

CHAPTER X

Christ our Savior is Born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Juda.

468. The palace which the supreme King of kings and Lord of lords had provided for welcoming his eternal and incarnate Son into this world was a most poor and insignificant shelter or cave, to which most holy Mary and St. Joseph went after they had been denied all hospitality and the most ordinary kindness by their fellow men, as I have described in the previous chapter. This place was so despised and held in contempt that although the town of Bethlehem was full of strangers lacking inns in which to stay, none would demean or lower himself so far as to make use of it for a lodging, for it is certain no one deemed it desirable or suitable for such a purpose except the Teachers of humility and poverty, Christ our Savior and his most pure Mother. For this reason the wisdom of the eternal Father had reserved it for them, consecrating it in all its bareness, loneliness and poverty as the first temple of light, and as the house of the true Sun of justice (Mal. 4:2), who for the upright of heart was to be born from the most resplendent aurora Mary in the midst of the darkness of night (symbolic of the night of sin) which filled the entire world (Ps. 111:4).

469. Most holy Mary and St. Joseph entered the shelter thus provided for them, and by the effulgence of the ten thousand Angels of their guard they could easily ascertain its poverty and loneliness, which they esteemed as favors and welcomed with tears of consolation and joy. Without delay the two holy travelers fell on their knees and praised the Lord, giving Him thanks for this benefit which they knew had been provided by his wisdom for his own hidden designs. Regarding this mystery the heavenly Princess Mary had a better insight, for as soon as She sanctified the interior of the cave by her sacred footsteps She felt a fullness of joy which entirely elevated and vivified Her. She besought the Lord to bless with a generous hand all the inhabitants of the neighboring city, because by rejecting Her they had given occasion for the vast favors which She awaited in this neglected cavern. It was formed entirely of the bare and coarse rocks, without any natural beauty or artificial adornment, a place intended merely for the shelter of animals, yet the eternal Father had selected it for the shelter and dwelling place of his own Son.

470. The angelic spirits, who like a celestial militia guarded their Queen and Lady, formed themselves into cohorts in the manner of court guards in a royal palace. They showed themselves in their visible forms also to St. Joseph, for on this occasion it was appropriate for him to enjoy such a favor, on the one hand in order to assuage his sorrow by allowing him to behold this poor shelter thus beautified and adorned by their celestial presence, and on the other in order to enliven and encourage him for the events which the Lord intended to bring about during that night in this forsaken place. The great Queen and Empress of heaven, who was already informed of the mystery which was to be accomplished here, set about cleaning with her own hands the cave which was so soon to serve as a royal throne and sacred mercy seat, for neither did She want to miss this occasion for exercising her humility, nor would She deprive her onlybegotten Son of the worship and reverence implied by this preparation and cleansing of his temple.

471. St. Joseph, attentive to the majesty of his heavenly Spouse, which it seemed She was forgetting in demonstrating such humility, besought Her not to deprive him of this work which he considered as his alone, and he hastened to set about cleaning the floor and the corners of the cave, although the humble Queen continued to assist him therein. Since the holy Angels were in human visible form, they were (according to our way of understanding) abashed at such devoted

determination and humility of their Queen; then with holy emulation they assisted with this work, or more succinctly, in the shortest time they had cleansed and set in order that cave, leaving it prepared and full of fragrance. St. Joseph started a fire with the material which he had brought for that purpose. Since it was very cold they sat at the fire in order to receive some alleviation. They partook of the food which they had brought, and they ate this, their frugal supper, with incomparable joy of their souls. The Queen of heaven was so absorbed and taken up with the thought of the impending mystery of her divine delivery that She would not have eaten if She had not been urged thereto by obedience to her spouse.

472. After their supper they gave thanks to the Lord as was their custom. Having spent a short time in this prayer and conferring about the mysteries of the incarnate Word, the most prudent Virgin felt the approach of the most blessed birth. She requested her spouse St. Joseph to rest and sleep since the night was already far advanced. The man of God yielded to the request of his Spouse and urged Her to do the same, and for this purpose he arranged and prepared a sort of couch with the articles of wear in their possession, making use of a crib or manger which had been left by the shepherds for their animals. Leaving most holy Mary in the portion of the cave thus furnished, St. Joseph retired to a corner of the entrance, where he began to pray. He was immediately visited by the divine Spirit and felt a most sweet and extraordinary influence by which he was rapt and elevated into an ecstasy. In it was shown to him all that passed during that night in this blessed cave, for he did not return to consciousness until his heavenly Spouse called him. Such was the sleep which St. Joseph enjoyed that night, more exalted and blissful than that of Adam in paradise (Gen. 2:21).

473. At the same time the Queen of all creatures, remaining in that portion of the cave prepared by St. Joseph, was moved by a strong call of the Most High which efficaciously and sweetly transformed Her, raising Her above all created things and causing Her to feel new effects of the divine power, since this was one of the most rare and admirable ecstasies of her most holy life. She was also immediately filled with new enlightenment and divine influences, such as I have described in other places, until She reached the clear vision of the Divinity. The veil fell and She saw intuitively the Divinity himself in such glory and plenitude of insight as all the capacity of men and angels could never describe or fully understand. All the knowledge of the divinity and most holy humanity of her Son which She had ever received in former visions was renewed, and moreover other secrets of the inexhaustible archives of the bosom of God were revealed to Her. I do not have sufficient, appropriate and adequate terms or words in order to manifest what I know of these sacraments by the divine light, for their abundance and fecundity make me poor in expression.

474. The Most High announced to his Virgin Mother that the time of his coming into the world had arrived, and what would be the manner in which this was now to be fulfilled and executed. The most prudent Lady perceived in this vision the purpose and exalted scope of these wonderful mysteries and sacraments insofar as they related to the Lord himself, as well as how they concerned creatures, for whose benefit they had been primarily decreed. She prostrated Herself before the royal throne of the Divinity and gave Him glory, magnificence, thanksgiving and praise for Herself and for all creatures, such as was befitting the ineffable mercy and condescension of his divine love. At the same time She asked His divine Majesty for new light and grace in order to be able worthily to undertake the service, worship and raising of the Word made flesh, whom She was to bear in her arms and nourish with her virginal milk. This petition the heavenly Mother brought forward with the most profound humility, as one who understood the greatness of this new sacrament. She held Herself unworthy of the office of raising and

conversing as a Mother with a God incarnate, of which even the highest Seraphim are incapable. Prudently and humbly did the Mother of Wisdom ponder and weigh this matter. And because She humbled Herself to the dust (Lk. 1:48) and acknowledged her nothingness in the presence of the Almighty, His Majesty raised Her up and confirmed anew upon Her the title of Mother of God. He commanded Her to exercise this office and ministry of a legitimate and true Mother of Himself, and treat Him as the Son of the eternal Father and at the same time the Son of her womb. All this could easily be entrusted to such a Mother, in whom was contained an excellence which words cannot express.

475. Most holy Mary remained in this ecstasy and beatific vision for over an hour immediately preceding her divine parturition. At the moment when She issued from it and regained the use of her senses She felt and saw the body of the infant God begin to move in her virginal womb; how, releasing and freeing Himself from the place which in the course of nature He had occupied for nine months, He now prepared to issue forth from that sacred bridal chamber. This movement not only did not cause any pain or hardship, as happens with the other daughters of Adam and Eve in their childbirths (Gen. 3:16), but filled Her with incomparable joy and delight, causing in her soul and in her virginal body such exalted and divine effects that they exceed all the thoughts of men. Her body became so spiritualized with the beauty of heaven that She seemed no more a human and earthly creature. Her face emitted rays of light like a sun incarnadined among most beautiful color, her countenance most dignified with admirable majesty, and her demeanor all inflamed with fervent love. She was kneeling in the manger, her eyes raised to heaven, her hands joined and folded at her breast, her soul lifted up in the Divinity, and She herself was entirely deified. With this disposition, at the end of the heavenly rapture, the most eminent Lady gave to the world the Onlybegotten of the Father and her own (Lk. 2:7), our Savior JESUS, true God and true man, at the hour of midnight, on a Sunday, in the year of the creation of the world five thousand one hundred ninety-nine, as the Roman Church teaches, and which has been declared to me as the true and certain date.

476. There are other circumstances and particulars of this most divine Nativity which all the faithful assume were miracles, yet since the only witnesses were the Queen of heaven and her courtiers, not all can be known in particular, except those which the Lord himself has manifested to his holy Church in general, or to particular souls in diverse ways. Since I believe there is some divergence of opinion in this matter, which is most sublime and venerable, as soon as I had manifested to my superiors and directors what had been made known to me they ordered me under obedience to consult anew the divine light and ask the Empress of heaven, my Mother and Teacher, and the holy Angels who assist me, for information on some particulars necessary for a clearer statement of the most sacred parturition of Mary, the Mother of JESUS our Redeemer. In order to comply with this command I returned for a better understanding of these same happenings, and it was then expounded to me in the following manner:

477. At the end of the beatific vision and rapture of the Mother ever Virgin, which I have described above (473), was born of Her the Sun of justice, Son of the eternal Father and her Son, clean, most beautiful, refulgent and pure, leaving Her more divinized and consecrated in her virginal integrity and purity; for He did not divide, but penetrated the virginal cloister like the rays of the sun which penetrate the crystal without damaging it, making it more beautiful and refulgent. Before the explanation of the miraculous manner in which this was executed, I say the infant God was born pure and disengaged, without the covering called *secundina*, surrounded by which other children are commonly born and in which they are enveloped in the wombs of their mothers. I will not detain myself in explaining the cause and origin of the error which has been

introduced to the contrary. It is enough to know and suppose that in the generation and birth of the incarnate Word the powerful arm of the Almighty selected and took from nature all that truly and substantially pertained to human generation, so the Word would be made true man, truly calling Himself conceived, engendered and born as the Son of the substance of his Mother ever Virgin. Yet in the rest of the conditions which are not essential but incidental to generation and birth we must not only separate Christ our Lord and his most holy Mother from those which have any relation and dependence on sin, original or actual, but also from many others which do not derogate from the substance of generation or birth and which involve some impurity or superfluity of nature not necessary for the Queen of heaven to be called a true Mother, and Christ our Lord her Son born of Her. None of these effects of sin or nature were necessary for the true humanity of Christ, or for his office of Redeemer or Teacher; and whatever was not necessary for these three ends, and whatever by its absence would redound to the greater excellence of Christ and his Mother, must be denied of both. Neither were the miracles necessary for such a birth worked sparingly by the Author of nature and grace in her favor, She who was his worthy Mother, prepared, adorned, and made increasingly beautiful for this purpose, for the divine right hand enriched Her at all times with gifts and graces, and reached the utmost limits of his omnipotence possible in regard to a mere creature.

478. Conformable to this truth the fact She was a Virgin in conceiving and giving Him birth, remaining ever Virgin by the operation of the Holy Ghost, did not derogate from Her being a true Mother. Though without her fault She could have lost this privilege of virginity in a natural manner, yet in that case the Mother of God would have lost such a rare and singular excellence; hence we must say the divine power of her most holy Son preserved it for Her so She would not be without it. Likewise the divine Child could have been born with this covering or cuticle in which others are born, yet this was not necessary in order to be born as the Son of his legitimate Mother; therefore He chose not to take it with Him from the virginal and maternal womb, just as He chose not to pay to nature other penal tributes of impurity which other human beings pay in the common order of childbirth. It was not just for the incarnate Word to be subject to all the laws of the sons of Adam; rather it was consequent upon his miraculous birth for Him to be exempt and free from all that could be caused by the corruption or uncleanness of matter. Thus also this covering, or *secundina*, was not to fall prey to corruption outside of the virginal womb, because it had been so closely connected and attached to his most holy body, and because it was composed of the blood and substance of his Mother. In like manner it was not advisable to keep and preserve it outside of Her, nor was it appropriate to give it the same privileges and importance as his divine body in coming forth from the body of his most holy Mother, as I will yet explain. The wonder which would have to be wrought to dispose of that sacred covering outside of the womb could be wrought much more appropriately within.

479. Thus the infant God was brought forth from the virginal chamber unencumbered by any corporeal or material substance foreign to Himself, but came forth glorious and transfigured, for the infinite wisdom of the Divinity disposed and ordained that the glory of his most holy soul should overflow and communicate itself to the body of the infant God at his Nativity, participating in the gifts of glory as happened later in his Transfiguration on mount Tabor in the presence of the Apostles (Mt. 17:2). This miracle was not necessary in order to penetrate the virginal enclosure and leave unimpaired her virginal integrity, for without this transfiguration God could have brought this about by other miracles. That the Child was born leaving his Mother a Virgin is certain, as the holy Doctors say who know of no other mystery in this Nativity. It was the will of God for the most blessed Virgin to look upon the body of her Son, the

Man-God, for this first time in a glorified state for two reasons. The first was so by this divine vision the most prudent Mother would conceive the highest reverence with which to treat her Son, true God and true man. Though She was already informed of his twofold nature, the Lord nevertheless ordained that by ocular demonstration She would be filled with new graces corresponding to the greatness of her most holy Son which was thus manifested to Her in a visible manner. The second reason was to reward by this wonder the fidelity and sanctity of the divine Mother, for her most pure and chaste eyes, which had turned away from all earthly things for love of her most holy Son, were to see Him at his very birth in this glory, and thus be rejoiced and rewarded for her loyalty and beautiful love.

480. The sacred evangelist Luke (2:7) tells us the Virgin Mother, having brought forth her firstborn Son, *wrapped Him up in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger*. He does not say She received Him in her arms from her virginal womb, for this did not pertain to the purpose of his narrative; however, the two sovereign princes, St. Michael and St. Gabriel, were the assistants of the Virgin on this occasion. They stood by at a proper distance in human corporeal forms at the moment when the incarnate Word, penetrating the virginal chamber by divine power, issued forth to the light, and they received Him in their hands with ineffable reverence. In the same manner as a priest exhibits the sacred host to the people for adoration, so these two celestial ministers presented to the divine Mother her glorious and refulgent Son. All this happened in a short space of time. In the same moment in which the holy Angels thus presented the divine Child to his Mother, the most holy Son and Mother looked upon each other, and by this look She wounded the Heart of the sweet Infant and was at the same time exalted and transformed in Him. From the arms of the holy Princes the Prince of heaven spoke to his happy Mother and said to Her: “Mother, become like unto Me, since for the human existence Thou hast given me I desire from this day to give Thee another new and more exalted existence in grace, so Thou, who art a mere creature, mayest resemble Me, who am God and man, by perfect imitation.”* The most prudent Mother answered: *Trahe me post Te, curremus in odorem unguentorum tuorum* (Cant. 1:3); *draw me after Thee, Lord, and we will run in the odor of thy ointments*. In the same way many of the hidden mysteries of the Canticles were fulfilled, and other sayings which passed between the infant God and the Virgin Mother which had been recorded there, as for instance: *My Beloved to me, and I to Him, and his turning is towards me* (Ib. 2:16; 7:10); *behold thou art fair, my friend, and thy eyes are dove’s eyes; behold, my beloved, for thou art fair* (Ib. 1:14-15); and many other sacraments, which to mention would unduly prolong this chapter.

481. The words which most holy Mary heard from the mouth of her most holy Son served to make Her understand at the same time the interior acts of his most holy soul united to the Divinity, so by imitating them She could become like unto Him. This was one of the greatest blessings which the most faithful and fortunate Mother received at the hands of her Son, true God and true man, not only because it was continued from that day on through all her life, but because it furnished Her the means of copying his own divine life as faithfully as was possible to a mere creature. At the same time the heavenly Lady perceived and felt the presence of the most holy Trinity, and She heard the voice of the eternal Father saying: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased and satisfied* (Mt. 17:5). The most prudent Mother, entirely divinized among such exalted sacraments, answered: “Eternal Father and most high God, Lord and Creator of the universe, give me anew thy permission and blessing to receive in my arms the Desired of

* cf. *Transfixion* 75 [Ed.]

the nations (Ag. 2:8), and teach me to fulfill thy divine will as thy unworthy Mother and faithful slave.” She then heard a voice which said: “Receive thy onlybegotten Son, imitate Him, raise Him, and remember Thou must sacrifice Him when I shall ask it of Thee. Nourish Him as a Mother and reverence Him as thy true God.” The divine Mother answered: “Behold here the creature of thy divine hands, adorn me with thy grace so thy Son and my God may receive me for his slave. If Thou shalt support me with thy great power I shall not fail in his service. And do not take it as boldness that the humble creature shall hold in her arms and nourish with her milk her own Lord and Creator.”

482. After this interchange of words, so full of mysteries, the divine Child suspended the miracle of his transfiguration, or rather He inaugurated that other miracle of suspending the effects of glory upon his most holy body, confining them entirely to his soul; without them He now demonstrated in his human nature the capability of suffering. In this state the most pure Mother now saw Him, and still remaining on her knees and adoring Him with profound humility and reverence She received Him in her arms from the hands of the holy Angels. And when She saw Him in her arms She spoke to Him and said: “My sweetest Love, light of my eyes and being of my soul, Thou hast arrived in an opportune hour into this world as the Sun of justice (Mal. 4:2) in order to disperse the darkness of sin and death (Is. 9:2). True God of true God, redeem thy servants (Ps. 33:23), and may all flesh see Him who brings salvation (Is. 40:5; 52:10). Receive for thy service thy slave, and supply my insufficiency so I may serve Thee. Make me, my Son, such as Thou dost desire me to be in thy service.” Then the most prudent Mother turned toward the eternal Father to offer up to Him his Onlybegotten, saying: “Most high Creator of all the universe, here is the altar and the sacrifice acceptable in thine eyes (Mal. 3:4). From this hour, my Lord, look upon the human race with mercy, and though we merit thy indignation, it is time for Thee to be placated by thy Son and mine. Let thy justice now come to rest, and let thy mercy be magnified, since for this reason the Word has vested Himself in the semblance of sinful flesh (Rom. 8:3) and has become a Brother of mortals and sinners (Philip. 2:7). By this title I recognize them as children and pray for them from my inmost heart. Thou, O powerful Lord, hast made me Mother of thy Onlybegotten without my merit, since this dignity is above all the merits of creatures; yet I partly owe to men the occasion which has given me this incomparable happiness, since for them I am Mother of the incarnate Word made capable of suffering and the Redeemer of all. I will not deny them my love, my care, and my watchfulness for their remedy. Receive, eternal God, my desires and petitions for that which is according to thy own will and pleasure.”

483. The Mother of Mercy turned also toward all mortals and addressed them, saying: “Let the afflicted be consoled and the disconsolate rejoice (Is. 61:1-3); let the fallen be raised up (Mt. 9:5) and the agitated be pacified; let the dead be revived, the just be joyful, and the saints rejoice (Ps. 95:11); let the celestial spirits receive new jubilation, the Prophets and Patriarchs of limbo new alleviation (Is. 9:2), and let all generations praise and magnify the Lord (Ps. 71:17), who renews his wonders (Ecclus. 36:6). Come, come ye poor (Lk. 4:18), approach ye little ones without fear, for in my hands I have He who is called a Lion* made a meek lamb (Is. 16:1), the Almighty become weak, the Invincible subdued. Come to draw life, hasten to obtain salvation, and draw near to gain eternal rest, since I have this for all, and it shall be given to you freely (Is. 55:1) and communicated to you without envy (Wis. 7:13). Do not be slow and heavy of heart, O ye sons of men (Ps. 4:3). And Thou, sweet Good of my soul, give me permission to receive from

* cf. Apoc. 5:5-6 [Ed.]

Thee that kiss desired by all creatures (Cant. 1:1).” Thereupon the most happy Mother applied her heavenly and most chaste lips with tender and loving caresses of the infant God, who awaited them as her true Son.

484. Holding Him in her arms She thus served as the altar and sanctuary where the ten thousand Angels adored in visible human forms their Creator incarnate. And since the most blessed Trinity assisted in a special manner at the birth of the Word, heaven was as it were emptied of its inhabitants, for the whole heavenly court had transported itself to that happy cave of Bethlehem and was adoring the Creator in his garb and habit of a pilgrim (Philip. 2:7). And in their praise the holy Angels intoned the new canticle: *Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis* (Lk. 2:14). In sweetest and sonorous harmony they repeated it, astonished at the new wonders they saw being fulfilled, and at the unspeakable prudence, grace, humility and beauty of a tender Maiden of fifteen years, the Depositary and minister of so many exalted sacraments.

485. It was now time for the most prudent and attentive Lady to call her most faithful spouse St. Joseph, who as I said above (472) was rapt in divine ecstasy in which he knew by revelation all the mysteries of the sacred Nativity which were celebrated during that night. Yet it was also proper for him with his bodily senses to see, experience, adore and reverence the incarnate Word before all other mortals, since he of all others had been chosen to act as the faithful guardian of such an exalted sacrament. Through the will of his heavenly Spouse he issued from his ecstasy, and upon being restored to consciousness the first sight of his eyes was the divine Child in the arms of the Virgin Mother, reclining against her sacred countenance and bosom. There he adored Him with most profound humility and tears of joy. He kissed his feet with new joy and admiration, which would have taken away and dissolved life in him if divine power had not preserved it, and he would have lost all use of his senses if it was not necessary to use them on that occasion. After St. Joseph had adored the Infant the most prudent Mother asked permission of her Son to arise (for until then She had remained on her knees), and while St. Joseph handed Her the wrappings and swaddling clothes which She had brought She clothed Him with incomparable reverence, devotion and tenderness. Having thus swathed and clothed Him his Mother, with heavenly wisdom, laid Him in the crib as related by St. Luke (2:7). For this purpose She had arranged some straw and hay upon a stone in order to prepare for the Godman his first resting place upon earth next to that which He had found in her arms. According to divine ordainment an ox from the neighboring fields ran up in great haste, and entering the cave joined the beast of burden brought by the Queen. The Blessed Mother commanded them, with what show of reverence was possible to them, to recognize their Creator. The humble animals obeyed their Mistress and prostrated themselves before the Child, warming Him with their breath and rendering Him the service refused by men. And thus the God made man was placed between two animals, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and wonderfully fulfilling the prophecy *the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel hath not known me, and my people hath not understood* (Is. 1:3).

INSTRUCTION OF THE QUEEN, MARY MOST HOLY.

486. My daughter, if mortals would keep their hearts unattached, and with sincere judgment worthily consider this great sacrament of kindness which the Most High worked for them, it would be a powerful means of conducting them in the pathway of life and subjecting them to the love of their Creator and Redeemer. Since they are men are capable of reason, if they would only

make use of their freedom to treat this sacrament with the reverence due to its greatness, who would be so hardened as not to be moved to tenderness at the sight of their God become man, humiliated in poverty, despised, unknown, entering the world in a cave, lying in a manger among brute animals, with only the shelter of a poor Mother, and cast off by the foolishness and arrogance of the world? Who shall dare to love the vanity and pride which were openly abhorred and condemned by the Creator of heaven and earth in his conduct? Nor may creatures abhor the humility, poverty and indigence which the Lord loved and chose for Himself as the very means of teaching the way of eternal life. Few there are who stop to consider this truth and example, and because of this vile ingratitude there are few who shall reap the fruit of these great sacraments.

487. But if the condescension of my most holy Son was so great as to bestow so liberally upon thee his light and knowledge concerning these vast blessings, ponder well how much thou art bound to cooperate with this light. So thou mayest correspond to this obligation I remind and exhort thee to forget all that is of earth and lose it out of thy sight, and seek nothing or engage thyself with nothing except what can help thee to withdraw and detach thee from the world and its inhabitants, so with a heart freed from all terrestrial affection thou mayest dispose thyself to celebrate in it the mysteries of the poverty, humility, and divine love of the incarnate God. Learn from my example the reverence, fear and respect with which thou must treat Him, remembering how I acted when I held Him in my arms. Follow my example whenever thou dost receive Him in thy heart in the venerable Sacrament of the Eucharist, wherein is contained the same true God and true man who was born of my womb. In this Sacrament thou dost receive Him and actually possess Him so near that He is within Thee just as truly as I possessed Him and conversed with Him, though in another manner.

488. I desire thee to go even to extremes in this holy reverence and fear, and I desire thee to take notice and be convinced that in entering into thy heart in the holy Sacrament thy God exhorts thee in the same words which thou hast recorded as spoken to me, *become like unto Me*. His coming down from heaven to earth, his being born in humility and poverty, his living and dying in it, giving such a rare example of the contempt of the world and its deceits, and the knowledge which thou hast received of these works, having them pointed out to thee in lofty and exalted enlightenment and penetration, all these things must be for thee a living voice which thou must hear with closest attention of thy soul and write within thy heart, so with discretion thou make proper use of the common benefits. Understand that my most holy Son and Lord desires thee to receive them and be grateful for them as if for thee alone (Gal 2:20) He descended from heaven to redeem thee and institute all his wonders and doctrines He left in his holy Church.