

CHAPTER XI

Christ our Savior Celebrates the Sacramental Supper, Consecrating His Sacred and True Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist; His Prayers and Petitions; the Communion of His Most Holy Mother; and Other Mysteries which Took Place on This Occasion.

469. With great timidity do I enter upon the treatment of this mystery of mysteries, the ineffable Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, and what happened at its institution, since raising the eyes of my soul to receive the divine light which encompasses and governs me in this work, by the intelligence in which I participate in so many combined wonders and sacraments I mistrust my littleness which in this mystery becomes manifest to me. My faculties are disturbed, and I cannot find words to explain what I see and conceive, though all these conceptions are far from the reality revealed to my understanding. Yet though I am ignorant of the terms and very unfit for such discourse I must speak so I may continue this History and relate what part the great Lady of the world, Mary most holy, had in these wonders. If I do not speak with the propriety this matter demands, let my condition and amazement be my excuse, for it is not easy to descend to exterior and appropriate words when the will only desires with affection to supply the deficiency of its understanding and enjoy that which it cannot appropriately manifest.

470. Christ our Good had partaken of the prescribed supper with his disciples reclining on the floor around a table which was elevated from it little more than the distance of six or seven fingers, for such was the custom of the Jews. But after the washing of the feet He ordered another and higher table to be prepared such as we now use for our meals, by this ceremony putting an end to the legal suppers and things low and figurative, and beginning the new banquet upon which He founded the new law of grace. From that time on began the consecration upon the elevated table or altar permanently used in the Catholic Church. The new table was covered with a very rich cloth, and upon it was placed a plate or salver and a large cup in the form of a chalice, capacious enough to hold the necessary wine, in accordance with the will of Christ our Savior, who by his divine power and wisdom prepared and arranged all of this. The master of the house was moved from on high to offer these so rich and precious vessels of emerald-like stone; afterwards the sacred Apostles used them for consecration when they could and at an opportune and proper time. Christ our Good sat down at the table with the twelve Apostles and some of the other disciples, and ordered them to bring Him thin unleavened bread of pure wheat and place it on the plate, and pure wine of which He prepared the chalice with what was necessary.

471. Then the Master of life spoke words of most endearing love to his Apostles, and though his sayings were accustomed to penetrate to the inmost heart at all times, yet on this occasion they were like the flames of a great fire of charity which consumed the souls of his hearers. He manifested to them anew the most exalted mysteries of his divinity and humanity, and the works of the Redemption. He enjoined upon them peace (Jn. 14:27) and the union of charity (Jn. 17:26), of which He was now to leave a pledge in the mysteries about to be celebrated. He reminded them that in loving one another they would be loved by the eternal Father with the same love in which He was beloved. He gave them an understanding of the fulfillment of this promise in having chosen them to found the new Church and the law of grace. He renewed in them the light concerning the supreme dignity, excellence and prerogatives of his most pure Virgin Mother. Among all the Apostles St. John was most deeply enlightened in these mysteries due to the office imposed upon him. The great Lady from her retreat beheld in divine contemplation all these doings of her Son in the Cenacle, and in her profound intelligence She

entered more deeply into their meaning than the Apostles and the Angels, who also were present in bodily forms (452) adoring their true Lord, Creator and King. By the hands of these Angels were brought to the Cenacle Enoch and Elias from the place where they were, the Lord decreeing that these two Fathers of the natural and written laws be present at the new wonder and founding of the evangelical law and participate in its admirable mysteries.

472. All these being gathered together, awaiting with admiration what the Author of life intended to do, there appeared also in the hall the Persons of the eternal Father and of the Holy Ghost as at the Jordan and on Tabor. Although all the Apostles and disciples felt this divine presence, yet only some of them were truly favored with a vision of it; among these was especially St. John the Evangelist, who was always gifted with eagle sight into the divine mysteries. The entire heaven was transplanted to the Cenacle of Jerusalem, for of such great importance was the magnificence of this work by which the Church of the New Testament was founded, the law of grace established, and our eternal salvation prepared. For a better understanding of the doings of the incarnate Word, I must remind the reader that He possessed two natures in one Person, the divine and human natures united in one divine Person of the Word; hence the proper activities of both natures are rightly attributed to one and the same Person, just as the same Person is called both God and man. Consequently when I say the incarnate Word spoke and prayed to the eternal Father, it must not be interpreted as meaning that He prayed or spoke insofar as He was divine, since in divinity He was equal to the Father (Jn. 10:30), but insofar as He was human, inferior (Jn. 14:28), and composed of body and soul as we ourselves are. Hence in this sense Christ our Good in the Cenacle confessed with praise and magnificence his eternal Father for his divinity and infinite being; and then pleading for the human race He prayed, saying:

473. “My Father and eternal God, I confess Thee, praise Thee, and magnify Thee in the infinite Being of thy incomprehensible Divinity in which I am one with Thee and the Holy Ghost, engendered from all eternity by thy intellect (Ps. 109:3) as the figure of thy substance (Heb. 1:3) and the image of thy individual nature. The work of human Redemption, which Thou hast entrusted to Me to accomplish in the same nature which I took in the virginal womb of my Mother, I desire to consummate* and endow with the highest perfection and plenitude of thy divine approbation, and then pass from this world to thy right hand and bring to Thee all those whom Thou hast given Me, without losing any of them (Jn. 17:12) insofar as our will and the sufficiency of their remedy is concerned. My delight is to be with the children of men (Prov. 8:31), and in my absence they will be left orphans and alone if I leave them without assistance and do not remain with them. Hence I desire, my Father, to leave them assured pledges and assurances of my inextinguishable love and the eternal rewards which Thou hast prepared for them. I desire to leave them an unfailing memorial of what I have labored and suffered for them. I desire them to find in my merits an easy and efficacious remedy for sin, by which they participate in the disobedience of the first man, and I desire to restore copiously the right, which they lost, to the eternal happiness for which they were created.

474. “And since there shall be few who will preserve themselves in this justice, it is necessary to leave them other remedies by which they can be restored to grace and increase it, receiving anew most high gifts and favors of thy ineffable clemency in order to justify and sanctify them by diverse ways and means in the state of their dangerous pilgrimage. We determined by our eternal will their creation from nothing into being and existence so we could communicate to

* cf. Jn. 19:30 [Ed.]

them our divinity, perfections, and eternal happiness, and thy love, which obliged Me to be born with a nature in which I could suffer and humble Myself to the death of the cross (Philip. 2:8), would not be content or satisfied if it did not invent new means of communicating itself to men according to their capacity and our wisdom and power. These means shall consist of visible and sensible signs proportioned to the sentient condition of men and causing invisible effects in the spiritual and immaterial part of their nature.

475. “For these high ends of thy exaltation and glory, my Lord and Father, in my name and in that of all the poor and afflicted children of Adam I beseech the *fiat* of thy eternal will. If their sins provoke thy justice, their neediness and misery cry out for thy infinite mercy. Along with thy mercy I interpose all the works of my humanity united to my divinity by an indissoluble bond; the obedience by which I accepted a nature capable of suffering unto death; the humility by which I subjected Myself to men and their depraved judgments; the poverty and labors of my life; the affronts of my passion; my death; and the love with which I have accepted all of this for thy glory and to make Thee known and adored by all creatures capable of thy grace and glory. Thou, my Lord and Father, hast made Me the Brother of men and the Head (Col. 1:18) of all the elect who partaking of our divinity shall rejoice with Us for all eternity. As children they are to be heirs with Me of thy eternal goods (Rom. 8:17), and as members (I Cor. 6:15) they can participate in the influence of the Head which I desire to communicate according to the love which as a Brother I have for them; and I desire on my part to draw them with Me to thy friendship and participation in our happiness for which they were formed from their natural head, the first man.

476. “By this immense love I decree, my Lord and Father, that all mortals from now on can be regenerated by the Sacrament of *Baptism* into the fullness of thy friendship and grace, and that they may receive it as soon as they are born to the light; and being unable to express their own will, their desire to be born again* into thy acceptance may be manifested for them by others. From that moment they shall be heirs of thy glory, sealed as children of my Church by an interior and indelible mark, and washed from the stain of original sin; they shall receive the gifts of the virtues of faith, hope and charity, by which they can perform the works of thy children by knowing Thee, hoping in Thee, and loving Thee for thy own Self. They shall also receive the virtues by which they restrain and govern their disorderly and sinful inclinations and be able to know without error the good from the evil. This Sacrament shall be the portal of my Church and the one which makes them capable of the other Sacraments, and for new favors and benefits of our grace. I also decree that after this Sacrament they may receive another upon arriving at the use of reason, *Confirmation*, by which they shall be ratified and confirmed in the holy faith they have professed and must continue to profess, and enabled to defend it with fortitude. And because human frailty easily falls away from the observance of my law, and since my charity will not permit Me to leave them without an easy and opportune remedy, I desire to provide for this the Sacrament of *Penance*, whereby acknowledging their sins and confessing them with sorrow they shall be restored to the state of justice and reinstated in the merits of glory I have promised to them. Thus Lucifer and his minions shall not remain triumphant in having separated them from the state and security in which Baptism placed them.

477. “Justified by means of these Sacraments men shall become capable of the highest participation in my love possible in the exile of their mortal life, namely to receive Me sacramentally in their heart under the species of bread and wine in an ineffable manner. Under

* cf. Jn. 3:3ff. [Ed.]

the species of bread I shall leave my body, and under the species of wine my blood, and in each one of them I shall be really and truly present in entirety. In order to thus give Myself to them I institute this mysterious Sacrament of the *Holy Eucharist* as heavenly nourishment proportioned to the human condition and the state of viators, for whom I shall work these miracles and with whom I shall remain by this means until the end of the coming ages (Mt. 28:20). And so they may have another Sacrament which shall purify and defend them when they reach the end of life, I establish the Sacrament of *Extreme Unction*, which shall also be a pledge of their resurrection in the same bodies sealed by this Sacrament. And because all must be ordered for the sanctification of the members of the Mystical Body of my Church, in which must be maintained the highest harmony and order, giving to each one the position proper to his ministry, I desire the ministers of these Sacraments to have the supreme rank with respect to the other faithful, that of priests, and to provide for this I institute the sacrament of *Holy Orders* in order to mark, distinguish and sanctify them with a particular excellence. And though all of them shall receive it from Me, I desire that it be by means of one head who shall be my Vicar and represent my Person; he shall be the High Priest into whose will I deposit the keys of heaven, and all upon earth must obey him. For the greater perfection of my Church I decree the last Sacrament, *Matrimony*, to sanctify the natural bond established for human propagation. Thus shall all the grades of my Church be enriched and adorned by my infinite merits. This is, eternal Father, my last will, in which I make all mortals inheritors of my merits, linking them together in my new Church wherein my merits shall be deposited.”

478. This prayer Christ our Redeemer made in the presence of the Apostles, but without exterior demonstration. But most blessed Mother, who from her retreat observed and accompanied Him in his prayer, prostrated Herself upon the floor and as his Mother offered to the eternal Father the petitions of her Son. And though She could not add anything essentially meritorious to the works of her most holy Son, nevertheless since She was his Coadjutrix She expanded upon this petition as on other occasions, inciting on her part the mercy of the eternal Father so He would not look upon his Onlybegotten alone, but always accompanied by his Mother. And the Father looked upon them both, graciously accepting the prayers respectively of the Son and Mother for the salvation of men. The Queen performed something else on this occasion because it was left to Her by her most holy Son. In order to understand what this was, it must be remembered, as I mentioned in the preceding chapter, that Lucifer was present at the washing of the feet of the Apostles, and being forced to remain and witness the doings of Christ in the Cenacle he astutely inferred that the Lord had resolved upon some great work for the benefit of the Apostles. Although the dragon felt his forces much diminished and altogether unavailing against the Redeemer, he nevertheless sought with implacable fury and pride to spy out these mysteries for the concoction of future malicious plans. The great Lady perceived these intentions of Lucifer, and knew the foiling of them was left in her hands; therefore, inflamed by zeal and love for the Most High, She as sovereign Queen commanded the dragon and all his squadrons to leave the hall and descend to the depths of hell.

479. To accomplish this the arm of the Almighty gave new power to most holy Mary so neither the rebellious Lucifer nor all his hosts could resist. They were hurled into the infernal caverns, there to remain until they were given new permission to issue forth to be present at the Passion and Death of our Redeemer, by which they were to be entirely vanquished and convinced that Christ was the Messiah and Redeemer of the world, true God and true man. Hence we understand that Lucifer and his demons were present at the legal supper and washing of the feet, and afterwards at the entire Passion of Christ, but they were not present at the institution of the

Holy Eucharist, nor at the Communion then distributed by Christ our Lord. Then the great Queen was raised to a most sublime state of contemplation of the mysteries about to be enacted, and the holy Angels, as to another valorous Judith,* sang to Her of this glorious triumph over the dragon. At the same time Christ our Lord offered to the eternal Father exalted gratitude and praise for the blessings conceded to the human race in consequence of his petition.

480. Thereupon Christ our Lord took into his venerable hands the bread which lay upon the plate, interiorly asking the permission and condescension of the Most High in order to oblige Him that now and ever afterwards, in virtue of the words about to be pronounced by Himself and later to be repeated in his holy Church, He would really and truly become present in the host, Himself yielding obedience to these sacred words. While making this petition He raised his eyes toward heaven with an expression of such sublime majesty that He inspired the Apostles, the Angels, and his Virgin Mother with new and deepest reverence. Then He pronounced the words of consecration over the bread, changing it by transubstantiation into his true body; He then pronounced the words of consecration over the wine, changing it into his true blood. At the very moment Christ our Lord finished pronouncing the consecration the eternal Father responded: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I delight, and shall take my delight to the end of the world; and He shall be with men during all the time of their banishment." The same was confirmed by Person of the Holy Ghost. The most sacred humanity of Christ, in the Person of the Word, gave tokens of most profound veneration to the Divinity contained in the Sacrament of his body and blood. The Virgin Mother in her retreat prostrated Herself on the ground and adored her Son in the Blessed Sacrament with incomparable reverence. Then the Angels of her guard, along with all the Angels of heaven, likewise adored the Blessed Sacrament, and after them the holy souls of Enoch and Elias adored the Host in their own name and in the name of the ancient Patriarchs and Prophets of the natural and written laws respectively.

481. All the Apostles and disciples (except the traitor Judas), because they had faith in this great mystery, joined the Blessed Mother in adoring Jesus Christ in the sacred Host with profound humility and reverence according to each one's disposition. Then our great High Priest Christ raised up his own consecrated body and blood so all who were present at this first Mass could adore them in a special manner, which they also did. In this elevation his most pure Mother, St. John, Enoch and Elias were more enlightened to understand in a special manner how under the species of bread is his sacred body, and under the species of wine his blood; how in both species Christ is present whole and entire, living and true, due to the inseparable union of his most holy soul with his body and blood; how with his body, blood and soul is united the divinity of the Person of the Word, which is united with the Person of the Father and of the Holy Ghost; and how by this concomitant and inseparable union and existence of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, there exists in the Blessed Sacrament all three Persons of the Holy Trinity with the perfect humanity of Christ our Lord. All this was most highly understood by the heavenly Lady, and by the others according to their degree. They understood also the efficacy of the words of consecration, now endowed with such divine power that as soon as they are pronounced with the intention of doing what Christ did at that time by any priest since that time over the proper material, they would change the bread into his body and the wine into his blood, leaving the accidents to subsist in a new way and without their proper subject. They saw that this change would take place so certainly and infallibly that heaven and earth would sooner fall to pieces

* cf. Judith 13:22-26; Epistle, Sept. 15, Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary [Ed.]

than the effect of these words of consecration, when pronounced in the proper manner by the sacerdotal minister of Christ, would ever fail.

482. The heavenly Queen understood also by a special vision how the sacred body of Christ our Lord is hidden under the accidents of bread and wine without changing them, nor the accidents changing Him, for neither can the body be the subject of the accidents, nor can the accidents be the form of the body. The accidents retain the same extension and qualities both before and after consecration, occupying the same place as is perceived in the consecrated host. The sacred body is present in an invisible manner, even though retaining its grandeur and integrity without mixing one part with another. The entire body remains in the whole host, and all of it in every particle of the host, without the body expanding or limiting the host, or the host altering the body; for neither is the extension of his body correlative with the accidental species, nor do the species depend upon the sacred body for their existence. They therefore have a totally different mode of existence, and the body penetrates the quantity of the accidents without being impeded by them. Although naturally by its extension the head would demand a different place and space than the hands, and these from the chest, and so on for the rest, yet by divine power the consecrated body places itself with its integral grandeur in one and the same place, since then it has no correlation with the spatial extension it would naturally occupy, being freed from all these relations, because without them it can still remain a quantitative body. Moreover, Christ need not remain in only one place, or in only one host, but in many hosts at the same time, though there be innumerable consecrated hosts.

483. She likewise understood that the sacred body, though having no natural dependence upon the accidents in the manner declared above, nevertheless does not remain in them sacramentally beyond the time of the corruption of the species of the bread and wine, for thus it was ordained by the most holy will of Christ, the Author of these miracles; hence there is a voluntary dependence of the miraculous coexistence of his body and blood with the incorrupt accidents. When the accidents are corrupted and destroyed by the natural causes which alter them, as happens after Holy Communion when they are altered and corrupted by the heat of the stomach, or by other causes which have the same effect, then God, in the last instant when the species are ready for their last transformation, creates another substance.* This new substance, now devoid of the existence of the sacred body, nourishes the body of the communicant[†] and enters into the human form of existence, which is the soul. This miracle of the creation of a new substance which receives the altered and corrupted accidents is consequent upon the determination of the divine will not to have his body remain in the corrupted accidents, and also due to the order of nature, since the substance of man cannot be nourished and grow except by some other substance which being newly added to it prevents the accidents from continuing to exist.

484. All these and other wonders the right hand of the Almighty perpetuated in this most august Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. All of them the Mistress of heaven and earth understood and comprehended profoundly. In like manner St. John, the Fathers of the ancient law, and the Apostles understood much regarding these mysteries. Knowing the great and public benefit contained therein for all men, the most pure Mother foresaw also the ingratitude of mortals in regard to this ineffable Sacrament established for their benefit, and She resolved to atone with all the powers of her being for our shameless and ungrateful behavior. She took upon Herself the duty of rendering gratitude to the eternal Father and to his most holy Son for such a rare wonder

* cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Part III, Question 77, Article 5 [Ed.]

† cf. Jn. 6:56

and favor granted to the human race. This She did for the remainder of her life, and many times She shed tears of blood pressed from her most ardent Heart in order to satisfy for our reprehensible and apathetic forgetfulness.

485. Still greater was my admiration when Jesus our Good, having raised the most holy Sacrament for the adoration of the disciples (as I said before), divided it by his own sacred hands, and first received Holy Communion Himself as the first and High Priest. Recognizing Himself as man inferior to the Divinity which He was now to receive in this his own consecrated body and blood, He humbled Himself, shrank within Himself, and had as it were a trembling of the sensitive part of his being, thereby manifesting two things: First, the reverence with which his sacred body must be received; and the other, the sorrow He felt due to the temerity and audacity of many men who would come to receive and handle this most exalted and eminent Sacrament. The effects of Holy Communion in the body of Christ our Good were divine and admirable, for during a short space of time the gifts of glory overflowed into his body just as on mount Tabor; yet this wonder was manifested only to his most pure Mother, though St. John, Enoch and Elias knew something of it. This was the last consolation He permitted his humanity to enjoy in its inferior part during his earthly life, and from that moment until his death He rejected all such alleviation. The Virgin Mother, by a special vision, also understood how Christ her divine Son received Himself in the Blessed Sacrament and what was the manner of its presence in his divine Heart. All this caused inestimable affection in our Queen and Lady.

486. While receiving his own body and blood Christ our Lord composed a canticle of praise to the eternal Father and offered Himself in the Blessed Sacrament as a sacrifice for human salvation. He took another part of the consecrated bread and delivered it to St. Gabriel the archangel, who carried and communicated it to most holy Mary. By having such a privilege conferred on one of their number the holy Angels considered themselves sufficiently recompensed for being excluded from the sacerdotal dignity and yielding it to man. The privilege of merely having even one of their number hold the sacramental body of their Lord and true God filled them with a new and immense joy. The great Lady and Queen with abundant tears was awaiting Holy Communion when St. Gabriel with innumerable other Angels arrived; and from the hand of the holy Prince She received the Blessed Sacrament, the first after her most holy Son, imitating Him in his humility, reverence, and holy fear. The most holy Sacrament was deposited in the bosom and above the Heart of most holy Mary as in the most legitimate shrine and tabernacle of the Most High. There the ineffable Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist remained deposited from that hour until after the Resurrection, when St. Peter said the first Mass and consecrated anew, as I shall relate in its place (*Cor.* 112). The Almighty desired to have it so for the consolation of the great Queen and in order to fulfill his promise that He would remain with the children of men *even to the consummation of the world* (Mt. 28:20), for after his death his most holy humanity could not remain in his Church any other way than by his consecrated body and blood. This true manna was deposited in most pure Mary as in the living Ark, together with the whole evangelical law, just as formerly its prophetic figures were deposited in the ark of Moses (Heb. 9:4). The sacramental species were not consumed or altered in the bosom of the Lady and Queen of heaven until the next consecration. Having received Holy Communion the Blessed Mother gave thanks to the eternal Father and to her most holy Son in new canticles in imitation of what the divine incarnate Word had done.

487. After the heavenly Princess received Holy Communion, our Savior distributed the Blessed Sacrament to the Apostles (Lk. 22:17), commanding them to distribute it among themselves and receive it as He had; by these words He conferred upon them the priestly dignity, and they began

to exercise it by giving Communion each to himself. This they did with the greatest reverence, shedding copious tears and worshipping the body and blood of our Lord whom they had received. They were established with the preeminence of seniority in the power of the priesthood as being founders of the evangelical Church (Eph. 2:20). Then St. Peter, at the command of Christ our Lord, took other consecrated particles and administered Holy Communion to the two ancient fathers, Enoch and Elias. This Holy Communion so rejoiced these two holy men that they were encouraged anew in their hope of the beatific vision, which by the divine will was deferred for them for so many ages, and they were strengthened to live on in this hope until the end of the world. Having rendered most fervent and humble gratitude to the Almighty for this blessing, they were brought back to their place of abode by the hands of the holy Angels. The Lord desired to work this miracle in order to pledge Himself to include the ancient natural and written laws in the benefits of the Incarnation, Redemption, and general resurrection, since all these mysteries were contained in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. By thus communicating Himself to the two holy men, Enoch and Elias, who were still in their mortal flesh, these blessings were extended over the human race such as it existed under the natural and written laws, while all the succeeding generations were to be included in the new law of grace with the Apostles at the head. This was all well understood by the two holy men Enoch and Elias, and in the name of the rest of the saints of the natural and written laws they gave thanks to their and our Redeemer for this hidden benefit.

488. Another very secret miracle occurred at the Communion of the Apostles. The perfidious and treacherous Judas, hearing the command of his Master to receive Holy Communion, resolved in his unbelief not to comply, but if he could do so without being observed he determined to keep the sacred body and take it to the priests and Pharisees in order to give them a chance of incriminating his Master by showing them, by this great crime, what He had called his own body, or if he could not succeed in this to perform some other profanation of the divine Sacrament. The Lady and Queen of heaven, who by a most clear vision was observing all that happened, and who knew the interior and exterior dispositions of the Apostles along with their actions and affections in receiving Holy Communion, saw also the execrable intentions of the obstinate Judas. All the zeal for the glory of her Lord, existing in Her as his Mother, Spouse and Daughter, was aroused in her most pure Heart. Knowing it was the divine will that She make use of her power as Mother and Queen, She commanded the holy Angels to extract from the mouth of Judas the consecrated bread and wine and replace them from whence they had been taken. On this occasion She took upon Herself the defense of the honor of her divine Son so Judas would not heap such an ignominious injury upon Christ the Lord. The holy Angels obeyed their Queen, and when it was the turn of Judas to communicate they withdrew the consecrated species one after the other, and purifying them from their contact with Judas, the most wicked of living men, they secretly replaced them. Thus the Lord shielded the honor of his malicious and obstinate Apostle to the end. This was attended to by the Angels in the shortest space of time, and the others then received Holy Communion, for Judas was neither the first nor the last to communicate. Then our Savior rendered gratitude to the eternal Father, and by this He ended both the legal and the Sacramental supper in order to begin the mysteries of his Passion, which I shall relate in the following chapters. The Queen of heaven attended to all full of wonder and joyful praise, magnifying the Most High.

INSTRUCTION GIVEN TO ME BY THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN.

489. O my daughter! Would that the believers in the holy Catholic faith opened their hardened and stony hearts in order to attain a true understanding of the sacred and mysterious blessing of the Holy Eucharist! If they would only detach themselves, root out and reject their earthly inclinations, and restraining their passions apply themselves with living faith to study by the divine light their great happiness in thus possessing their eternal God in the Blessed Sacrament, and being able by its frequent reception to participate in the full effects of this heavenly manna! If they would only worthily esteem this precious gift, begin to taste its sweetness, and share in the hidden power of their omnipotent God! Then nothing would ever be lacking to them in their exile. In this, the happy age of the law of grace, mortals have no reason to complain of their weakness and their passions, since in this bread of heaven they have at hand strength and health. It matters not that they are tempted and persecuted by the demon, for by receiving this Sacrament frequently they are enabled to overcome him gloriously. The faithful are to blame for neither paying attention to this mystery nor availing themselves of its infinite power in all their necessities and labors as their remedy provided by my most holy Son. I tell thee truly, my dearest, that Lucifer and his demons have such a fear of the presence of the Blessed Sacrament that to approach it causes them more torments than to remain in hell itself. Although they do enter churches in order to tempt souls, they as it were do violence to themselves, suffering cruel pains in the hope of destroying a soul and drawing it to commit sin, especially in the sacred places and in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Their wrath against the Lord and against souls alone could induce them to expose themselves to the torment of his real sacramental Presence.

490. Whenever He is carried through the streets they usually fly and disperse in all haste, and they would not dare to approach those who accompany Him if by their long experience they did not know they will induce some to forget the reverence due to their Lord. Therefore they make special efforts to tempt the faithful in the churches, for they know what great injury they can thereby do to the Lord himself, who in his sacramental love is there waiting to sanctify men and receive the return of his most sweet and untiring love. Hence thou canst also understand the strength of those who prepare themselves to partake of this bread of angels,* and how the demons fear the souls who receive the Lord worthily and devoutly, and who strive to preserve themselves in this purity until the next Communion. But there are very few who live with this intention, and the enemy is ceaselessly alert in striving to throw them back into their forgetfulness, distraction and indifference, in order not to encounter such powerful weapons arrayed against them. Write this admonition in thy heart; and since without thy merit the Almighty has ordained for thee to receive Holy Communion daily, seek by all possible means to preserve thyself in good dispositions from one Communion to the other. It is the will of the Lord and my own that with this sword thou fight the battles of the Almighty in the name of the holy Church against the invisible enemies, for in our days they are heaping affliction and sorrow upon the Mistress of the nations, while there is none to console Her or take it to heart (Lam. 1:1-2). For this cause do thou weep and rend thy heart in sorrow,† for while the omnipotent and just Judge is so incensed against Catholics for having provoked his justice by such immeasurable and repeated sins even under the banner of the holy faith they profess, none are found to consider, weigh and fear the damage, nor to dispose themselves for the remedy they could solicit by proper

* cf. Ps. 77:25; Wis. 16:20 [Ed.]

† cf. Joel 2:13; Epistle, Ash Wednesday [Ed.]

reception of the divine Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, approaching with contrite and humble hearts and by my intercession.

491. This sin, which in any of the children of the Church is most grave, is most reprehensible in the wicked and unworthy priests, since the irreverence with which they treat the most holy Sacrament of the Altar has given occasion for the other Catholics to undervalue it. If the people see that the priests approach the divine mysteries with fear and reverential trembling,^{*} all know they must treat and receive their sacramental God in like manner. Those who so honor Him shall shine in heaven like the sun among the stars, for the glory of the humanity of my divine Son shall reflect a special light in those who have behaved well toward Him in the Blessed Sacrament and have received Him with all reverence, whereas this shall not happen to those who have not frequented this holy table with devotion. Moreover the devout will bear on their breast, where they have so often harbored the Holy Eucharist, most beautiful and resplendent inscriptions showing they were most worthy tabernacles of the holy Sacrament. This shall be a great accidental reward for them, and a source of jubilation and admiration for the holy Angels and all the rest of the Blessed. They shall also enjoy the special favor of being able to penetrate deeper into the mystery of the presence of the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and understand all the rest of the wonders hidden therein. This shall be such a privilege that it alone would suffice for their eternal happiness, even if there was no other enjoyment in heaven; moreover, the essential glory of those who have worthily and devoutly received the Holy Eucharist shall in several respects exceed the glory of many martyrs who have not received the body and blood of the Lord.

492. I also desire thee, my dearest daughter, to hear from my own mouth what were my sentiments when in mortal life I was about to receive Holy Communion. In order to better understand what I say, reflect on all I have commanded thee to write about my gifts, merits and labors in life. I was preserved in my conception from original sin, and at that instant I received the knowledge and vision of the Divinity, as thou hast often recorded. I knew more than all the saints; I surpassed the highest Seraphim in love; I never committed any fault; I constantly practiced all the virtues in a heroic degree, and in the least of them I was greater than all the saints in their highest perfection;[†] the intention and object of my actions were most exalted, and my habits and gifts were noble without measure; I imitated my most holy Son most closely; I labored most faithfully; I suffered with eagerness, and cooperated with the doings of the Lord exactly as was proper for me; I ceased not to exercise my love and gain new and supereminent merits of grace. Yet despite all of this I thought myself fully repaid by being allowed to receive his most sacred body in the Holy Eucharist, though I did not judge myself worthy of such an exalted benefit. Now consider what thy sentiments must be, and those of the rest of the children of Adam, on being admitted to the reception of this admirable Sacrament. And if for the greatest of saints one Holy Communion is a superabundant reward, what must the priests and the faithful think when they are allowed to receive Him so frequently? Open thine eyes to the deep darkness and blindness of men, and raise thine eyes to the divine light in order to understand these mysteries. Look upon all thy works as insufficient, all thy sufferings as most insignificant, and all thy gratitude as falling far short of what thou dost owe^Δ for such an exquisite blessing as that of possessing in the holy Church Christ my divine Son present in the Blessed Sacrament in order to enrich all the faithful. And if thou dost not have worthy recompense to offer Him for this

^{*} cf. par. 485 above; Philip. 2:12 [Ed.]

[†] cf. Ps. 86:1-3 [Ed.]

^Δ cf. *Lauda Sion* (*Sequence* of the Mass for Corpus Christi), v. 2 [Ed.]

blessing and the others thou dost receive, at least humble thyself to the dust and remain prostrate upon it; confess thyself unworthy in all the sincerity of thy heart. Magnify the Most High, bless and praise Him, preserving thyself at all times worthy to receive Him and to suffer many martyrdoms in return for such a favor.