

Instructions and Devotions for Communion.

LET a man prove (or try) himself, says St. Paul (1 Cor. xi. 28), and so eat of that bread, and drink of that chalice. This proving or trying one's self is the first and most necessary preparation for the holy Communion; and consists in looking diligently into the state of one's soul, in order to discover what indispositions or sins may lie there concealed, and to apply a proper remedy to them, by sincere repentance and confession; lest otherwise, approaching the Holy of Holies with a soul defiled with the guilt of mortal sin, we become "guilty of the body and blood of Christ, and receive judgment to ourselves, not discerning the Lord's body" (1 Cor. xi.). For this reason we go to confession before Communion, in order to clear our souls from the filth of sin.

The person that is to receive the blessed sacrament must be also fasting, at least from midnight, by the command of the Church, and by a most ancient and apostolical tradition, ordaining, that in reference to so great a sacrament, nothing should enter into the body of a Christian before the body of Christ. The case of danger of approaching death is excepted, when the blessed sacrament is received by way of *viaticum*.

Besides this preparation of confession and fasting, the person that proposes to go to Communion must endeavour to attain the best devotion he is able, in order to dispose his soul for worthily receiving so great a guest. To this end he is recommended:

1. To think well on the great work he has in hand; to consider attentively who it is he is going to receive, and how far he is from deserving such a favour; and to implore, with fervour and humility, God's grace and mercy. And this should be the subject of his meditations and prayers for some

days beforehand, and more particularly the night before his Communion, and the morning he receives.

2. To propose to himself a pure intention, viz. the honour of God, and the health of his own soul; and in particular, that by worthily receiving Christ in this heavenly sacrament he may come to a happy union with him, according to that of S. John, vi. 57, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him."

3. To meditate on the sufferings and death of his Redeemer; this sacrament being instituted to this end, that we should "shew forth the death of Christ until he come" (1 Cor. xi. 26).

4. To prepare himself by acts of virtue, more especially of faith, love, and humility; that so he may approach to his Lord with a firm belief of his real presence in this sacrament, and of that great sacrifice which he heretofore offered upon the cross for our redemption, of which he here makes us partakers; with an ardent affection of love to him who has loved us so much, and who, out of pure love, gives himself to us; and with a great sentiment of his own unworthiness and sins, joined with a firm confidence in the mercies of his Redeemer.

Here follow one or two forms and methods of preparation for the holy Communion. They should be used as *aids* to the exercise of our thoughts and the kindling of our affections, and not as substitutes for our own efforts. They point out the proper line of thought and subjects for reflection, and if used carefully and meditatively, will be found of great assistance. But no forms, however perfect in themselves, would be good for us without much care and effort on our own parts. More than one form is given, as a variety is useful for different minds, and also for the same mind at different times.

A MEDITATION BEFORE COMMUNION.

Consider, 1st, that Jesus Christ our Lord, whom we receive in this blessed sacrament, is called in Scripture "the Lamb which was slain from the beginning of the world" (Apocalypse xiii. 8), because, from the very beginning of the world, there was no way of coming at God's mercy or grace but by faith in a Redeemer to

come, and by the merits of his future death and passion. Hence Christ crucified was, from the beginning of the world, the great object of the devotion of the patriarchs and prophets: for him they constantly sighed; him they regarded in all their sacrifices; which were indeed so many figures of him, and of his death. All these figures were to have an end when Christ himself, the very Truth, came in person into the world, and offered himself upon the cross, a sacrifice for the sins of the world. But still his death and passion is to be the perpetual object of the devotion of all his children and servants, even to the end of the world; not now as prefigured in shadows and types, but as commemorated and celebrated in the eucharistic sacrifice and sacrament, containing and exhibiting in very truth our great High Priest and Victim, Jesus Christ. For the ancient figures have now passed away, and the truth has succeeded in their place; and that same Fountain of all sanctity, who of old communicated himself to his servants spiritually by faith, now gives himself to us verily and indeed in these heavenly mysteries. For this manner of communicating himself was best becoming the new law; which is a law of love, a law of grace, and a law of truth. O my soul! admire and adore the riches of the bounty and goodness of thy God and Saviour, who gives thee in this sacrament so great a gift, that heaven itself has nothing greater. Embrace his love, but let it be with a suitable return of love; and see thou prepare thyself worthily to receive so great a visit. Oh, take care to open wide thy heart, that it may be capable of holding those treasures which he brings with him, and which he desires to impart to thee.

Consider, 2dly, the figures by which God was pleased in the Old Testament to foreshew this sacrament; especially these three, the tree of life, the paschal lamb, and the manna from heaven. The *tree of life*, which God planted in the midst of the earthly paradise, had that excellent property, that if sin had not banished us from that happy abode, by feeding on the fruit of it we should have been maintained in a constant vigour, strength, and health, and have never died. How well

does the blessed eucharist answer this noble figure! in which we feed upon life itself in its very fountain, and by frequently and worthily approaching to it, receive a copious and constant supply of heavenly grace for the maintaining of the vigour, strength, and health of the soul; that so we may never incur the second death, but may pass from life to life; from the life of grace to the life of glory; from life concealed under sacramental veils, to life seen and enjoyed, without shadow or change, for all eternity.

The *paschal lamb*, which was first offered in sacrifice to God on the evening in which the children of Israel were delivered from the bondage of Egypt, and then was, by God's command, eaten by all the faithful, was also a figure of the blessed eucharist, and of the true Lamb of God, there communicated to us; even that Lamb, which was first offered in sacrifice for our eternal redemption from the bondage of the infernal Pharaoh, and is now received by all the faithful in these heavenly mysteries, for a perpetual commemoration of this our redemption, and a daily application of the fruit of it to our souls. Oh, let us confidently run to this Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world! Let us receive with all affection this Christian passover! Let us embrace this victim of our redemption, this new sacrifice of the new covenant, the covenant of life and of love! Let us sprinkle ourselves with this blood of the New Testament, that so the destroying angel may have no power to hurt us.

Another figure of the blessed eucharist was the *manna from heaven*, with which the children of Israel were wonderfully fed during their forty years' sojourning in the wilderness, before their coming to the land of promise. This food was in many ways miraculous, but nothing in comparison with that living bread, that bread of life, which is given us in the divine mysteries; which comes down from heaven in order to carry us thither, to the true land of promise, the land of the living; and which nourishes our souls to life eternal. O heavenly manna! O bread of angels! Thou art my true and only support during this my mortal pilgrimage. Oh, let my

soul always hunger after thee ! Let me ever relish thy hidden sweetness !

Consider, 3dly, the mysteries which we celebrate in this thrice blessed sacrament and sacrifice. Here the whole passion and death of Christ is solemnly acted, as a most sacred tragedy, by himself in person. Here the Lamb of God presents himself as slain to his eternal Father ; and his blood most powerfully pleads in our behalf. Here the death of our Lord, the fountain of all our good, plentifully flows into our souls, and ever lives and brings forth in us the fruit of life. Here the triumphs of our crucified King, his victorious resurrection and glorious ascension, are displayed. Here we receive an assurance of the share that we have in Christ and in his redemption. Here we partake of his Body and of his Spirit. Here we drink of the fountain of life. Here all the members of Christ are happily united with one another, and with their head, in a sacrament of union and love. Here, in fine, we have a most certain pledge of everlasting life, and of the eternal enjoyment of him in our blessed country, who thus lovingly gives himself to us in this place of banishment. O my soul, reverence with awe, and embrace with love, these mysteries, so full of majesty and of love. The High Priest of the Old Testament was but once a year to enter into the inward sanctuary of the temple, called the Holy of Holies ; and then not without divers purifications and sacrifices, and a solemn fast of all Israel. See, then, how pure, how holy, thou oughtest to be, who so often art admitted into the sanctuary of the New Testament,—that is, to these divine mysteries, sanctified by the presence of Jesus Christ himself, the true Holy of Holies, of which that Jewish sanctuary was but a shadow.

Consider, therefore, 4thly, that what most especially calls for our devotion in these most holy mysteries is the real presence of Jesus Christ himself, true God and true man, under the sacramental veils. Bow thyself down, my soul, to adore this sacred truth ; let no proud thoughts of opposition arise in thee against this admirable sacrament ; captivate thy understanding to the obedience of faith ; build thyself upon the express words of Truth

itself, so often repeated in holy writ, and upon the express declaration of the Church of God, against which the gates of hell can never prevail. The glory and merit of faith is to believe what thou canst not see; to acknowledge that the Almighty can do infinitely more than thou canst comprehend; and that no effort of mercy and love can be too great for him who has died for love. See, then, what thy devotion ought to be in consequence of this belief; what profound reverence to so great a Lord, who lies concealed in these tremendous mysteries; what purity of conscience, in order to approach worthily to purity itself; what humility, what love, when thou art admitted to his embraces!

Consider, 5thly, how many ways thy Lord and thy God, the Sovereign Good, who delights to be with the children of men (Prov. viii. 31), communicates himself to thee. In his incarnation and birth he gave himself to be thy companion, and to take upon him all thy miseries. In his death he gave himself to be thy ransom. In this heavenly sacrament he gives himself to be thy food, the comfort and support of thy exile; and in his kingdom above, he designs to give himself for thy eternal reward. Oh, what can he do more to testify his love to thee! As wise as he is, he cannot contrive any thing better for thee; as powerful as he is, he cannot do more for thee than give thee himself. Oh, how true is that saying of the beloved disciple, that God is love! But what dost thou see in me, dear Lord, that can move thee to love such a poor worm, such a wretched sinner, as I am? There can be nothing good in me but what is thy gracious gift: and, alas! I fear I have hitherto abused all thy gifts. It is, then, thy own pure goodness alone that can make thee love me; and thy pure love alone that can make thee communicate thyself to me. Oh, let me, then, be no longer ungrateful to thy love! Let thy divine fire, which thou so much desirest to enkindle upon earth, take hold now of my heart, that I may return thee love for love! Oh, send it now into my soul, that it may prepare for thee a suitable lodging there! Oh, let me henceforward give myself wholly to thee, who so often givest thyself to me!

Consider, 6thly, who it is that thou art to receive in this blessed sacrament, and who thou art that presumest to approach him. He is the great King and Maker of heaven and earth, and the whole creation is as nothing in his sight. He is eternal, immense, and every way infinite in power, in majesty, in beauty, in wisdom, in glory; and thou art but a diminutive worm, made of earth, and full of miseries. He is infinitely pure and holy, in whose sight the very heavens are not clean, and who cannot endure iniquity; and thou art infested with the leprosy of sin. How, then, my soul, shall we dare venture to enter into this inward sanctuary, to draw near the throne of this infinite Majesty, and, unclean as we are, to touch and receive the Holy of Holies? Oza was struck dead for irreverently touching the ark of the covenant; the Bethshamites, for irreverently looking on it; Nadab and Abihu, for offering incense before it with unhallowed fire: and what was this ark (in which were only deposited the tables of the law) in comparison with the Lord and Giver of the law, whom we here approach to? When God was about to give the law, the children of Israel were commanded to be purified, and to keep themselves chaste; and even then to keep at a distance from the mountain, where the Lord appeared in thunder and lightning: only Moses was permitted to ascend to the mountain-top, to converse with the divine Majesty, or rather with an angel speaking in his person. And how shall we, with so little purity, dare to approach this infinite and all-holy Deity, this consuming fire? How shall we, the most unworthy of all sinners, presume to receive this Lord of glory? Must we stay away till we have the presumption to think ourselves worthy? No, certainly; for one of the most necessary dispositions for receiving worthily is to acknowledge and believe our own unworthiness. Or must we, through awe and fear of so great a Majesty, abstain for ever from partaking of these tremendous mysteries? No; for it is no less certain death to stay away from the fountain of life, than to come to it unworthily. What, then, must we do, my soul? We will not run away from our Sovereign Good. No; we will run to him, but it shall be like the humble

publican, like the poor prodigal returning home, like the penitent Magdalen: such as these he never rejects. It shall be with a contrite and humble heart, which he never despises; it shall be with an entire confidence in his infinite goodness and mercy, for no one ever hoped in him and was confounded. Oh, grant us, dear Lord, to approach thee with these good dispositions! and since thou art pleased to invite thyself into so poor, so mean, so wretched a habitation as this of my breast, be pleased first to infuse those graces, those virtues, those dispositions, which may prepare the place for thee; for thou knowest that of myself I can do nothing.

Consider, 7thly, the happy fruits which this divine sacrament produces in those souls which frequent it with due preparation. "The bread that I will give," says our Lord (S. John vi. 52), "is my flesh, for the life of the world." And again, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day." And again, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him." And "He that eateth me shall live by me." And "He that eateth this bread shall live for ever." Wheresoever our Lord comes, he carries about with him all the treasures of life, that is, all grace, love, and holiness; and on his part is ever ready to open these treasures, and to communicate them to those souls which he comes to visit. These treasures are infinite, and so is the love which he bears to us. What gifts, then, what graces may we not expect, if we come with reverence and humility, with love and devotion, to him who is the fountain of life! Here we receive the bread of life for the food and nourishment of our souls. Here we meet with a constant supply of grace, to repair the daily decays caused by our infirmity and corruption; to give us new strength and vigour to walk on in our way through the wilderness of this world to the mountain of God; and to make us continually grow in virtue, till we come to a perfect man, to the measure of the fulness of Christ. Here devout souls taste the sweetness of heaven in its very fountain. Here, seated like Magdalen, at the feet of our Lord, they learn from him heavenly les-

sons, and enjoy his delicious conversation. Aspire after this happiness, O Christian souls, which in some measure makes you enjoy heaven upon earth. If you love Jesus Christ, run to his embraces; if you love yourself, run to your Sovereign Good. But see it be with due preparation, and most especially with faith, with reverence, and with love.

First Method.

DEVOTIONS BEFORE COMMUNION.

An Act of Faith.

My Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I firmly believe that in this blessed sacrament thou art present verily and indeed; I believe that here are thy body and blood, thy soul and divinity. I acknowledge these truths; I believe these wonders; I adore thy power, which hath wrought them; I praise thy infinite goodness, which hath prepared them for me; with David, "I will praise thee, my God, with my whole heart, and will recount all thy admirable works; I will rejoice in thee, and bless thy holy name." In this faith, and with this acknowledgment, I approach this adorable banquet, wherein thou bestowest on me the divine food of thy body and blood. Grant, O blessed Jesus, that I may approach thee with such a profound sense of reverence and humility as is due to thy infinite Majesty. Grant, O Lord, that I may now receive thee with a pure heart, a clean conscience, and a sincere and lively faith. Pardon my sins, which have rendered me most unworthy to approach thee: I hate them, because they are displeasing to thee, my God; I renounce them for ever, and promise to be faithful to thee. Take courage, my soul, raise thyself up; go and receive thy God, and with him all the favours he hath prepared for thee in this most divine sacrament.

An Act of Hope.

In thee, O Jesus, do I place all my hope, because thou alone art my salvation, my strength, my refuge, and the foundation of all my happiness; and were it not for the confidence I place in thy merits, and in the precious blood wherewith thou didst redeem me, I would not presume to partake of this banquet. Encouraged by thy goodness, I come to thee as a poor and infirm sheep to its shepherd; as a sick man to his physician; as a condemned criminal to his powerful intercessor: that, as the true shepherd of my soul, thou mayest strengthen me; heal me, as my physician; and, as my merciful advocate, deliver me from the sentence of sin and death. I, who am an abyss of nothing, invoke thee, who art the abyss of all goodness; for though my sins are innumerable, and very grievous, yet they are but light and trivial when compared to thy boundless mercy, and the infinite ransom of thy blood. Have pity, therefore, on me, O Jesus, and save me, for thou forsakest none that put their trust in thee.

An Act of Charity.

How strong was the force of thy love, my dear Redeemer, when, being about to depart out of this world to thy eternal Father, thou providedst for us this divine banquet, enriched with all heavenly sweetness. It was through the wonderful effects of thy divine goodness that thou didst humble thyself to such an excess for our redemption, as to take upon thee the infirmity of our nature. And is it not through an infinite excess of thy love, that thou hast left us thy body and blood for the food and nourishment of our souls; that, as thou didst unite thyself to our humanity, so we might here be made partakers of thy divinity? In return for this thy infinite love, I desire to love thee, O Lord Jesus, who art my only comfort in this place of banishment, the only hope of my infirm soul, and my happiness, above all else that I can enjoy. Make me to love thee, my God, with my whole heart, with my whole soul, with all my mind, and

with all my strength ; that as every moment is an increase of my life, so it may be also of my love towards thee. I desire, with all the affections and powers of my soul, that as the utmost thanks are due, so they may be returned to thee, by all the faithful, for this divine food, which is our refreshment, support, strength, armour, and defence in all our dangers and distresses ; and that my love may never cease, inflame my heart with the fire of heaven, that it may continue burning, till nature and corruption being weakened and consumed, I may be wholly transformed into thee. Come, O Lord, hasten to release me from the bonds of sin, and prepare me for the blessings thou art now about to bestow on me.

An Act of Desire.

As the wearied hart thirsts after the fountains of water, so doth my soul pant after thee, my Saviour, my Lord, and my God. It ardently longs to drink of those fountains which thy love hath opened for its comfort and relief. Tired with my own evil ways, I return hungry and thirsty, crying out aloud, Have mercy on me, O Son of God, and permit me to taste of thy banquet, that my soul may be refreshed. Oh, that my soul did truly hunger after thee, the bread of angels, the food of blessed souls, and that all that is within me might be delighted with the taste of thy sweetness ! I here despise all human consolations, that I may be comforted by thee, my only good, my God and Saviour, whom I love above all things, and desire to entertain within my breast, with as much devotion and affection as is conceived by thy chosen servants, who now sit at thy table of celestial bliss. And however I may have been hitherto wanting in my duty, or unjust to thee, in misplacing my affections, I desire for ever to renounce my folly and weakness, and from my heart request that, for the future, my joy, my relief, my treasure, and rest, may be entirely centred in thee. May I never desire any thing besides thee ; and may all things seem contemptible and as nothing without thee, O my God.

An Act of Thanksgiving.

Who am I, O God of infinite goodness, that thou shouldst permit me to partake of this bread of angels? How have I found such favour in thy sight, as to be the object of so unspeakable a mercy? Come, all ye angels and saints of God, and I will recount to you what great things our Lord hath done for my soul. He hath raised me out of the dust, and delivered me from the bonds of sin; he hath told me not to be dejected, for that he himself will be my support and my strength; and though I have most unworthily forsaken him by my repeated follies, yet behold he calls me once more, and invites me to partake of the bread of life, that, as he made me, so I may ever live by him. What thanks can I give thee, O merciful Jesus, Saviour of the world? What return shall I make thee for all thou hast done for my soul? Were I to give all I have in acknowledgment of thy love, it would still be as nothing; for thou, Lord, hast plentifully poured forth thyself upon me, and given me even all that thou art; and if, in thanksgiving for thy mercies, I were to lay before thee my body and soul, my life, liberty, and all I possess, what would they be, when compared to the blessings thou hast here bestowed on me; what to the debt I owe, which is in some kind equal to what I receive, infinite as thyself? Thou hast mercifully given thyself to me, for the food of my soul; and now behold I offer thee all that I have, all that I am, all that I possess; to thee I make a full surrender of them all, that, being wholly thine, I may now no longer have any part in myself.

An Act of Humility.

In fervour of spirit and humility of heart I approach thy holy altar, O my God, to implore thy mercy and assistance. I adore thee, divine Jesus, really present in this sacred host; I acknowledge my unworthiness to receive thee; yet encouraged by thy goodness, I venture to follow the impulse of my heart, which powerfully at-

tracts me to thee. "O Lord of Hosts, how lovely are thy tabernacles; my soul longeth and fainteth" for thy possession; for "blessed is the man that trusteth in thee." Thou art the God of all glory; and what am I, and what should I have been, hadst thou not raised me from the grave of sin? Alas! without thee, my soul is a barren land, fertile only in the production of weeds and brambles; but with patient love thou hast come to my assistance, saying, "Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice, for I, the Lord, have done great things" for thee. Ah, merciful Lord! what hast thou left undone to secure my happiness? And now, forgetful of all my past ingratitude, thou invitest me to thy sacred banquet. I come, then, with confidence, because "thou art my God, and hast heard me, and art become my salvation." Oh, "what shall I render unto thee, O Lord, for all thou hast rendered unto me? I will take the chalice of salvation; and I will call upon thy name. I will pay my vows to thee before all thy people; for I am thy servant." I have strayed far from thee, my God, and thou hast displayed the wonders of thy mercy, by recalling me from my wanderings. Oh, perfect thy work of love, by preserving me from ever again forsaking the path of thy commandments; "teach me to do thy will," and strengthen me to fulfil it perfectly.

Humbled, O Lord, at the view of my many miseries, and convinced of my weakness; yet animated with a sincere desire to employ the remainder of my years in repairing my past ingratitude; I fervently implore thy powerful assistance, for, "strengthened by thee, I can do all things;" with humble confidence I approach thy altar, "for with thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light I shall see light." Come, then, O blessed Jesus, to take possession of my heart, in thy adorable sacrament. Come, and give efficacy to my resolution, of living henceforth but for thee, and of devoting all my faculties to the promotion of thy glory. Establish thy dwelling in my soul, that, fertilised by the dew of thy grace, it may produce a rich harvest of holiness and virtue. May thy love be the end of my existence, and the only motive of all my actions; may it be my guide

amidst the dangers of that world wherein thy will hath cast my lot; may it be my light in perplexities, and my counsel in doubts; may it forcibly detach my affections from the things of this world. O adorable Jesus, can there be any real comfort but in thy service; any unalloyed happiness but in the possession of thee? May I henceforth prove my conviction of this truth by constant fervour and undeviating fidelity! Amen.

A Prayer before Receiving.

I approach thy banquet, O Jesus, having nothing to confide in but thy goodness and mercy, being of myself a sinner, destitute of all virtue. I hasten to thee, most compassionate Physician, the fountain of all goodness, that I may be healed. I fly under the wings of thy merciful protection, hoping thou wilt be my Saviour, though I dare not appear before thee as my Judge. To thee I expose all my wounds, to thee I discover all my shame. My sins, I confess, are so many and great as to make me despair, if thou didst not encourage me to hope in thy mercies, which are infinite. Look, therefore, on me with the eyes of compassion, O Lord Jesus Christ, eternal King, God and Man, who wast crucified for the sins of men. Have mercy on me, thou inexhaustible fountain of goodness. Hail, saving Victim, offered on the cross for me and all mankind! Hail, generous and precious blood, flowing from thy wounds, O Jesus, and washing away the sins of the world! Remember thy creature, O Lord, whom thou hast redeemed by thy death. I am truly sorry for my offences, of which I am resolved to amend. Wash away, therefore, all my sins, and blot out my iniquities, that, purified in soul and body, I may worthily approach the Holy of Holies; and grant that thy precious body and blood, which I now, though unworthy, am about to receive, may avail to a full discharge from the guilt of all my crimes, a victory over my evil thoughts, the beginning of a new life, the seed of good works, and a sure protection of soul and body against all the snares of my enemies.

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION.

An Act of Thanksgiving.

I return thee thanks, O eternal Father, for having, out of thy pure mercy, without any desert of mine, been pleased to feed my soul with the body and blood of thine only Son; and beseech thee, that this holy communion may not be to my condemnation, but available to the effectual remission of all my sins. May it strengthen my faith; encourage me in the practice of good works; deliver me from all evil habits and sinful desires; perfect me in charity, patience, humility, obedience, and all other virtues. May it secure me against all the snares of my enemies, visible and invisible; closely unite me to thee, the only true God, and finally settle me in unchangeable bliss, by admitting me, though an unworthy sinner, to be a guest at that divine banquet, where thou, with the Son and the Holy Ghost, art the true light, eternal fulness, everlasting joy, and perfect happiness of all the saints; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O tender and compassionate Lord Jesus, my God and my Saviour, thou art really present in my heart. Humbled before thee, I adore thee with all the powers of my soul, and love thee with all the affections of my heart. When I consider the splendours of thy awful Majesty, I scarcely dare to lift my eyes to thee; but yet thy goodness encourages me to speak to thee of my wants, and open my heart in all confidence before thee. How can I become weary of repeating that I love thee, or more nobly employ the faculties with which thou hast gifted me, than in proclaiming thy praises, and proving my boundless gratitude for thy mercies? My highest ambition is to attain the perfection of thy love; and for this I earnestly pray to thee, reminding thee of thy own promise, that "whatsoever we ask in prayer, believing, we shall receive." Grant me the spirit of perfect obedience to thy commands, and constant fidelity to thy inspirations; as

well as a lively horror, not only of grievous sin, but of every deliberate fault, however small. Assisted by thy grace, O divine Jesus, I desire to offer thee the homage of a heart submissive to thy will; of sincere piety, founded on charity towards thee and my neighbour; of purity of intention in all my actions, and constant recollection of thy divine presence. Thus may I hope to bring forth fruits worthy of eternal life, for thou hast declared that it is only "those who do thy will who shall enter the kingdom of heaven." Shall not so glorious a promise animate my zeal? Happy those who obtain admittance to that abode of peace and glory, where our "God shall wipe away all tears, and death shall be no more; nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow, shall be any more." Even in this life, thou givest a faint idea of the happiness thou hast prepared for those who love thee, filling our souls with a peace which the world cannot give or take away. What felicity awaits us, when we shall see thee face to face, and through a long eternity share thy glory! From my heart, I now exclaim, with those who are prostrate before thy eternal throne, "I give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, who art, and who wast, and who art to come; because thou hast taken to thee great power, and hast reigned." O divine Jesus, reign in my heart for ever, as my King and sovereign Master. Command my desires, subdue my passions, and render my will submissive to thine. I sincerely desire to prove my love for thee; and how can I do so more effectually, than by embracing thy will on all occasions? The thought of the happy eternity which awaits me shall animate my hope, and the remembrance of thy eternal love shall impel me to embrace without hesitation whatever thou shalt command. My study shall be to know thy will, my consolation to adore it, and my joy to fulfil it perfectly. O my God, vouchsafe ever to guide me by thy holy Spirit, for "if thy wisdom be not with me, I shall be nothing." Thou hast fed me with thy sacred body and blood, that, united to thee, I may love thee more fervently, "ever follow that which is good towards all men," and adhere to thee, who "art the way, the truth, and the life." My King, my God, and

my Saviour, may I be faithful to thy graces, may I correspond with thy mercy, may my actions be ever animated by that spirit of faith and love, which will render them acceptable in thy sight, and ensure me a share in the happiness promised to those who faithfully persevere to the end in thy love and service. Amen.

An Act of Adoration.

I praise and glorify thy blessed name, O my God, for the many favours thou hast now bestowed on me, and for all the blessings wherewith thou hast enriched my soul, after the many miseries and wants I have suffered, when, by my pleasures and passions, I had departed from thee. In thy great goodness, thou didst withdraw me from the precipice whither I was running; enlightening me with thy beams, and, by the inspirations of thy grace, inviting me to return. Thou hast pardoned all my sins; and, to crown all these favours, thou hast now come to visit me, that thou mightest abide in me, and I in thee. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. He hath forgiven thee all thy iniquities, and healed all thy infirmities. He hath redeemed thy life from destruction, and crowned thee with mercy and compassion. He hath satisfied thy hunger with good things, and replenished thee with all thou couldst desire. And oughtest thou not to resolve upon a change of life, and, renewing thy strength, grow young like the eagle in his service? Let thy grace, O Lord, be ever at hand to assist me; for the experience of my weakness makes me fearful; and if thou support me not, I shall certainly fall again. Be thou, therefore, my shield and defence. Grant me a firm and constant faith; and strengthen it not only with respect to this mystery, but all other Christian truths and principles of eternal life; that, by the help thereof, I may overcome all such difficulties as I may have to encounter in my journey to that state of bliss for which I was created; and that I may follow the faith of those who, for my example, have gone before me, have tri-

umphed over their enemies, done justice, and obtained the promises.

Of Hope.

I adore thy infinite greatness, O divine Majesty, who fillest both heaven and earth, and art adored by all the blessed spirits, angels, and saints, who, without ceasing, praise and cry out before thee, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth." Is it possible thou shouldst condescend to visit the most unworthy of all thy servants, and desire to dwell within him? If the heavens, nay, the heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee, how much less this habitation, which I have prepared for thy reception! Thou knowest, O blessed Jesus, how to conceal the dazzling splendour of thy glory, and condescend to our weak capacity, that so thou mayest communicate thyself to us the more freely. This thou didst not only at the time of thy adorable incarnation, when thou madest thyself like to us, the more forcibly to attract our love to thee; but also when thou didst institute this mystery, wherein thou gavest thyself to us for the food and nourishment of our souls, the more closely to unite us to thyself, and make us aspire to that celestial banquet thou hast prepared for the blessed in heaven. O God, grant me the grace so eagerly to long after this eternal banquet, that the desire of hereafter enjoying it may make me despise all the goods and pleasures of this life, and labour incessantly to prepare myself, till I am happily admitted amongst its guests. I now desire to wean my heart entirely from all irregular and corrupt affections, that I may place my whole love and confidence in thee alone. For this end, I am firmly resolved to watch over all my actions, to flee from sin, and avoid whatever may be displeasing to thee. I will labour to work out my salvation by observing thy precepts, and as I have resolved, so I hope to be faithful to thee; but this resolution I acknowledge myself unable to perform without the help of thy grace, which I most humbly implore. O Jesus, save me; conduct me through the ways of thy commandments, in which I now begin to walk,

with courage and perseverance. Incline my heart to love thy divine truths; divert my eyes from beholding vain objects; refresh and strengthen me in the paths of holiness; and attract me so powerfully to thyself, that I may at last follow thee to heaven, where thou livest and reignest for all eternity..

An Oblation.

What pledge can I give, O my Saviour, as an earnest of the love which I have now engaged to thee? I have nothing worthy of thee, and if I had, I have nothing but what is thine; but such is thy goodness, that thou art content to accept from us what is already thine own. Wherefore, behold, I here offer to thee my body and soul, which are both now sanctified by thy divine presence; I consecrate them to thee for ever, since thou hast chosen them for thy temple; my body to be continually employed in thy service, and never more to become an instrument of sin; my soul to know thee, to love thee, and be evermore faithful to thee. Bless, O Lord, the offering which I here make thee. "Bless, O Lord, this house." Permit not my body to be any more defiled with sensual delights, nor my soul by a will to commit any mortal sin; for, as I am now resolved to serve thee with body and soul, I will labour to correct their evil inclinations. I will declare war against myself, renounce all my vain pleasures, my passion, my pride, my self-love, my own will, and whatever else may offend thee.

A Prayer for Perseverance.

Preserve, O Lord, for ever in my soul, the holy resolutions wherewith thou hast now inspired me, and grant me grace faithfully to put them in execution. Without thy aid I can do nothing; I therefore earnestly crave thy assistance, to conquer all the difficulties I may meet with in the way of my salvation. Regard me with the eyes of thy mercy; have compassion on my weakness; and strengthen me daily with thy grace.

O glorious Virgin, unite with me in giving thanks to

thy beloved Son, who hath restored me to his grace, and refreshed my soul with the banquet of his most precious body. Offer him all the grateful service thou didst him in this life, to supply the defects of my devotion; and obtain of him that he depart not from me without leaving a large benediction behind him for my soul.

O all ye holy angels, ministering spirits of God, behold the only Son of the eternal Father, whom you adored at his entrance into the world. Intercede with him in my behalf, that I may henceforth serve him with the same spirit and truth wherewith you ministered to him whilst he remained on earth, and with the same cheerfulness wherewith you now obey him in his heavenly kingdom. O all ye men and women, saints of God, behold here within my breast your Lord, the source and reward of all your sanctity and grace, and let your prayers be joined with mine; that by his grace I may follow your steps in the exact performance of every duty, till, abounding in good works, I may at length be admitted into your society, and possess my Jesus for all eternity.

To your Patron Saint.

O great Saint N, whose name has [or names have] been conferred upon me, and under whose patronage I have placed myself, obtain for me grace to fulfil the holy resolutions I have this day made. Help me, by thy powerful intercession, to lead a life conformable to the sacred character I have received, and to imitate the virtues for which thou wast so remarkable. Protect me through all the perils of life, and abandon me not at the awful hour of death. Amen.

The Conclusion.

Graciously hear all my prayers, O good Jesus; hide me within thy wounds, and there protect me from all my enemies. Oh, let nothing ever separate me from thee. Call me to thee at the hour of my death, that, with thy saints, I may praise thee for ever. And now, Lord Jesus, I go from thee for a while, but I trust not without

thee, who art my comfort and the ultimate happiness of my soul. To thy love and protection I recommend myself, as well as my brethren, my relatives, my country, my friends, and my enemies. Love us, O Lord, change our hearts, and transform us into thyself. May I be wholly employed in thee and for thee; and may thy love be the end of all my thoughts, words, and actions, who livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.

ASPIRATIONS FOR SUCH AS HAVE OPPORTUNITY BEFORE OR AFTER COMMUNION, OR WHILE OTHERS ARE COMMUNICATING.

Enlighten the eyes of my soul, O Lord Jesus, with the rays of divine faith and wisdom, that I may ever look on thee as the way, the rule, and example of all my thoughts, words, and actions.

What am I, Lord, or what claim can I have on thy bounty, that thou shouldst thus follow me with thy blessing? Thou hast created me for thyself, and thou alone shalt be the rest and centre of my soul.

Good Jesus, my hope and only happiness, I here return thee thanks for all thy sufferings; and beg that I may ever find a place of refuge in thy sacred wounds against the assaults of all my enemies; imprint the memory of them, I beseech thee, so deeply on my heart, that I may ever love thee; and in all my sufferings never forget what thou hast suffered for me.

Oh, that I could ever remember thee, think of thee, and love thee only. Oh, that my senses were shut against vain and sinful objects, and my mind freed from all fruitless solicitude, that I might ever abide in thee. From henceforth I will with the utmost diligence seek thee, my only good; my desires shall be fixed on thee alone, and all my actions shall be directed to thy glory.

I resign myself into thy hands, O God, desiring that thy holy will may be done in and by me, both now and for ever. Be thou my instructor, director, and helper on all occasions that I may neither do, speak, think, nor

desire any thing but what is according to thy good will and pleasure.

Grant thy servant, O Lord, understanding, that he may learn the way of thy commandments. O Jesus, thou fountain of goodness, direct my steps in thy paths, and teach me to do thy will. Inspire me with courage to take up my cross and follow thee. Disengage my heart from all unprofitable cares and vain affections; and though I dwell among creatures, yet may I ever live in thee and for thee. Grant me true fervour of spirit, and enkindle in my breast the fire of divine love, that I may find no rest but in thee.

How sweet, O Lord, is thy spirit; how pleasant to my ear are the words of thy mouth! Oh, that I could ever be attentive to them, and fulfil thy law. May I die to the world and all its pleasures; and let the greatness of thy love make all that is earthly appear to me as nothing. Protect me against my enemies, and in all danger come to my defence; make haste to help me, O God, and say to my soul, I am thy health and salvation.

As it is in thee, O Jesus, that I live, so it is in thee I desire to die; and, both living and dying, I will ever profess that thou art good, and that thy mercy endureth for ever.

My God, how long dost thou permit me to wander from thee? When wilt thou consume in me all that is corrupt and contrary to thy will? Draw me after thee, I beseech thee, that I may walk cheerfully in the way of thy precepts. Make me according to thine own heart, and let my soul be now thy habitation for ever.

My soul without thee is dry, like earth without water; moisten it, I beseech thee, with the dew of heaven, and grant me thy blessing from the land of the living. Wound my heart with thy love, that it may relish no earthly objects, but entirely depend on thy will.

Into thy hands I surrender myself, O my good God, and, laying aside all private wishes, desire to depend on thee, not only as to the whole state of my body and soul,

but also as to all the accidents and events thou mayest please to appoint for me, asking nothing more but that thy name may be glorified for ever.

I accept all my sufferings and privations from thy hand, convinced that whatever I endure, whether in soul or body, for love of thee, is for my good.

Let nothing be my comfort but thou, my Lord Jesus; nor any thing afflict me but my sins, and whatever is displeasing to thy divine Majesty.

O blessed Jesus, life eternal, by whom I live, and without whom I die, unite me to thyself; that in the embraces of thy holy love and divine will, I may rest for ever.

When shall I behold thee, sweet Lord? When shall I appear before thy face? When shall I see thee in the land of the living? Till then I sigh and bewail my banishment, desiring to be dissolved, and be with thee.

O Jesus, who, by becoming my food in this life, preparest me to feed on thee eternally in the next; who in this divine banquet givest us possession of thy grace here, and a secure pledge of my glory hereafter; have mercy on me, O Lord, and hear my prayer.

As I now adore thee here by faith, under these sacred veils, so may I hereafter behold thee face to face, and eternally rejoice in thy presence.

A Second and Shorter Method.

A PREPARATORY PRAYER,
CONTAINING THE CHIEF ACTS OF DEVOTION PROPER BEFORE
COMMUNION.

§ *Direct your Intention.*

O Lord Jesus Christ, King of everlasting glory! behold I desire to come to thee this day, and to receive thy body and blood in this heavenly sacrament, for thy honour

and glory, and the good of my soul. I desire to receive thee, because it is thy desire, and thou hast so ordained : blessed be thy name for ever. I desire to come to thee like Magdalen, that I may be delivered from all my evils, and embrace thee, my only good. I desire to come to thee that I may be happily united to thee, that I may henceforth abide in thee, and thou in me ; and that nothing in life or death may ever separate me from thee.

§ *Commemorate the Passion of Christ.*

I desire, in these holy mysteries, to commemorate, as thou hast commanded, all thy sufferings ; thy agony and bloody sweat ; thy being betrayed and apprehended ; all the reproaches and calumnies, all the scoffs and affronts, all the blows and buffets, thou hast endured for me ; thy being scourged, crowned with thorns, and loaded with a heavy cross for my sins, and for those of the whole world ; thy crucifixion and death, together with thy glorious resurrection, and triumphant ascension. I adore thee, and give thee thanks for all that thou hast done and suffered for us ; and for giving us, in this blessed sacrament, this pledge of our redemption, this victim of our ransom, this body and blood which was offered for us.

§ *Make an Act of Faith.*

I most firmly believe, that in this holy sacrament thou art present verily and indeed ; that here is thy body and blood, thy soul and thy divinity. I believe that thou, my Saviour, true God and true Man, art really here, with all thy treasures ; that here thou communicatest thyself to us, makest us partakers of the fruit of thy passion, and givest us a pledge of eternal life. I believe there cannot be a greater happiness than to receive thee worthily, nor a greater misery than to receive thee unworthily. All this I most steadfastly believe, because it is what thou hast taught us by thy Church.

§ *Make an Act of Contrition.*

O Lord, I detest, with my whole heart, all the sins

by which I have ever offended thy divine Majesty, from the first moment that I was capable of sinning to this very hour. I desire to lay them all at thy feet, to be cancelled by thy precious blood. Hear me, O Lord, by that infinite love by which thou hast shed thy blood for me. Oh, let not that blood be shed in vain! I detest my sins, because they have offended thy infinite goodness. By thy grace I will never commit them any more: I am sorry for them, and will be sorry for them as long as I live; and according to the best of my power, will do penance for them. Forgive me, dear Lord, for thy mercy's sake; pardon me all that is past; and be thou my keeper for the time to come, that I may never more offend thee.

§ *Make an Act of Divine Love.*

O Lord Jesus, the God of my heart and the life of my soul, as the hart pants after the fountains of water, so does my soul pant after thee, the fountain of life, and the ocean of all good. I am overjoyed at the hearing of these happy tidings, that I am to go into the house of our Lord; or rather, that our Lord is to come into my house, and take up his abode with me. O happy moments, when I shall be admitted to the embraces of the living God, for whom my poor soul languishes with love! Oh, come, dear Jesus, and take full possession of my heart for ever! I offer it to thee without reserve; I desire to consecrate it eternally to thee. I love thee with my whole soul above all things; at least, I desire so to love thee. It is nothing less than infinite love that brings thee to me; oh, teach me to make a suitable return of love!

§ *Humbly beg God's Grace.*

But, O my God, thou knowest my great poverty and misery, and that of myself I can do nothing: thou knowest how unworthy I am of this infinite favour, and thou alone canst make me worthy. Since thou art so good as to invite me thus to thyself, add this one bounty more to all the rest, to prepare me for thyself. Cleanse my

soul from its stains; clothe it with the nuptial garment of charity; adorn it with all virtues, and make it a fit abode for thee. Drive sin and the devil far from this dwelling, which thou art here pleased to choose for thyself, and make me one according to thy own heart; that this heavenly visit, which thou designest for my salvation, may not, by my unworthiness, be perverted to my own damnation. Never let me be guilty of thy body and blood by an unworthy communion. For the sake of this same precious blood, which thou hast shed for me, deliver me from so great an evil! Rather let me die ten thousand deaths, than thus presume to crucify thee again.

§ *Implore the Prayers of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints.*

O all ye blessed angels and saints of God, who see him face to face whom I here receive under these humble veils; and thou most especially ever-blessed Virgin, Mother of this same God and Saviour, in whose sacred womb he was conceived and borne for nine months; I most humbly beg the assistance of your prayers and intercession, that I may in such manner receive him here, in this place of banishment, as to be brought one day to enjoy him with you in our true country, and there to praise him and love him for ever.

ASPIRATIONS AFTER COMMUNION.

Behold, O Lord, I have thee now, who hast all things. I possess thee, who possessest all things, and who canst do all things: take off my heart, then, O my God and my All, from all other things but thee, for in them there is nothing but vanity and affliction of spirit. Let my heart be fixed on thee alone; let me ever repose in thee, for in thee is my treasure, in thee is the sovereign truth, true happiness, and a blessed eternity.

Let my soul, O Lord, feel the sweetness of thy presence. Let me taste how sweet thou art, O Lord! that

being allured by thy love, I may never more run after worldly pleasures; for thou art the joy of my heart, and my portion for ever.

Thou art the Physician of my soul, who healest all our infirmities by thy sacred blood. I am that sick man, whom thou camest from heaven to heal: oh, heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.

Thou art the good Shepherd, who hast laid down thy life for thy sheep; behold, I am that sheep that was lost, and yet thou vouchsafest to feed me with thy body and blood: take me now upon thy shoulders to carry me home. What canst thou deny me, who hast given me thyself? Guide thou me, and I shall want nothing in the place of pasture where thou hast put me, until thou bringest me to the happy pastures of eternal life.

O true Light, which enlightenest every man that cometh into this world, enlighten my eyes, that I may never sleep in death.

O Fire, ever burning and never failing, behold how tepid and cold I am! Inflammé my reins and my heart, that they may be on fire with the love of thee; for thou camest to cast fire upon earth; and what dost thou desire but that it be enkindled?

O King of heaven and earth, rich in mercy, behold I am poor and needy: thou knowest what I stand most in need of; thou alone canst assist and enrich me. Help me, O God, and out of the treasures of thy bounty succour my needy soul.

O my Lord and my God, behold I am thy servant: give me understanding, and excite my affection, that I may know and do thy will.

Thou art the Lamb of God, the Lamb without spot, who takest away the sins of the world: oh, take away from me what may hurt me, and displease thee, and give me what thou knowest to be pleasing to thee, and profitable to me.

Thou art my love and my joy; thou art my God, my portion, and my All; thou art he that will restore my inheritance to me.

O my God and my All, may the sweet flame of thy love consume my soul, that so I may die to the world

for the love of thee, who hast vouchsafed to die upon the cross for the love of me!

ACTS OF DEVOTION, PRAISE, AND THANKSGIVING AFTER
COMMUNION.

O Lord Jesus Christ, my Creator and my Redeemer, my God and my All, whence is this to me, that my Lord, and so great a Lord, whom heaven and earth cannot contain, should come into this poor dwelling, this house of clay of my earthly habitation! Oh, that I could entertain thee as I ought! Thy loving kindness invites me to thy embraces; and I would willingly say, with the spouse in the Canticles, "I have found him whom my soul loveth; I have held him, and will never let him go." But the awe of so great a majesty checks me, and the sense of my great unworthiness and innumerable sins keeps me back. Would that I could embrace thy feet! that, like Magdalen, I could wash them with my tears.

Bow down thyself, with all thy powers, O my soul, to adore the sovereign Majesty which hath vouchsafed to come to visit thee; pay him the best homage thou art able, as to thy first beginning, and thy last end; and perfectly annihilate thyself in the presence of this eternal, immense, infinite Deity. Then pour thyself forth in his presence in praises and thanksgiving; and invite all heaven and earth to join with thee in magnifying their Lord and thine, for his mercy and bounty to thee.

What return shall I make to thee, O Lord, for all thou hast done for me? Behold, when I had no being at all, thou didst create me; and when I was gone astray, and lost in my sins, thou didst redeem me, by dying for me. All that I have, all that I am, is thy gift; and now, after all thy other favours, thou hast given me thyself: blessed be thy name for ever! Thou art great, O Lord, and exceedingly to be praised; great are thy works, and of thy wisdom there is no end; but thy tender mercies, thy bounty and goodness to me, are above all thy works: these I desire to confess and extol for ever.

Bless, then, thy Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within thee praise and magnify his name. Bless thy Lord, O my soul, and see thou never forget all that he hath done for thee. O all ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord, praise and glorify him for ever. O all ye angels of the Lord, bless the Lord, praise and glorify his holy name. Bless the Lord, all ye saints, and let the whole Church of heaven and earth join in praising and giving him thanks for all his mercies and graces to me; and so, in some measure, supply for what is due from me. But as all this still falls short of what I owe thee for thy infinite love, I offer to thee, O eternal Father, the same Son of thine whom thou hast given me, and his thanksgiving, which is infinite in value. Look not, then, upon my insensibility and ingratitude, but upon the face of thy Christ, and with him, and through him, receive this offering of my poor self, which I desire to make to thee.

N.B. Here also may be recited the *Cantic of the Three Children*, the *Te Deum*, and some of the Psalms of praise.

AN OBLATION AFTER COMMUNION.

O Father of mercies, and God of all consolation, how hast thou loved us, to whom thou hast given thy only begotten Son, once for our ransom, and daily for the food of our souls! What can I, a wretched creature, return to thee for this infinite love? Verily nothing else but this same beloved Son of thine, whom thou hast given to me; and surely thou couldst give me nothing greater, or more worthy of thyself. Him, then, I offer to thee, O heavenly Father, with whom thou art always well pleased; him whom thou didst lovingly deliver up to death for me, and hast given me in this most holy sacrament, which we frequent for the everlasting memorial of his death. He is our High Priest and Victim; he is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world; he is our advocate and intercessor. Look down, then, upon him, and for his sake look down upon me, and upon us all. Remember all his sufferings which he endured here

in his mortal life; his bitter anguish, his agony and bloody sweat; all the injuries and affronts, all the blows and stripes, all the bruises and wounds, that he received for us. Remember his death, which thou wast pleased should be the fountain of our life; and, for the sake of his sacred passion, have mercy on us.

O my dear Lord and Saviour, who hast here given me thyself, I would gladly make some suitable return to thee for this infinite love; I would gladly make thee some offering in acknowledgment of this rich present thou hast made me. But alas! thou knowest my poverty; thou knowest I have nothing worthy of thy acceptance; nothing but what, upon a thousand titles, is already thine. But, O my God, such is thy goodness, thou wilt be contented with the little that I can give thee, though it be thy own already; thou askest nothing but my heart, and this I here most willingly offer thee. Oh, be pleased to accept of it, and make it wholly thine for ever. I offer thee here my whole being, my body with its senses, and my soul with all its powers; that as thou hast at present honoured them both by thy presence, so they may both be thy temple for ever. Oh, sanctify and consecrate eternally to thyself this mansion, which thou hast this day chosen for thy abode. I give thee my memory, that it may be for ever recollected in thee; my understanding, that it may be always enlightened and directed by thy truth; and my will, that it may be ever conformable to thine, and ever burn with the love of thee. Oh, take me entirely into thy hands, with all that I have, and all that I am; and let nothing henceforward, in life or death, ever separate me from thee. Amen.

PETITIONS AFTER COMMUNION.

O most merciful Saviour, behold I have presumed to receive thee this day into my house, relying on thy infinite goodness and mercy, and hoping, like Zaccheus, to obtain thy benediction. But, alas, with how little preparation! with how little devotion! From my heart I

beg pardon for my great unworthiness, and for my innumerable sins, which I detest for the love of thee; and I desire to detest them for ever. Oh, wash them all away with thy precious blood, for thou art the Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world; and one drop of this blood, which thou hast shed for us, is more than enough to cancel the sins of ten thousand worlds.

Thou seest, O Searcher of hearts, all my maladies, and all the wounds of my soul. Thou knowest how prone I am to evil, and how backward and sluggish to good. Who can heal all these my evils but thou, the true physician of my soul, who givest me thy body and blood in this blessed sacrament, as a sovereign medicine for all my infirmities, and a sovereign balsam for all my wounds? Dispel the darkness of ignorance and error from my understanding by thy heavenly light; drive away the corruption and malice of my will by the fire of divine love and charity; strengthen my weakness with heavenly fortitude; subdue in me all evil passions, particularly that which is most deeply rooted in me, and is my ruling passion; stand by me henceforward in all my temptations, that I may never more be overcome; remove from me all dangerous occasions; and grant me that I may rather die a thousand deaths than live to offend thee mortally.

O my Jesus, thou art infinitely rich, and all the treasures of divine grace are locked up in thee! These treasures thou bringest with thee when thou dost visit us in this blessed sacrament, and thou takest an infinite pleasure in opening them to us, to enrich our poverty. This it is that gives me confidence to present thee now with my petitions, and to beg of thee those graces and virtues which I stand so much in need of, as thou knowest. Oh, increase and strengthen my belief of thy heavenly truths; and grant that henceforward I may ever live by faith, and be guided by the maxims of thy Gospel. Teach me to be poor in spirit, and take off my heart from the love of these transitory things, and fix it upon eternity: teach me, by thy divine example, and by thy most efficacious grace, to be meek and humble of heart, and in my patience to possess my soul. Grant that

I may ever keep my body and soul chaste and pure; that I may ever bewail my past sins, and by a daily mortification, restrain all irregular inclinations and passions for the future. Above all things teach me to love thee, to be ever recollected in thee, and to walk always in thy presence; teach me to love my friends in thee, and my enemies for thee; grant me grace to persevere to the end in this love, and so to come one day to that blessed place where I may love and enjoy thee for ever.

Have mercy also on my parents, friends, and benefactors, and on all those for whom I am in any way bound to pray, that we may all love thee and faithfully serve thee. Have mercy on thy whole Church, and on all the clergy, and religious men and women, that all may live up to their callings, and sanctify thy name. Give thy grace and blessing to all princes and magistrates, and to all Christian people; convert all unbelievers and sinners, and bring all strayed sheep back to thy fold; particularly have mercy on N and N, &c.

O blessed Virgin, Mother of my God and Saviour. recommend all these my petitions to your Son. O all ye angels and saints, citizens of heaven, unite your prayers with mine: you ever stand before the throne, and see him face to face whom I here receive under veils; be ever mindful of me, and obtain from him, and through him, that with you I may bless him and love him for ever. Amen.

