored me to Thy favor, shedding on me Thy precious blood, and applying to my soul the virtue of Thy sacred wounds, how shall I acknowledge the wonders of Thy love! Truly, O Lord, are Thy
[614] mercies above all Thy works! How shall I prove my gratitude to Thee, O divine Benefactor of my soul! I will offer Thee this day, and all the days of my life, a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and incessantly extol Thy divine munificence. I will consecrate my whole existence to Thee, shunning sin, and loving Thee with my whole heart. Oh, permit not that I should again trample on the blood which saved me, and grieve the Heart which was broken for me. Give efficacy to my desire nevermore to offend Thee: fortify my weakness; preserve me from occasions of sin; grant me the grace of steady perseverance in my good resolutions. O Strength of the weak! in proportion as I distrust myself, so do I firmly hope in Thee; grant me, then, Thy all-powerful assistance, on which alone I rely. Prostrate at Thy feet, O my Saviour! with the penitent Magdalen, I implore this, as the greatest of all favors. O Father of mercies! I know that Thou art reluctant to destroy the vessel of clay Thy hands have formed; strengthen me, then, against future relapses. Holy Virgin, support me by thy powerful protection; all ye angels and saints, intercede for my conversion and sanctification.

Offering of the Penance Enjoined at Confession.

Before leaving the chapel offer your penance, or such portion

as you can, prefacing it with the following or some appropriate prayer.

O God of sanctity! of myself I have no means of satisfying Thy rigorous justice, but I offer Thee an abundant satisfaction in the infinite merits of a God-man. I present Thee, O my God! the Sacred Heart of Thy Son, filled with sadness and pierced with [615] wounds for me, that Thy justice may thus be appeased. I unite my sufferings to the bitter pangs of my dying Saviour. May the abundance of His merits, and the immense charity of His Heart, supply for the imperfection and insufficiency of my works. O Lord! Who hast severed my chains, strengthen me with Thy grace, that I may never resume them; that I may conquer the bad habits which have been so long opposed to Thy spirit, and courageously resist the temptations to which I have hitherto so easily yielded. Amen.

Aspirations, Some Of Which May Be Used Advantageously Before Or After Confession.

My Lord and my God, I sincerely acknowledge myself a vile and wretched sinner, unworthy to appear in Thy presence; but do Thou have mercy on me, and save me.

Most loving Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before Thee, and am unworthy to be called Thy child; make me as one of Thy servants, and may I for the future be ever faithful to Thee.

It truly grieves me, O my God, to have sinned, and so many times transgressed Thy law; but wash me now from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

I detest my sins, O Lord: I abhor my wickedness: I confess my ingratitude, and seek refuge in Thy mercy.

From this moment I purpose nevermore to offend Thee: oh, let me suffer all kinds of pain and infamy, nay, even death itself, rather than return to my former course of life, and live Thy enemy. [616]

O loving Father, assist me by Thy grace, that I may bring forth worthy fruits of penance, and not suffer my sins to go unpunished.

Now, O Lord, I begin to live, not trusting in my own strength, or in the resolutions I make, but in the multitude of Thy mercies. Perfect, O God, the work which Thou hast begun in me. Thou hast given me peace and understanding; but, wretched sinner that I am, how ungratefully have I abused all Thy gifts! And yet now, with all the tenderness of a loving Father, Thou recallest me from sin, and rescuest me from hell and everlasting damnation.

Alas! my soul is full of anguish and confusion at the recollection of the many sins whereby I have offended Thee, my merciful Redeemer, made myself a slave to the devil, and provoked Thy anger.

Oh, that I had never transgressed Thy commandments, nor fallen into such an abyss of misery and calamity! Oh, that I had never sinned! Happy those souls who have preserved their innocence: oh, that I had been so happy!

But now I am resolved, with the help of Thy grace, to be more watchful over myself, to amend my failings, and fulfil Thy law. Look down on me with the eyes of mercy, O God, and blot out my sins.

Forgive me what is past, and, through Thine infinite goodness, secure me, by Thy grace, against all my wonted failings for the time to come.

My sins surpass in number the sands of the sea, and I confess myself, O Lord, unworthy of Thy mercy; but Thy goodness is above all my offences.

Thou hast declared, O Lord, that there is joy in heaven for
[617] the conversion of a sinner; grant me, then, the grace of true repentance, and let heaven rejoice at my amendment.

Thou willest not the death of a sinner, but that he be converted and live. Grant me, then, that spiritual life which I need; for behold, O Lord, I sincerely desire to live to Thee.

Thou didst come, O dear Redeemer, not to call the just, but sinners, to repentance; behold a miserable sinner here before Thee: oh, draw me powerfully to Thyself.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and, according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies, blot out my iniquities. Sprinkle me with Thy precious blood, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Let not Thy precious blood, my dear Saviour, be shed for me in vain; but may it now bring forth in me the fruit of sincere repentance, and open to me the way to life everlasting.

How great is Thy goodness, O Lord, in having so long spared such a worthless servant, and waited with so much patience for his amendment! What return shall I make for Thy infinite mercies? Oh, let this mercy be added to the rest, that I may nevermore offend Thee: this single favor I earnestly beg of Thee, O Lord, viz., that I may for the future renounce my own way to follow Thine

Help me, O Lord my God, and have compassion on my sinful soul. Amen.

[618]

Communion.

Before Communion.

A Prayer Which May Be Said Some Days Before Communion.

O Lord Jesus Christ! Whom I aspire to receive in a few days within the temple of my soul, I come to implore that Thou wilt Thyself prepare Thy destined abode, cleansing it from every stain, and enriching it with ornaments worthy of Thy presence. Grant me an increase of faith, hope, and charity; grant me true contrition, and profound humility; grant me to sigh with

holy Simeon for Thy coming, and, like him, to centre in Thee alone the ardent affections and fervent desires of my heart. O Lord! Whose throne is surrounded by cherubim and seraphim! Whose presence is felt by all creation, Whose spotless sanctity the angels themselves contemplate with awe, I acknowledge my extreme unworthiness to receive Thee; but animated with lively confidence in Thy paternal goodness, I conjure Thee to prepare me Thyself, and to supply from the treasury of Thy abundant mercies for all my deficiencies. O Thou Who hast come on earth to save me, and Who by Thy sufferings hast opened heaven to receive me, grant me grace to profit by all Thou hast done and endured for my salvation!

Aspirations Which Should Be Used The Days Preceding Communion.

As the wearied hart pines for the refreshing water, so does my
[619] soul thirst for Thee, O Lord!

My soul sighs for the possession of God; when shall I come and appear before Him? Lord, I come to Thee; but how shall I prepare the way for Thee? I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed.

How can I receive Thee into a heart so full of iniquities, and yet how can I abstain from the living Bread come down from heaven to give life to the world?

Have pity, I beseech Thee, on me, a sinner; and deign to prepare Thyself a dwelling in my heart; grant that from Thy adorable body may proceed a virtue to give strength and life to my soul.

Prepare me for Thyself, O Jesus! and render me worthy of Thy visit; look on me, O Lord! and inflame me with Thy love; that I may run after the odor of Thy perfumes.

Grant me humility of spirit, and pure charity, to render me worthy of participating in the blessed food of heaven.

I wish to attract Thee by my love, and to enjoy Thy presence in the centre of my soul. O my God! my life! my all! I beseech Thee to come into my heart, and to unite me to Thyself forever.

Act Of Faith.

Behold, He cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping over the hills. Cant. ii. 8. Ah, my most amiable Saviour, over how many, what rough and craggy mountains, hast Thou had to pass in order to come and unite Thyself to me by the means of this Most Holy Sacrament! Thou, from being God, [d. 20] hadst to become man; from being immense, to become a babe; from being Lord, to become a servant. Thou hadst to pass from the bosom of Thy eternal Father to the womb of a Virgin; from heaven into a stable; from the throne of glory to the gibbet of a criminal. And on this very morning Thou wilt come from Thy seat in heaven to dwell in my bosom.

Behold He standeth behind our wall, looking through the windows, looking through the lattices. Cant. ii. 9. Behold, O my soul, thy loving Jesus, burning with the same love with which He loved thee when dying for thee on the cross, is now concealed in the Most Blessed Sacrament under the sacred species: and what doing? Looking through the lattices. As an ardent lover, desirous to see his love corresponded with, from the Host, as from within closed lattices, whence He sees without being seen, He is looking at you, who are this morning about to feed upon His divine flesh. He observes your thoughts, what it is that you love, what you desire, what you seek for, and what offerings you are about to make Him.

Awake, then, my soul, and prepare to meet thy Jesus; and, in the first place, by faith say to Him: So, then, my beloved Redeemer, in a few moments Thou art coming to me? O hidden God, unknown to the greater part of men, I believe, I confess, I adore Thee in the Most Holy Sacrament as my Lord and Saviour! And in acknowledgment of this truth I would willingly lay down my life. Thou comest to enrich me with Thy graces, and to unite

Thyself all to me; how great, then, should be my confidence in
[621] this Thy so loving visit!

Act Of Confidence.

My soul, expand thy heart. Thy Jesus can do thee every good, and, indeed, loves thee. Hope thou for great things from this thy Lord, Who, urged by love, comes all love to thee. Yes, my dear Jesus, my hope, I trust in Thy goodness, that, in giving Thyself to me this morning, Thou wilt enkindle in my poor heart the beautiful flame of Thy pure love, and a real desire to please Thee; so that, from this day forward, I may never will anything but what Thou willest.

Act Of Love.

Ah, my God, my God, true and only love of my soul, and what more couldst Thou have done to be loved by me? To die for me was not enough for Thee, my Lord; Thou wast pleased to institute this great Sacrament in order to give Thyself all to me, and thus bind and unite Thyself heart to heart with so loathsome and ungrateful a creature as I am. And what is more, Thou Thyself invitest me to receive Thee, and desirest so much that I should do so! O boundless love! incomprehensible love! infinite love! a God would give Himself all to me!

My soul, believest thou this? And what doest thou? what sayest thou? O God, O God, O infinite amiability, only worthy object of all loves, I love Thee with my whole heart, I love Thee above all things, I love Thee more than myself, more than my life! Oh, could I but see Thee loved by all! Oh, could I but cause Thee to be loved by all hearts as much as Thou deservest! I love
[622] Thee, O most amiable God, and I unite my miserable heart in loving Thee, to the hearts of the seraphim, to the heart of the most blessed Virgin Mary, to the Heart of Jesus, Thy most loving and beloved Son. So that, O infinite good, I love Thee with the love with which the saints, with which Mary, with which Jesus love Thee. And I love Thee only because Thou art worthy of it, and to give Thee pleasure. Depart, all earthly affections, which

are not for God, depart, from my heart. Mother of fair love, most holy Virgin Mary, help me to love that God Whom thou dost so ardently desire to see loved!

Act Of Humility.

Then, my soul, thou art even now about to feed on the most sacred flesh of Jesus! And art thou worthy? My God, and who am I, and Who art Thou? I indeed know and confess Whom Thou art Who givest Thyself to me; but dost Thou know what I am who am about to receive Thee?

And is it possible, O my Jesus, that Thou Who art infinite purity desirest to come and reside in this soul of mine, which has been so many times the dwelling of Thy enemy, and soiled with so many sins? I know, O my Lord, Thy great majesty and my misery; I am ashamed to appear before Thee. Reverence would induce me to keep at a distance from Thee; but if I depart from Thee, O my life, whither shall I go? to whom shall I have recourse? and what will become of me? No, never will I depart from Thee; nay, even I will ever draw nearer and nearer to Thee. Thou art satisfied that I should receive Thee as food, Thou even invitest me to this. I come then, O my amiable Saviour, I come [623] to receive Thee this morning, all humbled and confused at the sight of my defects; but full of confidence in Thy tender mercy, and in the love which Thou bearest me.

Act Of Contrition.

I am indeed grieved, O God of my soul, for not having loved Thee during the time past; still worse, so far from loving Thee, and to gratify my own inclinations, I have greatly offended and outraged Thy infinite goodness: I have turned my back against Thee, I have despised Thy grace and friendship; in fine, O my God, I was deliberately in the will to lose Thee. Lord, I am sorry, and grieve for it with my whole heart. I detest the sins which I have committed, be they great or small, as the greatest of all my misfortunes, because I have thereby offended Thee, O infinite goodness. I trust that Thou hast already forgiven me; but if Thou

has not yet pardoned me, oh, do so before I receive Thee: wash with Thy blood this soul of mine, in which Thou art so soon about to dwell.

Act Of Desire.

And now, my soul, the blessed hour is arrived in which Jesus will come and take up His dwelling in thy poor heart. Behold the King of heaven, behold thy Redeemer and God, Who is even now coming; prepare thyself to receive Him with love, invite Him with the ardor of thy desire; come, O my Jesus, come to my soul, which desires Thee. Before Thou givest Thyself to me, I [624] desire to give Thee, and I now give Thee, my miserable heart; do Thou accept it, and come quickly to take possession of it.

Come, my God! hasten; delay no longer. My only and infinite good, my treasure, my life, my paradise, my love, my all, my wish is to receive Thee with the love with which the most holy and loving souls have received Thee; with that with which the most blessed Virgin Mary received Thee; with their communions I unite this one of mine.

Most holy Virgin and my Mother Mary, behold, I already approach to receive thy Son. Would that I had the heart and love with which thou didst communicate! Give me this morning thy Jesus, as thou didst give Him to the shepherds and to the kings. I intend to receive Him from thy most pure hands. Tell Him that I am thy servant and thy client; for He will thus look upon me with a more loving eye, and now that He is coming, will press me more closely to Himself.

After Communion.

Act Of Welcome.

Ah, my Jesus, my love, my infinite good, my all, be ever welcome in the poor dwelling of my soul! Ah, my Lord, where art Thou! to what a place art Thou come! Thou hast entered my heart, which is far worse than the stable in which Thou wast born; it is full of earthly affections, of self-love, and of inordinate desires. And how couldst Thou come to dwell there? I would

address Thee with St. Peter, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man. St. Luke v. 8. Yes, depart from me, O Lord, for I am [625] indeed unworthy to receive a God of infinite goodness; go and find repose in those pure souls who serve Thee with so much love. But no, my Redeemer; what do I say? Leave me not; for if Thou departest, I am lost. I embrace Thee, my life; I cling to Thee. Mad indeed have I been in having separated myself from Thee for the love of creatures; and in my ingratitude I drove Thee from me. But now I will never more separate myself from Thee, my treasure; I desire to live and die united to Thee. Most blessed Virgin Mary, seraphim, and all souls, do you who love God with pure love lend me your affections, that I may worthily attend on my beloved Lord.

Loving Aspirations To Jesus In The Blessed Sacrament.

They can be used either before or after communion, or in visiting the Blessed Sacrament.

1. Go forth, ye daughters of Sion, and see King Solomon in the diadem wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals. Cant. iii. 11. O daughters of grace, O ye souls who love God, quit the darkness of earth, and behold Jesus, your King, crowned with a crown of thorns; the crown of contempt and suffering with which the impious synagogue, His mother, crowned Him on the day of His espousals, that is to say, on the day of His death, by the means of which He espoused Himself on the cross to our souls. Go forth again, my soul, and behold Him all full of compassion and love, now that He comes to unite Himself to Thee in this Sacrament of love. [626]

Has it indeed, then, cost Thee so much, my beloved Jesus, before Thou couldst come and unite Thyself to souls in this Most Sweet Sacrament? Wast Thou indeed obliged to suffer so bitter and ignominious a death? Oh, come, then, without delay and unite Thyself to my soul also. It was at one time Thy enemy by sin; but now Thou desirest to espouse it by Thy grace. Come, O

Jesus, my Spouse, for nevermore will I betray Thee; I am determined to be ever faithful to Thee. As a loving spouse, my whole thought shall be to find out Thy pleasure. I am determined to love Thee without reserve; I desire to be all Thine, my Jesus, all, all, all.

2. A bundle of myrrh is my Beloved to me; He shall abide between my breasts. Cant. i. 12. The myrrh plant when pricked sends forth tears, and a healthful liquor from the wounds. Before His Passion, our Jesus determined to pour forth His divine blood from His wounds in so painful a way, to give it afterwards all to us for our salvation in this bread of life. Come, then, O my beloved bundle of myrrh, O my enamored Jesus; Thou art indeed a subject of grief and pity to me, when I consider Thee all wounded for me on the cross; but then, when I receive Thee in this Most Sweet Sacrament, Thou becomest, indeed, to me more sweet and delicious than a bunch of the choicest grapes can be to one who is parched with thirst. A cluster of cypress my love is to me, in the vineyards of Engaddi. Cant. i. 13. Come, then, to my soul, and revive and satiate me with Thy holy love. Ah, what sweetness do I feel in my soul at the thought, that I [627] have to receive within myself that same Saviour of mine Who for my salvation was pleased to be drained of all His blood, and sacrificed on a cross! He shall abide between my breasts. So, my Jesus, nevermore will I drive Thee hence; and Thou shalt nevermore have to leave me. I am determined ever to love Thee, and to be always united to and closely bound up with Thee. I will always belong to Jesus, and Jesus will be always mine; forever, forever, forever He shall abide between my breasts.

Act Of Thanksgiving.

My God and Lord, I thank Thee for the grace which Thou hast this morning bestowed upon me, of coming to dwell in my soul; but I would wish to thank Thee in a manner worthy of Thee and of the great favor which Thou hast done me. But what do I say? how can such a miserable creature as I am ever worthily thank

Thee?

Father Segneri says that the feeling most becoming a soul who communicates is that of wondering astonishment at the thought, and to repeat, A God is united to me; a God is mine. David said, What shall I render to the Lord for all the things that He hath rendered to me? Ps. cxv. 12. But I! what return shall I make to Thee, my Jesus, Who, after having given me so many of Thy good things, hast this morning, moreover, given me Thyself? My soul, bless, then, and thank thy God as best thou canst. And thou, my Mother Mary, my holy advocates, my guardian angel, and all ye souls who love God, Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what great things He hath done for my soul. Ps. lxv. 16. Come and bless and thank my [628] God for me, admiring and praising the truly great graces which He has granted me.

Act Of Oblation.

My Beloved to me, and I to Him. Cant. ii. 16. Should a king go to visit a poor shepherd in his hut, what can the shepherd offer him other than his whole hut, such as it is? Since, then, O Jesus, my divine King, Thou hast come to visit the poor house of my soul, I offer and give Thee this house and my entire self, together with my liberty and will: My Beloved to me, and I to Him. Thou hast given Thyself all to me; I give myself all to Thee. My Jesus, from this day forward I will be no longer mine; I will be Thine, and all Thine. May my senses be Thine, that they may only serve me to please Thee. And what greater pleasure, says St. Peter of Alcantara, can be found than that of pleasing Thee, most amiable, most loving, most gracious God? I at the same time give Thee all the powers of my soul, and I will that they shall be all Thine; my memory I will only use to recall to mind Thy benefits and Thy love; my understanding I will only use to think of Thee, Who always thinkest of my good; my will I will only use to love Thee, my God, my all, and to will only that which Thou willest. My most sweet Lord, I offer, then,

and consecrate to Thee this morning all that I am and have, my senses, my thoughts, my affections, my desires, my pleasures, my inclinations, my liberty, in a word, I place my whole body and soul in Thy hands.

Accept, O infinite majesty, the sacrifice of the hitherto most
[629] ungrateful sinner Thou hast ever had on earth; but who now offers and gives himself all to Thee. Do with me and dispose of me, O Lord, as Thou pleasest.

Come, O consuming fire, O divine love! and consume in me all which is mine, and which is displeasing in Thy most pure eyes, so that from henceforward I may be all Thine, and may live only to execute, not Thy commands and counsels alone, but all Thy holy desires and good pleasure also. Amen.

O most holy Mary, do thou present this offering of mine to the most Blessed Trinity with thine own hands; and do thou obtain their acceptance of it, and that they may grant me the grace to be faithful unto death. Amen, amen, amen.

Act Of Petition.

O my soul, what art thou doing? The present is no time to be lost: it is a precious time, in which thou canst receive all the graces which thou askest. Seest thou not the eternal Father, Who is lovingly beholding thee? for within thee He sees His beloved Son, the dearest object of His love. Drive, then, far from thee all other thoughts; rekindle thy faith, enlarge thy heart, and ask for whatever thou willest.

Hearest thou not Jesus Himself Who thus addresses thee: What wilt thou that I should do to thee? St. Mark x. 51. O soul, tell me what dost thou desire of Me? I am come for the express purpose of enriching and gratifying thee; ask with confidence, and thou wilt receive all.

Ah! my most sweet Saviour, since Thou hast come into my
[630] heart in order to grant me graces, and desirest that I should ask Thee for them, I ask Thee not for the goods of the earth, riches, honors, or pleasures; but grant me, I beseech Thee, intense

sorrow for the displeasures I have caused Thee; impart to me so clear a light, that I may know the vanity of this world, and how deserving Thou art of love. Change this heart of mine, detach it from all earthly affections; give me a heart conformable in all things to Thy holy will, that it may seek only for that which is more pleasing to Thee, and have no other desire than Thy holy love: Create a clean heart in me, O God.Ps. l. 12.

I deserve not this; but Thou, my Jesus, deservest it, since Thou art come to dwell in my soul: I ask it of Thee through Thy merits, and those of Thy most holy Mother, and by the love which Thou bearest to Thy eternal Father.

> Here pause, to ask Jesus for some other particular grace for yourself and for your neighbors. Do not forget poor sinners, or the souls in purgatory.

Eternal Father, Jesus Christ Himself, Thy Son, has said: Amen, amen, I say to you, if you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it you. For the love, then, of this Son, Whom I now hold within my breast, do Thou graciously hear me and grant my petition.

My most sweet loves, Jesus and Mary, may I suffer for you, may I die for you; may I be all yours, and in nothing my own! May the Most Blessed Sacrament ever be thanked and praised! Blessed be the holy and immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary! [631]

Acts Of The Love Of God.

1. My God, my sovereign good, would that I had always loved Thee!
2. My God, I detest the time in which I loved Thee not.
3. How have I lived so long without Thy holy love!
4. And Thou, my God, how hast Thou borne with me!
5. I thank Thee, O my God, for so much patience.
6. Now I desire to love Thee forever.
7. I would rather die than cease to love Thee.

8. My God, deprive me of life rather than permit that I should cease to love Thee.

9. The grace I ask of thee is, that I may always love Thee.

10. With Thy love I shall be happy.

Glory be to the Father.

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1. My God, I desire to see Thee loved by all men.

2. I should consider it a happiness to give my blood, in order that all men may love Thee.

3. Blind are they who love Thee not.

4. Enlighten them, O my God.

5. Not to love Thee, O sovereign good, is the only evil to be feared.

6. Never will I be of the number of those blind souls who love Thee not.

7. Thou, O my God, art my joy and all my good.

8. I desire to be wholly Thine forever.

[632] 9. Who shall ever be able to separate me from Thy love?

10. Come, all created beings; come, all of you, and love my God.

Glory be to the Father.

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1. My God, would that I had a thousand hearts to love Thee!

2. Would that I had the hearts of all men to love Thee!

3. How I should rejoice were there many worlds, who might all love Thee!

4. I should be happy if I could love Thee with the heart of all possible creatures.

5. Thou, indeed, dost merit it, O my God!

6. My heart is too poor and too cold to love Thee!

7. O woful insensibility of man, in regard of this sovereign good!

8. Oh, the blindness of worldlings, who know not true love!

9. O blessed inhabitants of heaven, who know it and love it!

10. O happy necessity, to love God!

Glory be to the Father.

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1. O my God, when shall I burn with love for Thee?

2. Oh, how happy would be my lot!

3. But since I know not how to love Thee, I can rejoice at this, that so many others love Thee with all their hearts.

4. I rejoice at this particularly, that the angels and saints love Thee in heaven.

5. I unite my feeble heart to their inflamed hearts. [633]

6. Would that I could love Thee as well as those saints who have been most inflamed with love for Thee!

7. Would that I had for Thee a love similar to that of St. Mary Magdalene, St. Catharine, and St. Teresa!

8. Or such as that of St. Augustine, St. Dominic, St. Francis Xavier, St. Philip Neri, St. Aloysius Gonzaga.

9. Or as that which was entertained for Thee by the holy apostles; and particularly by St. Peter, St. Paul, and the beloved disciple.

10. Or, in fine, as that with which the great patriarch St. Joseph loved Thee.

Glory be to the Father.

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1. Would, moreover, that I could love Thee as the Blessed Virgin loved Thee upon earth!

2. As she loved Thee, particularly when she conceived Thy divine Son in her virginal womb, when she brought Him into the world, when she nourished Him with her milk, and when she saw Him die.

3. Would that I could love Thee as she loves Thee now, and as she will love Thee forever in heaven!

4. But to love Thee as Thou deservest to be loved, O God, infinitely good, even this would not suffice.

5. I should wish, moreover, to love Thee as the divine Word made man loved Thee.

6. As He loved Thee at His birth.

7. As He loved Thee expiring on the cross.

8. As He loves Thee continually in the tabernacles where He lies hid.

[634] 9. As He loves and shall love Thee forever.

10. In fine, my God, I wish to love Thee as Thou lovest us; but since that is impossible, grant that I may love Thee as well as I know how, as much as I can, and as much as Thou wishest me. Amen.

Glory be to the Father.

Then say the following prayer:

O God, Who hast prepared invisible rewards for those who love Thee, pour forth some of Thy love into our hearts, to the end that, loving Thee in all and above all, we may obtain the accomplishment of Thy promises, which surpass all desire; through Our Lord Jesus Christ, etc.

You may also add the following:

Lift up thine eyes, O my soul; behold and see the power of thy King, the grace of thy God, the love of thy Saviour, now that thou art so near to Him. Take now thy rest, taste and see how fair and how comely is the Spouse thou hast chosen. See what the delights are of that country towards which thou art sighing. See how fair the splendor of that crown for which thou toilest. See what is the essence and what the infinite grandeur of thy God, Whom thou hast loved, Whom thou hast worshipped, for Whom thou hast constantly longed.

O God of my life, what praises worthy of Thee can I offer Thee? Truly I know not. What shall I render unto Thee, O my well-beloved, for all the benefits wherewith Thou hast overwhelmed me? Thou in me, and I in Thee, O Jesus, my one good; this is the thank-offering I set before Thy glory. I have nothing else beside. My one only offering is what I am in Thee, my life in Thee. [635]

O God, Thou sacred object of my love, expand my heart in Thee, enlarge my soul, and fill me with Thy glory. Oh, when shall it be said unto my soul:Turn again into thy rest, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee? When, oh, when shall I hear that blissful word: Come, enter into the holy place of the rest of thy Spouse? O Jesus? my sweetest peace, when shall I lay me down and take my rest in Thee, whilst Thou showest me all Thy glory?

Pius VII., by a rescript, Aug. 11, 1818, granted an indulgence of three hundred days to all the faithful who should recite, with a contrite heart, a succession of acts of the love of God, arranged in form of a crown, with five Glory be to the Fathers, etc. By saying them ten times a month for a whole year, a person may gain a plenary indulgence on any day he may choose; confession, communion, and prayers according to the Pope's intentions being supposed.

[Transcriber's Note: Obvious printer's errors have been corrected.]

Footnotes

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