

CHAPTER VIII

Manifesting the Miracle by which the Sacramental Species were Preserved in Most Holy Mary from One Communion to the Next, and the Manner of the Operation of This Miracle after She Descended from Heaven to the Church.

118. Thus far I have only touched upon in passing the favor mentioned above (19, 32), reserving its more abundant manifestation for the proper place, which is here, so such a great wonder of the Lord in favor of his most loving Mother would not remain in this History without the enlightenment which may be desired by our piety. My own limited powers of explanation grieve me, for not only am I ignorant of infinitely more than what I perceive concerning it, but even what I know I can describe only in most unsatisfactory and inadequate terms, and by language falling far short of my conceptions; nevertheless, I dare not pass over in silence the benefits conferred upon our great Queen by the right hand of her divine Son after She had descended from heaven to take charge of his Church on earth, for if they were great and ineffable before that time, they now increased in eminent variety and exhibited at the same time the infinite power of Him who conferred them and the immense capacity of that singular and chosen creature who received them.

119. To explain this rare and prodigious blessing, that the sacramental body of Christ in the sacred species were preserved continually in the bosom of most holy Mary, it is not necessary to seek for another cause than that underlying all the other favors with which God distinguished this great Lady, namely that it was his holy will and according to his infinite wisdom by which He performs according to measure and weight all that is appropriate (Wis. 11:21). Christian prudence and piety will be content to know as a reason that God had singled this mere creature out to be his natural Mother, and hence She alone of all creatures deserved this distinction. Since this wonder was unique and without parallel, it would be apathetic ignorance to seek proofs of what the Lord did with his Mother by comparing it with what He did or ever shall do in other souls, since Mary alone rises and is elevated above the common order of all. Yet though all this is true, the Lord nevertheless desires us by the light of faith and by other enlightenments to seek the reasons for the propriety and equity according to which the powerful arm of the Almighty wrought these wonders in his most worthy Mother, so in them we may know and bless Him in Her and through Her, and so we may understand how secure all our hope and destiny is in the hands of such a powerful Queen, in whom her Son has deposited all the force of his love. In accordance with these truths I shall explain what has been made known to me of this mystery.

120. Mary most holy lived thirty-three years in the company of her Son and true God, and from the time when He was born of her virginal womb to the time of his death on the Cross She never left Him. She nursed Him, served Him, followed and imitated Him, conducting Herself always as a Mother, Daughter and Spouse, as a most faithful Servant and Friend. She enjoyed the sight of Him, his conversation, his doctrine, and the favors which, together with all these merits and gifts, She received in this mortal life. Christ ascended into heaven, and the force of his love for Her, and right reason itself, demanded that He take to heaven with Him his most loving Mother in order not to be deprived of Her there, nor She in this world of his presence and company. Yet the most ardent love which both of them had for men dissolved in a manner these bonds of union, inducing our most kind Mother to return to the world in order to establish the Church, and moving the Son to give his consent to her absence from Him during this time. Yet as the Son of God was powerful enough to recompense Her for this privation to a certain extent, it became for

Him an obligation of his love to make such a recompense, and the fulfillment of this obligation would not have been so recognized or made so manifest if He denied his purest Mother the favor of accompanying Her upon earth while He remained seated in the glory of the right hand of his Father. Beyond this, the most ardent love of the Blessed Mother, having been accustomed and nourished by the presence of her purest Son, would have inflicted upon Her insufferable violence if for so many years She could not enjoy Him present in the manner possible while She was remaining in the holy Church Militant.

121. Christ our Savior satisfied this desire completely by continuing his sacramental presence in the Heart of his most happy Mother while She lived in the Church on earth after His Majesty ascended into heaven. By this sacramental presence He in a certain way abundantly recompensed Her for that which She had endured when He yet lived with Her in this world, for in those times He often absented Himself in order to attend to the work of our salvation, and thus her Heart was afflicted with apprehensions or fears roused by the works in which He had to engage. And even when He returned He could not remain always in her company, and when He was present She was unable to forget the Passion and Death of the cross which awaited Him. This sorrow sometimes cast a shadow on the joy of possessing Him and attending upon Him. But when He was established at the right hand of his eternal Father, having endured the torment of his Passion, that same Lord and Son maintaining his sacramental presence in her virginal bosom, then the heavenly Mother enjoyed his presence without fear or disturbance. In the Son She continually enjoyed the presence of the entire Trinity by that manner of vision which I have described before (32). Thus was fulfilled and literally realized what this great Queen says in the Canticles: *I held Him, and will not let Him go, until I bring Him into the house of my Mother the Church. There I will give Him a cup of spiced wine and new wine of my pomegranates* (Cant. 3:4; 8:2).

122. By this favor granted to his most holy Mother the Lord fulfilled his promise made to the Church in his Apostles that He would be with them to the end of time (Mt. 28:20). He had already anticipated the fulfillment of this promise even at that time when He resolved to ascend into heaven, for He had remained sacramentally present in his Mother since the Last Supper as I said in the second Part (*Tran.* 794). But it would not have been entirely fulfilled after his Ascension if He had not wrought this new miracle in the Church, for in those first years the Apostles had no temple or proper arrangement for continually preserving the Holy Eucharist, and therefore they always consumed the sacred species entirely on the day of consecration. Most holy Mary alone was the sanctuary and the temple in which for some years the most Blessed Sacrament was preserved so the Church would not be deprived of the incarnate Word even for one moment from the time when He ascended into heaven until the end of the world. Although He was not present there in that Tabernacle for the use of the faithful, yet He was there for their benefit and for other most glorious ends, since the great Queen prayed and petitioned for all the faithful in the temple of her own Heart. She adored the sacramental Christ in the name of the whole Church, while by means of this Lady and the presence He maintained in Her Christ was present and united to the Mystical Body of the faithful. Above all this great Lady was the cause of the supreme fortune of that age, for by thus sheltering within her bosom her sacramental Son and God, just as He is now harbored within the sanctuaries and tabernacles, He was continually adored with highest reverence and piety by most holy Mary, and was never offended as He is now in our churches. In Mary He was satiated with the delights which He desired to enjoy for the eternal ages among the children of men (Prov. 8:31), and since all the assistance rendered to the Church was rendered with these delights as an object, the Lord could not have gained this end more fully than by remaining sacramentally present in the Heart of his most pure Mother. She

was the most legitimate sphere of the divine love, and as it were the proper element and center in which her sacramental Son rested, and all other creatures outside of most holy Mary were in comparison to Her foreign to Him, since this conflagration of divine love, which always burns with infinite charity, found in them no room or sphere for its flames.

123. From the understanding which has been given to me of the mystery of the love of Christ our Lord for his most holy Mother, and the force with which He was drawn toward Her, I would go so far as to say that if He had not found this way of remaining with Her in the sacramental species He would have come down from the right hand of the Father to the world in order to render companionship to his Mother while She sojourned with his Church (680); and if it had been necessary for the heavenly mansions and the celestial courtiers to be deprived of the attendance and presence of the most holy humanity for that time, He would have considered that of less importance than to be deprived of the company of his Mother. It is no exaggeration to say this, and we must all confess that in Mary most pure the Lord found a correspondence and degree of love more conformable to his will than in all the Blessed combined, and consequently his personal love for Her exceeded his love for all others. If the shepherd of the Gospel parable leaves the ninety-nine sheep in order to go in search of only one that is lost (Mt. 18:12), and if we nevertheless dare not say of Him that He leaves the greater for the less, it should not cause wonder in us that this divine shepherd Jesus left all the rest of the Saints in order to be in the company of that most sincere Sheep who clothed Him with her own nature and raised and nourished Him as a Mother. Without doubt the eyes of his beloved Spouse and Mother would attract Him in swiftest flight from those heights (Cant. 6:4) to that earth where He had lived and to which He had before this come for the remedy of the children of Adam, toward whom He was less attracted but rather repelled by their sins and the necessity of suffering for them. If He now descended to live with his most loving Mother it would not be to suffer and die, but to enjoy the delights of her company; however, it was not necessary to abandon heaven, since by descending in sacramental form He could satisfy both his own love and that of his most blessed Mother, in whose Heart as upon his couch (Cant. 3:7) this true Solomon could take up his rest without leaving the right hand of his eternal Father.

124. The manner of operating this miracle was as follows: When most holy Mary received the most Blessed Sacrament, the sacramental species retreated from the common place of the stomach where the natural food is mingled and digested, and instead of being mixed up or digested with even the little nourishment sometimes taken by the great Lady, the species withdrew into the Heart of Mary as if in repayment of the blood which She had given up at the Incarnation of the Word and from which was formed the sacred humanity for hypostatic union with the Word, as has been explained in the second Part (*Inc.* 137). The Communion of the Holy Eucharist is called an extension of the Incarnation,* and therefore it was appropriate for the Blessed Mother to share in this participation in a new and singular manner, since She also concurred in the Incarnation of the Word in a miraculous and extraordinary manner.

125. The heat of the heart in the perfect living beings is very great, and in man it is certainly not less due to his greater excellence, nobility of nature, and prolonged life and activity, and the providence of nature supplies it with air or ventilation for its refreshment and to temper that innate ardor which is the origin of the ardor of the whole animal. However, though in the noble constitution of our Queen the ardors of her Heart were intense, and though the affections and operations of her inflamed love still more increased them, nevertheless the sacred species while

* cf. Pope Leo XIII, *Mirae caritatis* (May 28, 1902) [Ed.]

lodged in her Heart were not changed or consumed; moreover, although multiplied miracles were required in order to preserve them, they are not to be thought scarce in this unique creature, who was altogether a prodigy of miracles which were summarized in Her. This favor began at her first Communion (*Tran.* 486), and through the preservation of the species continued until the second Communion received at the hands of St. Peter on the Octave of Pentecost (112); then as the new species took their place in her Heart, the former ones were consumed. By this miraculous exchange the previous sacramental species continued to yield their place to those She received in her Communions until the end of her life, and thus She was never deprived of her Son and true God present sacramentally.

126. Through this privilege, and that of the continual and abstractive vision of the Divinity mentioned before, most holy Mary was so deified, and her operations and faculties were raised so far above human conception, that it is impossible to understand them in this mortal life, nor to have of them the proportionate concept which we have of other things, nor can I find terms in order to explain the little which has been manifested to me. After She returned from heaven She was entirely renewed and transformed regarding the use of her senses, for on the one hand She was absent from her divine Son for whom She had worthily employed them when He was sensibly present, and on the other hand She felt and perceived Him resting in her Heart whereon all her attention was centered. From the day on which She descended She made a new treaty with her eyes* and exercised a new dominion and sway over them, not permitting any terrestrial and visible images to enter except those necessary for the government of the Church and the discharge of her duties. For her interior contemplations She made no use of these images, neither was it necessary for Her to make use of them for her discursive thought in the interior workshop of her mind, these images being merely stored in her memory and understanding, for her interior meditations and contemplations were actuated by infused images and the science connected with the abstractive vision of the Divinity in the manner in which the Blessed know and see in God, in that voluntary mirror, that which they desire to see manifested in itself. In this manner our Queen understood the will of God in all her works, and She did not make use of her sight in knowing or learning any of these things, though She used her eyes to see where She was going or with whom She was conversing in all the sincerity of her Heart.

127. The sense of hearing She used somewhat more frequently, for it was necessary to listen to the Apostles and the faithful in what they reported regarding the state of souls, and of the Church and its needs and spiritual advancement, in order to answer them and give them her instruction and counsel. Yet She governed her sense of hearing so completely that it was affected by no sound or word which disagreed in the least with the sanctity and perfection of her state, or which was not necessary for the practice of charity toward her fellow men. Of her sense of smell She made no use for terrestrial odors or for the common objects of that sense, but through the intervention of the Angels She was regaled by the celestial perfumes which were perceived by Her in praise of the Creator. She experienced a great change also in the sense of taste, for She was made aware that after her sojourn in heaven She could live without earthly nourishment, though that was not commanded Her but left to her own free will. Hence from that time She ate very seldom and sparingly, and this only at times when St. Peter or St. John asked Her, or in order to avoid astonishment in others at not seeing Her eat. But when She thus out of obedience or humility tasted food She perceived not the common taste or savor of it, and thus her sense did not react upon it any more than if She had eaten some apparent or glorified substance. Her touch

* cf. Job 31:1 [Ed.]

likewise conformed to this kind of change, for through it She perceived little of that which She touched and had in it no sensible delight; however, She felt the contact of the sacramental species in her Heart, to which She ordinarily attended with feelings of admirable sweetness and joy.

128. All these privileges in regard to the senses were granted Her at her petition, for She consecrated anew all of them and her faculties to the greater glory of the Most High and for producing in Her the plenitude of virtue, sanctity, and the most eminent perfection. And though throughout her whole life, from the first instant of her Immaculate Conception, She had complied with all the requirements of a faithful servant (Mt. 25:20) and a prudent dispenser of the plenitude of her graces and gifts (as appears from the whole course of this History), yet after She ascended to heaven with her Son She was perfected in all things and furnished by the divine omnipotence with new faculties of operation. Though She was yet a pilgrim, since She did not yet enjoy the beatific vision as a comprehensor, nevertheless the operations of her senses participated in and were more similar to those of the saints glorified in body and soul than to the operations of the other viators. There is no other way of comparing this state so singular, so blessed and divine, in which our great Queen and Lady returned from heaven to govern the holy Church.

129. To this exalted activity of the sensible faculties corresponded her interior wisdom and knowledge, for She knew the will and decrees of the Most High in all that She was obliged or desired to do, in what time, manner, order and circumstance each work was to be accomplished, with what words and under what arrangements, so in this She was not excelled even by the angels, who assist us without ever losing sight of the Lord. The great Queen practiced the virtues with such high wisdom that She excited their admiration, for they saw that no other mere creature could exceed Her or could arrive at that summit of sanctity and perfection which they saw Her attain. One of the things which filled Her with highest joy was the adoration and reverence exhibited by the supernal spirits to the Lord sacramentally present in her bosom; the same was also shown by the saints whenever She ascended into heaven in the company of her most holy Son, bringing Him along enclosed in her Heart in the sacramental species, and this was a sight furnishing new joy and jubilation for all the Blessed. The great Lady, in being received by Christ into heaven, would offer Him the reverence which the holy angels gave to the most Blessed Sacrament in her bosom, and this She did as a result of her knowledge of the rudeness and baseness of mortals in venerating the sacred and consecrated body of the Lord. In recompense for this fault which all of us have committed She offered to His Majesty the worship and reverence given to his sacramental presence by these celestial princes, who most worthily knew this mystery and venerated it without deception or negligence.

130. Sometimes the body of her most holy Son manifested itself to Her glorious within Her; at other times with the natural beauty of his most holy humanity; at other times, and almost continually, were made known to Her all the miracles contained in the most august Sacrament of the Eucharist.* All these wonders, and many others which we cannot understand in this corruptible life, most holy Mary enjoyed, sometimes becoming manifest to Her in themselves, sometimes in the abstractive vision of the Divinity, and along with the images of the Divinity were presented to Her all that She was to do for Herself and for all the Church. What was most consoling to Her was to perceive the joy and pleasure of her divine Son in remaining sacramentally present in her most sincere Heart, which without a doubt (according to what was

* cf. *Transfixion* 481ff. [Ed.]

made known to me) was greater than to be in the company of the saints. O extraordinary, singular and exalted privilege! Thou by Thyself wast more pleasing to the Creator than the high heavens He had made for his habitation (Ps. 113:16). He who cannot be contained in those illimitable spaces (III Kg. 8:27) measured and enclosed Himself in Thee alone, and found a pleasant throne and resting place not only in thy virginal womb but in the immensity of thy capacity and love. Thou alone never existed without being a heaven, and Thou wast never without God from the moment He gave Thee being, and with the plenitude of complacency He shall rest in Thee through all the ages of his interminable eternity. Let all the nations know Thee, let all generations bless Thee (Lk. 1:48), and let all creatures magnify Thee, for in Thee they know and praise their true God and Redeemer, since through Thee alone He has visited us and repaired our unfortunate fall (Ib. 68).

131. Who among mortals, or even among the angels, can describe the conflagration of love burning in the most pure Heart of this great Queen so full of wisdom? Who can comprehend the impetus of the river of the Divinity which inundated and absorbed this City of God (Ps. 45:5)? What affections, what movements, what acts did She perform from all the virtues and gifts She received without measure or rate, operating with all the force of these graces without equal? What prayers, what petitions did She offer up for the holy Church? What charity did She have towards us? What goods did She merit and acquire for us? Only the Author of this prodigious wonder could know them. But let us on our part raise our hopes, enliven our faith, and incite our love in union with this kind Mother; let us solicit her intercession and assistance, since He who is her Son and our Brother will deny nothing to Her whom He has so singled out for his love, as I have described and will describe farther on.

*INSTRUCTION GIVEN ME BY THE GREAT QUEEN
OF THE ANGELS, MARY MOST HOLY.*

132. My daughter, of all thou hast until now manifested of my life and works thou hast been well informed, considering thou art a mere creature. Besides me there is no other created being which thou canst better use as thy model and original for thy greater sanctity and perfection. But now thou hast entered upon the description of the supreme state of virtue attained by me in mortal life, and this favor should oblige thee to renew thy desires and direct all the attention of thy faculties toward the perfect imitation of all I teach thee. It is time, my dearest, and there is reason for thee to deliver thyself entirely over to my will in what I seek of thee. And in order for thee to be more encouraged to attain this good, I desire thee to take notice that when my most holy Son enters sacramentally into those who receive Him with veneration and fervor, having prepared with all their powers to receive Him with purity of heart and without lukewarmness, in such souls, though the species of the Blessed Sacrament are consumed, His Majesty remains with them by another special mode of grace by which He assists, enriches and governs them in return for the fine hospitality they have shown Him. Few are the souls who participate in this blessing, because many knowing of it approach the holy Sacrament without the proper disposition, as if by haphazard or habit, and without being solicitous for the reverence and holy fear they owe Him. But as thou art now informed of this secret, and since by the orders of thy superiors thou receivest Him every day, I desire thee to prepare thyself worthily each time and thus partake of this great blessing.

133. For this end thou must avail thyself of the remembrance of what I did, and by it regulate thy aspirations, thy fervor, thy love, and all that is necessary to prepare thy heart as a temple and

habitation of thy Spouse and highest King. Labor then to collect all thy powers within thyself. Before and after receiving Holy Communion observe all that pertains to the fidelity of a spouse, and especially must thou place a guard over thine eyes and a watch over all thy senses (Ps. 140:3) so no profane or foreign image enters into the temple of the Lord. Keep thy heart entirely pure and unspotted,* for when it is impure or preoccupied the plenitude of divine light and wisdom cannot enter (Wis. 1:4). All this thou shalt know from what God has shown thee if thou hast attended to it with an upright intention. Even supposing thou cannot exempt thyself from all interaction with creatures, it is appropriate for thee to hold thy senses in great subjection and not permit them to introduce the image of any sensible thing by which thou wouldst not be assisted in striving after the most holy and pure of the virtues. Separate the precious from the vile (Jer. 15:19), the truth from deceit. In order for thee to imitate me perfectly I desire from now on for thee to attend to the choice thou art to make in all things great or small so thou mayest err in none, perverting the order of right reason and of divine light.

134. Consider attentively the common deception of mortals and the woeful damage they suffer, for in the decisions of their will they ordinarily are moved solely by what they perceive through the senses, and they immediately proceed to act upon their choice without further consideration or counsel. Since the sensible impressions immediately move the animal passions and inclinations, it is evident that men do not act according to right reason but according to the impulse of passion excited by the senses and their objects. Thus he who is offended and considers only the injury and pain caused is right away moved to vengeance; and he who follows only his hankering after someone else's property he sees decides on injustice. In the same manner act so many unfortunates who follow the concupiscence of the eyes, the movements of the flesh, and the pride of life (I Jn. 2:16), because these are the only things offered by the world and the demon. In their blind deception they follow darkness as their light (Jn. 3:19), taste the bitter as sweet, take deadly poison for a remedy of their souls, and hold that for wisdom which is nothing but diabolical and earthly ignorance. Do thou guard thyself against these pernicious errors, and never resolve on anything or govern thyself by anything that is merely sensible or arising from sensible impressions, nor pursue the advantages held out through them. In thy actions take counsel first of all from the interior knowledge and light communicated to thee by God so thou mayest not go blindly forward,† and He shall always grant thee sufficient guidance. Immediately seek the advice of thy superiors and teachers if thou canst do so before making thy choice. And if thy superior or teacher is not at hand, seek counsel from others, even inferiors, for this is more secure than to follow thy own will which may be disturbed and blinded by passion. This is the rule to be followed in thy works, especially the exterior ones, pursuing them with recollection, with secrecy, and according to the demands of the occasion and fraternal charity as presented to thee. In all of them it is necessary not to lose out of sight the north star of interior light while navigating in the profound gulf of thy interaction with creatures, where there is always danger of perishing.

* cf. James 1:27 [Ed.]

† cf. Mt. 15:14 [Ed.]