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VISITS TO THE ALTAR OF MARY.

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VISITS TO THE ALTAR OF MARY.

Mary the Kind Virgin
Kerry

*Recommendation of the Most Rev. Dr. Moriarty, Lord
Bishop of Kerry.*

“ We recommend to the faithful of our diocese the *Visits to the Altar of Mary*, by the Author of *St. Francis and the Franciscans*. The pious exercises which this little book suggests will be found useful and consoling. The reflections are solidly instructive, and the prayers are a true expression of the Christian’s devotion to the ever-blessed Mother of God.

“ ✠ DAVID MORIARTY,
“ *Bishop of Kerry.*

“ *The Palace, Killarney, February 22d, 1867.*”

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VISITS TO THE ALTAR OF MARY:

A MANUAL OF

Devotion for Congregations and Private Use.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"ST. FRANCIS AND THE FRANCISCANS," "THE LIFE AND REVELATIONS OF ST. GERTRUDE," "THE CHILD'S MONTH OF MARY," "THE CHILD'S MONTH OF THE SACRED HEART," "A MONTH OF REPARATION TO THE HEART OF LOVE," ETC. ETC.



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To Mary,

THE MOTHER OF JESUS, AND OUR MOTHER;

To Mary,

THE "MISTRESS OF THE HEART OF GOD," WHO CAN OBTAIN
FROM THAT HEART ALL OUR HEART'S DESIRE.

PREFACE.

THIS little manual of devotion has been asked for by several persons both in the middle and higher classes of society. It was said that the Meditations, &c. in the ordinary Months of Mary, however excellent, are too long for general use, and that a work was much needed to assist family and congregational devotion, as well as for private use. We can only humbly hope that those who have made this request may not be disappointed, and affectionately entreat all who approve of the *Visits to the Altar of Mary* to make it known as widely as possible, and to pray for the writer.

Might we also venture to suggest, that those who have means and heart to do good might perform a great work of charity, at a very trifling expense, by distributing good books, and particularly books of devotion for special seasons, among their

own servants, tenants, and schools? Those who have an abundant supply of reading at their command are little aware how much such books are treasured, and how devoutly they are used by those who have but few. The Superiorettes of Convents in the poorer Missions in England and Ireland would also most thankfully accept even a few books for distribution among their school-children.

CONVENT OF POOR CLARES, KENMARE,
Feast of the Purification, 1867.

VISITS TO THE ALTAR OF MARY.



FOR THE EVE OF THE MONTH OF MARY.

ON THE LOVE OF MARY FOR HER CHILDREN.

A Visit to offer the devotions of the coming month, and to ask a special blessing on them.

MARY loves us because we are her children. A loving and tender Mother is never wearied by the importunities of her little ones; and Mary, who is the most loving and tender of all mothers, will never weary of hearing and answering our petitions. The one great thing that she desires for all her children is, that they should become like her Son Jesus. He is the only Child who never disobeyed her or grieved her. It is for His love that she loves us. How great must be His love for us, when He inspires Mary with such a love! The best return we can make Him is to have a perfect trust and confidence in His Blessed Mother. Those who are not devout to Mary cannot really understand the great mystery of the Incarnation, and do not love Jesus as they should—for if they loved Him, they would love His Mother also.

Let us try, then, during this month, to become more like Jesus. Let us consider what spiritual

grace we need most in order to attain this great end, and let us ask it with confidence every day. Let us also try to induce others to honour Mary by special devotion to her during this month.

Prayer.

Mother of Jesus, we have assembled now around your altar to offer you the devotions of the coming month. Obtain for each of us the special grace we need to become more like Jesus [*here name the special grace and the other intentions which you wish to obtain during this month*]. And if in our ignorance we have not asked what is really most necessary for us, "show thyself a Mother," and obtain it for us from the Heart of your divine Son. We beseech you also, O Lady, to implore the tenderest benediction of that Heart for this [*family, convent, or congregation*]. He alone knows the special need and desire of each, and He can refuse you nothing. We offer you all the prayers, processions, devotions, Masses, Benedictions, penances, and fasts that may be performed in your honour during the coming month—obtain abundant graces for the whole Church, and an increase of devotion to your immaculate Heart. Amen.*

* An indulgenced prayer from the *Raccolta* (authorised translation) has been added for each day. There is also an indulgence of 100 days for each day, granted "to all the faithful of the Catholic world who either in public or in private shall honour the Blessed Virgin with some special homage, or devout prayers, or other virtuous practices" (*Raccolta*, p. 193).

Where practicable, five decades of the Rosary might be added after each day's devotion, and a hymn sung; but as short and fervent devotions are preferable to long and cold ones, in many cases, especially for family or private devotion, one decade might be sufficient. It is hoped this may always be done, as there are few who could not find time for one *Our*

In thy conception, O Mary, thou wast immaculate. Pray for us to the Eternal Father, whose only-begotten Son Jesus, conceived in thy womb, thou didst bring forth. (100 days' indulgence.)

MAY THE FIRST.

THE ANNUNCIATION.

A Visit to our Lady, to ask her intercession for the conversion of sinners.

“And the angel said unto her, Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee” (Luke i. 28).

THIS, then, is the secret of Mary's power with God. She is full of grace; and the Lord is with her. If we, in all our sin and misery, can truly say that, with the help of God, we can do all things, what cannot Mary do, who is full of grace, and with whom Jesus Himself is united in the very closest ties of flesh and blood? Our salvation was the great object of the Incarnation; and since Mary only desires what Jesus desires, her great end is to secure the salvation of the human race. It was for this that Jesus came to her. It is for this that she comes to us, as it were, during this month with special graces, with new helps, with earnest entreaties. Ah, let us not turn away from this loving Mother. She desires the salvation of each of us with a love, an ardour, only less than the love of

Father and ten *Hail Marys*. Might we advise a special offering to be made by each individual of the indulgences which may be gained during the month for the souls in purgatory?—“My God, I offer Thee all the indulgences which I may gain during this month for the souls in purgatory.”

the Sacred Heart. She knows the misery of a lost soul, and the ineffable blessedness of the redeemed ones who shall reign with the Lamb upon Mount Sion. Let us pray, then, during this month with great fervour to the refuge of sinners. Let us pray for our own salvation first; and then, not less earnestly, for the salvation of others. Let us remember that, even as some trifling bodily ailment, if neglected, may be the cause of temporal death, so some little fault, some sinful inclination to which we yield even in small matters, may lead to our eternal ruin.

But we should also pray for others. We generally pray for the salvation of others in proportion to our earnestness about our own salvation. During this month there will be so many missions, so many retreats, so many sermons, so many calls to poor sinners to return to God—such abundant graces. It is, as it were, the spring-time of grace for the Church each year. Let us pray, then, that many new flowers may be planted in the garden of the Church, and that those already within its boundaries may increase in beauty and strength.

Prayer.

Mother of Jesus, full of grace, and full of Jesus, oh, pray for us to thy divine Son, that we also in our measure may be filled with grace and filled with Him. Let us not lose one drop of the precious and fertilising dews which are even now descending upon the Church in such rich abundance. Help us to root out of our hearts whatever may be a hindrance to our eternal salvation, and to plant therein the special grace which we individually need. Refuge of sinners, we pray to thee also for all poor sinners—for all sinners who are dying, for sinners in

our gaols and workhouses, in our mines and factories ; for the poor who make their poverty an excuse for sin, for the rich whose riches imperil their salvation. O Mother of Jesus, we are all thy children, rich or poor, sinful or saintly ; love us, then, with thy Mother's heart of love, and help those who love thee to console thee for the ingratitude of those who despise thy tenderness. Amen.

Indulged Prayer to our Lady of Peace.

Hail, thou that art most venerable, Queen of Peace, most holy Mother of God ; through the Sacred Heart of Jesus, thy Son, the Prince of Peace, cause His anger to cease from us, that so He may reign over us in peace. Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that any one who sought thy prayers was forsaken by God. Inspired with this confidence, I come unto thee. Despise not my petition, O Mother of the Incarnate Word ; but, in thy lovingkindness, hear and answer me, O merciful, O kind, O sweet Virgin Mary. (100 days' indulgence.)

Sweet Heart of Mary, be my salvation ! (800 days' indulgence.)

MAY THE SECOND.

THE ANNUNCIATION (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to thank her for repairing the sin of Eve.

“And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word” (Luke i. 38).

EVE had made herself the handmaid of the Evil One. She became his servant, she obeyed his voice, she complied with his wish. And since Eve voluntarily, of her own free will, accepted this degrading servitude, her posterity have inherited from her an inclination to evil and a preference for the devil's will to God's will. Let us consider well what fearful consequences follow from that one apparently trifling act ; that we may be better able to estimate the greatness of Mary's victory, the sublime perfection of her obedience. What the devil willed, Eve willed ; what the devil asked, Eve did. What God willed, Mary willed ; what God willed, Mary accomplished. Each had free will, each made her choice ; and the consequences of the choice of each involved millions in eternal misery, or helped millions to attain eternal blessedness. O Mary, our Mother, our joy, our only hope, how shall we thank thee for that *Ecce ancilla Domini* (“Behold the handmaid of the Lord”) ! It was the act of acceptance of the divine will on which the world's salvation depended. Mary with her free will chose God's will, and thus repaired the sin of Eve, who with her free will chose to do the will of the demon. How we should thank the Mother of Jesus ! How we should love the Mother of Jesus ! How earnestly

we should endeavour to imitate her blessed example! All sin is simply making the choice that Eve made. When we sin, we prefer the will of the devil to the will of God. We make ourselves not only his servants, but, alas, even his slaves. We subject ourselves to the most cruel bondage, and this by our own deliberate choice. Oh, let us pray to Mary to obtain for us grace to imitate her example, to say in every circumstance of life, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord," to be His faithful servants, and to desire nothing but the accomplishment of His will in us, by us, and on us.

Prayer.

O Mary, O our Mother, how shall we thank thee for that one word of thine which repaired the fault of Eve! That one act of thine, in the designs of God, was necessary for our salvation. Obtain now for us the grace to love the will of God as thou didst love it, to obey the will of God as thou didst obey it, to correspond with the designs of God as thou didst correspond with them. May we learn that to be the handmaids of the Lord is the one simple end of our creation, and that they who by their labours or their sufferings obey His will most perfectly, fulfil most perfectly that end! Obtain for us the grace of being such faithful handmaids, that we may neither frustrate nor hinder the designs of God in our regard—that we may be ever waiting and watching for the least intimation of His will, and when that will is known, that we may accomplish it perfectly. Amen.

Indulgenced Prayer : Act of Praise.

Blessed be God.

Blessed be His holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

Blessed be the name of Jesus.

Blessed be Jesus in the most holy Sacrament of the
Altar.

Blessed be the great Mother of God, the most holy
Mary.

Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.

Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.

Blessed be God in His holy Angels and His Saints.

(One year's indulgence each time.)

MAY THE THIRD.

THE VISITATION.

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to obtain through her intercession the grace of true charity towards our neighbour.

“And Mary went into the hill country with haste”
(Luke i. 39).

LET us consider to-day the wonderful charity of Mary, that we may learn to love it and to imitate it. When there is an act of kindness to be performed for another, she allows no consideration of self to interfere. She goes with “haste,” she goes into the “hill country.” O Mary! O our Mother! teach us some of the secrets of thy charity, whisper into our hearts some of those sublime lessons of heavenly love that Jesus is whispering to thee, as it were, even now, while He lieth in thy womb. Yes, He who “leaped from His royal throne,” in His haste to come and save us, teaches thee now to go “with haste” when thou canst do a kindness to another. Shall we not try to imitate Mary, who is thus taught by Jesus! How often we lose an

opportunity of performing a kindness because we hesitate and delay so long before we act; how often we lessen the pleasure which that kindness would give by our delay in doing it! But during this month of grace we will try to amend. We will perform works of charity with haste, as those should do who fear by delay to lose an eternal crown,—for each act of charity will be eternally crowned in heaven. And let us not fear to go “into the hill country.” We may often meet with difficulties in performing acts of charity—difficulties from ourselves, for our selfishness will suggest many an excuse for saving us trouble; difficulties from others, for our charity may be repaid with indifference or even with contempt; but let us not be discouraged: we must follow Mary even from afar, we must climb up the hills after her, and from their summit it may be we shall catch many a glimpse of home, for charity brings us very near to God. We must bear with the impatience of the sick, the waywardness and fretfulness of children, the ingratitude of dependents, the indifference of friends; and, harder still, we must conquer our own feelings, we must hide, as far as may be, our own sufferings, we must forego our own ease and convenience, if we would practise perfect charity—if, like Mary, we would be God’s messengers of mercy for the spiritual and temporal comfort of others, if we would be truly the children of the Heart of love, forgetful of self, and full of tender thought and care for even the *least* want or sorrow of our neighbour.

Prayer.

Mother of Jesus, Mother of mercy, obtain for us the grace of a tender and self-sacrificing love for others. Oh, warm our hard, cold hearts with some

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sparks of fire from that Heart of burning love which once lay cradled in thine arms. Thou knowest how He would have us love; oh, make us love even to this measure of perfection. Thou hast all power over that Heart; obtain from it, for us, the gift and grace of the sublimest charity. Amen.

Indulged Prayer.

Sweet heart of Mary, be my salvation! (300 days.)

Behold, my most loving Jesus, to what an excess Thy boundless love has carried Thee.* Of Thine own flesh and precious blood thou hast made ready for me a banquet, in order to give me all Thyself. What was it that impelled Thee to this transport of love for me? It was Thy Heart, Thy loving Heart. O adorable Heart of my Jesus! burning furnace of divine love! within Thy most sacred wounds receive Thou my soul, that in that school of charity I may learn to requite the love of that God who has given me such wondrous proofs of His love. Amen. (100 days once a day.)

MAY THE FOURTH.

THE VISITATION (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to obtain through her intercession the grace of profound humility.

“And she entered into the house of Zachary and saluted Elizabeth” (Luke i. 40).

OUR Blessed Lady tells us expressly in the sublime canticle with which the Holy Ghost inspired her, that God had “regarded her humility.” How profound must that humility have been, when it at-

tracted the regards of the very God of heaven ! How infinitely pleasing to Him must that humility have been, when it drew down the very Son of God into the Virgin's womb ! Well may Mary exclaim, "For behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." Yes, and our divine Lord Himself said of her that she was, if it were possible, even more blessed for having heard the words of God and kept them, than for having been that highly favoured one whose womb bore Him and whose paps He sucked. O Mother of Jesus, teach us the secrets of thy humility, that we also may learn how to attract the regards of Him who looketh on the lowly. There are few things which displease us more in others than pride ; but do we ever consider how much our pride displeases God ? We despise pride in those beneath us, we dislike it in our equals ; and yet, alas ! do we not constantly act and speak with pride before God and man ? Mary gives us a precious example of humility in her visit to St. Elizabeth. She who is the superior visits the inferior ; she who might have claimed the service and homage of all mankind goes to render the service of the most tender charity to her inferior. Let us learn from the mystery of the Visitation, from this incident in the life of Mary which has been related to us in such detail by the Holy Ghost, how we should practise charity and humility. There can be no true charity without humility. If we are proud in our words, our manner, or even in our inmost thoughts towards others, we cannot practise true charity. In some way or other the pride will manifest itself and offend or grieve those whom we may even wish to serve. Let us learn also to act promptly when the least opportunity offers for doing a service to others, and, both for their sakes and for our own,

let us do our acts of charity in a spirit of true humility.

Prayer.

Mother of Jesus, Mother most humble, obtain for me the grace to imitate thy blessed example of charity and humility. Thou knowest, as none other can, how Jesus loves the humble; oh, obtain for me the grace which is so dear to His adorable Heart. Mother of mercy, one sigh, one movement of thy heart, one desire, has power to obtain all we ask; oh, do not refuse the children of thy love, however unworthy we may be.

Indulged Prayer.

O Father! O Son! O Holy Ghost!

O Holy Trinity! O Jesus! O Mary!

O ye blessed Angels of God, all ye Saints of paradise, men and women, obtain for me these graces, which I ask through the precious Blood of Jesus Christ:

1. Ever to do the holy will of God.
2. Ever to live in union with God.
3. Not to think of any thing but God.
4. To love God alone.
5. To do all for God.
6. To seek only the glory of God.
7. To sanctify myself solely for God.
8. To know well my own utter nothingness.
9. Ever to know more and more the will of my God.
10. (*Here ask what you most desire.*)

Mary, most holy, offer to the Eternal Father the most precious Blood of Jesus Christ for my soul, for the holy souls in purgatory, for the needs of Holy Church, for the conversion of sinners, and for all the world.

Then say three *Gloria Patris* to the most holy Blood of Jesus Christ; one *Hail Mary* to the sorrows of most holy Mary; and one *Requiem æternam*, &c., for the holy souls in purgatory. (300 days' indulgence once a day.)

MAY THE FIFTH.

THE NATIVITY.

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, that she may obtain grace for us to love Jesus above all.

“And she brought forth her first-born Son, . . . and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn” (Luke ii. 7).

THE world has not changed since that Christmas night. How many are there, even now, who can find no room for Jesus! They have room enough for their friends, room enough for their families, room enough for their own interests; but they have no room for Jesus. They send Him out of doors; the stable must do for Him, for the best rooms are wanted for other guests. Even now—even this very day—Mary is going about with Jesus seeking for hearts wherein she may bring Him forth again spiritually; and, alas, how often she is repulsed! how often she finds “no room” for Him! Let us ask ourselves, if we have ever sent our sweet Jesus to the stable? Have we ever retained our best rooms for other guests? The inn is the type of the world. It is all full of bustle and business. People are too much occupied to think about Jesus; they have so much business, such important business, that they cannot stop to attend to the words He would whisper in their hearts; and so Jesus is sent

to the stable, and these very people forget He ever called on them, and think no more of the love they have slighted or despised. But Jesus thinks of them. Even in the cold stable, where they have driven Him out to lodge with the beasts, even there He thinks of them, prays for them, suffers for them, and hopes that they will yet come and look for Him ; and He will come to them with the same love, as if they had not treated Him so unkindly ; and He will never reproach them with their wicked ingratitude. But, alas, there are few indeed who seek Jesus in the stable, when they have once deliberately and wilfully expelled Him from the inn ! Let us pray this day most fervently to Mary, that we may never expel Jesus from our hearts. Let us beseech her, by the anguish she endured on that Christmas night when Jesus was thus treated, by the joy she felt when Jesus accepted her arms as His refuge, that we may never, never prefer any thing to Jesus ; that we may never, never retain any thing, however trifling, in our hearts that would prevent Jesus from reigning therein as the absolute Master of them.

Prayer.

Sweet Mother of Jesus, I compassionate the sorrows of thy heart on that Christmas night when Jesus was refused room in the inn. Oh, by the depth of thy maternal anguish, obtain for me such grace that I may never refuse Him room in my heart ; obtain for me that I may never have any guest therein whose presence would be displeasing to Him. And since during this month devoted to thee thou art ever seeking with special zeal for human hearts wherein Jesus may find a home, I desire to assist thee, Mother of mercy, by my prayers for the conversion of sinners, and by my

efforts to make my own heart more worthy of His abode. Help me, O Mary, to accomplish this holy purpose.

Indulgenced Prayer.

Mary, Virgin ever blessed! who can worthily praise thee or give thanks to thee, who by the assent of thy will alone didst rescue a fallen world? what honour can the weakness of our human nature pay to thee, which by thy intervention alone has found the way to restoration? Accept, then, such poor thanks as we have here to offer, though they are unequal to thy merits, and, receiving our vows, obtain by thy prayers the remission of our offences. Carry thou our prayers within the sanctuary of the heavenly audience, and bring forth from it the medicine of our reconciliation. Through thee may that be pardoned which through thee we bring before God, and that be granted which we ask with faithful heart. Accept what we offer, grant us what we ask, pardon us what we fear, for thou art the sure hope of sinners. Through thee we hope for the forgiveness of our faults; and in thee, most blessed one, is the hope of our reward. Holy Mary, succour the wretched, help the faint-hearted, comfort the sorrowful, pray for the people, shield the clergy, intercede for the devout female sex, let all feel thy help who celebrate thy holy commemoration. Be thou at hand, ready to aid our prayers when we pray, and return to us laden with the answers we desire. Make it thy care, blessed one, to intercede ever for the people of God—thou who didst deserve to bear the Redeemer of the world, who liveth and reigneth for ever and ever. Amen.—Extracted from the eighteenth sermon of St. Augustine, *De Sanctis*. (50 days' indulgence each time it is said.)

MAY THE SIXTH.

THE NATIVITY (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, that she may obtain for us the grace of a most fervent and ever-increasing devotion to herself.

“And entering into the house, they found the Child, with Mary His Mother” (Matt. ii. 11).

THE love of Jesus and of Mary cannot be separated; the Child and His Mother were always together—together at Bethlehem, together in Egypt, together at Nazareth, together at the marriage-feast, together on Calvary, together on Mount Zion. O Mother of Jesus, if we are with thee, we shall never be far from Jesus; may we seek more and more thy blessed company, and so shall we surely find Him who is our eternal joy. We cannot separate the love of the Mother from the love of the Son. We cannot say, I will love Mary so much, and I will love Jesus so much. We must love the Child and the Mother. We shall find the Child in the arms of the Mother, we shall find the Mother in the Heart of the Child. Heresy alone would separate Jesus and Mary, because it has not faith, the precious, inestimable, supernatural gift of faith. It understands not the mystery of the Incarnation, for faith alone can believe in it aright. As well might we try to make the blind understand the beauty of colour as attempt to convince the heretic of the union of devotion to the Mother and the Child. We see, but they cannot see, and we lose our time and our patience in arguments to convert, when we had better have expended that time and devoted that patience to

prayer that the gift of faith might be bestowed on them. But, for ourselves, let us learn more and more to seek the Child with the Mother. Devotion to Mary is the most precious gift which the love of the Sacred Heart can bestow on any soul. Every act and every word of our divine Lord when on earth had a depth and a significance which we can but faintly conjecture. Let us remember that almost His last act and word on earth was to confide His Mother to the care of the disciple whom He loved most; the disciple whom, in the very words of inspiration, it has been declared that "Jesus loved." And so it has been ever since that awful hour. Jesus bestows the gift of devotion to Mary—of real, deep, boundless devotion and trust and love—on those souls who are most precious to His Heart, and most frequently on those who stand with Him on Calvary, whom He has called by more than ordinary suffering to a special participation in His Passion. He confides such souls to Mary, that she may teach them and strengthen them by her example and her intercession; He confides Mary to such souls, that they may console her by their devotion and their sanctity. And there are souls also, less saintly and less suffering, whose salvation seems for some inscrutable reason especially dear to God, and these also He gives in charge to Mary, that she may snatch them from destruction, that they may be trophies of her power and her love.

Prayer.

Mother of Jesus, obtain for us, during this blessed month of Mary, the grace of graces, the grace of an immense, boundless increase of devotion to thee. May we, like the shepherds and the wise men, seek the Child and the Mother; and like them, also, may we

adore Him, may we offer our gifts, and present Him with the gold of our charity, the frankincense of our prayer, and the myrrh of our sufferings. Through thee may we have access to Him who was given to us through thee; in thee may we find Him whose abode was in thee for nine most blessed months, and through thee may we go to Him when we shall receive the summons to that blessed land where thou reignest with Him for endless ages.

Indulgenced Prayer.

Virgin most holy, Mother of the Incarnate Word, Treasure of graces, Refuge of us poor sinners, we fly to thy maternal love with lively faith, and we ask thee ever to obtain for us grace to do the will of God and thine own. Into thy most holy hands we commit the keeping of our hearts, beseeching thee for health of soul and body, in the certain hope that thou, most loving Mother, wilt hear our prayer. Wherefore with lively faith we say—

Hail Mary (three times).

Let us pray.

Defend, O Lord, we beseech Thee, us Thy servants, through the intercession of the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, from all infirmity both of body and soul; and mercifully protect us, who prostrate ourselves before Thee with our whole heart, from the snares of the enemy; through Christ our Lord. Amen. (200 days' indulgence.)

MAY THE SEVENTH.

THE PRESENTATION.

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to obtain the grace of conversion for those who disobey the commands of the Church.

“And after the days of her purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they carried Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord” (St. Luke ii. 22).

JESUS had come to give another law, instead of the law of Moses. He had come to abolish those ceremonies and types which foreshadowed His first advent, and yet we find that until the law was actually—or, as we might say, formally—abolished, by His death, when He sealed the new testament with His blood, He was Himself most scrupulously exact in fulfilling its every requisition. Let us try to-day to learn one of the great lessons which we are taught in the mystery of the Presentation. Mary had not contracted the very slightest defilement in the birth of Jesus, and yet she “fulfils the days of her purification,” as though she had been like other women. Jesus was Himself the one true, spotless Sacrifice, and yet He condescends to allow sacrifice to be offered for Him. Surely there is a deep lesson for us in all this; let us try to learn it. Let us remember, first, the immense importance of doing the will of God, even in the very least matter; and, secondly, that each of us is under a solemn obligation of giving good example to others. Nothing but absolute necessity can excuse us from obeying the commands of the Church. How few and light these commands are, when compared with the heavy precepts of the Jewish Law! They are golden

chains, which unite us to our Love; oh, let us beware how we break them or cast them from us! We do not know how the most trifling action may be remembered by others, or what scandal we may give even by a thoughtless word. Let us ever speak with reverence of all that is commanded us. Let us obey with fidelity and willing love. Let us also try to console Jesus for the sins of those who grieve His adorable Heart by their disobedience. Jesus obeys the commands of the Church even as a little Child; shall children, then, dare to plead their youth as an excuse for disobedience? Jesus obeys at the cost of suffering and sacrifice; who can refuse to obey, whatever difficulty they may find in obedience?

Prayer.

O sweet Mother of Jesus, obtain for us the grace of a great love and reverence for all the commands of the Church. May we become, through the help of thy intercession, more prompt and faithful in our obedience. Above all, obtain for us pardon of our past failings in this matter, and strength and help for the time to come. May thy example be our encouragement; and the example of Jesus, our support.

Indulged Prayer.

Loosen, O Lord, we pray Thee, in Thy pity, the bonds of our sins, and by the intercession of the blessed Mary ever Virgin, Mother of God, the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and all Saints, keep us, thy servants, and our abodes, in all holiness; cleanse us, our relations, kinsfolk, and acquaintances, from all vices; adorn us with all virtues; grant to us peace and health; repel our enemies, visible and invisible; curb our carnal desires; grant

us healthful seasons ; bestow Thy charity upon our friends and our enemies ; guard Thy holy city ; preserve our Sovereign Pontiff, Pius IX. ; and defend all prelates, princes, and all Christian people, from adversity. Let Thy blessing be ever upon us ; and grant to all the faithful departed eternal rest ; through Christ our Lord. Amen. (*40 days' indulgence for each recital. 100 years and as many quarantines, provided it be said every Saturday for a month.*)

MAY THE EIGHTH.

THE PRESENTATION (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, for Christian parents and for all who have charge of the young ; to obtain for them the grace to fulfil faithfully their solemn duties.

“They carried Him to Jerusalem, to present Him to the Lord” (St. Luke ii. 22).

MARY is the model of Christian parents, even as Jesus is the model of Christian children. Let us try to learn another lesson from the mystery of the Presentation ; a lesson of the most incalculable importance, a lesson to be studied with prayers and tears. “They carried Him to Jerusalem, to present Him to the Lord.” This should be the first act of every Christian parent, the first care of all who have charge of youth. But, perhaps, you will say, We do our best with our children. We have taken care that they should receive the Sacrament of Baptism ; we teach them their prayers ; we take them to Mass ; we send them to Confession : what more can be required of us ? True, it is well, so far ; but why is it that so many children, who are thus cared for by

their parents, neglect their religious duties after a few years, and act as if they had never been trained to habits of virtue? The reason, no doubt, is, in part, because of their own natural depravity and inclination to evil; because they do not themselves correspond faithfully with the advantages and graces with which they are favoured. But, alas! there is another reason, and a very sad one; it is, that Christian parents do not always give their children example as well as instruction. The very best Christians love the world too much. They present their children to God first, but they present them to the world afterwards. They teach them, it may be, to love God first, and then they teach them to love the world after. The child will follow the example of the parent far more readily than her instructions; and if that example is an example of worldliness, her instructions not to love the world will be of very little avail. Let us all, then, learn from Mary how we should act towards those young and innocent souls of whom we may have charge. Let us present them to the Lord. Let us give them up wholly to God; and never, never, either by word or example, induce them to recall the sacrifice, even in the most trifling matter.

Prayer.

Mother of Jesus, model and guide of Christian mothers, we beseech thy help, thy all-powerful help, and intercession in the great work of giving instruction and good example to our children. Obtain for us the grace we need, lest we should scandalise those for whom Jesus died. Mother most merciful, we invoke thy patronage and thy care for our orphans, especially in our workhouses, for children in reformatories and prisons, for our poor little out-

cast wanderers, and above all for those who are tempted to renounce their faith. O Mary, by thy love of Jesus, help them, strengthen them, and raise up kind friends to assist them.

Indulged Prayer.

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that any one who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, and sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother! to thee I come, before thee I stand sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions; but, in thy clemency, hear and answer me. Amen. (300 days each time.)

MAY THE NINTH.

THE FINDING IN THE TEMPLE.

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to obtain the grace of an ardent devotion to Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament.

“They found Him in the Temple” (St. Luke ii. 4-6).

LET us learn from this how we should seek Jesus, and where we shall find Him. For three days Mary and Joseph sought their Blessed Child, sorrowing. Do we thus seek Jesus when we lose Him? Do we not too often lose Him, and remain unconscious of our loss? Ah, let us pray to Mary, let us beseech her with our whole heart, to obtain for us such grace that we may never, never lose Jesus without knowing it. This mystery may teach us two lessons. First, we may learn that, whenever

we have the misfortune to lose the company of Jesus by our sins, we must seek Him sorrowing. We must seek Him with the sorrow of sincere contrition for having offended Him ; we must seek Him with the sorrow of love, which grieves for the loss of its Beloved in proportion to its affection for Him. We must seek Jesus in the Temple. We need not expect to find Him among our kinsfolk and acquaintances ; it is in the silence of the Temple that He will "hear us, and ask us questions." We lose Jesus, also, when we become absorbed in the pleasures of life, when we sorrow immoderately for its trials. But, whatever may have occasioned our loss, we must seek Jesus, and seek Him until we find Him. He still abides with us, He remains hidden and unknown to the multitude, in the most Holy Sacrament. Here we may find Him, and here we shall find support and consolation in every trial, of whatever kind. Let us pray for the grace of great, of boundless devotion to the most Holy Sacrament. It will be at once the remedy for evil, and the consolation of affliction. Our happiness here (for we may be happy, if we seek Jesus), even in the greatest trials, will be proportioned to our love of the most Holy Sacrament ; and our eternal joy will also be measured by our devotion to It when on earth. But we may also learn another lesson. Our life may be compared to the three days of sorrow in which Mary sought Jesus. And we also, if we seek Him during the three days of our mortal life, shall find Him in His eternal temple, to our eternal joy.

Prayer.

Mother of Jesus, by thy sorrow in seeking Jesus and thy joy in finding Him, obtain for me such grace that I may never lose Him even for a

moment ; and should I be so unhappy as to lose Him, that I may seek Him with tears until I find Him. Oh, may I never be satisfied with any thing but Jesus ! May pleasure be pain to me without Jesus ! May joy be sorrow to me without Jesus ! May I seek Him daily more and more in the most adorable Sacrament of His love, until I find Him eternally in the temple of His heavenly glory. Amen.

Indulgenced Prayer.

Jesus, my God, my Saviour, true God and true Man, with that most profound homage with which the faith itself inspires me, I adore and love Thee with my whole heart, enclosed in the most august Sacrament of the Altar, in reparation for all the acts of irreverence, profanation, and sacrilege which I may ever have been so unhappy as to have committed, as well as for all such like acts that ever have been done, or which may be done—though God forbid they should be !—in ages yet to come. I adore Thee, therefore, my God ; not, indeed, as Thou deservest, nor as much as I am bound to adore, but as far as I am able ; and I would that I could adore Thee with all the perfection of which a reasonable creature is capable. Meantime, I purpose now and ever to adore Thee, not only for those Catholics who adore Thee not and love Thee not, but also in the stead of, and for the conversion of, all heretics, schismatics, impious atheists, blasphemers, sorcerers, Turks, Jews, and idolaters. Jesus, my God, mayst Thou be ever known, adored, loved, and praised every moment in the most holy and divine Sacrament ! Amen. (200 days' indulgence.)

MAY THE TENTH.

THE FINDING IN THE TEMPLE (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, that she may obtain for us the grace of a great love of prayer.

“And His Mother kept all these words in her heart” (St. Luke ii. 51).

PRAYER is the great duty of every Christian. Our spiritual vitality depends on prayer in some manner, even as our natural life depends upon the act of drawing our breath. Prayer obtains for us the grace we need to conquer our enemies, and to attain habits of virtue. Prayer unites us to God. It draws down the Eye of His mercy and love upon us. Prayer prepares our souls for receiving the life-giving Sacrament, without which they would perish. All the Saints loved prayer. It was not only a duty with them, it was also their dearest pleasure. To deprive them of prayer, was a greater trial to them than to deprive them of food,—for they cared little, indeed, for the life of their body, when compared with the life of their soul. And Mary, who is the Queen of all Saints, who surpassed them all in every virtue, far beyond even what we can imagine,—Mary’s life was prayer. “His Mother kept all these words in her heart.” It was not in her mind, but in her heart, she kept them. What we love most, we keep in our hearts; we say that we have “set our heart” on having any thing, when we desire very much to possess it. We say, “I love you with all my heart,” when we desire to express the warmest affection for another. Thus, if we wish to love Jesus, we must keep His words in our hearts.

We must make them the subject of our thoughts, that we may understand them better. We must make them the subject of our prayers, that we may obey them better. Every prayer must be a prayer from our hearts, if we wish it to reach the Heart of God. Let us try during this month to pray with greater fervour and attention—with all our hearts.

Prayer.

O sweet Mother of Jesus, obtain for me from thy divine Son the great grace and gift of prayer. May I learn, like thee, to keep all His words in my heart ; to occupy myself continually in meditating upon His love, in considering His actions, and in asking for grace to imitate them more and more perfectly in every circumstance of life. I ask thee, O Lady, especially to obtain for me a great devotion to the Rosary ; a better understanding of the mysteries it commemorates, and a greater fervour in reciting the Angelic Salutation. Accept, I beseech thee, the prayer I am about to offer, in reparation for my past carelessness.

Indulged Prayer.

Heart of Mary, Mother of God, our Mother, Heart most amiable, on which the adorable Trinity ever looks with complacency, worthy of all the veneration and tenderness of Angels and of men ; Heart most like the Heart of Jesus, whose most perfect image thou art ; Heart full of goodness, ever compassionate towards our miseries,—vouchsafe to thaw our icy hearts, that they may be changed entirely to the likeness of the Heart of Jesus. Infuse into them the love of thy virtues ; inflame them with that blessed fire with which thou dost ever burn.

In thee, let the Holy Church find safe shelter ; protect it, and be its sweet asylum, its tower of strength, impregnable against every inroad of the enemies. Be thou the road leading to Jesus ; be thou the channel whereby we receive all graces needful for our salvation. Be thou our help in need, our comfort in trouble, our strength in temptation, our refuge in persecution, our aid in all dangers, but especially in the last struggle of our life, at the moment of our death, when all hell shall be unchained against us to snatch away our souls,—in that dread moment, that hour so terrible, whereon our eternity depends. Ah, yes, most tender Virgin ! do thou, then, make us feel how great is the sweetness of thy Mother's heart, and the power of thy might with the Heart of Jesus, by opening for us a safe refuge in the very fount of mercy itself, so that one day we, too, may join with thee in paradise in praising that same Heart of Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.

Act of Praise to the SS. Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

May the divine Heart of Jesus and the immaculate Heart of Mary be known, praised, blessed, loved, worshiped, and glorified, always and in all places. Amen. (60 days' indulgence, once a day.)

MAY THE ELEVENTH.**THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN.**

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, that she may obtain for us the grace of strength in all our temptations.

“And being in an agony, He prayed the longer” (St. Luke xxii. 43).

TEMPTATIONS are generally of two kinds. Either they are directly from the devil, who tries to induce us to commit some sin or imperfection, or they are appointed for us by God through some circumstance of life, or in some more mysterious manner, as a means of advancing us in perfection. Whichever kind of temptation we may be called to endure, prayer is the one sovereign and unfailing remedy. Jesus gives us the example Himself in this mystery, when, “being in an agony, He prayed the longer.” There is no device of the devil more subtle or more dangerous than when he tries to make us weary of prayer, or to neglect it. How do we act when we are tempted? We often say, the temptation is so sudden, that we had no time to pray. But temptations are very seldom so sudden. If we know that we are easily tempted to anger, impatience, or any other fault, we cannot say the temptation is sudden, however suddenly the annoyance may come which provokes us. A temptation is not sudden if we know beforehand that it is likely to happen; and if it is not sudden, we have no excuse for yielding to it without a struggle. Any temptation, such as to pride, anger, or impatience to which we know that we are liable, should be made a special subject of preparation in our morning devotion. We should

say, at least at our morning prayers: "My God, I know that I am easily tempted to anger, &c.; help me this day with a special grace, that I may not yield to this sin;" and then we should ask our Lady to help us, and say three *Hail Marys* for this intention. If we did this, we should soon find the benefit of it. But there are other temptations: temptations which may last for months or years; temptations which, perhaps, we feel as if we could scarcely bear; interior trials, which are all the heavier because sent by God for our special purification, for some most loving end, the greatness of which is, perhaps, proportioned to His love for us: what are we to do in these temptations? Ah, surely we must not sink down under the burden, and declare that we can endure them no longer. No! let us imitate the example of Jesus, and "pray the longer;" and let nothing tempt us to give up prayer, or to lessen our earnestness in it.

Prayer.

O Mother of Jesus, Mother of sorrows, help me by thy intercession and thy example! Obtain for me the grace of courage in temptation; of fidelity in trial; and of boundless love and trust in the Heart of my most sweet Jesus. May I so meditate upon His example, as to learn to imitate it faithfully. Pray for me, O my Mother! and, with a Mother's love and tenderness, succour me now, in every moment of temptation, and at the hour of my death. Amen.

*Indulged Prayer.**

∇. O God, make haste to help me!

Rz. O Lord, make speed to save me!

Glory be to the Father, &c.

* If this prayer is found too long, the shorter one at page 35 may be substituted.

1. I compassionate thee, sorrowing Mary, in the affliction of thy tender Heart, when the holy old man Simeon prophesied to thee. Dear Mother, by thy Heart then so afflicted, obtain for me the virtue of humility, and the holy fear of God. Hail Mary.

2. I compassionate thee, sorrowing Mary, in the anxiety which thy sensitive Heart underwent, in the flight and sojourn in Egypt. Dear Mother, by thy Heart which was then made so anxious, obtain for me the virtue of liberality, especially towards the poor, and the gift of piety. Hail Mary.

3. I compassionate thee, sorrowing Mary, in the trouble of thy careful Heart, when thou didst lose thy dear Son Jesus. Dear Mother, by thy Heart then so troubled, obtain for me the virtue of holy chastity, and the gift of knowledge. Hail Mary.

4. I compassionate thee, sorrowing Mary, in the shock thy maternal Heart underwent when Jesus met thee, as He carried His cross. Dear Mother, by thy loving Heart then so overwhelmed, obtain for me the virtue of patience and the gift of fortitude. Hail Mary.

5. I compassionate thee, sorrowing Mary, in the martyrdom thy generous Heart bore so nobly, whilst thou didst stand by Jesus in His agony. Dear Mother, by thy Heart then so martyred, obtain for me the virtue of temperance and the gift of counsel. Hail Mary.

6. I compassionate thee, sorrowing Mary, in the wound of thy tender Heart, when the sacred side of Jesus was pierced with the lance. Dear Mother, by thy Heart then so transfixed, obtain for me the virtue of fraternal charity, and the gift of understanding. Hail Mary.

7. I compassionate thee, sorrowing Mary, in the

pang felt by thy loving Heart when the body of Jesus was buried in the grave. Dear Mother, by all the bitterness of desolation thou didst then experience, obtain for me the virtue of diligence and the gift of wisdom. Hail Mary.

V. Pray for us, most sorrowful Virgin Mary.

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 most Blessed Virgin Mary, Thy Mother, may intercede for us before the throne of Thy mercy, now and at the hour of our death, whose most holy soul was transfixed with the sword of sorrow in the hour of Thine own Passion. Through Thee, Jesus Christ, Saviour of the world, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

(300 days' indulgence each time.)

MAY THE TWELFTH.

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN *(continued.)*

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain for us the grace of resignation in suffering.

“My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt” (St. Matt. xxvi. 32).

If, like Mary, we kept the words of Jesus in our hearts, and meditated on them with prayer and love, our lives would be very different from what they are. What infinite and multiplied examples and consolation we may find even in one mystery! Time

would fail to enumerate all that might be said of the awful mystery which we are now commemorating, in which Jesus endured every form of human anguish, and even appeared to sink beneath the burden. He teaches us that we may ask, "if it be possible," to be relieved from suffering; but He teaches us also to add, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Do we pray thus in suffering? Do we hold our wills in a balance, however great may be the anguish we endure, until we know the will of "our Father"? and when we do know that will, do we accept it as children should accept the will of the most tender, of the most loving, of fathers? Oh, if we could only convince ourselves that "God is love," how differently we should act in all the trials of life! Let us learn now to seek for strength from Jesus in all our suffering. Let us remember that, *whatever* our suffering may be, He also has endured a like agony, and that He can and does sympathise in every pang which we are called to endure. Others may not understand all we feel; but Jesus understands it. Others may not sympathise with it; but Jesus sympathises with it. We can never know in this world either the value of suffering or the love of God in sending it. We must suffer; should we not then desire to be resigned for our own sakes, if for no higher motive? If we are resigned with a holy and loving resignation, our souls will be sanctified by our sufferings, and we shall be nearer and dearer to God for all eternity. If we are not resigned, we increase the burden here, and, it may be, we lay up future sufferings for ourselves hereafter. Let us learn to think more of the love of God, and then we shall accept suffering with more patience, and it may be that, like the Saints, we shall desire it. Of one thing

we may be assured—Jesus knows and feels for every pang. Whether our trial is bereavement, anxiety about those we love, sorrow for their sufferings, or grief for their sins, Jesus knows it all, and sympathises in our every pain.

Prayer.

Mother of Dolors, who didst suffer as none other ever can, help us to bear all our sufferings with love and resignation. Obtain for us the grace of such perfect confidence in the love of our sweet Jesus, that we may be convinced that every suffering is sent in love, and therefore we should accept it with love. We offer these *Hail Marys* in honour of thy dolors, to obtain through thy intercession the grace of perfect and loving resignation to the Divine Will in every circumstance of life.

Indulgenced Prayer.

Seven *Hail Marys*, and after each the Versicle :

Holy Mother, pierce me through,
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Saviour crucified.

(300 days' indulgence once a day.)



MAY THE THIRTEENTH.

THE SCOURGING AT THE PILLAR.

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain for us the grace of bearing false accusations patiently.

“I, having examined Him before you, find no cause in this Man in those things wherein you accuse Him. . . . I will chastise Him, therefore, and release Him” (St. Luke xxiii. 14, 16).

How often we hear people say they could bear such and such an accusation, or such and such a trial, “if they deserved it”! To be charged with a fault, however trifling, which we have not committed, seems to be one of the greatest trials to our pride. And yet, what an example Jesus gives us of both silence and submission when falsely accused! Our first impulse is to excuse ourselves more or less vehemently, and this leads usually to further sin. We are not always believed; and then anger rises on both sides, and a quarrel—or at least a coldness—takes place, for some people are too proud to be angry, and thus more sin is committed. Had we been silent, and borne the false accusation without a word unless it was absolutely necessary to speak, all this would have been prevented, and probably our silence would have been our best defence; for truth will manifest itself sooner or later. Jesus is not only falsely accused, He is also unjustly punished. Nay, He is even acknowledged to be blameless; and yet He is made to suffer as if He were guilty. “I will chastise Him,” says Pilate, “and then release Him.” O Jesus! O my Love! how cruel was that chastisement! can we form even the

least idea of that anguish of body or that anguish of mind? Thou seest a robber deliberately preferred to Thee, even when he is acknowledged guilty and Thou art declared innocent; and yet Thou art silent, and we cannot bear the slightest reproach. How many good excuses we find for excusing ourselves! how many plausible reasons the devil and our pride suggest! But let us learn from Jesus for the future. Let us beseech our Blessed Lady to obtain for us the grace to imitate Him more perfectly; and let us ask ourselves also how we have been so unhappy as to prefer Barabbas to Jesus, or, like Pilate, to condemn Him rather than offend others. Oh, how often the world is preferred to Jesus! How often the maxims and opinions of the world are preferred to the maxims and opinions of Jesus! The world calls a man a coward when he receives injuries and contempts with meekness. Jesus gives him the example of despising the opinion of the world; but do we not too often listen to the world, and act as it would have us?

Prayer.

O sweet Mother of Jesus, obtain for us the grace to imitate His example and His meekness under false and unjust accusations. Help us to govern our tongues and our tempers; and may we have daily a more and more ardent desire to follow in the footsteps of our great Example in every circumstance of life.

Indulged Prayer.

Hail, Mary, full of sorrows! the Crucified is with thee. Compassionate art thou amongst women, and worthy of compassion is the Fruit of thy womb,

Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of the Crucified, obtain tears of compunction for us crucifiers of thy Son, now and at the hour of our death. Amen. (100 days' indulgence each time. The prayer at page 49 may be added if time permit.)

MAY THE FOURTEENTH.

THE SCOURGING (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain for us the grace to conquer our self-love.

“Then he released to them Barabbas; and having scourged Jesus, delivered Him unto them to be crucified” (St. Matt. xxvii. 26).

LET us meditate seriously and with many tears on these awful words. Can we, even for a moment, imagine the greatness of the crime? He released Barabbas and scourged Jesus! O most sweet, most innocent, and most suffering Jesus, was there none to ask for Thy release? was there no voice to plead Thy innocence? was there no arm to shield Thee from the cruel lash, from the most unjust scourging? Alas! how the Heart of Thy Mother bled when she heard the sentence of the judge! Oh, how gladly would she have given her body to the torturers, and let them reek their worst upon it, not for hours alone, but for ages, could she have saved Thee a single blow! Let us compassionate the Mother for a moment, that we may learn still more to compassionate the Son. If the scourging of Jesus seems so dreadful to us, what must it have been to Mary? If we can scarcely bear to think of it, what must she not have borne when she heard it? Alas! and

thou hast more than this to bear, O faultless Mother, O innocent and bleeding Son ! Let us ask ourselves, Why did Jesus suffer all this ? It was for sin. It was our sin that condemned Him, though Pilate uttered the sentence ; it was our sin that scourged Him, though the Roman soldiers held the lash. Oh, let us learn from the sufferings of Jesus how to hate sin ! Let us ask Mary to offer the sufferings of Jesus to the Eternal Father for us, that we may obtain grace to avoid sin. Whenever we prefer indulging our selfish, sinful inclinations to obeying the commands of God, we prefer Barabbas to Jesus. We get the scourge ready, and, alas, how we strike and wound our innocent Victim ! Ah, you will say, you would rather die a thousand deaths than even once raise your hand to strike Jesus ; but have you not often struck Him ? Every sin we commit is a blow to the Heart of Jesus, which He feels far more than the lash of the Roman soldier. He bore that agony, that anguish, hoping that it would touch our cold, hard hearts, and keep us from sin ; but, alas, it is not so. We sin as if Jesus had never suffered. Oh, what a fearful thing it is for a Christian soul to sin ! Let us examine ourselves carefully. Let us try to comfort Jesus. If we do not ourselves commit gross sins, let us make atonement for those who do. It is believed that Jesus suffered this scourging especially to atone for sins of the flesh ; let us make reparation for these sins by our prayers, our fasts, and our tears. Above all, let us strive to purify ourselves from every stain. Let us never again prefer the Barabbas of our sinful inclinations, even in the most trifling matter, that we may never again be so unhappy as to deliver Jesus to be crucified.

Prayer.

Mother of sorrows, obtain for us the grace of true and perfect contrition for all our sins. Oh, may we never again be so unhappy as to offend our Jesus! Oh, may we never again prefer our sinful inclinations to His adorable will! Plead for us, O Mother, and offer our act of reparation for the sins for which Jesus was scourged, our act of love to console Him for that cruel agony.

Indulgenced Prayer.

My sweetest Jesus, be not to me a Judge, but a Saviour (*ten times; 50 days' indulgence for each recital*).

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious Blood of Jesus in satisfaction for my sins, and for the wants of Holy Church (*ten times; 100 days' indulgence for each recital*).

MAY THE FIFTEENTH.

THE CROWNING WITH THORNS.

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to make reparation for our sins of pride.

“And the soldiers, plating a crown of thorns, put it upon His head; and they put on Him a purple garment” (St. John xix. 2).

LET us consider in this mystery the humility of Jesus. What should we think of a king who was thus mocked by his subjects? We are horrified and distressed and grieved when we read of subjects rising up against their rulers, and putting them to

death. We speak with indignation of a slave who kills his master. But God's enemies are not content with putting Him to death: they must also mock Him; and they so contrive it, that their mockery is also a torture to their Victim. One might have supposed that the scourging of Jesus would have satisfied their thirst for blood. One spark of humanity ought to have been sufficient to deter them from further outrages; but that spark of humanity was wanting, as, alas, it is but too often wanting now. When we hear of the cruelties of men to their fellow-men, of their wanton barbarities, of the tortures of the martyrs of old, or of cruel usage of the weak and helpless now, let us remember the crowning of thorns, let it be a deep lesson to us of the depravity of our nature, let it humble us to the earth to think of what cruelties we are capable when unrestrained by the grace of God; and let us remember that neither education, nor intellectual culture, nor natural amiability, nor high position in life, where exterior courtesy is the rule, will save our children from committing deeds of cruelty to others, which may make them the terror and shame of humanity, unless they are governed in every thought, word, and action by the Spirit of God. Let mothers and all who have charge of the young teach them to meditate on the sufferings of Jesus, that they may know how much our sin has cost Him. We may also learn from this mystery the patience of Jesus. He is tortured and mocked, and yet we complain of the least pain, of the least slight from others. There are few Catholics in the world who are not at some time of their lives tried by mockery. It may be only a word or a look—often, indeed, almost harder to bear than an open insult—or it may be a torrent of reproaches and

angry words. Under such trials let us think of Jesus mocked by His creatures ; or rather, let us often meditate on the mysteries of His life and Passion, that we may better understand how He acted in each circumstance, and that we may obtain strength and grace to imitate His example. How many have become tepid and careless Catholics, because they feared a smile of contempt or a cold look ! Alas ! is this the way we should imitate Jesus mocked ?

Prayer.

Mother of Dolors, I beseech your help and your blessed prayers, that I may not add to the sorrows of my Jesus. I beseech you, O Lady, to make one act of reparation for all my sins of pride, and to offer your humility once in atonement for them, and to obtain for me such grace, that I may never deny, conceal, or waver in my faith through human respect, or when despised for it by others.

Indulged Prayer.

O God, who to redeem the world and to free us from the pains of hell didst vouchsafe to be born amongst men, subject to pain and to death, to be circumcised, rejected, and persecuted by the Jews, betrayed by thy disciple Judas with a sacrilegious kiss, and as a lamb, gentle and innocent, to be bound with cords, and dragged in scorn before the tribunals of Annas, Caiphas, Pilate, and Herod ; who didst suffer Thyself to be accused by false witnesses, torn by scourges, crowned with thorns, smitten with blows, insulted with spittings, to have Thy divine countenance covered out of contempt, to be many ways set at naught and outraged, to be filled with reproaches and ignominies, and, last of all, to be

stripped of Thy clothes, nailed to and raised high upon a cross between two notorious thieves, to be drenched with gall and vinegar, and then pierced with a lance, and so to fulfil the mighty work of our redemption,—Saviour most tender, by these Thy many cruel sufferings borne by Thee out of Thy love for me,—which I, unworthy as I am, yet dare to contemplate,—by Thy holy cross and by Thy bitter death, free me from the pains of hell, and vouchsafe to bring me to paradise, whither Thou didst lead the penitent thief who was crucified with Thee, my Jesus; who, with the Father and with the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Then say five *Our Fathers*, *Hail Marys*, and *Gloria Patris*. (300 days' indulgence once a day.)

MAY THE SIXTEENTH.

THE CROWNING WITH THORNS (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain pardon for our sins against charity.

“And spitting upon Him, they took the reed and struck His head” (St. Matt. xxvii. 30).

ONE should have supposed that no person would have been so unfeeling and inhuman as to add to the sufferings, already so great, which our Jesus had borne for our love; but, as we said in our last reflection, human cruelty has no limits when it is inspired by diabolic rage. It was not enough to spit upon Jesus, but they must also strike His head. Let us consider who performed these acts of cruelty, and who endured them, that we may the better

understand the malice of the persecutors and the love of the Saviour. Alas! those who struck Jesus were the very persons whom He had come to save, the very persons for whom He was enduring all this suffering, hoping thereby to redeem them from endless pain. But you will say, Perhaps they did not know Jesus. Alas! we must fear that they had sufficient grace to know Him if they had been faithful to it. We often wonder now that people are so obdurate that they refuse to believe the plainest truths, and remain without the Church's pale, when they seem to have heard its every doctrine explained in the clearest terms, when they seem to have no excuse for their adherence to error; but do we not also see hundreds within the Church who do believe and yet who do not obey, who believe the Church's faith, and yet disobey the Church's precepts? What excuse have they? Do we not know, do they not know, that it is possible to resist grace? that men sometimes *will* not believe, and that no one is lost except by his own free and deliberate choice? How earnestly we should pray for such souls! Our prayers may obtain for them the grace they do not merit; our prayers may save them from eternal woe. Oh, if we have not already begun to pray earnestly, fervently, and constantly for the conversion of sinners, let us begin now: there is no greater work of charity. No charity can be greater to a soul than to procure its salvation; and how many more souls might be saved if we were but more earnest for their salvation! Let us show our love to Jesus by loving those for whom He has endured so much; let us not lose an hour—nay, not a moment—in commencing this blessed work, for every moment souls are hurrying into eternity, every moment souls are going before their Judge and hearing their eternal doom.

Prayer.

Refuge of sinners, we come to implore thy help for sinners—for sinners for whom thy Jesus died. O Mother, offer for them the dolors of thy broken heart; remember that they are thy children, though blind to thy love. O Mother of Jesus, pray to Jesus for the unconverted, for the aged, for the dying, for all who are impenitent and in danger of eternal death, and obtain for us the tenderest charity for sinners, and an ardent love of souls.

Indulged Prayer.

PRAYER TO ST. NICHOLAS OF BARI.

St. Nicholas, my special protector, from that bright throne where thou dost enjoy the vision of thy God, in pity turn thine eyes upon me; obtain for me from God that grace and assistance of which, in my present necessities, spiritual and temporal, I am most in want, and especially the grace of ———, if such be expedient for my eternal welfare. Remember, moreover, O saintly Bishop, our Sovereign Pontiff, the holy Church, and this city of Rome. Bring back in the right way of salvation those who live steeped in sin, or buried in the darkness of ignorance, error, and heresy. Comfort the sorrowing, provide for the needy, strengthen the weak-hearted, defend the oppressed, help the sick,—let all experience the effects of thy powerful intercession with Him who is Supreme Giver of all good. Amen.

One *Pater* and *Ave*.

Ps. Pray for us, blessed Nicholas,

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

Let us pray.

O God, who hast honoured, and ceasest not daily to honour, Thy High-Priest and glorious Confessor Blessed Nicholas with innumerable miracles, grant, we beseech Thee, that by his merits and prayers we may be delivered from the fire of hell and from all other dangers ; through Christ our Lord. Amen. (*50 days' indulgence, once a day.*)

MAY THE SEVENTEENTH.

THE CARRIAGE OF THE CROSS.

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain for us the grace of bearing interior trials with patience and love.

“ And bearing His own cross, He went forth to that place which is called Calvary” (St. John xix. 17).

WE must all suffer. The first breath a little infant draws is a breath of suffering ; the last breath the dying yield up to God is but the last act of suffering. Since, then, suffering is our allotted portion in life, and since none can escape it, how important it is for us to learn how to suffer well ! Men have endured torments equal to the torments of the martyrs ; we must fear only to endure still greater torments for all eternity. We cannot too strongly impress on ourselves the great value of suffering, and our own miserable folly if we lose all that God has designed to give us if we suffer patiently. Suffering is a punishment for sin. If Adam and Eve had remained faithful to God in paradise, there would have been no suffering. But God is so infinitely good, merciful, loving, that He even turns our punishment to our benefit, and allows us to merit

eternally by the very pains we justly deserve. If we only thought of this, and of the love and goodness of God, we should not so often complain when we are tried. Let us remember that we *deserve* all the suffering God sends, and that if He had pleased to let suffering be simply a punishment for the sins we have committed, and never had allowed us the least merit for all we endured, we should still have been bound to submit. Oh, how good God is to us, and how sad it is that we should grieve Him by our murmurings under trial! Even if we had only committed one venial sin, we should deserve all our sufferings as a punishment for it; and what shall we say of those who rebel under their trials, and yet perhaps have committed many mortal sins? Let us pray to our Blessed Lady to help us to bear our crosses with patience and love. Let us ask her that we may obtain all the merits which our good God is desirous to give us if we only bear them aright. Oh, that we were as wise for our eternal interests as we are for our temporal concerns! If we were told we must endure a few months' imprisonment and all the trials attendant on it, but that if we pleased we might lay up a great store of wealth against our release by bearing our punishment patiently, oh, what patient sufferers we should be! But the store is for eternity—the wealth is for heaven. What are we doing? There are few days in which we have not *something* to suffer, and even trifles will be accepted by our beloved Lord.

Prayer.

O Mother of Jesus, obtain for me the grace to bear all the trials of life with patient love. Help me especially in those interior trials of which none but God can know; and by the anguish thou didst

endure when Jesus fell beneath His cross, help me when I fall, and obtain for me the grace to rise quickly, to repent truly, and to proceed courageously.

Indulgenced Prayer.

Help us, O God of our salvation, and for the glory of Thy name deliver us: be merciful to our sins, for Thy name's sake.

PSALM liii.

Save me, O Lord, in Thy name, and judge me in Thy strength.

O God, hear my prayer; give heed to the words of my mouth:

For strangers have risen up against me, and the mighty have sought after my soul, and they have not set God before their eyes.

For behold, God is my helper, and the Lord is the protector of my soul.

Turn away evil from me before my enemies, and scatter them in Thy truth.

I will freely sacrifice to Thee, and will give praise, O God, to Thy name, because it is good.

For Thou hast delivered me out of all my trouble, and mine eye hath looked down upon mine enemies.

Glory be to the Father, &c.

V. For the glory of Thy name, deliver us;

R. And deal mercifully with our sins, for Thy name's sake.

Let us pray.

Lord, we beseech Thee, in Thy pity hear the prayers of Thy people; that we, who suffer justly for our sins, may for the glory of Thy name mercifully be delivered; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

We beseech Thee, therefore, help Thy servants,

whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood.
(100 days for each recital.)

MAY THE EIGHTEENTH.

THE CARRIAGE OF THE CROSS (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain for us the grace of bearing our own cross well.

“And bearing His own cross, He went forth to that place which is called Calvary” (St. John xix. 17).

EVERY Christian has some special cross which may be called “his own.” Each has a trial peculiar to himself, which perhaps would be no trial to others, or at least a very much lighter one. There are perhaps few greater helps to our sanctification than to accept that special cross which is our own with love, and to let it do the work in us which God designed it should do when His love prepared it for us. These crosses often depend on our natural disposition or on our peculiar circumstances; but that disposition and those circumstances are ordained for us by God, and the cross arising from them may be, if we choose it, the special means of our sanctification. Let us look at Jesus, and learn from His example how to bear this trial. He goes forth “bearing His own cross.” Our sweet Jesus bore all our crosses also, but we are specially told He bore “His own”—perhaps to show us that Jesus bore a cross which none ever could understand, which none ever should bear, except Himself; perhaps to teach us that we also should go forth bearing our own cross, bearing that special trial which is peculiarly our own, and bearing it even to Cal-

vary. It will avail us but little to bear our cross for a while, if we become weary and lay it aside. We may indeed fall beneath it, like our divine Master ; but, like Him also, we must rise again, and again place it with love upon our shoulders. We must bear it to Calvary—that is, we must bear it, no matter how heavy it may become ; we must bear it until death. He that endureth to the end shall be saved. Oh, let us endure ; let us meditate on the example of Jesus, and ask His help. Let us bear our own cross. There are many who would be willing, or who fancy they would be willing, to bear any cross but their own. Every one else's cross seems to them lighter ; and yet, perhaps, they would find the crosses of others far heavier if they were compelled to take them up, and feel them *as others feel them*. We must also bear our “own cross,” and not try to lay it on others, either by making them miserable with our complaints, or by making them suffer with us. Oh, how happy and how blessed are the souls who go forth with Jesus, bearing their own cross patiently, and seeking to lighten the crosses of others !

Prayer.

O Mother of Dolors, whose cross was so incomparably heavier than ours can ever be, teach us to bear our crosses aright and to profit by them. Obtain for us heroic courage and fervent love, and let us not lose one degree of their wholesome bitterness, nor one degree of the merit we may obtain thereby.

Indulgenced Prayer.

Let us offer this prayer for all who are in affliction.

Give peace, O Lord, in our days ; for there is

none other that fightest for us but only Thou, our God.

Ÿ. Let peace be in Thy strength, O Lord ;

R̄. And plenty in Thy strong places.

Let us pray.

O God, from whom proceed all holy desires, all right counsels, and just works, grant unto us, Thy servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be devoted to Thy service ; and that, being delivered from the fear of our enemies, we may pass our time in peace under Thy protection ; through Christ our Lord. Amen. (*100. days for each recital.*)

MAY THE NINETEENTH.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to obtain the pardon of all our sins through the infinite merits of the death of her beloved Son.

“Now, there stood by the cross of Jesus His Mother”
(St. John xix, 25).

THE sword of grief which Simeon predicted has indeed pierced the heart of Mary. She has watched her only Son, her all-beloved, through every agony ; and now the last moment has come, and she stands by the cross of Jesus. O sweet Jesus, teach us to stand there in life, that we may be found there in death. Jesus is about to pour forth the last drop of His most precious Blood for sinners, and can we imagine with what fervour Mary offers it to the Eternal Father ! All that man’s cruelty can do has been done, and yet even at the very last and to the

very last Jesus is striving to save His murderers, striving to save those who will hereafter condemn Him to death in their hearts, and whose crime is, if possible, far greater than the crime of these perfidious Jews. Mary now obtains the plenitude of her power over the Heart of love. No love but hers could have "stood" through those hours of agony. No love but hers could have pardoned the murderers of her only One. No love but hers could have hoped against hope that future sinners might be less obdurate, and prayed that in the ages to come her Mother's love might win their cold hearts. And thus it is that the most desperate cases may be confided to Mary. Jesus gave them to her at the foot of the cross. He said, "Behold thy Son," and not in vain; for He knew, as none other can, the depth of her maternal love; He knew how unwearied would be her patience, her prayers, and her hope; and He confided the saintly to her, that she might obtain for them the grace to become more saintly, and the sinners, that they might have a last chance of redemption. O love of the Heart of love, who has left no device untried to save our thankless hearts! Let us, then, meditate on this mystery with great love and devotion. It would require many meditations to expand all its deep teaching; but Jesus Himself will instruct us if we only ask Him. Let it especially teach us devotion to the precious Blood and devotion to Mary: devotion to the precious Blood, because there its last drops were poured forth for us; because there the testament was sealed with Blood; because there the Sacrament, in which we receive the most precious Blood, obtained its power by the death of the Victim, and the other Sacraments were enabled to convey to us the merits of that Blood;—devotion

to Mary, because we were there confided to her by our Brother Jesus, and there she accepted us for her children.

Prayer.

Mother of Dolors, we compassionate thy sorrows and thy anguish. Pardon, oh, pardon us all our crimes and the sufferings we have caused thee; and since thou hast taken us for thy children, notwithstanding all our vileness, show thyself our Mother, and with a mother's love intercede for us with thy dying Son. Offer for us, and for all whom we love, the last drops of His most precious Blood, and ask for the pardon of all our sins. Ask also, we beseech thee, O Lady, that we may obtain the inestimable grace of an ever-increasing devotion to thee, and that we may console thee in some manner by that devotion for all the sorrows of thy maternal heart.

Indulged Prayer.

Say five *Our Fathers* and *Hail Marys*, with the versicle, "We therefore pray Thee, help Thy servants, whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy most precious Blood;" and, "Eternal rest give to them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them." (300 days' indulgence, when said in suffrage for the souls of the faithful departed, devoutly meditating on the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.)

MAY THE TWENTIETH.

THE CRUCIFIXION (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain for us the grace of a happy death.

“And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said: Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit. And, saying this, He gave up the ghost” (St. John xxiii. 46).

DEATH is the only event which we can feel perfectly sure will happen to each of us; and yet how little we concern ourselves about it! Death will be the most important of all events to us; and yet we act daily, and deliberately, as if it were a matter of no consequence—as if its results might be left to chance; at best, we propose to ourselves to do what we can when the time comes: and so we save ourselves from painful reflection now. But does not this show that we have very little love for our own souls, or for God? Alas for our poor souls! well might they reproach us with our indifference to them! Oh, strange infatuation! strange blindness and misery of our sinful flesh, that it should so beguile us from our real, our eternal interest! Let us at least devote a few moments to-day to this all-important subject. Let us ask ourselves, Are we living as we should wish to be found living when the dread summons shall come? For we should always be living thus prepared, since we know not the day or the moment. Is there any thing in our conduct, our habits, our pursuits, that will make us less fit for heaven? This is a very important question, and one which we should consider very carefully. As the tree falls, so will it lie. We may, indeed, be saved; but is this all we desire? Is this

the only end for which Jesus suffered so much for us? Does He not expect something more from us than merely to secure our salvation? Is it worthy of the heirs of a kingdom to be indifferent to their future greatness—to neglect the preparation necessary to fit them for their future dignity? It is well for us, indeed, if we prepare for death so as to secure our salvation; but it will be incomparably better for us if we prepare ourselves to adorn the many mansions of our Father's house—if we enter therein magnificently attired in the apparel of sanctity, and decked with the jewels of love. Oh, let us be in earnest! let us begin now, this very day, to prepare for our end—to prepare for our home. Let us ask Mary to help us, for she knows the brightness and beauty of that home; and she knows, also, what we most need to fit ourselves for it.

Prayer.

Mother of Jesus, and our Mother, we commend to thee the special care of our last moments. Oh, by the anguish and grief which thou didst endure when thy Jesus hung upon the tree in His dying agony, help and pity us in that hour of dread. We desire specially to commend to thee the last three hours of our lives. We beseech thee, by the three hours during which thou didst stand beneath the cross, to stand by us and assist us then. It was during these hours, O Mother, that our Jesus commended us to thy care. Remember this, we beseech thee, and succour us for His dear sake.

Indulgenced Prayer,

TO OBTAIN THE GRACE OF A HAPPY DEATH.

We offer to the most Holy Trinity the merits of Jesus Christ, in thanksgiving for the most precious

Blood which He shed in the garden for us ; and by His merits we beseech the Divine Majesty for pardon of our sins.

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

We offer to the most Holy Trinity the merits of Jesus Christ, in thanksgiving for His most precious Death endured on the cross for us ; and by His merits we beseech the Divine Majesty for the remission of the pains due to our sins.

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

We offer to the most Holy Trinity the merits of Jesus Christ, in thanksgiving for His unspeakable Charity, by which He descended from heaven to earth to take human flesh, and to suffer and die for us upon the cross ; and by His merits we beseech the Divine Majesty to bring our souls to the glory of heaven after our death.

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

(300 days' indulgence every time these offerings are devoutly recited to obtain a good death.)

MAY THE TWENTY-FIRST.

THE RESURRECTION.

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain grace for us to live a risen life.

“For behold, there was a great earthquake, for an Angel of the Lord descended from heaven; and coming, rolled back the stone and sat upon it” (St. Matt. xxviii. 2).

THE mystery of the resurrection should be a constant subject of our devout meditation. If we considered

it prayerfully and constantly, how it would help us to raise our thoughts above this poor world, and how many "great stones" would be rolled away for us thereby! Let us ask our Blessed Lady to help us to understand the joyful mysteries, as she has helped us to understand the sorrowful. Her joy at the resurrection was proportioned, nay, more than proportioned, to her anguish at the crucifixion. Our God, our Father, let us rather say, is so infinitely good, so inconceivably loving, that He makes our spiritual joys far, far exceed our sorrows! An inspired Apostle has told us that no human heart can *imagine* the joys which God has prepared for us in heaven; and yet he knew how great were the sorrows of earth. He knew that we more than imagine them—that we suffer from them at times until we almost sink under them. Yes, we know, we understand fully the sorrows and the trials of this life; but we do not know, we do not understand, we cannot even faintly imagine, the joys of heaven. The sorrows of the saddest, darkest life on earth will appear but as the shadow of a passing cloud on a summer's day when we stand amid the glories of the resurrection morning. O day of days, O joy of joys, O beauty of eternal beauty! There love will live in unclouded light, for grief can never come to dim it, or make it at once our pain and our comfort, as it is on this poor earth! There every mark and token of suffering shall be changed to a jewel of everlasting brightness, and every anguish to a crown of unending joy! Are we preparing for this day? are we desiring it? Oh, let us ask the Mother of Jesus, by her joy on the day of His resurrection, to obtain for us the grace of a glorious resurrection, of an eternal beatitude!

Prayer.

Mother of joys the most sublime, the most perfect which any creature ever has known, or ever can know, prepare us for the eternal joys which are prepared for us. Thou knowest the glories of the resurrection morning, for already thou hast had a foretaste of its gladness; oh, help us, then, poor exiles weeping in this valley of tears, far from our home and our Jesus, and, alas, too often careless and indifferent to our misery! Pray for us, O Mother of joys, and obtain for us an eternal share in thy eternal blessedness!

Indulgenced Prayer.

Sweet heart of Mary, be my salvation! (*Nine times; 300 days' indulgence for each recital.*)

Prayer of St. Ignatius.

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
 Body of Christ, save me.
 Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
 Water out of the side of Christ, wash me.
 Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
 O good Jesus, hear me;
 Hide me within Thy wounds;
 Suffer me not to be separated from Thee;
 Defend me from the malignant enemy;
 Call me at the hour of my death,
 And bid me come unto Thee,
 That with Thy Saints I may praise Thee
 In all eternity. Amen.

MAY THE TWENTY-SECOND.

THE RESURRECTION (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain pardon for our sins of worldliness.

“Why seek you the living with the dead? He is not here, but is risen” (St. Luke xxiv. 5, 6).

ONE of the greatest lessons, and perhaps not the least important one, which we should learn from our Lord's resurrection is, to abhor sins of worldliness. And yet, how common are these sins! We renounce the world at our Baptism, a type of our resurrection, and a Sacrament wherein we receive the pledge and first germs of our risen life; and yet as soon as reason is developed, we devote ourselves heart and soul to that very world which we have promised to renounce. There are few sins more pernicious than sins of worldliness, because there are few sins more subtle. Alas, even in the cloister the spirit of the world may creep in, and religious may be found who are actuated by its motives and maxims, perhaps at first unconsciously, until at last they become blind to their misery, and find a thousand excuses to palliate imperfections which all can see except themselves. “Why seek ye the living with the dead?” We are living—at least, this is our privilege—our imperative duty, if we desire to live eternally; we are living, and yet we “seek the living with the dead”! We seek things spiritual and things temporal at the same time. We wish to possess the fading flowers of earth and the immortal wreaths of heaven. But we desire an impossibility; we must make our choice; we cannot love God and Mammon; we cannot have an unlimited use of the pleasures of

time, and then expect the abundant delights of the house of God. No ; every Christian, from the very poorest to the most wealthy,—from the poor sufferer in the workhouse or hospital to the inhabitant of the palace and the court,—must make *some* sacrifice of the things of time if he desires to possess eternal riches. We cannot impress this truth too deeply on our minds, because there is scarcely a day of our lives, scarcely an hour of each day, in which we are not called upon in some way or another to make a choice between the living and the dead—to consider and to act for time or for eternity. Can we say that we always choose for eternity—that this is our first reflection when called to decide what may be either important or trifling? In great events we may be blinded by their greatness, and so full of eagerness for earthly success and prosperity, as to lose sight of heaven. In trifles, we may forget that these very trifles make the sum of life—that hours are made of minutes, and days of hours ; and thus, from mere want of reflection, we do daily, in our little acts, prefer the interests of time to the interests of eternity. Let us ask our Blessed Lady to obtain for us the grace of conversion from this dangerous evil.

Prayer.

Mother of Jesus, thou knowest how our poor hearts are prone to love of earth and earthly things ; oh, obtain for us the grace to rise above the trifles of time, and to live with eternity constantly in view. In every action, whether little or great, may we make this our first consideration. Thou knowest the true value of an immortal soul ; teach us to know it also. Thou knowest how wretched and how unworthy of our thoughts are all the things of time and sense ; O Mother, obtain for us the grace

to despise them as they deserve! Draw thy children after thee, attract them to thee, make them desire thee, so that we may long more and more for our blessed and eternal home, and live for eternity alone.

Indulgented Prayer.

1. Eternal Father! I offer Thee the merits of the Precious Blood of Jesus, Thy well-beloved Son, my Saviour and my God, for the propagation and exaltation of my dear Mother Thy holy Church, for the safety and prosperity of her visible head, our chief pastor, the Bishop of Rome; for the Cardinals, Bishops, and pastors of souls; and for all the ministers of the sanctuary.

Then say one *Gloria Patri*, and the ejaculation:

Blessed and praised for evermore be Jesus, who hath saved us with His Blood.

2. Eternal Father! I offer Thee the merits of the Precious Blood of Jesus, Thy well-beloved Son, my Saviour and my God, for the peace and concord of Catholic kings and princes, for the humiliation of the enemies of our holy faith, and for the welfare of all Christian people.

Gloria Patri, &c., as above.

3. Eternal Father! I offer Thee the merits of the Precious Blood of Jesus, thy well-beloved Son, my Saviour and my God, for the repentance of unbelievers, the uprooting of heresy, and the conversion of sinners.

Gloria Patri, &c.

4. Eternal Father! I offer Thee the merits of the Precious Blood of Jesus, Thy well-beloved Son, my Saviour and my God, for all my relations, friends, and enemies; for the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, and for all those for whom Thou, my God,

knowest that I ought to pray, or wouldst have me pray.

Gloria Patri, &c.

5. Eternal Father! I offer Thee the merits of the Precious Blood of Jesus, Thy well-beloved Son, my Saviour and my God, for all who this day are passing to the other life, that Thou wouldst save them from the pains of hell, and admit them quickly to the possession of Thy glory.

Gloria Patri, &c.

6. Eternal Father! I offer Thee the merits of the Precious Blood of Jesus, Thy well-beloved Son, my Saviour and my God, for all those who love this great Treasure, for those who join with me in adoring it and honouring it, and for those who strive to spread devotion to it.

Gloria Patri, &c.

7. Eternal Father! I offer Thee the merits of the Precious Blood of Jesus, Thy well-beloved Son, my Saviour and my God, for all my wants spiritual and temporal, in suffrage for the holy souls in purgatory, and chiefly for those who were most devout to this Blood, the price of our redemption, and to the sorrows and pains of our dear Mother, most holy Mary.

Gloria Patri, &c.

Glory be to the Blood of Jesus, now and for ever, and through all ages. Amen.

MAY THE TWENTY-THIRD.

THE ASCENSION.

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain for us a spirit of thanksgiving.

“And it came to pass, whilst He blessed them, He departed from them, and was carried up to heaven. And they, adoring, went back into Jerusalem with great joy. And they were always in the Temple praising and blessing God. Amen” (St. Luke xxiv. 51-53).

LET us contemplate the joy of Mary in the ascension of Jesus. For herself, indeed, there might have been some sorrow, as she must lose the company of her only Love. The forty days of the manifestation of His risen glory have passed away. The graces and blessings of His appearances to His disciples will not again return; perhaps they regret that they did not profit more by them. But Mary, who ever corresponded faithfully and perfectly to every grace, has no such sorrow. Her one thought is Jesus, and Jesus is her only Love. If He ascends, she may not see Him so frequently as before; but His joy is hers. Her love is too pure, too deep, too true, to think of self even for an instant; and though she may long with a holy desire for the moment when she shall follow Him, she also returns to Jerusalem with great joy. Let us ask Mary to obtain for us the blessed grace of a spirit of thanksgiving. How many novenas we make, in our necessities, to God, to our Lady, and to the Saints! but do we ever think of making a novena of thanksgiving? Even when we receive a plain and manifest answer to our prayers, do we utter as much as one “Thanks be to God”? How many *Our Fathers* and

Hail Marys do we say in proportion to our *Gloria Patri*? It is our duty to be thankful, for thanksgiving is commanded us in Holy Scripture again and again both by precept and example; but it is more than a duty. Thanksgiving, to be real, to be acceptable to God, should be the spontaneous effusion of hearts overflowing with grateful love; and thanksgiving will ever bring its own reward. Let us begin to cultivate a spirit of thanksgiving. Let us try to form a holy habit of frequently saying the *Gloria Patri* for all God's mercies to us, both in general and in particular; and let us resolve, sometimes at least, to make a novena of thanksgiving after our novenas of petition. Even should we not obtain what we have asked, we ought not the less to thank God. Do we not know that He is our Father—that He will give us *all* that is really good for us—that He has pledged Himself to this? and if our petitions are refused, may we not be assured that the refusal is a greater boon than the favour we asked? for Jesus would not pain us by a refusal, if that refusal were not better for us.

Prayer.

Mother of Jesus, obtain for us the grace of a true spirit of thanksgiving, and an ardent love of our risen Lord. May we continually praise Him for His mercies, when we pray to Him for His favours! We beseech Thee, O Mother of holy joy, look upon us poor exiled children, and fill us so with desires of the joys of heaven that we may no longer desire the joys of earth.

Indulgenced Prayer of Thanksgiving.

Eternal Father! we offer Thee the most Precious Blood of Jesus, shed for us with such great love and

bitter pain from His right hand ; and through the merits and the efficacy of that Blood we entreat Thy Divine Majesty to grant us Thy holy benediction, in order that we may be defended thereby from all our enemies, and be set free from every ill, whilst we say : *Benedictio Dei omnipotentis, Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, descendat super nos, et maneat semper. Amen.*

Pater, Ave, and Gloria. (100 days' indulgence each time this offering is said in thanksgiving for blessings received.)

MAY THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

THE ASCENSION (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain for us the grace we need most.

“Who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (Rom. viii. '34).

THE Apostle St. Paul tells us in the Epistle to the Ephesians, that when our Lord ascended on high He gave “gifts to men.” This, then, is one of the ends which the Heart of Jesus sought in His ascension—to make intercession for us, and to give us gifts. Oh, let us seek these gifts ! oh, let us implore the help of this intercession. Jesus has ascended. His suffering life is over. The life of glory of His sacred humanity has begun. He took that flesh on earth that He might suffer for us ; He takes that flesh to heaven that He may plead for us, as Man for men, as a Brother for His brethren, as a Spouse for His bride. O human Heart of Jesus, surely the ascension of Thy adorable humanity is not the least token of Thy love ! That Heart knows our every

weakness and our every fear. That Heart knows our every need, and also our ignorance of our greatest needs. That Heart knows the blindness of our self-love, which would ruin our eternal interests in its eagerness for our temporal happiness ; oh, happy are we that we are loved with a love which knows no change ; with a love which surpasses our own self-love, great as it may seem ; with a love whose wisdom is proportioned to its intensity ! We ask, but ask amiss. Jesus only knows what is for our real good, but He desires to give. Let us ask, then, and rest assured that He will give, not, indeed, the "serpents" which we too often desire, but the "children's bread" for which we so seldom offer a petition, and which is nevertheless so absolutely necessary for us. And, since the Mother of Jesus has more power over that risen Heart than any other creature, let us seek her help. We all need some special grace, proportioned to our special circumstances. We all need some help on our heavenward journey, which may be absolutely necessary for the attainment of our end ; and often we know not ourselves what that one special grace is, or we ask for it coldly and carelessly, seeking other things, which seem to us of more importance, with far greater earnestness. Our cause will be safe in the hands of Mary ; she knows and sees what is hidden from us, and her Mother's heart is ever ready to plead for her children. Let us ask her earnestly, fervently, and perseveringly, and we shall not be disappointed.

Prayer.

O Lady of the Sacred Heart, we come to implore thy help in our many and great necessities. Thou knowest, O Lady, what we need : ask it for us. Ask for us with a Mother's love the special grace

most necessary for our salvation. Ask it also, O Lady, with a Mother's power, for thou canst not ask in vain.

Indulged Prayer.

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 didst enrich 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.

Gloria Patri, &c.

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, &c., as above, with *Gloria Patri*.

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, &c., as above, with *Gloria Patri*.

Prayer to the most Holy Virgin.

Mary, Mother of God, most holy and immaculate Virgin, by the love thou dost ever bear to God, by the gratitude thou hast towards Him for the manifold graces and favours with which thou wast enriched by Him, particularly for the privilege granted to thee alone of thy Immaculate Conception, and by the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, thy divine Son, our Lord, we pray thee most earnestly to obtain for us a most perfect and constant devotion towards thyself, and a full trust that, through thy most mighty intercession, we shall receive all the graces which we ask. Certain henceforth of obtaining them from thy great goodness, with hearts overflowing with joy and thankfulness, we venerate thee; repeating the salutation which the holy Archangel Gabriel made to thee.

Hail Mary, &c.

(An indulgence of 300 days for each recital.)

MAY THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain for us the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Ghost.

“And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them” (Acts ii. 3).

THE descent of the Holy Ghost is one of the most important mysteries of the Rosary. Perhaps if we meditated on it with greater love and devotion, our lives would be more pleasing to God. We do, indeed, acknowledge in a general way that we can do nothing good of ourselves; but we act too often as if

we thought but little of the source from whence all good proceeds. If we obtain, through the intercession of our Blessed Lady, the grace of a greater devotion to God the Holy Ghost, it will not be the least precious of the gifts which we hope to receive during this month. In our divine Lord's last instruction to His disciples, He expressly promises to give them another Paraclete; that is, One who should be their Guide and Comforter in His absence. While they were with Him, they could ask Him for every thing they required; they could have recourse to His counsel in all their doubts, to His loving comforting in all their troubles. But now He is going away from them, and, like a tender parent about to leave a young and helpless family for a time, our Jesus considers, and looks beforehand to supply, as far as possible, all the wants that may occur in His absence; wants which these poor, sorrow-stricken souls do not even anticipate, so absorbed are they in their present grief. But when its first anguish has passed away, then they know and see the love which thus provided for them unasked, and forgetful of its own sorrows; Jesus knew, also, that they might fear lest this Comforter should also leave them as He had done, and He adds that He shall "abide with them for ever." But He tells them that this Blessed Spirit will not come to all. The "world cannot receive Him." Alas! may we not fear it is because there is so much of the world in us that we have so little of the company of the Holy Ghost? We expect Him to comfort us with His divine comforting, and yet we seek comfort in and from the world, with which He can have nothing to do. Again and again our dear Lord tells His disciples what the Paraclete will do for them, and how they must receive Him. He is to abide with them,

—that is, if they submit to the conditions on which alone He can make a home in their hearts. He is to teach them all things,—that is, if they are willing to learn. Oh, let us pray to Mary,—to Mary, the Spouse of the Holy Ghost; to Mary, who never grieved Him, or resisted His least inspiration. Let us pray with our whole hearts that she may obtain for us the grace of an immense devotion to the Holy Ghost, and let us say the Hymn of the Holy Ghost for this intention, with great love and reverence, in honour of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Mary at the Incarnation and at Pentecost.

Indulgenced Hymn.

VENI CREATOR.

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!

Thou in Thy sevenfold gifts art known;
Thou, Finger of God's hand, we own;
The Promise of the Father, Thou!
Who dost the tongue with power endow.

Kindle our senses from above,
And make our hearts o'erflow with love;
With patience firm, and virtue high,
The weakness of our flesh supply.

Far from us drive 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 confessed,
 Of Both the 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 !

(100 days' indulgence daily ; on Whitsunday or during its Octave, 300 days.)

An indulgence of seven days is granted to all who shall say seven *Gloria Patris*, in honour of the Holy Ghost, the Fountain of Light and Infallible Truth, with the desire of obtaining His seven gifts, for the diffusion of the faith, and for the intention of the Supreme Pontiff.

We earnestly recommend those who may read these pages to practise this little devotion daily. What could be more important for ourselves than to gain an indulgence, to obtain an increase of the seven great gifts of the Holy Ghost, and to assist the Church by our poor prayers ?

MAY THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain for us that special gift of the Holy Ghost which we most need.

“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost” (Acts ii. 4).

THE great end of all our devotions and practices of piety should be, first, the glory of God, and then our own sanctification. What promotes the one, will

promote the other. We cannot be earnest in seeking God's glory in our own souls or in the souls of others, without increasing proportionately our own nearness to God. We have, perhaps, proposed to ourselves some special end, first for God's glory, and then for our own sanctification, as the particular object of our devotions during this month of May ; and if we have not done so, it is not too late : let us begin now, or, if our intention has been already made, let us renew it with greater earnestness. What did we ask for ? Some spiritual need first ; some grace which we feel is most necessary for our salvation. Perhaps humility, perhaps patience, perhaps a greater love of Mary, and a greater confidence in her intercession. But whatever we ask, the Holy Spirit is the Giver of gifts ; and, oh, let us ask Him now for this special gift, with all the earnestness and with all the love we can command. Or rather, since our love is so cold, since our earnestness scarcely deserves the name, let us seek her help who will never refuse it, let us ask her intercession who can never be refused ; and then we may be assured of obtaining what we desire. Would to God that we might all increase in devotion to the Holy Ghost ! He waits to be invited, He desires to be asked, to help us, and we are so indifferent to what would be our greatest spiritual aid, that we scarcely ever think of praying for it. Those who desire the most blessed grace of devotion to the Holy Ghost, should pray especially to Mary for it. He could not listen in vain to the pleadings of her voice, or to the least desire of her Immaculate Heart. Our Mother Mary knows our necessities ; let us ask her to obtain for us that gift which we most need. Alas ! how can we expect to become saints, when we do not seek the help of the Source of all sanctity ?

how can we expect to learn all that God would teach us, when we do not so much as ask the instruction of that Blessed Spirit whom He has given us to be our Instructor? Let us make an act of sincere contrition for all our neglect of devotion to the Holy Ghost, and form a firm resolution to amend for the future.

Prayer.

O Mother of Jesus, and Spouse of that Blessed Spirit whom He has sent to be our Comforter and our Teacher, obtain for us the grace of being worthy of His company, and ardently desirous of His teaching! Thou knowest, O Lady, how blind we are to our own greatest needs, how indifferent we are to our true interests; obtain for us the gift which will help us most to sanctify our souls, the gift most necessary for our salvation.

Indulgenced Hymn.

Holy Spirit! Lord of Light!
From Thy clear, celestial height,
Thy pure, beaming radiance give!

Come, Thou Father of the poor!
Come, with treasures which endure!
Come, Thou Light of all that live!

Thou, of all creatures best,
Visiting the troubled breast,
Dost refreshing peace bestow.

Thou in toil art comfort sweet;
Pleasant coolness in the heat;
Solace in the midst of woe.

Light Immortal! Light Divine!
Visit Thou these hearts of Thine,
And our inmost being fill.

If Thou take Thy grace away,
Nothing pure in man will stay ;
All his good is turned to ill.

Heal our wounds—our strength renew ;
On our dryness pour Thy dew ;
Wash the stains of guilt away.

Bend the stubborn heart and will ;
Melt the frozen, warm the chill ;
Guide the steps that go astray.

Thou, on those who evermore
Thee confess and Thee adore,
In Thy sevenfold gifts descend.

Give them comfort when they die ;
Give them life with Thee on high ;
Give them joys which never end.

Then add seven *Gloria Patris*, as at page 78.

MAY THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

THE ASSUMPTION.

A Visit of love to our Blessed Lady, to congratulate her on her heavenly glory.

“Behold my Beloved speaketh to me : Arise, make haste, my love, my dove, my beautiful one, and come. For winter is now past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers have appeared in our land” (Cant. ii. 10-12.)

THOSE who have listened for the voice of Jesus on earth shall one day hear that voice in heaven. “Behold my Beloved speaketh to me.” How many times Mary had heard those blessed accents ! The first words that Jesus spoke on earth were probably addressed to Mary, and almost His last words were addressed to her also. But who shall tell us how often His voice resounded in the ears of her soul

during the long years of exile which she endured after her beloved had returned to His country? Now He speaks to her for the last time on earth. Can we tell which was greater, the joy of the Mother or the joy of the Son, when He uttered the summons home. "Behold," she exclaims, "behold, my Beloved speaketh to me." And what does He say, O Mary? this time thou wilt not, nay, thou needest not, hide the secrets of the King. Tell us, then, O Mother, tell us what He saith to thee. Thou wilt not tell us, perhaps we may never know, all that He whispered to thee in thy heart of hearts,—for there are secrets between God and the soul which none may know save those to whom they are confided,—but this thou canst reveal to us. What saith thy Beloved to thee? "Arise, make haste, my love, my dove, my beautiful one, and come." Come! yes, at last it is the summons home. But thou must come with "haste," for Jesus has been waiting for thee all too long, and now that the moment appointed by eternal love and eternal wisdom for thy assumption has arrived, He cannot bear delay. "Make haste," He exclaims, "Mother, come to your Son,—to your Son who loves you, to your Son who knows your worth, to your Son, to whose filial love even heaven seemed to want something while its Queen was absent from its courts. And Mary, who had always obeyed the voice of her Beloved "with haste," who never hesitated or delayed when Jesus spoke,—Mary now indeed arises with haste, not to ascend the hill country on a toilsome mission of charity, but to be borne in triumph to the everlasting hills, and crowned Queen of Love. Let us, then, pray to this blessed Mother for grace so to listen to the voice of Jesus here, that we may hear it eternally hereafter. Let us congratulate her on her Assumption.

Let us sing canticles of praise to her, in spirit at least, with the Angels. Let us rejoice that her winter of sorrow is past, that the rain, the floods, and torrents of anguish which once oppressed her are over ; and let us beseech her to obtain grace for us so to pass through the wintry sorrows of time, that we may with her enjoy the eternal summer of heaven.

Prayer.

Mother of Jesus, we rejoice in thy joys, for the joys of the Mother are the joys of her children. Help us, O Lady, to follow thee from afar, to keep thy glory ever in our thoughts, and to remember how thy sorrows are now crowned with joy. Oh, may we learn by thy example how to bear the trials and cares of this life, that with thee we may enjoy the repose of eternal life. Oh, plead with all a Mother's love for us, thy poor exiled children,—plead for us, because thou art our Mother ; plead with Jesus, because thou art His Mother. He will hear thee for the sake of those for whom He died, and whom He loves so dearly ; wretched as we are, He will hear us for thy sake, because thou alone didst never waste or misuse the price of thy redemption.

Indulgenced Prayer.

1. Most Holy Virgin, I venerate thee with my whole heart above all Angels and Saints in paradise as the Daughter of the Eternal Father, and I consecrate to thee my soul, with all its powers. *Hail Mary.*

2. Most Holy Virgin, I venerate thee with my whole heart above all Angels and Saints in paradise as the Mother of the only-begotten Son, and I consecrate to thee my body, with all its senses. *Hail Mary.*

3. Most Holy Virgin, I venerate thee with my whole heart above all Angels and Saints in

paradise as the spouse of the Holy Ghost, and I consecrate to thee my heart and all its affections, praying thee to obtain for me from the ever-blessed Trinity all that is necessary for my salvation. *Hail Mary.*

(An indulgence of 100 days for each recital, when said to ask the protection of the Blessed Virgin in the practice of every Christian virtue, and especially the virtue of chastity.)

MAY THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

THE ASSUMPTION (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain for us the grace of great confidence in her intercession.

“After her shall virgins be brought to the King, her neighbours shall be brought to Thee” (Ps. xliv. 15).

WE considered the glory of Mary, in her Assumption, yesterday,—the love with which she loved Jesus, and the love with which Jesus loved her. But Mary is not content to be alone in her glorious state: “After her shall virgins be brought to the King,” and not the virgins alone, but her very “neighbours shall be brought to Thee.” A royal lady must have her train of attendants. The young and nobly born are her special maids of honour; Mary has her court and her royal state, but virgins are her maids of honour, and these she presents to the King with special favour. The virgins may be said truly to come after her, because they have learned their virginity from her example, because the purest and holiest of virgins must follow at an immeasurable distance the Queen of Virgins. Mary

loves those most who are most like Jesus; and those who have sought to become more like Him in the special purity of their lives, whether in the world or the cloister, will be the special objects of Mary's love. To those whom she loves most, she will impart the most special gifts of devotion to herself. They will be nearest to her in her train of chosen virgins: and those who are nearest to Mary, will be nearest to Jesus; for since the assumption of the Queen of Heaven, the Mother and the Son can never be separated. She will "bring them to the King." Love of Mary leads most surely, safely, and speedily to love of Jesus. What greater boon can she bestow on the souls she loves most, what greater favour can she obtain for them? Hence it is that those who have loved Mary with a real, deep devotion have ever been the most saintly and the most dear to Jesus. But her "neighbours" also shall be brought. Oh, happy they who have the faintest claim on Mary's patronage! Happy even the poor wanderer who omits not the *Hail Mary* in all his days of even wilful straying from the fold! If he does not obstinately resist his Mother's love, she may yet save him. "Her neighbours shall be brought to Thee." Oh, let us claim the blessed relationship to Mary which Jesus Himself has given us, and let us pray with our whole heart that she may not despise our petition, that she may not disown her children; and let us ask her for the precious grace of a continually increasing confidence in her intercession!

Prayer.

Mother of Jesus, we hope in thee, we trust in thee; for thou art our Mother: oh, look upon us with a mother's love, do not disown thy children, miserable and worthless as they are; rather, with a

true mother's love, pity our misery, and make it the occasion of thy mercy. Thou art the Mother of mercy, and thou knowest how much we need thy help; refuse not our petition: we ask for a place in thy glorious train in heaven, for a place near Jesus; we ask for an immense increase of confidence in thy intercession, while we wander far from thee in exile: grant us our heart's desire.

Indulged Prayer.

Virgin most holy, Mother of the Word Incarnate, Treasure of graces, Refuge of us poor sinners, we fly to thy maternal love with lively faith, and we ask thee to obtain for us grace ever to do the will of God and thine own. Into thy most holy hands we commit the keeping of our hearts, beseeching thee for health of soul and body, in the certain hope that thou, our most loving Mother, wilt hear our prayer. Wherefore, with living faith we say, *Hail Mary* (three times).

Let us pray.

Defend, O Lord, we beseech thee, us thy servants, through the intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, from all infirmity, both of body and soul, and mercifully protect us, who prostrate ourselves before Thee with our whole heart, from the snares of the enemy. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.
(200 days' indulgence.)

MAY THE TWENTY-NINTH.

THE CORONATION.

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to ask her to beseech her divine Son that she may be loved and honoured as He desires.

“And a throne was set for the king’s mother, and she sat on his right hand” (3 Kings ii. 19).

SOLOMON was a type of Christ, and we cannot doubt that, as such, the reverence which he paid his mother has been recorded for some special purpose. When she approached him, he “bowed to her;” and a “throne was set for the king’s mother, and she sat on his right hand.” And yet heresy would fain have us think that Jesus has done less than this for Mary. But the Church of Christ teaches another lesson. Solomon did not crown his mother; he did not share his throne with her. But Jesus crowns Mary; the Church has taught us to believe that she has an empire over His Heart far beyond the most royal of earthly dignities, by sanctioning the devotion to our Lady of the Sacred Heart, which is the simple and practical manifestation of that belief. Solomon refused the petition of Bethsabee. He loved his mother personally, but he could not grant her request. She was but a sinful child of earth, and her petition was at least unwise. But Mary never can ask amiss, and therefore Jesus can never refuse her what she asks. A throne is set for the King’s Mother; and He has crowned her, on that throne, the eternal Queen of His Heart’s charity. Let us hasten to her throne with our petitions; but first let us ask that she may be more known, more loved, more honoured.

Let us also set thrones for the King's Mother in our hearts. We desire that the King Himself should reign therein ; we have already enthroned Him there. But we must also set a throne for the King's Mother ; we must place it at His right hand. Mary will console Him for our neglect, for our indifference. Mary will so attract Him by her love, that He will be obliged to remain with us for her sake. But especially when the King comes to us in Holy Communion, let us enthrone His Mother ; let us prepare a seat for her ; let us ask her to sit at the King's right hand to entreat for us. He cannot refuse her petitions ; and what moment could be more favourable for us to make them, or to obtain them ?

Prayer.

O Jesus, King of our poor hearts, do Thou reign therein for ever. We consecrate them to Thee wholly and without reserve. Rule and reign over us, dear Lord ; for we desire that our hearts should be Thy kingdom. We even beseech Thee to compel our submission, should we be so wicked as at any time to refuse it. And we will erect a throne for Thy Mother, a throne beside Thee, a throne at Thy right hand, that she may rule over us also for Thee, and help us more and more to love and to obey Thy rule. Oh, grant, dear Lord, that she may yet rule in every human heart, that thousands may be converted to Thee through her powerful intercession, that ere the close of this month countless trophies may be added to her heavenly glory, that countless souls may proclaim her "Blessed," in time and in eternity, as Thy Mother and as theirs.

Indulgenced Prayer.

Hail, Mary, full of grace ; the Lord is with thee ;

may thy grace be with me! Blessed art thou amongst women; and blessed is holy Anne, thy mother; from whom, O Virgin Mary, thou didst come forth free from all stain of sin; and of thee was born Jesus Christ, Son of the living God. Amen. (100 days' indulgence for each recital.)

MAY THE THIRTIETH.

THE CORONATION (*continued*).

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to offer her the love of her divine Son, and of all the Saints who have been most devout to her, in reparation for the indifference of bad Catholics, the contempt of heretics, and the ignorance of the heathen; and to pray to her for the conversion of the whole world.

“And a throne was set for the king's mother, and she sat on his right hand” (3 Kings ii. 19).

LET us meditate once more on the text we chose yesterday. Let us picture to ourselves the glories of Mary in heaven, as far as it is possible to our weak and human imagination. Whatever we may say or think, falls far—oh, how far!—short of the reality. It is only by meditating upon the greatness of God that we can understand the greatness of Mary. Let us read over the simple words in which this mystery is explained to us in our Rosary: “In the fifth glorious mystery we meditate how Mary was crowned in heaven by her Son.” Who shall help us, save Mary herself, to understand all that is contained in these few simple words? Why is she crowned? Because she alone of all the human race deserved that honour. Why is she crowned? Because her divine Son wills that she should reign

as a Queen. By whom is she crowned? By her Son. And who is that Son? He is the King of kings, and the Lord of lords; but He is also her Child. He was once subject to her in the flesh; He is now subject to her in the spirit. She rules and reigns over His deified Heart with all the power of the love which He Himself has given her. But if Jesus crowned Mary as a Queen, must He not intend, must He not desire, that she should be honoured as such? We cannot doubt this for a moment. O my God, what vengeance will one day be taken upon those who have wilfully refused to honour her whom the King has delighted to honour! A king might pardon insults offered to himself, while he could not pardon insults offered to the mother who bore him. And can we imagine that the King of kings will feel less rightful indignation against those who presume to dishonour her whom He Himself declared to be "blessed among women"? Let us hasten, then, to renew our own homage to this royal Lady. Let us hasten from love rather than from fear, for she will only accept the homage of love; and, thank God, we do love her more, far more, than our words can tell. Let us hasten also to offer her the homage of our reparation, even as loving children would desire to console a mother who was outraged and calumniated; and let us desire to console our Mother Mary for the contempt and ingratitude of men. Even as loving children would love their mother more because others loved her less than she deserved, or would manifest more love to her the more she was injured or grieved by others, so should we manifest our love to Mary by an increased devotion to her, and by acts of loving reparation for all the injuries she receives.

Prayer.

Mother of Jesus, we, thy children, come to offer thee the ardent love of our poor hearts. We would love thee, not for a month alone, but for time and eternity ; and we desire to manifest our love, not merely by our words, but in our lives. Reign, then, with Jesus as Queen over our hearts, and we will render thee the homage of the most dutiful subjects, the love of the most loving children. We will defend thy honour, O Lady, with the zeal of loyalty, the love of grateful fidelity. We will console thee by our own devotion, and by making constant reparation to thee for the indifference and contempt of others. We now offer thee these nine *Hail Marys* in honour of the nine months which Jesus lay in thy womb, in reparation for those who are unhappy enough to have despised thy love, or refused thee the honour due to thy greatness.

Then say nine *Hail Marys* with great love and fervour ; and after each *Hail Mary* add the Indulged Prayer :

Sweet Heart of Mary, be my salvation ! (300 days' indulgence for each recital.)

MAY THE THIRTY-FIRST.

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART.

A Visit to our Blessed Lady, to offer her our heart's love, to renew our intention of loving and serving her, and to offer her all the devotions of the past month, praying her to obtain special graces for us during the coming month of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

“And the king said to her: What wilt thou, Queen Esther? what is thy request? If thou shouldst even ask one half of the kingdom, it shall be given to thee” (Esther v. 3).

AND now we have come to the last day of the Month of Mary. Thus it is that time passes away, and eternity comes rapidly nearer. We have another Month of Mary less. Happy for us if we have no regrets for not having spent it more devoutly! Happy for us if we have gained all the treasures that were so freely offered to us! Happy for us if we have profited by the additional means of grace with which we have been favoured, and which can never be offered to us again! Once the opportunity is past, it is past for ever. New opportunities may, indeed, come, through God's great mercy. But what we have lost, is lost. Ah, let us renew our fervour now, on the eve of the Month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Let us try to gain a double treasure in June, to compensate for what we have missed in May. Or, happily, it may be that we have, through God's great mercy and Mary's love, profited in some degree by this month's graces, and thus we shall be better prepared to profit still more by the graces yet to come. The Church has sanctioned the dedication of this day to our Blessed Lady, under the title of our Lady of the Sacred

Heart;* and this title includes and expresses all the rest. It would require a volume instead of a few lines to explain this fully, and, in truth, it could never be explained on earth. We must go to heaven to understand the liberality and the love of the Heart of Jesus; and until we understand this, we cannot fully comprehend the power that Mary possesses over It. We must know and understand the greatness of His love, to know and understand the love which has made Him confide its treasures to His Mother. We must know something of the greatness of the desire with which He desires to save us, to understand His mercy in giving us Mary for a mediatrix with His Heart. How great is her love for us, when she devotes herself so unweariedly to our salvation,—often, alas! when we ourselves are indifferent to it. And if Assuerus was willing to give half of his kingdom to Esther, how much more will not Jesus give to Mary? Our God is just and generous. Mary gave herself to Him without reserve; she gave her whole being to Him; and Jesus gives Himself in return to Mary; gives her, as He ever does, even more than she has given; and Mary, our Mother Mary, uses her gifts and her power for us. Oh, let us hear no more of half-hearted devotion to Mary, but let us rather fear we have never yet loved her as we ought. What request, then, have we to make of the King at the close of this Month of Mary? what petition do we wish preferred? what gift do we desire? Let us ask for it. Let us ask Mary for it. Jesus cannot refuse her; and she will not refuse us. And let us close this month's devotion with a fervent thanksgiving for all the graces we

* See advertisement at the end of the little book on the Devotion to our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

have received during it; let us offer all the Masses, Communions, Benedictions, and devotions which have been celebrated or made throughout the Catholic world; desiring, if it had been possible, to increase their number a hundredfold, for the glory of God and the honour of our Mother Mary.

Prayer to our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

We fly to thy patronage, O Lady of the Sacred Heart; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers, O ever-glorious and blessed Virgin, mistress of the Heart of God!

And the Prayer at page 23, "Mary, Virgin ever blessed!"

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