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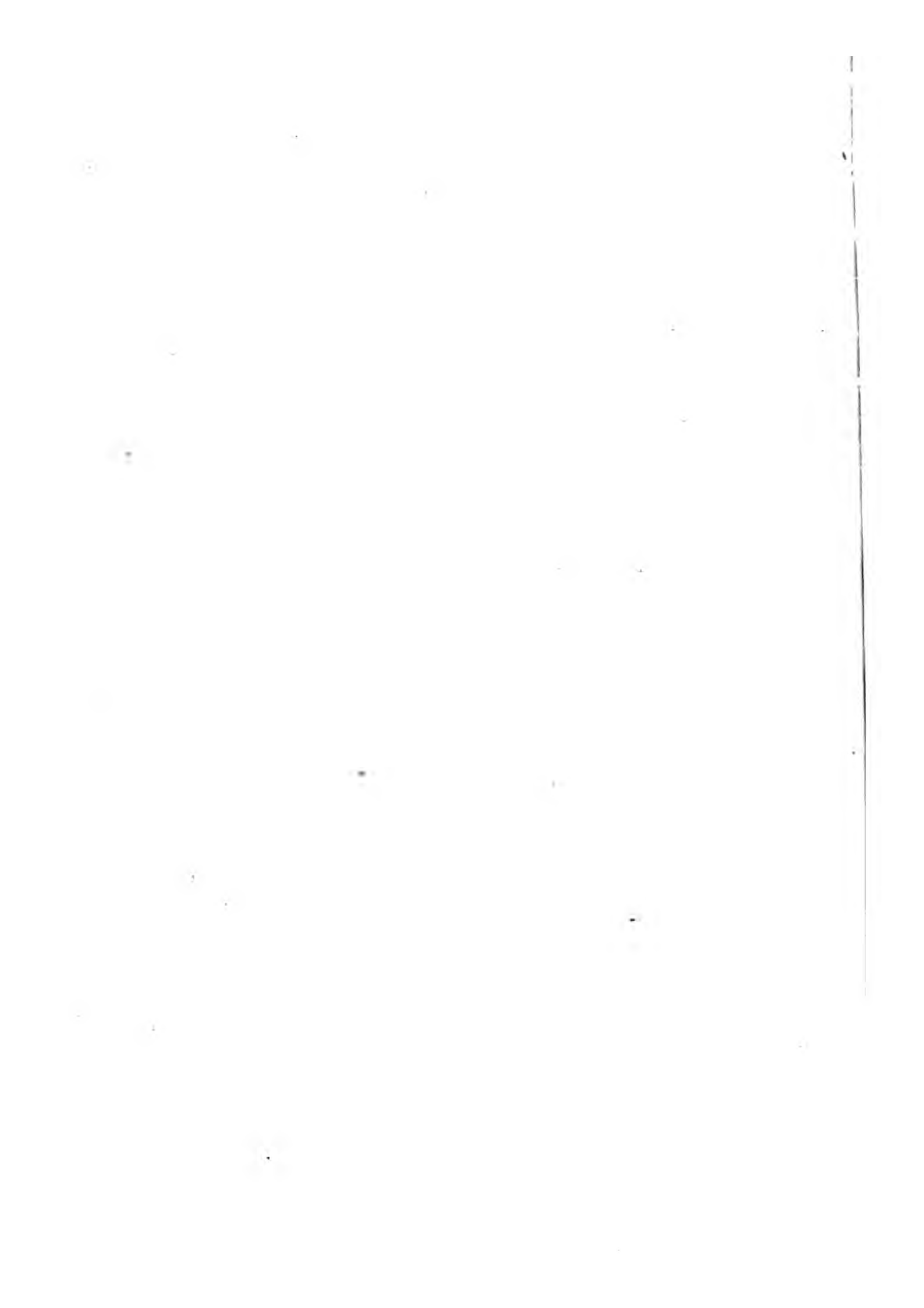
THREE ROSARIES
OF
OUR LADY





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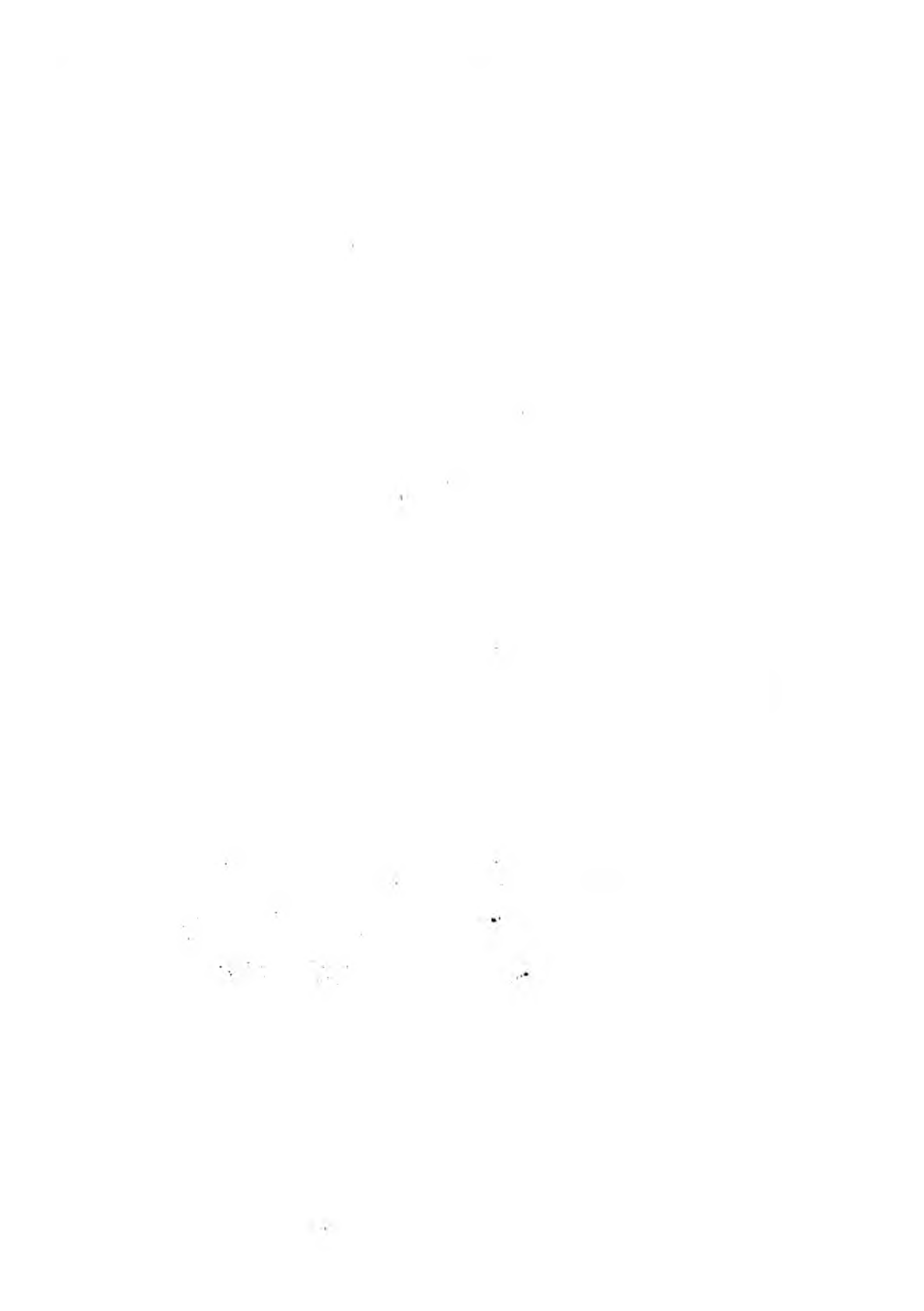




THREE ROSARIES

OF

OUR LADY



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LONDON

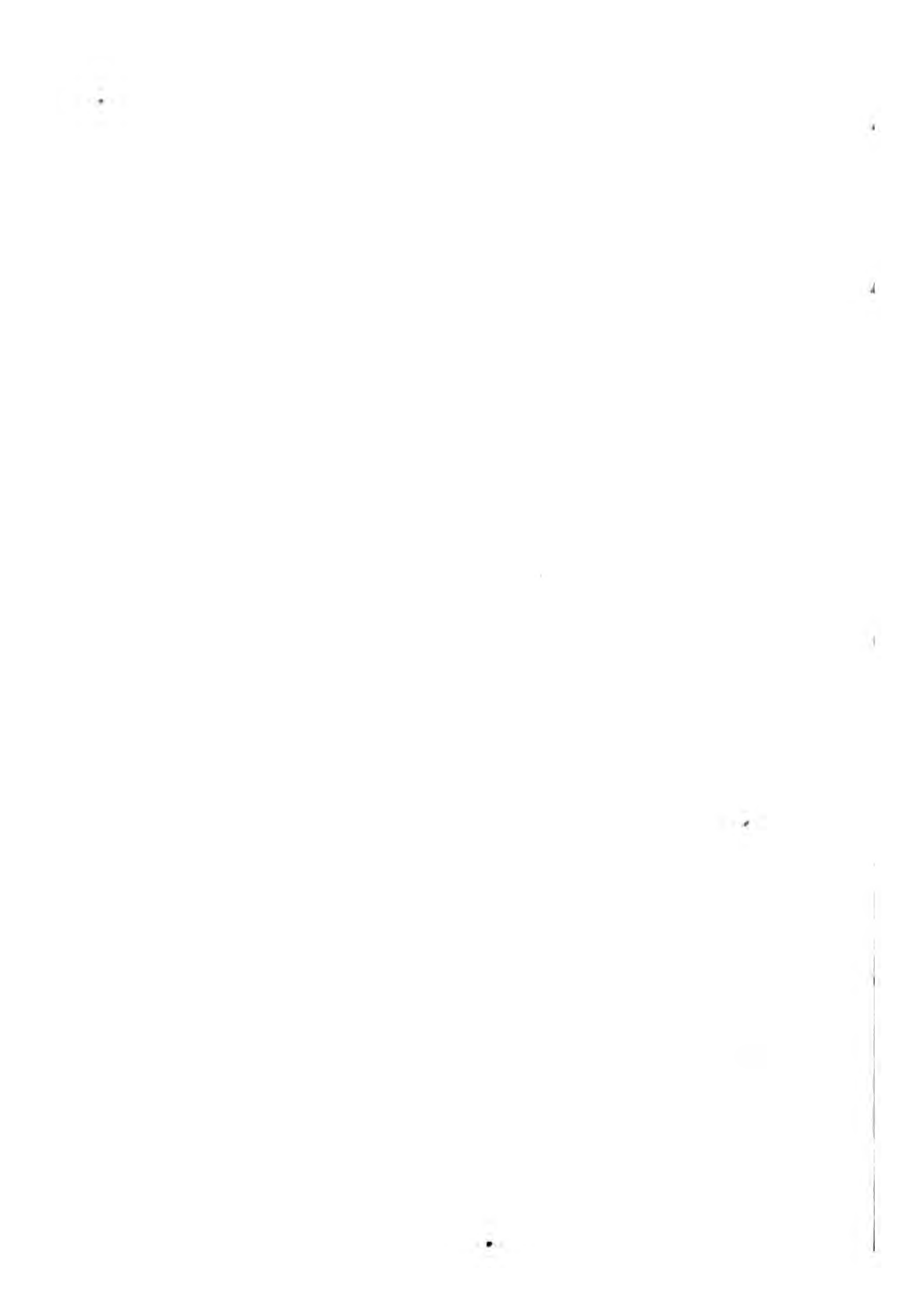
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A ROSARY IN HONOUR OF OUR
LADY AS CO-REDEMPTRIX





A ROSARY IN HONOUR OF OUR LADY AS CO-REDEMPTRIX.

A ROSARY in honour of OUR LADY as Co-Redemptrix — dwelling on the self-sacrifice, the union of the heart with God, the sharing of her Son's humiliation, the conquest of self-love and maternal love, out of conformity with the will of God, Godlike desire for the salvation of souls, and zeal for God's glory, in Mary as the perfect creature.

FIRST JOYFUL MYSTERY.

The Annunciation of our Lady.

MARY was alone ; pure, simple, happy, in God, when the Archangel came to offer her the desire of every maiden of her race.

In that supreme hour she might have been

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perturbed by a delight too ecstatic for a mortal heart ; but she was stilled by the high necessity of embracing with it a like lot to her Son's, a suffering as transcendent as her joy. She knew why God would put on flesh ; she knew that He, our Life (who as God hath life in Himself) came to take from His mother a mortal life, the power to die. Could her heart endure to crucify itself by giving up her child to insult, suffering, and death ? Mary alone of all creatures could have done it, because she alone had been created and fitted for this end. She said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord ; be it done to me according to Thy word ;" and in lowly love and perfect stillness she received the coming of God.

Son of Mary, conceived by the Holy Ghost, have mercy and hear our prayer. . . .

Mary, overshadowed by the power of the Most High, pray for us.

SECOND JOYFUL MYSTERY.

The Visitation of our Lady.

MARY arose with haste. She hurried to her cousin's house. She yearned to carry the miracle within her, where the divine power was already miraculously at work. Did she know that the

forerunner would adore his Lord? Did she only guess that where God was so present in blessing and in chastisement, her Babe and she would be acknowledged? or did she crave a refuge for a little in the hills to ponder on what now she knew, before she should begin her martyrdom by facing silently the alarm of tender, holy Joseph? Her heart, even *her* heart, was full to bursting. No word of hers was to tell her husband of her high calling and his own. As yet she was even to go through the piteous agony of his suspicion. And yet her heart was full of ecstasy.

In the house of the speechless Zachary, the unborn, speechless infant leapt for joy at the sound of her voice, and his aged mother proclaimed the dignity of Mary, and abased herself before the mother of her Lord.

Well had our Lady come here by Holy Ghost, for here she freely may break forth, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." Once only in all her life (for us), this once, the Alleluia of her heart must ring out. The first Christian hymn is this of Mary; the expression of the divinest joy mortal can ever know; good for every Christian when, in Holy Communion, God comes to enter into him. *We* are not only unworthy (that was Mary), we are degraded and defiled; yet that divine indwelling is vouchsafed also to us, and

though no other mortal love, or sacrifice, can ever equal hers, each heart can try to make his own our Lady's song of joy.

Holy God, Holy and Strong, Holy and Immortal, inhabiting the Immaculate, of Thy mercy grant our prayer. . . .

Virgin Mary, Mother of God, pray to Jesus for us.

THIRD JOYFUL MYSTERY.

The Birth of our Saviour Christ in Bethlehem.

FROM the coming of the Holy Ghost, Mary had been rapturously conscious that she was God's living temple; that hidden in her body, taking form from her substance, was He whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, whom she had adored and served; but whom now she worshipped with a passionate love of union and possession. In her, the Infinite was small. In her, God had assumed not only the features of humanity but her own, the likeness of His mother. As her expectation neared its term, Mary longed for the hour when He should manifest Himself. Surrounded by the heavenly court (unseen, unheard, adoring), she waited God's mysterious pleasure. Yet she would fain have never let Him go. It was the beginning of their parting. And when

the Desire of all nations, the well-beloved, co-equal Son, lay in her arms, so small and weak and helpless, how Mary longed that her sole worship by its wholeness and its ardour might make up to Him for the ignorance, indifference, and hatred of the world. She heard the angels' song; she saw the shepherds' adoration and the wise men's worship; she knew the love and reverence of Joseph, but she, the humblest of all creatures, knew that no created adoration could approach her own; for He that is mighty had done for her great things. He had kept her immaculate, He had taken her to be His Bride, and that flesh in which the Word of God was clothed, He had accepted of her substance.

O Babe in swaddling clothes, Emmanuel, our King and Lawgiver, the Saviour, have mercy on us, grant our prayer. . . .

Mother, sweetest, pray for us.

FOURTH JOYFUL MYSTERY.

*The Presentation of our Blessed Saviour in
the Temple.*

IN this mystery we have Mary's ceremonial profession of self-sacrifice. She went to the temple humbly imitating her Son. Though He was equal

with the Father, He "emptied Himself" for our salvation, and through Mary He became "obedient unto death." Though she was the immaculate Bride of the Father, and Mother of God the Son, she consented to hide her blessedness, and carried her divine Babe to the temple with the typical price of redemption. She was humble not only for herself, but for Him. She made as if He were the child of Joseph; and she (Virgin of virgins) a woman needing the sacrifice of purification. But her humility was met by God's love. Her Infant was hailed and adored as our Salvation, the Light and Glory of the world; and she was associated in the very temple with Jesus in the anguish He had come to suffer, and the work He had come to do: "thine own soul a sword shall pierce." And Mary did not flinch. She stood fast in faith and love and lowliness; the cost well counted. She had been counting it ever since that day when she was made doubly unlike all women, by the coming of the Holy Ghost, that she might conceive the Redeemer. She offered Jesus unto God. She offered her own heart as well; she pledged herself to refuse God nothing; to be content to see the Son of her womb despised, insulted, tortured, forsaken, crucified; to hold Him all through life as only hers that she might renounce (not the eternal, inconceivable delight of being His mother, but)

the womanly craving for His ease, for His being well esteemed and loved. She would never drag upon Him, she would never afflict Him by pity or self-pity. She would love those who hated Him, because He loved them. She would even love His torments, because they were His will; He had come to suffer.

Victim of our salvation, presented by Mary unto God, vouchsafe to grant our prayer. . . .

Mary, the Immaculate Conception, pray for us.

FIFTH JOYFUL MYSTERY.

The Finding of our Blessed Saviour in the Temple.

THE loss of Jesus would fill Mary with distress. Her husband and she for three days sought Him sorrowing. Mary would accuse herself of incredibly forgetting Him; of its being her own fault that He was gone away; but when they found Him, He reminded them that He was man to do God's business; He appealed to their knowledge that it must be so. And then, after this bitter grief, after shaking her soul with terror, after giving this one chance to the teachers of the law of confessing Him their Master, He gave His mother eighteen years of joy: the joy of such a

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home as earth never before contained, and never will again except in imitation. He gave us the example of a perfect Son, subject to His mother, in youth, through manhood, into middle life; subject not only to His mother, but to His mother's husband, Joseph. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give my heart to you.

Jesus, Uncreated Wisdom, have mercy, grant our prayer. . . .

Mary, frightened, sorrowful, and happier than happy, pray for us.

FIRST SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

The Agony and Bloody Sweat of our Blessed Saviour in the Garden.

BESIDES the revealed knowledge Mary possessed, and the light upon it she had gained by pondering all things in her heart, Mary had lived with Jesus thirty years, and doubtless to such as she He would plainly tell His mind. She knew that "His hour was come and the power of darkness;" and when He went out into the moonlight, she knew that what He went forth to suffer was the vision of sin. God would bring before His agonised Humanity the crimes of every kind that cried to heaven for vengeance, the outraged love

SECOND SORROWFUL MYSTERY. 15

of the Creator, the horror of all rebellion, misbelief, ingratitude, uncleanness, and brutality. God would discover to the Son of man the boundless expiation needed, and would lay the weight of all the world's iniquity on Him, wringing Him with anguish. And on the other hand, Satan would be mocking Him with the inefficacy of His propitiation; that in spite of it such millions would be lost, for whom He would suffer in vain.

Jesus, for love of us consenting to that dread agony, vouchsafe to hear our prayer. . . .

Mary, alone in thy heroic sorrow, bearing the woe of thy Beloved, pray for us.

SECOND SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

The Scourging of our Blessed Lord.

AFTER receiving at the hand of God the weight He came to bear, never to be lifted off His heart till all was consummated, our Lord gave Himself up to His blinded creatures that they might wreak their malice on Him, not knowing, as He pityingly said, what they did, yet knowing that no harm was found in Him, that He had walked among them blameless and merciful, the wonder-worker. Mary knew that the divine wrath was to be satisfied upon her Son in part by the hands of men, to

whom "power had been given from on high." Who but the perfect creature, "the woman," the bruiser of the serpent's head, could have conquered herself as Mary did! Along with her shuddering horror at the shame and torment of her Child, there was in Mary a supernatural submission, a godlike patience, a miraculous love for the misdoers, even a certain glory in the mortal agony which a greater tenderness than hers had laid upon her Son and over which His love would triumph; a rapture in the never-sleeping sense that Jesus, her own, the Son of her womb, flesh of her flesh, blood of her blood, whilst the mock of wicked men, and through them suffering the wrath of God, was still, as when He made the worlds, Himself the Beatific Vision.

Jesus, submitting to endure the wrath of God at the hands of creatures, have mercy on us, hear our prayer.

O Mary, by your adoration of Him in His Passion, pray for us.

THIRD SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

The Crowning of our Blessed Lord with Thorns.

BESIDES the mortal weight of agony laid on Him by His Father in the garden, Jesus had taken at

FOURTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY. 17

the hands of men in His scourging the chastisement of all their sensuality. When they took the reed and smote Him on the head, piercing it deep with the great acacia thorns, He, their Creator, gave them power to exact for God the atonement for all sins of pride, self-love, ambition, vanity, conceit and infidelity. For these the King of Glory wore a crown of thorns.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, our Atonement, grant our prayer. . . .

Mary, most lowly, pray for us.

FOURTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

Jesus carrying His Cross.

MARY knew by the shouts of the mob that her Son was on His way to Calvary. She waited for His passing; not to weep over Him, but to gladden Him. An ordinary woman could have so overcome herself as to be full of the same purpose, but only Mary could have cheered the Redeemer at that moment. He came along, faint, weary, goaded, stumbling; spittle and blood upon His face; bleeding, wounded, staggering under the burden He had come to bear; His heart all crushed and wrung with the weight of the wrath of God, with the horror of sin, and of

the damnation of the souls that would not be redeemed. But His eyes fell on Mary; and His heart beat high remembering how spotless He had made and kept her by His present suffering; and that she was not only the perfect work of His redemption, but that now, with all this woe before her, she, by the entire conformity of her will with God's, was pressing to His lips the cup of agony, urging Him to drink it to the dregs; inspiring Him for the joy set before Him in the reconciling of the elect, in the justifying of God's love, to endure the Cross, despising the shame, that having loved His own "unto the end" He might sit down satisfied at the right hand of God.

By Thy weariness and faintness, Almighty Lord, have pity, grant our prayer. . . .

Mary, Queen of martyrs, pray for us.

FIFTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

The Crucifixion of our Blessed Lord.

THE crowd closed round Him, yet for her support God had let Mary see in the gleam on the face of her Son how she had solaced Him. Did she not need that thrill of joy? for she knew the horrors that would go on out of sight before her eyes should again rest on her Beloved, as the awful tree was lifted bearing the Son of God.

Except the Cross, there is no such record of heroic love as the words, "There stood by the cross of Jesus His mother." For Mary was not divine; and, besides all her agony of sympathy and the unutterable strain upon her woman's heart of willing all His torments because they were God's will, all the while she had to take her own farewell. "In peace was her bitterness most bitter." She knew that the humanity He had from her, that "body of death" so ineffably one with hers, was dying now; that in His resurrection and His glory He would indeed for ever be the Son of man, and she His glorious Mother, but that, for ever, that dear, suffering life in which she had fed and clothed, caressed and waited on Him, would be ended, and that in self-sacrifice and faith, and Godlike love of souls, she must annihilate her heart. She must hear His voice give her up to be the devoted, willing mother of her fellow-creatures, His Beloved. "Woman, behold thy Son." Be thou the channel of life and strength to the heroic; the nurse, the tender helper of the weak, the sick, the poor, the sorrowful. To be made thus for ever to the Church what she had been to Jesus, was indeed a glory, but it came with the heart-break that He Himself would no more need her. Her motherhood had been, throughout, a rapture and an agony. She had accepted it knowingly, at the offer of the

Archangel. She had accepted it again when she offered her Son in the temple. She had accepted it when He appealed to her knowledge among the doctors. She had accepted it when He left the unimaginable home at Nazareth and "began to preach." She had accepted it when she knew that the hour of His passion was at hand; and now, beneath His Cross, she "*stood*," herself all swallowed up in Him.

Son of man, forsaken by God, of Thy great mercy, hear us.

Mary, most desolate, pray for us.

FIRST GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Resurrection of our Blessed Lord from the Dead.

MARY was now to live by faith. Her Son was no longer mortal, but the Conqueror of sin, death, and the grave. He would no longer need her care, her sympathy, or service. She was no more, on earth, to receive from Him the daily caresses and solicitude which had made Nazareth like heaven. Her maternal offices He had made over to the "beloved" for whom He died. Mary had consented to take for her child every soul which Jesus loved and longed for. Godlike still in her

conformity of heart, she had been able to promise this because He wished it. Because He loved each soul that should be born into this world with a tender, craving, devouring love, so that to captivate its love He would be fain to die again, *she* would give herself to every one; her mother's sympathy, her tenderness, her never-failing, sweetest patience, her omnipotence with God. Her life had been a miracle of joy as exquisite as her suffering. Henceforth it would be grayer, more supernatural. To-day she could see Him, the Heart of her heart, and for forty days again; and in the ecstasy of those meetings she would get strength for the mission He bequeathed to her.

Life of all life, vouchsafe to hear our prayer.

Mary, Mother of God, pray for us.

SECOND GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Ascension of our Blessed Lord into Heaven.

MARY might say to-day, "It is finished." Whilst He came and went, and now and again she could gaze on the divine, beloved face, kiss His dear feet and hands, and see the proof of His humanity in the wounds that had been His death—though all was over she might deceive herself. When the cloud received Him out of her sight, then truly all

was finished. Yet Mary did not go back sorrowful. She had not accepted the motherhood of God, and so fulfilled her part, to falter now. Who had the infant Church to look to else? Who but she could tell it of the marvel of the Birth of Christ? Who could so teach it to love Jesus as His mother could? Who else could feed it with His words and deeds? with stories of His Childhood and His Life? Who else could kindle the faint, frightened hearts with love like hers for Him that so loved them, with zeal like His for souls? Who like Mary could persuade them of that love "passing knowledge," "desiring with desire" to be united to them, which had brought God down to take a body from her own? Mary had embraced, with rapturous devotion, the sacrifice of fifteen years of separation, in which she would indeed receive Him sacramentally, and by faith be never parted from Him, but through which her hand should not touch, nor her eye see, Him whom her soul loved. Anything for Him! What were a few years! hardly enough to satisfy her love.

Jesus, gone to the Father, our Way and our Life, vouchsafe to grant our prayer. . . .

Mary, radiant with the joy of sacrifice, pray for us.

THIRD GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Descent of the Holy Ghost.

ONCE more did Mary wait for the coming of the Holy Ghost. Once more is Mary overshadowed by the power of the Most High. She, with the infant Church, waited for the promise of the Father; and, in fire, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, came down. It was thirty-four years since Mary had received Him that she might conceive the Word of God. Now He came again, and He would consecrate her for all time the Mother of His Bride, the Church. For the work of this day her Son had come. "I came to send fire on the earth, and what will I but that it should be kindled?" If He had not come, and suffered and ascended, the Holy Ghost had not been sent. But now, the personal Love of the Father and the Son had descended. He was to bring to each soul of man the knowledge of the intense, devouring love of God for it. He was to teach all hearts that what God asks is a return of love; and to enable them to give to Him a love like fire, consuming "wood, hay, stubble," and purifying self and creature love. O Mary, Bride of God, the fire of love was the very life of all your life. All it could

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possibly do now was to burn away any mere naturalness in your heart, that from henceforth you should live by faith alone ; and that living, as God had done on earth, for souls, you should grow daily dearer to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, till once more "it is finished."

O God the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, have mercy on us, grant our prayer.

Mary, Queen of the Apostles, pray for us.

FOURTH GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Assumption of our Blessed Lady into Heaven.

IT is almost past belief that the least shadow of regret should fall on Mary's heart when she knew that she was passing to her God ; the days of her separation fulfilled ; her sacrifice completed ; her Delight about to call her home. Who can imagine the delicious peace, the exquisite contentment, of her whole being ! For fifteen years she had lavished her sweetest sympathy on those she would leave behind. And when she saw them weeping that they should see her face no more, there was regret in her dear heart that they would need and long for her in vain.

All else was rapture of exceeding bliss, and no heart could have wished to delay her. The light of heaven was on her loveliness, more than angelic sweetness in her beauty; and as the apostles gazed their last on Mary, in the hush of her completed happiness the awe of an unseen Presence fell upon them, which was taking her away. Her espousals were fulfilled in heaven. She was gone, leaving with them, as they fondly thought, that almost worshipped body from which it had pleased God to prepare His own. They would cherish it as what the world contained most precious. But "My thoughts are not as your thoughts," saith the Lord. He would not let the Immaculate see corruption. His "love," His "dove," His "undefiled," should in her body be with Him in heaven.

While they poured out their tenderest, reverential care on what was left of Mary, her soul had been taken up through the ranks of the blessed and glorious, and was again in the arms of her Son; and while they thought that her body still consecrated the earth they had laid it in, that too had been raised on high, and Mary was all perfect with God.

Jesus, our Life, and Lover of our souls, vouchsafe to grant our prayer.

By the joy of your assumption, Mary, pray for us.

FIFTH GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Coronation of our Blessed Lady in Heaven.

THE angels are present at the joy of God. When had the like been seen in heaven! Mary was come. Not only blameless, innocent, immaculate, the Bride of God and His mother, but she who, above all, had heard the word of God and kept it; the "valiant woman;" the Queen of martyrs; Mary all love. She had begrudged God nothing, and in His lavish gratitude He would for ever and for ever enlarge her capacity and increase His reward. Out of union with His love for souls, Mary had sacrificed her heart for them; and her recompense should be that He would never refuse her prayer. She had given Him all her heart, and He would always hear her. The Almighty would deny His Bride and Mother nothing. She should be the benediction of her people. And for herself, she was with Him; her Own, her Child, her Beloved, her Darling. She was with Him now in bliss for ever; beloved, approved, and welcomed by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. As once she was full of grace, so now she was full of glory, full of peace, of rapture and of joy. Her happiness, her beauty, the delight of God.

He looked on Mary, and saw that she was very good. How could a creature hold the consciousness of being the delight of the most Holy Trinity! of knowing that never for one moment had the faintest shadow of fault darkened the sunshine of their approbation. The angels worship her who (created a little lower) has become their Queen. The Blessed thank and praise her. Adam and Eve and all their generations extol "the woman," through whom God was made one with man. Joseph, her husband, glories in her love; and on her ecstasy is set the crown of life, the crown of life eternal.

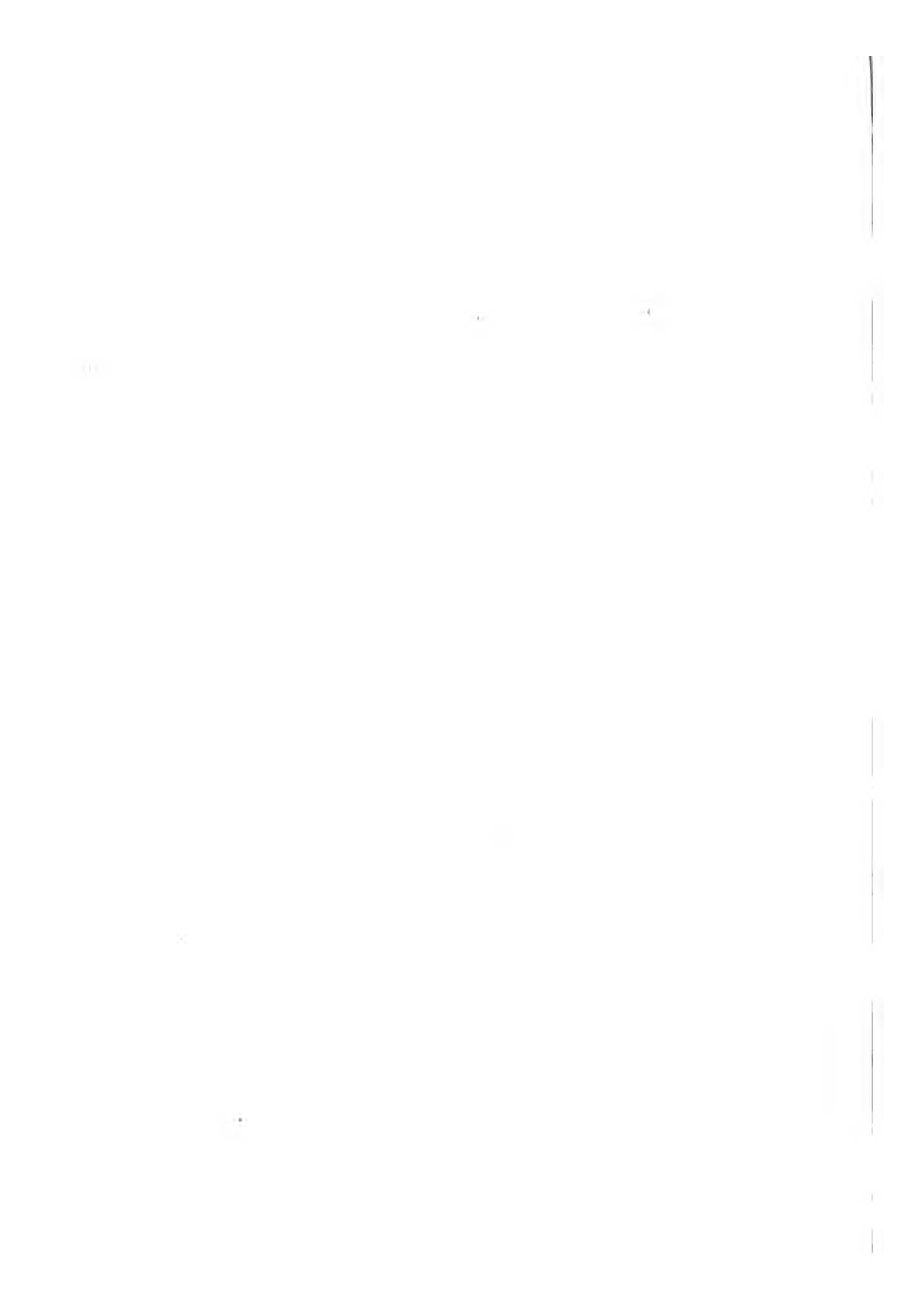
O God the Father,

God the Son, and

God the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, have mercy, grant our prayer.

Mary, love-crowned mother, pray for us.

A ROSARY OF
THE SACRED HEART





A ROSARY OF THE SACRED HEART.

WHEN our adorable Redeemer was passing to His Father, in the hour of His Passion when, with strong crying and tears, He asked for us God's highest gift, it was that "They all may be one," "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

Man's perfection, by union with his Maker, had been the very object of his creation ; and though sin (through the depravity of man's will) had seemed to cause a hopeless separation, God's love and desire were still, as from eternity, set upon the work of His hands. His tender purpose should not be frustrated or fail. And yet, how could the ever-blessed, impassible Godhead be allied to sin and its attendant sorrow? To sin it could not be. Sin is the contradiction of God's essential holiness. But for the saving of all creation, and the redemption of mankind, no

other miracle should be impossible. What God would do, neither angel nor man could have imagined. God only could have found the way to satisfy His love. He would secure for us that eternal happiness which, apart from Him, we could never enjoy, at a cost to Himself well nigh incredible; and He would secure it with a perfection God alone could have devised. The Word of God, co-equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost in the eternal Trinity, should assume human nature in addition to His own Divine; He should take no human personality, but in His own Divine Person, as God the Son, He should become human, mortal, passible; that, being God, He might, in mortal flesh, expiate the sin of all. When the fulness of time was come He would save a chosen woman from all touch of sin, and of her substance would accept the flesh and blood whose sufferings (as being His) should be an infinite atonement. That flesh and blood He would raise to the throne of God, for ever to personate us there, "the Firstborn of many brethren," "the Way" to God the Father. That Way was closed, but Godmade man would open it.

This is the gospel of our salvation. In this way God has redeemed us. Human nature is now for ever admitted into union with God, and the curse of separation being reversed, it is at each soul's choice to be in Christ supremely blest, or to

“reject so great salvation.” Our manhood being in God, gives to us all the power to be in Him ourselves, if only we but will. No power of hell can put asunder man and God, for God has joined the two together, and the divine love is for ever drawing souls (as “with the cords of a man”) to give way to the love of God. In God there is now a human heart loving Him as we ought to love Him, loving all creatures as we ought to love them. That heart is our example, and (as it were) ourselves in heaven already, the object of God’s tenderest love, the hope, the strength of all of us, our power to become the sons of God.

Let us say to that Adorable Heart, “I beseech Thee let Thy love, which is as fire in its strength, and for sweetness as the honeycomb, draw away my heart from all things of earth, that for the love of Thy love I may die to the world, who for the love of my love didst die upon the Cross.”

“One thing have I desired of the Lord, *that* I will require : not health, nor wealth, nor rank, nor worldly home ; nor worldly happiness, nor any worldly thing ; but one drop of that holy fire, one drop of that heavenly flame, to kindle me and set me all on fire with the love of Thee. O may that love consume and burn away every soil and stain both of the flesh and spirit, and consecrate me for a dwelling for Thyself in love, and consume me for a burnt offering acceptable to Thee. I should

fear lest I were asking of Thee some great thing, but Thou hast commanded me to love Thee with my whole heart, with my whole mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength ; blessed be Thy name for this command, for it is a command to be eternally blessed. Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt.”

FIRST JOYFUL MYSTERY.

The Annunciation of our Lady.

THE archangel was sent to say to Mary that God had chosen her to be the mother of His Son, and to ask her consent. By her faith and her humility, she was already full of grace and full of God. Humility, the sense of utter nothingness, is fulness of God. Because of these was Mary chosen to be the blessed one of all generations.

“Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to Thy word,” was Mary’s answer ; and the divine espousals between God and man were accomplished in her person.

O love of God, preparing for Thyself a human heart, vouchsafe to hear our prayer. . . .

Mary, the woman of all prophecy, the Bride of God, pray for us.

SECOND JOYFUL MYSTERY.

The Visitation of our Lady.

GOD'S love had achieved its amazing purpose. "I have loved thee with an eternal love, therefore have I visited thee." God the Son, in His own Divine Person, was taking a created nature from the substance of the Virgin Mary. Think of the joy of the ever-blessed Trinity in a new glory ; for now, God as man was adoring God. Think of our Lady's heart, its glad, gay joy, as she hastened across the mountains ; its gratitude, its worship, its ecstasy of believing happiness, its oblation of her whole self to God's ends, sure that, moment by moment, she was giving of her own substance for the forming of the Redeemer's body ; sure that God loved her ; sure that she was pleasing Him ; receiving with calm delight the worship of the unborn Prophet and His mother, knowing that indeed she carried God the Son within her.

O love of God, delighting in the lowly, undoubting, joyous love of Mary, and longing for the same in all men, hear us and grant our prayer. . . .

Mary, in whose person all creation is summed up, pray for us.

THIRD JOYFUL MYSTERY.

The Birth of our Saviour Christ in Bethlehem.

WHO can figure to Himself the satisfaction of the Divine Heart when, all things being now ready, Christ our Lord appeared among His creatures, as He had planned eternally ! needing Mary's arms to nurse Him, Mary's breast to feed Him, her sweet words and looks and kisses to caress Him. God—small, and soft, and weak, and tender, and appealing. The heart of our Lady's Baby was the very centre of the love which was drawing all things to itself. It seemed to be all Mary's ; but Mary, perfect and beloved as she was in herself, was dearer still to God as the mother of all living, as the one in whom He united all creation to Himself.

O Heart of God new-born, love that hast made Thyself so lovely for the winning of all hearts to Thee, receive and grant our prayer. . . .

Mary, bright mirror of the tenderest love, pray for us.

FOURTH JOYFUL MYSTERY.

**The Presentation of our Blessed Saviour in
the Temple.**

“THEY carried Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord.” Jesus allowed Himself to be carried to His temple, and the price of redemption to be paid for Him. Afar off, in the arms of the aged Simeon, He presented Himself, the Divine Redeemer, to His co-equal Father; and, burning with desire to avenge God’s outraged love, and open the way to the Father, offered Himself with all the intensity of His sacred Heart. Think of its passion of divine adoration. Think how it loved all creatures; how it loved Mary, who was making, with the offering of her Child, a holocaust of her own feelings unto God.

O beloved and tender Heart of Jesus, we adore Thee. Hear our prayer. . . .

Mary, offering your Child and your whole self to God’s love, pray for us.

FIFTH JOYFUL MYSTERY.

The Finding of our Blessed Lord in the Temple.

“I MUST be about my Father’s business.” Tenderly did our Saviour feel the trial to His Mother’s heart when He left her, and she sought Him sorrowing three days, but for such scourges she was prepared. . . “Whom He loveth He chastiseth,” and His Mother was indeed His Beloved. Loved above all, she must suffer more than all. But think of Mary’s rapturous thanksgiving when, after all her tears, and weary, self-reproaching anguish, she regained her Boy, and found Him safe, divine and sweet, sitting in the midst of the doctors, “giving testimony to the truth.” Think of her fulness of delight when He came up to her the same as ever, her meek, obedient, caressing, tender Child, her Son, her very own, yet intent upon the business of His heavenly Father. Think of the Heart of Jesus, in this His first public work for God. Think of its divine humility, going back to Mary, giving her no reproof, though she called Him the son of Joseph, only reminding her that they knew who He was, and should have guessed His occupation.

Heart of Jesus, Example of all virtue, hear and grant our prayer. . . .

Mary, most happy Mother of God, pray for us.

FIRST SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

**The Agony and Bloody Sweat of our Blessed
Saviour in the Garden.**

WITH eternal foresight, and with lifelong, fond intention, our glorious Saviour entered on His Passion. "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O my God." That will was that He, Jesus, the Son of man, God of God, the Holy One, should pass through and feel, as if it were His own, the torment and the horror of all sin, in expiation of the crimes of the whole world. "And He began to be exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." O Jesus, we bow down our hearts before Thy Sacred Heart, which, in the garden, alone, cried out to heaven with the agony God laid upon it. "See if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow." We adore that dear, submissive Heart, burning with love for God and man, but wrung with anguish, sweating drops of blood.

By Thine "Hour," and Thine Agony, O Heart of Jesus, hear and grant our prayer. . . .

Mary, consenting to the Agony of your Divine Son, pray for us.

SECOND SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

The Scourging of our Blessed Lord.

THE sharp, keen pain brings to the sacred, lonely heart of Jesus (heavy with the sorrow God had laid upon it) a crushing aggravation to its woe in the sense of man's self-pleasing recklessness whilst He suffers, and the cruel ingratitude with which, in every age, mankind repays His love. O Sacred Heart of Jesus, I have sinned. I have had my own disgraceful part in the cruel stripes they gave Thee. For my self-love, and gluttony, and sloth, and luxury, Thou, O my God, hast suffered. And I say so, and still indulge myself! How revolting to Thy patient, gracious Heart am I! how hateful my ingratitude! But God forbid that I should persevere in hardness. Awake my wretched heart to make amends to Thine.

Heart of Jesus, meek and humble, our Atonement, grant our prayer. . . .

Mary, striving against nature to be willing, pray for us.

THIRD SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

*The Crowning of our Blessed Lord with
Thorns.*

“BEHOLD the Man.” Who is that Person clothed with purple in derision, crowned with thorns in cruel mockery, and blasphemously saluted “Hail, King of the Jews”? Who is He?

It is no human person. It is God. God, in His highest act of love. God, in our nature. God, who, to content His love, and to achieve the re-union of creation with Himself, has put on our humanity. “Ecce Homo.” Heart of Jesus! Heart of God! was it with gibes, and sport, and spitting that they brought Thee forth? And we have all beheld Thee, and have all passed by, wagging our heads! we, who “to nothingness have added only sin.” Forgive us, Lord, hide our shame in Thy greatness; Thy Heart still loves us, for it is the Heart of God. We love Thee, we bow down to Thee, we lay our faces in the dust, we prostrate our whole being at Thy feet.

Jesus, despised, insulted, mocked and spit upon; by Thy silence and the sweetness of Thy patient Heart, hear us and grant our prayer. . . .

Mary, in prayer and bitter tears, pray for us.

FOURTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

Jesus carrying His Cross.

THE cross upon the Heart of Jesus was His Father's wrath and all the weight of all the woe of man; the grief, the pain, the degradation, falsehood, and despair of all humanity. He carried all the sorrows of that human nature which He had condescended to assume. He carried them to expiate them, and to sanctify them for all who in all time should "look to Him in their plagues." Henceforth the way of suffering is the way of God, the way of salvation. Suffering is the way for all: but it is the bait and attraction for loving hearts. "I will show him what great things he shall suffer for my name's sake."

O divine and adorable Heart of Jesus, adorably, divinely loving Lover of our souls, hear us and grant our prayer. . . .

Heart of Mary, pierced with the sword of love, pray for us.

FIFTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

The Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

THINK for a moment of the joy of heaven, and then, what heaven must have been the day the Son of God was crucified. Think of the amazement of the blessed angels. They knew no sacrificial ecstasy. In God alone such love existed. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;" but the *divine* love did far more. God took to Him a mortal life for this one end, that He might lay it down again for His beloved, "not as though we had first loved God," or were loveable; for no worthiness, or beauty, or gratitude in the creature, "thankless and sinful utterly;" but for the sake of His own love, incomprehensible as God is incomprehensible.

There was "silence in heaven," and God was all in all while the mystery of His love was consummated. But the intensity of even human love overmasters pain, and had the heart of Jesus allowed itself to feel the rapture of its love's divine satisfaction, it could have known no suffering. No temporary pain, no human sorrow, could have co-existed with that supreme delight. Therefore it was that the manhood of our Lord was "forsaken

by God ;” and that, as it were alone, the Son of man endured His Passion and the Cross ; and, having “loved us to the end,” gave up the ghost.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, “past all finding out,” we can but kneel, and worship, and adore ; believing what appears impossible.

By Thy Cross and Passion, hear us. . . .

Mother of Jesus crucified, pray for us.

FIRST GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Resurrection of our Blessed Lord from the Dead.

“I LAY down my life that I may take it again.”

“I am risen, and am still with you. Alleluia.”

Jesus, returning from the dead to men “slow of belief and foolish,” triumphant over sin and hell, but not over “hard hearts and incredulity” ! O Heart of Jesus, for whom hast Thou died and risen ? In this “day of Thy power,” what wounds didst Thou not receive in the house of Thy friends ! Thou didst come to Thine own, and they did not even know Thee. Heart of Jesus, was it only at the first that frightened souls misdoubted Thee ? Art Thou glorified now by those on whom Thou didst lavish love stronger than death, high as heaven and deep as the grave ?

SECOND GLORIOUS MYSTERY. 45

Shame on us! we ourselves are of those who will not believe "though one rose from the dead." And yet "Christ is risen indeed;" and our faith is not vain; we are not "in our sins," if only we hold fast to Thee, our Resurrection from sin, from self and from the grave, our Resurrection to joy and to God. "Lord save us, we perish." "Lord, we believe; help Thou our unbelief."

O Heart of God incarnate, our hope, and strength, and life eternal, may Thy miraculous love for us kindle our stupid hearts. Have mercy on us, grant our prayer. . . .

Mary, perfect hearer and keeper of the Word of God, pray for us.

SECOND GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Ascension of our Blessed Lord into Heaven.

"I GO to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God;" and, "I am the Way," "no man cometh to the Father but by Me." "Lord, we will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." "Thou art set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high," draw us after Thee. "God, for His exceeding love wherewith He loved us, has quickened us and raised us up, and made us

sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." By Him, our Way, we "have access to the Father." Shame on us if we press not forward, "going from strength to strength," after "the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus."

Heart of God, in our humanity gone up into the inaccessible light of the eternal glory, draw our hearts up to Thee. We adore Thee, hear our prayer. . . .

Mary, whose heart was all in heaven with your treasure, pray for us.

THIRD GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Descent of God the Holy Ghost.

HEART of Jesus, we adore Thee, mindful still of us. "I will send the Comforter." O God the Holy Ghost, we adore Thee. Thou art the Power and the Love of God. By Thee we can do all things. We can rise above ourselves; we can live unto God; we can conquer and sanctify ourselves by Him who loves us; we can be faithful to Him come what may; we can give Him love for love. O God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, one God, we adore Thee.

FOURTH GLORIOUS MYSTERY. 47

Heart of Jesus, glad in the knowledge of the new life Thou hast won for Thy creatures, we adore Thee, hear our prayer. . . .

Mary, Bride of God, pray for us.

FOURTH GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

*The Assumption of our Blessed Lady into
Heaven.*

O HEART of Jesus, cutting short the sacrifice of Mary, and opening to her (the first, and type, and sum of Thy beloved) the gate of heaven, we adore Thee in the rapture of that day. She came up from her exile, all fair and beautiful within and without, most lovely with love, her heart the perfect copy of the Heart of God; and looking upon her He loved her, and she knew it and was joyful, and her joy was the joy of God.

Heart of Jesus, receiving Thy Mother into Thy bliss and glory, vouchsafe to grant our prayer.

Mary, admitted to the Beatific Vision, pray for us.

FIFTH GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Coronation of our Blessed Lady in Heaven.

“A THRONE was set for the King’s Mother, and she sat on His right hand ; and the King said to her, ‘ My Mother, ask ; for I must not turn away my face.’ She was clothed with the sun, and the moon was under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars ;” and “ beholding the glory of the Lord with open face, she is transformed into the same image, from glory to glory.” What is the glory of all glory ? Love ; for “ love is of God,” and “ God is Love.” He loved us unto death, and He loves us in glory, and He desires *this* for His beloved : that, like Mary, and through Mary, we may each one be united to Himself in one Spirit, and be with Him, seeing Him as He is and for ever, in joy.

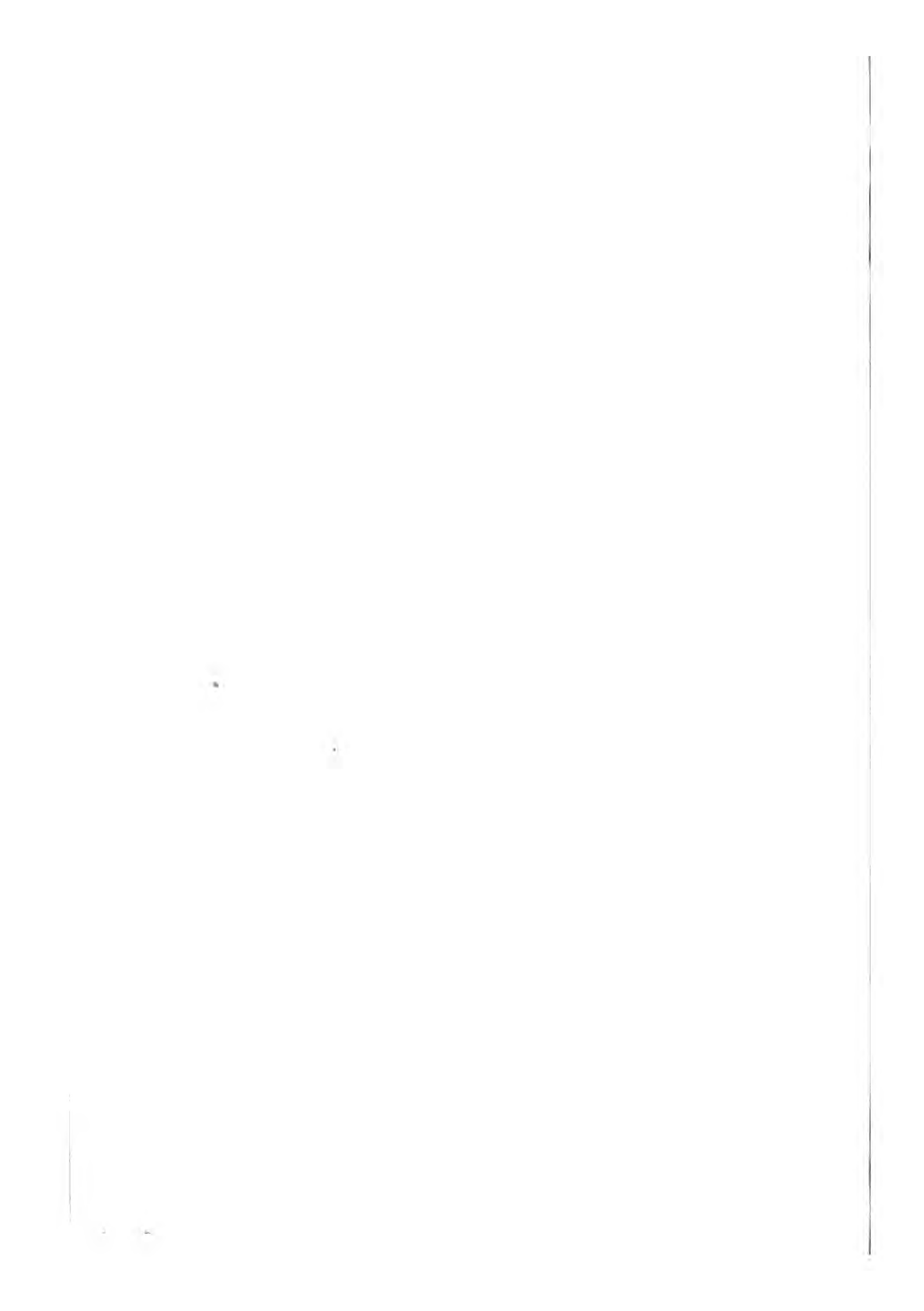
O Love of God the Father, we adore Thee.

Love of God incarnate, we adore Thee.

Love of God the Paraclete, we adore Thee.

Mary, the Beloved of God, pray for us.

A ROSARY IN IMITATION OF
OUR LADY





A ROSARY IN IMITATION OF OUR LADY.

HOW may we best please God in our poor thoughts on the mysteries of our salvation?

There has lived one to whose heart and mind they are more living and more dear than to all else together, be they men or angels. That blessed one is Mary.

God is the giver of all grace. He has made some to be prophets, some apostles, some evangelists, some martyrs; by the various grace bestowed on them. To Mary He gave the united grace of all; and its abundant fruitfulness made her the mother of God.

Lowliness, and faith, and love, were all perfect in Mary; and as "the pure in heart shall see God," so, pondering on divine things, she, the Immaculate, saw them in the unclouded light of God's grace. To do our best to feel as she felt

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and think as she thought, must be pleasing to God. Let us therefore go through our Lady's Rosary (the epitome of the Gospel), trying to echo her. We shall fail, by the stupidity and sin of our hearts ; but it will be something to have tried.

FIRST JOYFUL MYSTERY.

The Annunciation of our Lady.

WE may imagine that, at the end of a day of homely work and happiness, Mary, the young wife of Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth, Virgin of virgins, was alone in prayer ; and she might say : " O my Lord, who alone art our King, Thou knowest that Thy handmaid hath never rejoiced but in Thee, O Lord, the God of Abraham." (Esther xiv. 3, 18.) " My heart is ready, my heart is ready," " I will sing to the Lord God of Israel." " My heart hath uttered a good word, I speak my works to the king." And Gabriel appeared and saluted her, being sent to offer to her the motherhood of God : " The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee, and the Holy that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the

throne of David His Father, and He shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end." And that blessed Virgin did but say again: "My heart is ready;" for joy and also for sorrow; "be it done to me according to Thy word." But who shall intermeddle with her joy! joy that the hour was come for which all creation groaned; joy that now, for the glory and delight of God and man, the inseparable union of Godhead and manhood should be accomplished; and joy that the marvel, the bridal of heaven and earth, should begin in her!

SECOND JOYFUL MYSTERY.

The Visitation of our Lady.

MARY arose in haste, and, as she went across the hills, the humble, happy bride of God, that hymn was "singing in her heart," which her lips poured forth when Elizabeth saluted her, "Mother of my Lord."

Thank God that He has preserved to the world for all time the perfect creature's picture of her soul. We see her irrepressible delight in the choice that God had made of her. We see her joy in her own nothingness. We see her inspired

sense that God in that conscious nothingness had found place for the fulness of His love. We see the confident, confiding assertion of her own love and blessedness and glory.

Was the "Magnificat" the expression of a passing rapture? No; it was Mary's life-long temper, its spirit ran through her life. In her most piercing agonies this joy and triumph were underlying all. Mary, like all of us, was an embodied will. That will she offered utterly to God. Her will was to love God wholly; without reserve, without distraction, without admixture, without a thought of self; for she was full of grace, and the Lord was with her, and she knew it, and was glad. At a far distance *we* can copy this; we can say to our Lord "My will is to love Thee utterly." Pardoned, and in the grace of God, we can, by His help, fill all the common actions of our daily life with this purpose, and God, with immeasurable love, will fill the hearts from which self is thus cast out. He will set up His palace of delights in the kingdom offered to Him thus, and the humble soul shall extol God's gifts to her, and His work in her, and its life shall be a song of "Glory be to God."

THIRD JOYFUL MYSTERY.

The Birth of our Blessed Lord.

O MARY, who may rightly honour thee whose heart could say, "*My* Son, and the Son of the Most High, the Son of God. My little Child is my Redeemer. His Flesh was mine. His Blood was mine. This is the Holy that inhabiteth eternity, my very own sweet Babe and God!" The high prerogative of motherhood is Mary's grace alone. The Incarnation of the Word is the end for which she was created, and no other has been created that could have been Mother of God. But, thanks be to Him, not for her alone did He become her Son. For me, for every soul as if there were no other, He took flesh. There is none but may and ought to claim Him. "A Child is born to *us*, unto us a Son is given," that thereby God, the Mighty, might win our hearts. He came for each, one by one; loving each with a complete, perfect love, and each, as if no other soul existed, should kneel before God's manger-cradle with the cry, "My very own sweet Babe and God. I *have* nothing. I *am* nothing; but I lay my heart and my will at Thy feet. Be Thou my All in All."

FOURTH JOYFUL MYSTERY.

*The Presentation of our Blessed Saviour
in the Temple.*

WHAT may have been the thoughts of Mary on that fortieth day when Jesus had to be redeemed in the Temple? In simple obedience to the custom of the law, she had prepared the doves, or pigeons, that poor wives were to offer for their purification, and the sum appointed to buy back the first-born of the poor; and then she and Joseph took up Jesus to the temple, but only to the outer court, for they could not enter farther though Mary was the living house of God, and Jesus, God Himself. Might not the blessed Virgin have doubted thus:—"Being the Bride and Mother of God, shall I not dishonour Him by acting as if Joseph were His real father? Being a spotless Virgin, Mother only by the overshadowing power of the Most High, will it not be a false (and even perhaps blasphemous) humility to act as if unclean? Is not my Jesus the Sanctifier of the sanctuary? Am I not, by God's grace, more pure than the new-fallen snow?" But there is one safe answer in all questions—Obedience. Mary knew the law her Son confirmed: "Whatsoever they say unto

you, do." She never questioned; she submitted. She was not bidden to proclaim her prerogatives. She was silent. She left God's glory to his own good care. She obeyed. Can we not copy her in this? *We* have no sanctity to hide; still we are often tempted to show off such gifts or goodness as we may possess, and we say that it is for God's glory. We thereby fall into a thousand snares of conceit, and vanity, and scruples. The safety from all such is obedience. Or we are tempted to look solemn and behave peculiarly, to make it known that we are spiritual or pious persons. If we would wish to be like Mary, let us unite our hearts to hers when she appeared in the house of God as unclean, though she, the Immaculate, bore in her arms the well-beloved Son of God.

FIFTH JOYFUL MYSTERY.

The Finding in the Temple.

IF our poor hearts can realise the anguish of our Lady's tearful cry, "Jesus, my Son, my Son!" as she went about, and lay down, and rose up, for three days seeking Him and sorrowing, they will rejoice in her delight when her sorrow was turned into joy and she found her Treasure in the temple.

If our Lord withdrew Himself from His Mother, and hid Himself from her, every one of us must expect the like. If He make His presence sensible within us and let us taste the wonder of His love, the delight is not safe for earth. Now is our only time for sacrifice, for works of love, for patience, courage, faith. He hides Himself, He makes as though we had lost Him quite; that, fearing, longing, trusting, loving, we may call upon the Name of the Lord, we may "search diligently until we find," and seek Him at His altar in His holy house; for it is written, "When thou shalt seek there the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him; yet so if thou seek Him with all thy heart, and all the affliction of thy soul;" yet not forget to seek for Him *within* us, for "the kingdom of God is within you."

Jesus came back to His Mother. So will He do to us. He went home with her; obeyed, caressed, and cherished her. So will He do to every one of us, according to the measure of our love and humility. He will return and bring His reward with Him; and the trial of His former disappearance will enhance sevenfold the rapture of His conscious presence.

FIRST SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

The Agony in the Garden.

THE years of Mary's happy home were over. Her joys had been beyond all measure sweeter than any joy this earth had ever known. Now she must bare her soul to the sword which was to pierce it through her Beloved. Jesus went to enter on His Passion, and Mary must not "cry or strive" to have it lightened. That which, as God, He willed, though she may know the shrinking of His human nature, she must will; though it be to the rending asunder of soul and body. She must know that her own, her Jesus, is taking upon Him a torment which is wringing the very blood through His pores, and she must acquiesce in the depth of her heart. When His nature as man cries out, "Father, let this chalice pass from Me," her spirit must reply to God, "Not what I will, but what Thou wilt." Alone He wrestled with His agony, and she with the bitterness of her heart; and alone *we* must fight our battle, and die alone. Yet not alone, for the "valley of the shadow of death" He has sanctified by His agony, by the horror of sin (the sting of death) which He then endured in our stead.

God may, for the trying of faith, seem to leave a soul helpless, desolate, and frightened ; but Jesus Christ alone could endure to die " forsaken."

O believe it, souls which God created. At no time is He more near, more tender, than when He ordains this desperate test, and feigns to desert a soul. He watches, yearning, lest it falter and He lose it. He longs, as a lover does, that the beloved may prove her love by trusting His. If she bears up bravely, waits in faith, calls upon His dear Name, who shall tell the divine delight of the divine, unfathomable Heart ! Who shall guess its beating, in the joy of receiving love for love !

SECOND SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

The Scourging of our Blessed Lord.

O MARY, how didst thou endure this day and live ! to know the sacrilege it saw ; to bear it, and not die ! and they who did those deeds were *men* ; not fiends, but men redeemable, for whom Christ pleased to suffer. Mother, thine eyes could not see, thine ears could not hear the outrage, but what *must be* thou knewedst in every tortured nerve ; loving the Victim adoringly as God ; tenderly and passionately as thine own

flesh and blood. Amid thy shuddering sobs, Mary, what didst thou implore of God? "Father, save Him from this hour? But for this He came unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name." Surely God was glorified indeed that day when, besides the obedience of His co-equal Son, He was so loved by a mere creature. Mary, how couldst thou be so Godlike! thy heart is with His heart in deadly agony, but yet thy love is as His love. In Him love fought with agony, and He rejoiced in torments which wrought out so great salvation. Unto "the end" He must love on. God must be glorified and man redeemed. But who shall name the awful price! "By His stripes we are saved." Like Mary we must adore this awful mystery, worshipping the inconceivable love which could only thus be satisfied, heart-broken for our share in the agony He took, hating and renouncing wholly every sin our conscience knows, and those we are too bad to see, for all of which our gracious Saviour suffered on that day.

THIRD SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

The Crowning of our Blessed Lord with Thorns.

DIDST thou hear those mocking shouts, mother of sorrows, "Hail! King of the Jews"? Had He told thee with what a crown they should insult Him "in the power of darkness"? "Behold the man," manhood itself, God and man in one. The second Person of the most Holy Trinity stood in that crowded court, and not one soul revered Him. They bent the knee in mockery; they wound the thorns of sin around His head with laughter, and they spat on Him. But He was there for love of them, and His love faltered not. But "the woman," she from whom He had received that body of death, knew Him, and waited without in her anguish. Was it not miracle thy life could bear the struggle in thy heart and soul, Mary? Each moment of His passion cutting through thy mother-heart, and all the while an ecstasy of adoration, for that He, thy Jesus, is so peerless, so beautiful in His sweetness, so adorable in His meekness and divine in His love. O mother, thou art wonderful, that thou canst endure the cold, indifferent objects of such love. Mother,

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we know our worthlessness, help us, while yet we have the time, to pour our hearts out before Him in worship of the unspeakable perfection of His wondrous love, to break our hearts for having failed to know and care for Him supremely. Help us now to choose Him only for our one good thing, the object of our lives, the desire of our eyes, the love of our love.

FOURTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

Jesus carrying His Cross.

THE yells of the multitude cannot fail to reach thee, Mary ;—“ Crucify Him, crucify Him ;” and thou knowest that so they will. Mother, thou must forth to meet Him, to satisfy thy love and His. Thou shalt meet Him in the highway of the Cross, that way of holiness which He is consecrating in His blood, by His weariness, His faintness. From henceforth and for all, the way of the Cross is the way of Jesus and the way to God. It is the contradiction of our will, and whether it be in much or little, of one sort or another, it is the token of our Lord and the way of salvation. There is no sort of sorrow in which

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Jesus will not meet us if, like Mary, we go forth to look for Him. If love inspires us to seek Him, He is already on His way to us, longing that we should come. She sought Him for one mutual, yearning look of love and faith and grace unspeakable; and, in exchanging it, her Lord, her Life, was recompensed. But she was Mary, the perfection of creation. What of *us*, the miserable failures? Glory be to God and His incomprehensible love, He will even feel Himself repaid if we, the stupid and unfaithful, can find it in our hearts to seek Him in the way of sorrows. O my God, who would not wish to repay Thee!

FIFTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

The Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE procession of death passed on, and Mary after it. "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." In the strength of their mutual love she followed on to Calvary, and waited till the end, crucified with her Beloved, lost to all sense of self and of the horror round her; her life "hid with Christ in God;" her soul absorbed in His death-agony, in His heavenly love and triumph; for

here, upon the shameful tree, He triumphed over hell and all its power, and over human sin and weakness ; and restored us, every one, to the love of our Creator. The love of God was centered on humanity as Jesus Christ our Saviour hung between the earth and heaven. In Him, man gave to God a perfect glory, and God saw that, in Christ Jesus, man, His crowning work was “very good.”

And Mary “stood beside the Cross.” It is the central vision of all time—God, giving His only begotten Son to the death of the Cross ; and (in the person of our Lady) all creation gasping “*Fiat !*” in its misery, although its very heart be pierced with the remorse of love. It remains that we, like Mary, be crucified in heart with our Lord ; dead indeed unto sin, dead to the world and all its empty pleasures and distractions ; dead to self and all its paltry wills ; for faith, for gratitude, for love, and through the grace of Him who died for us.

FIRST GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Resurrection of our Blessed Lord.

IT would be hard for dust and ashes to imagine the heart of the Mother of God as she waited for

the first day of the week. She prepared no spices, for she knew that her Son would raise Himself from the grave, and that the women would not find Him there. Virgin of virgins ! she knew that as His Birth had left her inviolate so the sealed rock could be no hindrance to His Will. No mistrust could she know ; only desire, only love, only longing, for His visible triumph ; only delight, and gratitude, and love, when it was accomplished.

Only to think upon her joy is joy. She must have looked so beautiful. And now—how her loveliness must brighten if we remind her of the morning when her Joy returned, and He kissed her with the kiss of His mouth ; kissed the traces of the tears of her sympathy, and called her His own Mother still.

He was her resurrection and her life as He is ours ; but she was sinless, and we have to rise from the deep pit and slough of sin.

In the strength of the grace of Him, our Resurrection, we have to live henceforth like Mary. "We are able." The Feast of the Resurrection, Easter, to the Christian implies communion ; and communion, the Lord in us, is strength for everything ; strength to live henceforth like Mary, strength for the aim set before us all : "Be ye perfect as also your heavenly Father is perfect ;" and as "we can," by His indwelling, rise to

this new life, so we are bound to do ; no excuse, no delay. "I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me."

SECOND GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Ascension of our Blessed Lord.

AND what is the secret by which we, like Mary, can lead a risen life? Simply this: "If you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God." Our treasure is there, in God. Let our heart be there also. But "above" need not mean above the firmament, nor "the right hand of God" such heaven as we may attain to hereafter—"the kingdom of heaven is within you." Jesus, our treasure, has His chosen home in our hearts. To live our common drudgery of every day—bearing its daily weariness, its petty, unguessed sacrifices, its apparent unsanctity, its unlikeness to what we may think ourselves fit for, its want of sympathy and help—trusting that He is near, seeing the unseen, feeling the unfelt, making His presence (known by faith) our sanctuary from sinful nature, our contemplation, our judge, and our delight: this is to have our life "hid with Christ in God," to

be in harmony with Mary, and in union with Jesus Christ. This may be in the busiest or the gayest life of duty. O Mary, pray for us that the rest of our lives we “may so discern God’s presence with us and in us, that we may do this and all to His honour and glory.”

THIRD GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Descent of the Holy Ghost.

IT is not uncommon for Christians so to live as if the old reply were true, “We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost.” How different was it with our Lady! With what adoration she must ever have remembered the work the Holy Ghost had done in her! With what longing she must have waited for His promised advent after the Ascension! With what meekness of assured, confiding love she must have received the token of the fiery tongue!

Have we received the Holy Ghost? Do we rely upon His help? In our baptism he reversed the curse, and took possession of our hearts. In confirmation He renewed and added to His gifts. We might have gone on daily, like the Blessed

Virgin, adding strength to strength by His aid, but we have forgotten and despised Him. We have made our vows to Him, and broken them. Shall we not ask His pardon, and never more forget Him? He is that very Love of God without whom we are cold and selfish. He is the strength of our weakness, by Whom we can conquer sin and Satan. From Him is Grace and Unction, the very breath of our life. He is (in union with the Father and the Son) our Lover, tender, pitiful, and patient. Let us promise reparation of the past for all the days we have to live; and when we say the Gloria Patri let us remember to salute adoringly the Holy Ghost, our Sanctifier, Co-eternal and Co-equal with the Father and the Son in the one all-loving Godhead.

FOURTH GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Assumption of our Lady.

MARY'S last hour in this world arrived; and how did her heart feel? Ask your own. The moment of death is that of the particular judgment. At that moment, as the soul leaves the body, it is before its Judge; Jesus, the Son of man. The

soul stands bare before Him ; and every thought and word and deed in the flesh is recalled, and judged by the man Christ Jesus. How did Mary feel? can we venture to remotely guess? When her spiritual eyes were opened to "behold the Man," whom did she see? The adoration of her life. The One to whom as God her whole existence had been consecrated, the One whom, as her child, her Saviour, she had loved tenderly, absorbingly, devouringly, with all the delight, self-devotion and admiration, of which a creature could be capable. She had vowed herself to Him, had lived for Him, had suffered with Him, longed for Him. Now He had come for her ; and her life, as it was unrolled before Him, was one unbroken benediction, one changeless interchange of perfect love. In everything she had pleased Him, and she pleases Him for evermore. In body and soul she is now and for ever in the joy of His presence ; the hope of the elect in peril, and of the holy dead.

Most happy Mary, pray for us, that we who have loved ourselves, and known Him late, and loved Him poorly, may, thinking of the joy of thy death, "begin now to serve God a little," so that we too may "love His coming," and the hour of death be our desire, our safety, and our joy.

FIFTH GLORIOUS MYSTERY.

The Coronation of our Blessed Virgin Mary.

O SWEETEST Lady, we can only give thee joy of happiness, of rapturous delight such as we but feebly dream of. On earth thou didst receive such ecstasy as we have never even distantly approached; and there lives no soul amongst us who can conceive thy heaven. We can dimly follow thee on earth, believing, if we cannot realise, the sweetness of the sanctity of that life which was so simple. We can a little make our own the sympathy, the sorrow, the pathetic resignation, the silent unutterable woe of all thy suffering with thy Son; but this is past, sweet mother. Thy dolours were but short; eternal are thy joys. We are sad, we suffer often in body and in mind; we can more naturally dwell upon thy martyrdom and realise thy weariness, and faintness, the deadly aching pain of head and limbs and heart, which the torment of love over-mastered. But these are swallowed up, thanks be to God, in victory, in the triumph of thy Son and thine in His. And lovest thou not more, my sweetest mother, that we should

give thee joy of thy joy? of that which is the everlasting fruit of all the bitterness of earth? does not that contemplation lift our hearts above our present trials, and give us hope and courage, and the foretaste of the brightness of a salvation we expect through thee by Jesus Christ? Happy we, if we can only keep thee in our minds, and live in the remembrance that, with God in His eternal bliss, thou art "*our* sweetness;" for in thy person we, poor human creatures, are already in the joy of God. Our human nature sits upon His throne in the Person of the Son of God; but in thee is our human personality received into His everlasting bliss. Thou art the Bride of God. But, beyond words inferior as we are, worse far than nothing by our sins, He also calls *us*, calls us still, to that unspeakable felicity. In thinking of thy bliss we recollect our own; "the joy that is set before us;" we are roused to cleanse our souls and make them ready for the marriage feast; to bathe them in the blood that maketh virgins; to put on the raiment clean and white; to sanctify ourselves by sacraments, and by a pure intention; that when the cry is heard: "Behold the Bridegroom cometh," we may be glad and ready, and may be admitted to the joys "eye hath not seen nor ear heard," which are awaiting all that accept His salvation, in the heavens where Mary is Queen in her joy.

The day we see God in His glory, well pleased with us at last, we shall see her too, our lovely mother ; and she will smile and welcome us ; and fear will vanish in delight. If such a day be really possible for us, “what manner of people ought we to be now in holy conversation and godliness ?”

THE END.





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