

The Veneration of the Saints

SOMETIMES our non-Catholic friends suspect us of sinning against the first commandment because of the honor we pay to the saints. This accusation would be true if we paid to the saints the divine worship that is due to God alone. But we do not, not if we are in our right minds. Even the honor which we pay to Mary, the Blessed Mother of God, surpassing as it does the reverence we pay to the angels and the other canonized saints, is still of an entirely different nature from the adoration which we give, and *may* give, only to God.

When we pray to our Blessed Mother and to the saints in heaven (as we should), and beg their help, we know that whatever they may do for us will not be done of their own power, as though they were divine. Whatever they may do for us will be done for us by God, through their intercession. If we value the prayers of our friends here upon earth and feel that their prayers will help us, then surely we have the right to feel that the prayers of our friends in heaven will be even more powerful. The saints are God's chosen friends, heroes in the spiritual combat. It pleases God to encourage our imitation of them and to show his own love for them by dispensing his graces through their hands. Nor does the honor we show to the saints detract one whit from the honor that is due to God. The saints are God's masterpieces of grace. When we praise them, it is God—who made them what they are—whom we honor most. The highest honor that can be paid to an artist is to praise the work of his hands. We honor the statues and the pictures of the saints,

yes; and we venerate their relics. But we are not *adoring* these representations and relics. No more so than a hardheaded businessman is adoring the picture of his sainted mother before which he places a fresh flower every morning, or the lock of whose hair he carries reverently in his wallet. And when we pray before the crucifix or the image of saint, in order to better fix our mind upon what we are doing, we are not so stupid (let us hope) as to suppose that the plaster or wooden image has in itself any power to help us. That *would* be a sin against the first commandment, which forbids the making of images in order to adore them. But we do not, of course, adore them....



How then could anyone profess to have a genuine love for Jesus Christ without also having a love for his Mother? The objection that honor given to Mary is honor taken from God; the criticism that Catholics have added a second mediator to the "one mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus," shows how little understood is the truth of Christ's genuine humanness. Because Jesus loves Mary not merely with the impartial love which God has for every soul, not merely with the special love which God has for holy souls; Jesus loves Mary with the perfect human love which only the Perfect Man could have for the perfect Mother. He who belittles Mary does Jesus no service. On the contrary, he who dishonors Mary by reducing her to the stature of a "good woman," dishonors God in one of his most noble works of love and mercy.

Commentary from The Faith Explained by Fr. Leo J. Trese (1902-1970).

Proper Prayers of the Mass in the Extraordinary Form Votive Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary

(after the Presentation and before Holy Thursday)



Let us go therefore with confidence to the throne of grace: that we may obtain mercy. (Heb. 4:16)

INTROIT (Sedulius)

SALVE, sancta Pares, enixa puérpera Regem: qui cælum, terrámque regit in sæcula sæculórum, allelúia, allelúia. *Psalm.* Eructávit cor meum verbum bonum: dico ego ópera mea regi. *V.* Glória Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculórum. *R.* Amen. — Salve, sancta Pares ...

HAIL, holy Parent, that didst bring forth the King who ruleth Heaven and earth for ever and ever, alleluia, alleluia. *Ps. 44. 2.* My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak of my works to the King. *V.* Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. — Hail, holy Parent ...

COLLECT

CONCÉDE nos fámulos tuos, quæsumus, Dómine Deus, perpétua mentis et córporis sanitate gaudere, et gloriósa beátæ Mariæ semper Virginitatis intercessióne, a præsentí liberári tristítia, et ætérna pérfrui lætítia. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

GRANT to us Thy servants, we beseech Thee, O Lord God, that we may enjoy perpetual health of mind and body: and through the intercession of blessed Mary ever Virgin may be delivered from present sorrow and possess eternal joy. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who with Thee liveth and reigneth in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end.

LESSON

From the Book of Ecclesiasticus, 24. 14-16.

FROM THE BEGINNING, and before the world, was I created, and unto the world to come I shall not cease to be, and in the holy dwelling place I have ministered before Him. And so was I established in Sion, and in the holy city likewise I rested, and my power was in Jerusalem. And I took root in an honorable people, and in the portion of my God his inheritance, and mine abode is in the full assembly of the saints.

GRADUAL

BLESSED and venerable art thou, O Virgin Mary: who without loss of purity wert found to be the Mother of our Savior. Virgin Mother of God, He whom the whole world cannot hold enclosed Himself in thy womb, and became man.

Alleluia, alleluia. (*Num. 17. 8.*) The rod of Jesse hath blossomed: a Virgin hath brought forth God and man: God hath restored peace, reconciling in Himself the lowest with the highest. Alleluia.

After Septuagesima, the following TRACT is prayed in place of the Alleluia and V. Virgo Dei...

REJOICE, O Virgin Mary, thou alone hast destroyed all heresies. Who didst believe the words of the archangel Gabriel. Whilst a virgin thou didst bring forth God and man: and after childbirth thou didst remain a virgin. O Mother of God, intercede for us.

GOSPEL

Continuation of the holy Gospel according to St. Luke, 11. 27-28.

AT THAT TIME, as Jesus was speaking to the multitudes, a certain woman from the crowd, lifting up her voice, said to Him: Blessed is the womb that bore Thee and the paps that gave thee suck. But He said: Yea rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.

AB INÍTIO, et ante saecula creata sum, et usque ad futurum saeculum non desinam, et in habitatione sancta coram ipso ministravi. Et sic in Sion firmata sum, et in civitate sanctificata similiter requievi, et in Jerusalem potestas mea. Et radicavi in populo honorificato, et in parte Dei mei hereditas illius, et in plenitudine sanctorum detentio mea.

BENEDICTA et venerabilis es, Virgo Maria: quae sine tactu pudoris inventa es mater Salvatoris. V. Virgo Dei Genetrix, quem totus non capit orbis, in tua se clausit viscera factus homo.

Alleluia, alleluia. V. Virgo Jesse floruit: Virgo Deum et hominem genuit: pacem Deus reddidit, in se reconcilians ima summis. Alleluia.

GAUDE, Maria Virgo, cunctas haereses sola interemisti. V. Quae Gabrielis Archangeli dictis credidisti. V. Dum Virgo Deum et hominem genuisti: et post partum, Virgo, inviolata permansisti. V. Dei Genetrix, intercede pro nobis.

IN ILLO TEMPORE: Loquente Jesu ad turbas, extollens vocem quaedam mulier de turba, dixit illi: Beatus venter, qui te portavit, et ubera quae suxisti. At ille dixit: Quinimo beati qui audiunt verbum Dei, et custodiunt illud.

OFFERTORY

FELIX namque es, sacra Virgo Maria, et omni laude dignissima: quia ex te ortus est sol justitiae, Christus Deus noster.

FOR THOU art happy, O holy Virgin Mary, and most worthy of all praise: because from thee arose the sun of justice, Christ our God.

SECRET

TUA, Domine, propitiatione, et beatae Mariae semper Virginis intercessionem, ad perpetuam atque praesentem haec oblatio nobis proficiat prosperitatem et pacem. Per Dominum ...

BY THY gracious mercy, O Lord, and the intercession of blessed Mary ever Virgin, may this offering be of avail to us for welfare and peace now and for evermore. Through our Lord ...

PREFACE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

VERE dignum et justum est, aequum et salutare, nos tibi semper, et ubique gratias agere: Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, aeterna Deus. Et te in Veneratione beatae Mariae semper Virginis collaudare, benedicere et praedicare. Quae et Unigenitum tuum Sancti Spiritus obumbratione concepit: et virginitatis gloria permanente, lumen aeternum mundo effudit Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum. Per quem majestatem tuam laudant Angeli, adorant Dominationes, tremunt Potestates. Coeli, caelorumque Virtutes, ac beata Seraphim, socia exultatione concelibrant. Cum quibus et nostras voces, ut admitti jubeas, deprecamur, supplici confessione dicentes: — Sanctus.

IT is truly meet and just, right and for our salvation, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to Thee, holy Lord, Father almighty, eternal God: and that we should praise and bless and proclaim Thee in the Veneration of the Blessed Mary ever Virgin: who conceived Thine only-begotten Son by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, and the glory of her virginity still abiding, gave forth to the world the eternal Light, Jesus Christ our Lord: through Whom Angels praise Thy Majesty, Dominations worship, Powers stand in awe. The Heavens and the hosts of heaven with blessed Seraphim unite, exult, and celebrate; and we entreat that Thou wouldst bid our voices too be heard with theirs, singing with lowly praise: — Sanctus.

COMMUNION

BEATA viscera Mariae Virginis, quae portaverunt aeterni Patris Filium.

BLESSED is the womb of the Virgin Mary, which bore the Son of the Eternal Father.

POSTCOMMUNION

SUMPTIS, Domine, salutis nostrae subsidiis: da, quaesumus, beatae Mariae semper Virginis patrocinis nos ubique protege: in cujus veneratione haec tuae obtulimus majestati. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum ...

O LORD, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who have received these aids unto salvation, may be always and everywhere protected by the intercession of blessed Mary ever Virgin, in whose honor we offered this Sacrifice to Thy Majesty. Through our Lord Jesus Christ ...