

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 The Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday

(after Christmas and before the Purification)



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

INTROIT (Ps. 44. 13, 15, 16)

VULTUM tuum deprecabuntur omnes divites plebis: adducuntur Regi virgines post eam: proximæ ejus adducuntur tibi in lætitia et exultatione. *Psalm.* Eructavit cor meum verbum bonum: dico ego opera mea Regi. *V.* Glória Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen. — Vultum tuum deprecabuntur ...

ALL the rich among the people shall entreat Thy countenance: after her shall virgins be brought to the King: her neighbors shall be brought to thee in gladness and rejoicing. *Ps. ibid. 2.* My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak 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. — All the rich among the people ...

COLLECT

DEUS, qui salutis æternæ, beatæ Mariæ virginitate fecunda, humano generi præmia præstitisti: tribue, quæsumus; ut ipsam pro nobis intercedere sentiamus, per quam meruimus auctorem vitæ suscipere, Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum: Qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus Sancti ...

O GOD, who by the fruitful virginity of blessed Mary hast bestowed upon mankind the rewards of eternal salvation: grant, we beseech Thee, that we may experience her intercession for us, through whom we have been made worthy to receive the Author of Life, Jesus Christ Thy Son, our Lord: Who liveth and reigneth with Thee ...

EPISTLE

From Blessed Paul the Apostle to Titus, 3. 4-7.

DEARLY BELOVED: the goodness and kindness of God our Savior appeared: not by the works of justice which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost, whom He hath poured forth upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior: that, being justified by His grace, we may be heirs according to hope of life everlasting: in Christ Jesus our Lord.

GRADUAL (Ps. 44. 3, 2)

THOU art beautiful above the sons of men: grace is poured abroad in Thy lips. *Ÿ*. My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the king: my tongue is the pen of a scrivener that writeth swiftly.

Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. After childbirth thou didst remain a virgin: O Mother of God, intercede for us. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Continuation of the holy Gospel according to St. Luke, 2. 15-20.

AT THAT TIME the shepherds said one to another: Let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see this word that is come to pass, which the Lord hath showed to us. And they came with haste: and they found Mary and Joseph, and the Infant lying in the manger. And seeing they understood of the word that had been spoken to them concerning this Child. And all that heard wondered: and at those things that were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

CARÍSSIME: Appáruit benignitas et humanitas Salvatoris nostri Dei: non ex operibus justitiæ, quæ fecimus nos: sed secundum suam misericordiam salvos nos fecit per lavacrum regeneratiõnis et renovatiõnis Spiritus Sancti, quem effudit in nos abunde per Jesum Christum Salvatorem nostrum: ut justificati gratia ipsius, heredes simus secundum spem vitæ æternæ: in Christo Jesu Domino nostro.

SPECIÓSUS forma præ filiis hominum: diffûsa est grátia in lábiis tuis. *Ÿ*. Eructávit cor meum verbum bonum, dico ego ópera mea regi: lingua mea cálamus scribæ velóçiter scribentis.

Allelúia, allelúia. *Ÿ*. Post partum, Virgo inviolata permansisti: Dei Génitrix, intercede pro nobis. Allelúia.

IN ILLO TËMPORE: Pastóres loquebántur ad invicem: Transeámus usque Béthlehem, et videámus hoc verbum, quod factum est, quod Dóminus osténdit nobis. Et venérunt festinántes, et invenérunt Mariam: et Joseph, et infántem pòsitum in præsepío. Vidéntes autem cognovérunt de verbo, quod dictum erat illis de púero hoc. Et omnes, qui audierunt, miráti sunt: et de his, quæ dicta erant a pastóribus ad ipsos. María autem conservábat ómnia verba hæc, cónferens in corde suo. Et revérsi sunt pastóres glorificántes, et laudántes Deum in omnibus, quæ audierant, et viderant, sicut dictum est ad illos.

OFFERTORY

FELIX namque es, sacra Virgo María, et omni laude dignissima: quia ex te ortus est sol justitiæ, 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, Dómine, propitiatióne, et beátæ Mariæ semper Virginis intercessióne, ad perpétuam atque præsentem hæc oblátio nobis proficiat prosperitatē et pacem. Per Dóminum ...

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, æquum et salutáre, nos tibi semper, et ubique grátias ágere: Dómine sancte, Pater omnipotens, æternæ Deus. Et te in Veneratióne beátæ Mariæ semper Virginis collaudáre, benedicere et prædicáre. Quæ et Unigénitum tuum Sancti Spiritus obumbratióne concépit: et virginitátis glória permanénte, lumen ætérnum mundo effudit Jesum Christum Dóminum nostrum. Per quem majestátem tuam laudant Ángeli, adorant Dominatiónes, tremunt Potestátes. Cæli, cælórumque Virtútes, ac beáta Séraphim, sócia exsultatióne concélebrant. Cum quibus et nostras voces, ut admitti júbeas, deprecámur, súplici confessióne dicéntes: — 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

BEÁTA viscera Mariæ Virginis, quæ portavérunt ætérni Patris Filium.

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

POSTCOMMUNION

HÆC nos commúnio, Dómine, purget a crimine: et, intercedente beáta Virgine Dei Genitricæ Mariæ, cæléstis remédii fáciat esse consórtes. Per eúndem Dóminum nostrum ...

MAY this Communion, O Lord, cleanse us from guilt: and through the intercession of the blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, make us sharers of the heavenly remedy. Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son ...