

PEARLS FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE FOR OUR LITTLE ONES

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"Unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."—St. Matt. xviii. 3.

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THE ADORABLE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

'God commendeth His charity towards us, because when as yet we were sinners, according to the time Christ died for us.' St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, v. 8.

It is related in the Old Testament (Gen. xiv. 18) that when the Patriarch Abraham returned victorious from battle, he was met by the priest of the Most High God, Melchisedech, who offered a sacrifice of bread and wine and blessed him. Melchisedech represented our Divine Lord in His priestly office, for in Psalm 109, the Eternal Father says to His Son, our Saviour: 'The Lord hath sworn and He will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech.' As a priest Melchisedech offered a sacrifice in bread and wine, and our Lord, at the Last Supper offered, as a priest likewise, a true sacrifice in bread and wine by changing the substance of the bread into His Body, and the substance of the wine into His Blood. He then instituted the great Sacrifice of the Mass, because what He Himself did then, He commanded His Apostles and their successors to do as long as His Church should last, saying, 'This do in commemoration of Me.' The Mass is the same as the Sacrifice of the Cross, but different in the manner in which it is offered. The Sacrifice of the Cross was offered with the visible shedding of blood and the separation by death of Christ's soul from His body. The Mass is not offered in this manner: but the same Man God, Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, is the High Priest in the Mass, as He is also the Victim, and His death is therein represented as taking place by means of the separate consecration of the Body and of the Blood, under the appearance of bread and wine. No doubt, our Lord was sent through the charity, or love, of our Heavenly Father to die for our sins and so to save us, but He wished in giving us the Sacrifice of the Mass to help us to secure for our souls day by day the fruits of the Sacrifice of the Cross, that we might be able, through the grace of Christ and His infinite merits, to avoid sin and persevere in holiness of life. What a priceless treasure, then, do we not possess in the Adorable Sacrifice offered on the altar every morning for the living and the dead! And how desirous we should be to assist at Holy Mass whenever we have the opportunity of doing so! We ought to be present at Mass with feelings like those of the Blessed Virgin at the foot of the Cross on Calvary, and offer to God the virtues of her Most Pure Heart to make up, through the merits of her Son, for our imperfection in offering the Holy Sacrifice. One of the best ways of assisting at Mass is to follow the method that is given in your prayer book. Or you could say the Rosary contemplating, in the Sorrowful Mysteries, the scenes of our Lord's Passion and Death. Or, again, if you have a book with pictures connecting the events of the Passion with the corresponding parts of the Mass, you can reflect upon the pictures and say at each of them an 'Our Father' and a 'Hail Mary.' But whatever method you use, you should keep before your mind the four great ends for which our Lord offered the Sacrifice of the Cross and for which He offers Himself every day in the Mass—namely, ADORATION, THANKSGIVING, ATONEMENT FOR SIN, and PETITION FOR GRACE. Humility, contrition, and

confidence in God's goodness should be in your heart during this august Sacrifice, and an increase in those virtues is the fruit of Mass well heard.

There is no action of our life on earth so great and so fruitful of all kinds of blessing as assisting with a lively faith at the offering of the Adorable Sacrifice of the Mass, and you ought to be most anxious to be present at it, not only on Sundays and holidays of obligation, but also, if it is possible, every morning. I will now relate a fact which will show you how beneficial it is not to omit hearing Mass whenever you have the opportunity to assist at the Sacrifice. We are told in the Life of St. Elizabeth of Portugal that she made use of one of the royal pages to distribute her alms among the poor. Another page envied this young man, and to ruin him accused him to the King of a great crime. The King believed the accusation. He told a certain man who had charge of a lime-kiln that he should send him a certain page to ask if he had executed the King's commands; this page he was to throw into the kiln and so put him to death. On the appointed morning the accused page was sent with the message; but he happened to pass by a church where he heard the bell ring at the solemn moment of the consecration, and he entered. He heard the rest of the Mass, but as he was accustomed to assist at the Holy Sacrifice every day, he waited to hear another Mass which a priest was about to begin. In the meantime, the wicked page wished to know if the other were dead, and he went in haste to the owner of the lime-kiln, and asked if he had obeyed the King's order. The man, thinking he was the page who was to be put to death, seized him, and in spite of his cries and resistance, flung him into the kiln. Just about that time the King discovered how wrong the accusation was, and when he heard what had happened, he was glad that the accuser was punished, and that the page, whose piety preserved him from death, was saved. It is well, then, that we should always obey God's holy inspirations in the practice of piety, and love and reverence the Adorable Sacrifice which He has given us in the Mass.

Prayer to be Often Said.

I will draw near unto the Altar of God, unto God Who giveth joy to my youth.

Hymn.

O sweet, most happy thought! 'Tis mine
To offer as of yore,
A sacrifice, and one in power,
Excelling all before!

For me, upon an altar fair,
Lo, pleading day by day,
The Body and Blood of Him
Whom heaven and earth obey.

For me is immolated still,
Without encrimsoned stain,
In the pure Host the very Lamb
On Calvary's altar slain.

We offer, then, the Holy Mass,
Our Maker to adore,
To thank Thee for Thy precious gifts,
And praise Thee evermore.

We pray for pardon and for grace,
To change the life we've led;
And beg Thee, for Thy Son's dear sake,
To bless the quick and dead.

THE FAMILY CIRCLE

GOD MADE ALL THINGS.

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.