

St. Werburgh's, Chester



MADONNA AND CHILD

Catholic Reference Book, 1948

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" THE ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS "

Here we have the shepherds entering the cave at Bethlehem in order to pay homage to the newly-born Saviour. The Angels overhead are singing, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good-will." The reader will notice the expression of smiling contentment in our Lady's face and the look of surprise on the part of St. Joseph at the sudden intrusion of the shepherds with their sheep-dog. It is the work of Anton Raphael Mengs (1728-1779), a German historical and portrait painter, who spent most of his life in Rome and in Spain.

DEATH DOES NOT DIVIDE

BY FATHER JOSEPH DEGEN

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Matt. 5. 5).

"Behold, all souls are mine" (Ezekiel 18, 4).

Although we are exhorted to serve Him with joy, God does not forbid us to mourn, when death takes away one who is near and dear to us. Did not our Lord Himself, Who is the one supreme and perfect Model for our imitation, weep at the grave of His friend, Lazarus? What is required is that we do not sorrow in the unrestrained way of people who are devoid of Christian hope.

When Epaphroditus, one of his friends and fellow-workers in the Gospel, was restored to health after being sick, St. Paul wrote to the Philippians: "For indeed he was sick, nigh unto death; but God had mercy on him. And not only on him, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow on sorrow. Therefore, I sent him the more speedily: that seeing him again, you may rejoice, and I may be without sorrow." (Philippians 2, 27, 28).

The ways of God are inscrutable. We cannot tell why one is taken, and another is left. Our toy minds cannot fathom the counsels of Infinite Wisdom.

God withdraws the soul and summons it to Himself at such a time as He sees best, some at one period of life, some at another. The fitness of the time does not always harmonise with the short-sighted notions of men, but is justified by the laws of Divine Wisdom and Love.

The sending of each soul into the world is no chance matter, nor its withdrawal: all is planned by Divine Providence with a fixed aim and purpose.

God has a far deeper interest in each one of us—in each separate soul—than have our dearest and most devoted friends, none of whom can say what He says of every individual member of the human family, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jer. 31, 3).

In the kingdom of Heaven there is an infinite variety of souls, each differing in some respect from all others, as one star differeth from another star in glory (1 Cor. 15, 41).

Each of these souls has its particular office in the Divine economy, which no other is equally able to fulfil. Each is the enshrinement of an idea of the Divine Mind, and is perfect in its kind. All are beautiful and glorious, and the very least has a dazzling splendour that would put to shame all the brightest sheen of earthly glory.

"All souls are mine" (Ezekiel 18, 4). When a person dies in a state of grace and of friendship with God it means that one more soul has gone to throng the courts of Heaven: another jewel more is added to the Redeemer's crown: one soul more, washed in His Blood, will praise Him eternally in the realms above. One more escaped from the dark prison of the body has gone to enjoy the living light of the face-to-face vision of God.

A happy death means that the soul has been released from the temptations, uncertainties, and miseries of this land of exile, and has gone to that happy home, where God wipes away every tear from every eye, and there is no more crying, nor mourning, nor sorrow, but the weary are at rest and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads.

It is the soul that God takes to Himself at death, whilst He leaves the body in the hands of men. He takes the gem and leaves the casket behind. He takes the spiritual treasure and there remains only the earthly envelope. The spirit returns to God, who gave it, and the dust of the body returns to its earth from whence it was.

The wall of separation, which seems to rear itself between us and our dear departed ones, is non-existent to the eyes of faith. God takes them from our homes but not from our hearts. We can keep ourselves united with them in spirit by means of the golden link of prayer, until the happy day of re-union with them in the Beatific Vision of God throughout eternity.

Not only can we pray for our friends on the other side, but we can pray to them, and they will heed our prayers. They are constantly interceding for those whom they loved and cherished on earth, or in whom they were in any way interested. Thus the "Communion of saints," enables us to continue affectionate and profitable contacts with those whom God has called to Himself.

We thank our God upon every remembrance of thee
Death does not divide;
For is it not as if the rose had climbed
My garden wall and blossom'd on the other side?

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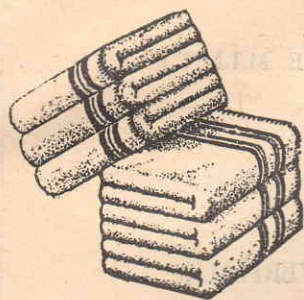
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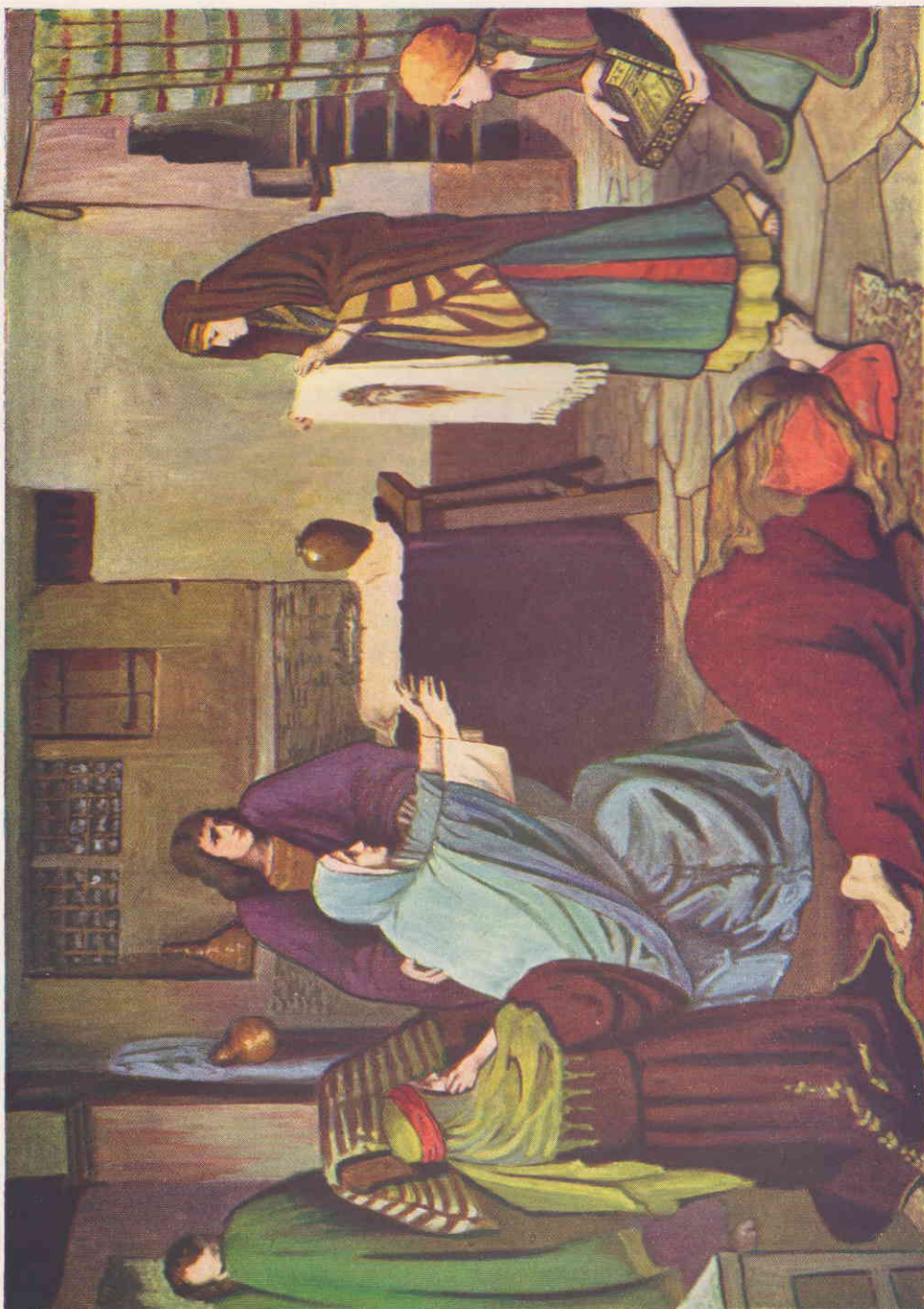
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"THE FIRST GOOD FRIDAY "

While Jesus hung on the Cross he bequeathed His Blessed Mother to the care of the Beloved Disciple John, and from that hour St. John protected Mary as his Mother.

After the Burial of Jesus he brought her to his home, and there with the aid of Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, tried to comfort the Blessed Mother in the loss of her son Jesus. The Crown of Thorns, the Vessel of the Precious Blood, were reverently enshrined, when the holy woman named Veronica, accompanied by her waiting maid, arrived to present her relic, the Holy Veil bearing the imprint of the Holy Face of Jesus. Jesus had left the picture of his face in return for her brave and charitable deed in wiping His face, all covered with blood and spittle, while on His journey to Calvary. The Holy Mother is most eager to receive this relic of her dead Son, while Mary Magdalene lies prostrate with grief at the sight of His suffering face.

THE FIRST GOOD FRIDAY

The pious Veronica was undoubtedly one of the Holy women who had followed Our Lord from place to place, and tradition tells of the kindness she showed to Him on the day of His Crucifixion.

Standing on the house-top Veronica heard the City astir and a great uproar, and approaching below the procession on its way to Calvary. Snatching up her long white veil—which was only worn out of doors—she hastened down into the street. As from afar off she waited for His approach she could see how His garment was torn and soiled, and His face stamped with suffering, marred and stained with blood and the spittle of the soldiers. He seems rather to stumble than to walk and she could see Him falling heavily on His Face. A scoffing crowd was around Him and the soldiers were prodding Him with the points of their spears to hasten His progress. As He came nearer she was more able to distinguish the poor suffering face of Our Lord, a Crown of Thorns pressed upon His brow.

Veronica's heart melted with compassion and she was blind to everything but that suffering face. Forgotten was the jeering crowd, the soldiers and the rabble, her one thought was to be near Him and to relieve His distress. Quickly she pushed her way through the crowd and casting herself down at the foot of the Holy One she kissed His weary and bleeding feet: "My Lord and My God," she murmured. One of the soldiers standing by shook her roughly by the shoulder and ordered her to go away, but rising to her feet Veronica unwound her veil, and with her eyes filled with tears to see the face of her beloved Master so full of meekness and Holy grandeur, pressed it against His face and wiped away the Precious Blood. She heeded not the blows of the soldiers who brutally ordered her to begone, and stood holding the blood stained veil close to her. What cared she for the blows and hard words of the soldiers now she was the bearer of her Saviour's Precious Blood. Her father, Jacob, hearing the commotion, hurried from his home and finding Veronica persuaded her to return. Obediently she did as she was asked, but going immediately to an upper room she knelt before a couch and there reverently unfolded the veil. Wonder and awe overshadowed her face as she gazed upon the veil, as there upon it was impressed the image of Our Saviour's countenance.

The Sacred Head was pierced with thorns, the forehead bleeding, the eyes swollen, and upon the cheeks the marks of blows, especially of the one which He had received from the servant of the High Priest, which had drawn from His lips the meek and gentle answer "If I have spoken evil, give testimony of the evil: but if well, why strikest Thou Me?," (St. John xviii, 23).

It would be hard to imagine the feelings of Veronica when she found herself the recipient of such a Holy Treasure, but harder still to imagine the feelings of the other Holy Women, especially the sorrowing Mother, on first beholding this memorial of Jesus. What a consolation it must have been to them to see His features thus impressed on the veil, and it must have been, especially to Our Lady, a source of both comfort and pain. Comfort to think that by His sufferings Our Lord had redeemed the world.

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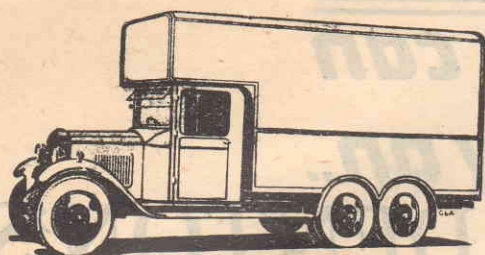
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MIRACLES AND THEIR PURPOSE

The Latin word 'miraculum' means something wonderful, but not necessarily supernatural.

In theology, however, this term is applied only to events so striking and wonderful that they are outside of or beyond the normal processes and the ordinary operations of nature.

Miracles are conveniently divided into three categories: (1) 'praeter,' (2) 'contra,' and (3) 'supra naturam.'

To the first belong those in which the miraculous effect could also have come about naturally, such as some of the cures at Lourdes, in which God's activity is manifested in a special and unusual manner. Many a disabled pilgrim has been cured instantaneously and has thrown away his crutches for ever. It is possible that the use of his limbs might have been restored to him after a few more years of hospital treatment.

Those miracles are said to be 'contra naturam' in which the effect produced is contrary to nature—such as the preservation of Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago, unhurt by the flames of the fiery furnace (Daniel 3) and the preservation of Daniel in a den of famished lions.

The margin between these and miracles 'supra naturam' is narrow. Yet there is a difference. To this third class belong those miracles, which under no circumstances could have been produced by natural causes, such as the raising of Lazarus from death to life.

Confronted with a miracle, sceptics cannot say, "This is nature," but they are compelled to exclaim, "The finger of God is here."

When our Lord said to the paralytic, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," the standers-by wondered at the assumption of such power. Reading their thoughts, our Lord added, "But that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, arise and take up thy bed and go into thy house."

It was by His miraculous bodily cure of the paralytic, that our Lord endeavoured to win the faith of his hearers in his power to perform still great wonders in the soul—wonders, which are not termed miracles, because they belong to the moral order, and do not strike the senses.

There are people, who reject miracles, on the ground that they would constitute a violation of the laws of nature.

These sceptics set up a false antithesis between nature and God, the Author and Sustainer of nature.

Having created nature, God did not leave it to itself, like an automatic machine, but moment by moment it depends upon His sustaining power to continue in existence.

And what, after all, are these laws of nature? When we have made out by careful observation that something is always the cause of a certain effect, we apply to the truth thus discovered the convenient, if somewhat misleading phrase, "laws of nature." They are just formal and concise statements of the way things always happen.

Call them "laws" if you like, but they are laws which God has impressed and imposed upon nature. They are external manifestations of the Divine order existing in the Divine Mind—a Mind which is capable of ever new forms of manifestation.

The universe does not fill God with awe, as it does us. He could create a thousand worlds, more wonderful than ours, and they would all be as nothing to His omnipotent power.

During His public ministry it was to His miracles that our Lord appealed in order to establish His claim that He was God as well as man. "The works themselves that I do give testimony of me."

If God ratifies a statement by a miracle, that statement must necessarily be true.

The primary purpose of miracles is to vindicate the truth—to give to the hesitating human mind Divine assurance of what is true. They guarantee the truth of God's supernatural revelation and thus form the rational basis of all we believe.

There are people who say that the age of miracles has gone for ever. But well-authenticated miracles have accompanied the whole course of the history of the Church and they occur to-day.

Among them are those that are continually taking place at Lourdes, where no cure is admitted as a miracle until it has passed the severe test of the Medical Bureau.

No natural explanation can account for cases of advanced tubercular disease or cancer being instantaneously cured.

These cures follow no "law." They do not depend on the intensity of the faith of the sick pilgrim. Indeed, some of the most fervent leave Lourdes uncured, while there have been remarkable cures among sceptics.

The cures come from a free cause acting when it pleases—they proceed from the free will of God, Who is the supreme law of nature.



" ELYMAS, THE SORCERER, STRUCK WITH BLINDNESS "

Sergius Paulus, a proconsul in Cyprus, sent for Paul and Barnabas to preach the Word of God before him, but Elymas, the magician of the island, sought by wicked means to turn him from the truth. Then Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, looked upon Elymas and said, "Oh, thou full of guile, and all deceit, son of the devil enemy of justice, thou dost not cease to pervert the right works of the Lord, and now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be struck blind, not seeing the sun for a time." Immediately darkness fell upon Elymas the sorcerer so that he felt about for someone to lead him away. Then the proconsul, when he had seen what was done, believed, admiring the doctrine of the Lord.—(The Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 13.)

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FEAST DAYS—JANUARY to JUNE, 1948

JANUARY, 1948

- 1 Th—The Circumcision
- 2 F—Octave of St. Stephen
- 3 S—Octave of St. John
- 4 S—The Holy Name of Jesus
- 5 M—Vigil
- 6 T—The Epiphany
- 7 W—Of the Octave
- 8 Th—Of the Octave
- 9 F—Of the Octave
- 10 S—Of the Octave
- 11 S—The Holy Family
- 12 M—Of the Octave
- 13 T—Octave of the Epiphany
- 14 W—St. Hilary
- 15 Th—St. Paul, Hermit
- 16 F—St. Marcellus, P.M.
- 17 S—St. Anthony A.B.
- 18 S—2nd after Epiphany
- 19 M—SS. Marius & Comps.
- 20 T—SS. Fabian & Sebastian
- 21 W—St. Agnes V.M.
- 22 Th—SS. Vincent & Anastasius, M.M.
- 23 F—St. Raymond of Pennafort
- 24 S—St. Timothy, B.M.
- 25 S—Septuagesima Sunday
- 26 M—St. Polycarp
- 27 T—St. John Chrysostom, B.C.D.
- 28 W—St. Agnes V.M. (2nd Feast)
- 29 Th—St. Francis de Sales
- 30 F—St. Martina, V.M.
- 31 S—St. John Bosco

FEBRUARY, 1948

- 1 S—Sexagesima
- 2 M—Purification J.V.M.
- 3 T—St. Blaise
- 4 W—St. Andrew Corsini
- 5 Th—St. Agatha V.M.
- 6 F—St. Titus, B.C.
- 7 S—St. Romuald, Ab.
- 8 S—Quinquagesima
- 9 M—St. Cyril of Alexandria
- 10 T—St. Scholastica V.
- 11 W—Ash Wednesday
- 12 Th—Seven Servite Fathers
- 13 F—Feria
- 14 S—St. Valentine
- 15 S—1st in Lent
- 16 M—Feria
- 17 T—Feria
- 18 W—St. Simeon
- 19 Th—Feria
- 20 F—Feria
- 21 S—Feria
- 22 S—2nd in Lent
- 23 M—St. Peter Damian
- 24 T—St. Matthias A.P.
- 25 W—Feria
- 26 Th—Feria
- 27 F—St. Gabriel
- 28 S—Feria
- 29 S—3rd in Lent

MARCH, 1948

- 1 M—Feria
- 2 T—St. Chad
- 3 W—Feria
- 4 Th—St. Casimir
- 5 F—Feria
- 6 S—SS. Perpetua & Felicitas, M.M.
- 7 S—4th in Lent
- 8 M—St. John of God
- 9 T—St. Frances of Rome
- 10 W—Forty Martyrs
- 11 Th—Feria
- 12 F—St. Gregory the Great
- 13 S—Feria
- 14 S—Passion Sunday
- 15 M—Feria
- 16 T—Feria
- 17 W—St. Patrick
- 18 Th—St. Cyril of Jerusalem
- 19 F—St. Joseph
- 20 S—Feria
- 21 S—Palm Sunday
- 22 M—Feria
- 23 T—Feria
- 24 W—St. Gabriel Archangel
- 25 Th—Maundy Thursday
- 26 F—Good Friday
- 27 S—Holy Saturday
- 28 S—Easter Sunday
- 29 M—Of the Octave
- 30 T—Of the Octave
- 31 W—Of the Octave

APRIL, 1948

- 1 Th—Feria
- 2 F—St. Francis of Paula
- 3 S—Feria
- 4 S—Low Sunday
- 5 M—St. Vincent Ferrer, C.
- 6 T—Feria
- 7 W—Feria
- 8 Th—Feria
- 9 F—Feria
- 10 S—Feria
- 11 S—2nd after Easter
- 12 M—Feria
- 13 T—Feria
- 14 W—Solemnity of St. Joseph
- 15 Th—Feria
- 16 F—Feria
- 17 S—St. Anicetus, P.M.
- 18 S—3rd after Easter
- 19 M—Feria
- 20 T—Feria
- 21 W—Octave Day of St. Joseph
- 22 Th—SS. Soter & Caius, P.P. M.M.
- 23 F—St. George
- 24 S—St. Fidelis
- 25 S—4th after Easter
- 26 M—SS. Cletus & Marcellinus
- 27 T—St. Peter Canisius
- 28 W—St. Paul of the Cross
- 29 Th—St. Peter M.
- 30 F—St. Catherine of Siena

MAY, 1948

- 1 S—SS. Philip & James, App.
- 2 S—St. Athanasius
- 3 M—Finding of the Holy Cross
- 4 T—St. Monica
- 5 W—St. Pius V.
- 6 Th—Ascension Day
- 7 F—St. Stanislaus
- 8 S—St. Michael, Archangel
- 9 S—Sunday within the Octave
- 10 M—St. Antoninus
- 11 T—Feria
- 12 W—St. Nereus & Comps.
- 13 Th—St. Robert Bellarmine
- 14 F—St. Boniface
- 15 S—St. John Baptist de la Salle
- 16 S—Whit Sunday
- 17 M—St. P. Pascal Baylon
- 18 T—St. Venantius
- 19 W—St. Peter Celestine
- 20 Th—St. Bernardine of Siena
- 21 F—Dedication of the Cathedral
- 22 S—Feria
- 23 S—Trinity Sunday
- 24 M—Of the Octave
- 25 T—Of the Octave
- 26 W—St. Augustine of Canterbury
- 27 Th—Corpus Christi
- 28 F—Of the Octave
- 29 S—St. Mary Magdalene
- 30 S—2nd after Pent.
- 31 M—St. Angela Maricia

JUNE, 1948

- 1 T—Of the Octave
- 2 W—Of the Octave
- 3 Th—Octave day of Corpus Christi
- 4 F—The Sacred Heart
- 5 S—St. Boniface, B.M.
- 6 S—3rd after Pent.
- 7 M—Of the Octave
- 8 T—Of the Octave
- 9 W—SS. Prime and Felician
- 10 Th—St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland
- 11 F—St. Barnabas, Ap.
- 12 S—Feria
- 13 S—4th after Pent.
- 14 M—St. Basil the Great
- 15 T—SS. Vitus & Comps.
- 16 W—Feria
- 17 Th—Feria
- 18 F—St. Ephraem
- 19 S—St. Juliana Falconieri
- 20 S—5th after Pent.
- 21 M—St. Aloysius
- 22 T—St. Paulinus
- 23 W—Of the Octave
- 24 Th—Nativity of St. John the Baptist
- 25 F—St. William, Ab.
- 26 S—SS. John & Paul
- 27 S—6th after Pent.
- 28 M—St. Irenaeus
- 29 T—SS. Peter & Paul, App.
- 30 W—Commemoration of St. Paul, Ap.

FEAST DAYS—JULY to DECEMBER, 1948

JULY, 1948

- 1 Th—The Precious Blood
- 2 F—The Visitation
- 3 S—St. Leo II
- 4 S—7th after Pent.
- 5 M—St. Anthony Maria Zaccaria
- 6 T—Octave day of SS. Peter & Paul
- 7 W—SS. Cyril and Methodius
- 8 Th—St. Elizabeth
- 9 F—SS. John Fisher & Thomas More
- 10 S—Seven Brothers
- 11 S—8th after Pent.
- 12 M—St. John Gualbert
- 13 T—St. Anacletus P.M.
- 14 W—St. Bonaventure
- 15 Th—St. Henry Emperor
- 16 F—Our Lady of Mount Carmel
- 17 S—St. Alexis
- 18 S—9th after Pent.
- 19 M—St. Vincent de Paul
- 20 T—St. Margaret V.M.
- 21 W—St. Praxedes
- 22 Th—St. Mary Magdalene
- 23 F—St. Apollinaris B.M.
- 24 S—Vigil of St. James
- 25 S—10th after Pent (St. James) A.P.
- 26 M—St. Anne, Mother of our Lady
- 27 T—St. Pantaleon M
- 28 W—SS. Nazarius & Comps.
- 29 Th—St. Martha V.
- 30 F—SS. Abdon & Sennen, M.M.
- 31 S—St. Ignatius C.

AUGUST, 1948

- 1 S—11th after Pent
- 2 M—St. Alphonsus Liguori
- 3 T—Finding of St. Stephen
- 4 W—St. Dominic, C.
- 5 Th—Our Lady of the Snow
- 6 F—Transfiguration
- 7 S—St. Cajetan, C.
- 8 S—12th after Pent.
- 9 M—St. John Vianney
- 10 T—St. Laurence M.
- 11 W—SS. Tiburtius & Susanna
- 12 Th—St. Clare, V.
- 13 F—SS. Hippolytus & Cassian
- 14 S—Vigil of the Assumption
- 15 S—13th after Pent. The Assumption, B.V.M.
- 16 M—St. Joachim
- 17 T—St. Hyacinth, C.
- 18 W—Of the Octave
- 19 Th—St. John Eudes
- 20 F—St. Bernard Ab.
- 21 S—St. Jane Frances
- 22 S—14th after Pent.
- 23 M—St. Philip Benitus
- 24 T—St. Bartholemew Ap.
- 25 W—St. Louis
- 26 Th—St. Zephyrinus
- 27 F—St. Joseph Calasanctius, C.
- 28 S—St. Augustine, B.C.D.
- 29 S—15th after Pent.
- 30 M—St. Rose of Lima
- 31 T—St. Raymond Nonnatus, C.

SEPTEMBER, 1948

- 1 W—St. Giles, Ab.
- 2 Th—St. Stephen, K.C.
- 3 F—Feria
- 4 S—Feria
- 5 S—16th after Pent.
- 6 M—Feria
- 7 T—Feria
- 8 W—Our Lady's Birthday
- 9 Th—St. Gorgonius M.
- 10 F—St. Nicholas of Tolentino
- 11 S—SS. Protus & Hyacinth
- 12 S—17th after Pent.
- 13 M—Feria
- 14 T—Exaltation of the Holy Cross
- 15 W—Seven Dolours of Our Lady
- 16 Th—SS. Cornelius & Cyprian
- 17 F—Stigmata of St. Francis
- 18 S—St. Joseph of Cupertino
- 19 S—18th after Pent.
- 20 M—St. Eunice & Comps.
- 21 T—St. Matthew, Ap.
- 22 W—St. Thomas of Villanova, B.C.
- 23 Th—St. Linus P.M.
- 24 F—Our Lady of Ransom
- 25 S—Feria
- 26 S—19th after Pent.
- 27 M—SS. Cosmas & Damian
- 28 T—St. Wenceslaus
- 29 W—Dedication of St. Michael
- 30 Th—St. Jerome, C.D.

OCTOBER, 1948

- 1 F—St. Remigius
- 2 S—Holy Guardian Angels
- 3 S—20th after Pent. (St. Teresa of Liseux)
- 4 M—St. Francis of Assisi
- 5 T—SS. Placid & Comps.
- 6 W—St. Bruno
- 7 Th—The Holy Rosary
- 8 F—St. Bridget
- 9 S—St. John Leonard
- 10 S—21st after Pent.
- 11 M—Motherhood of Our Lady
- 12 T—St. Wilfrid
- 13 W—St. Edward
- 14 Th—St. Callistus
- 15 F—St. Theresa
- 16 S—St. Hedwig
- 17 S—22nd after Pent. (St. Margaret Mary)
- 18 M—St. Luke, Ev.
- 19 T—St. Peter of Alcantara
- 20 W—St. John Cantius
- 21 Th—St. Hilariion
- 22 F—Feria
- 23 S—Feria
- 24 S—23rd after Pent. (St. Raphael, Archangel)
- 25 M—SS. Chrysanthus & Daria
- 26 T—Feria
- 27 W—Vigil
- 28 Th—SS. Simon & Jude, App.
- 29 F—Feria
- 30 S—Feria
- 31 S—Kingship of Christ

NOVEMBER, 1948

- 1 M—All Saints
- 2 T—All Souls
- 3 W—Of the Octave
- 4 Th—St. Charles
- 5 F—Of the Octave
- 6 S—Of the Octave
- 7 S—25th after Pent.
- 8 M—Octave day of All Saints
- 9 T—Dedication of the Basilica of Our Saviour
- 10 W—St. Andrew Avellino
- 11 Th—St. Martin of Tours
- 12 F—St. Martin I. P.
- 13 S—St. Didacus
- 14 S—26th after Pent.
- 15 M—St. Albert the Great
- 16 T—St. Gertrude
- 17 W—St. Gregory Thaumaturgus
- 18 Th—Dedication of the Basilicas of SS. Peter & Paul
- 19 F—St. Elisabeth of Hungary
- 20 S—St. Felix de Valois
- 21 S—27th after Pent.
- 22 M—St. Cecilia
- 23 T—St. Clement I. P.
- 24 W—St. John of the Cross
- 25 Th—St. Catherine V.M.
- 26 F—St. Silvester
- 27 S—Feria
- 28 S—1st of Advent
- 29 M—Vigil of St. Andrew
- 30 T—St. Andrew, Ap.

DECEMBER, 1948

- 1 W—Feria
- 2 Th—St. Bibiana V.M.
- 3 F—St. Francis Xavier
- 4 S—St. Peter Chrysologus
- 5 S—2nd of Advent
- 6 M—St. Nicholas
- 7 T—St. Ambrose
- 8 W—The Immaculate Conception
- 9 Th—Of the Octave
- 10 F—Of the Octave
- 11 S—St. Damasus I.
- 12 S—3rd of Advent
- 13 M—St. Lucy V.M.
- 14 T—Feria
- 15 W—Octave of the Immaculate Conception
- 16 Th—St. Eusebius B.M.
- 17 F—Feria
- 18 S—Feria
- 19 S—4th of Advent
- 20 M—Vigil
- 21 T—St. Thomas, Ap.
- 22 W—Feria
- 23 Th—Feria
- 24 F—Vigil
- 25 S—Christmas Day
- 26 S—St. Stephen, First Martyr
- 27 M—St. John, Ap. Ev.
- 28 T—Holy Innocents
- 29 W—St. Thomas of Canterbury
- 30 Th—Feria
- 31 F—St. Silvester

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BY FATHER JOSEPH DEGEN

The two chief sources of Christian joy are love and freedom—the love of God and of our neighbour in our hearts, and the freedom with which Christ makes us free, provided we co-operate with His grace: a freedom which emancipates the soul from the bondage of selfishness, envy, passion, sin, and bad habits.

The practice of virtue and the control of rebel tendencies fill the soul with a strong sense of peace and contentment.

Virtue is care-free and light-hearted, whereas vice is a prey to tempestuous restlessness, and to the tormenting reproofs of conscience, an ever-wakeful witness and sentinel.

There is no more powerful force in the world against the sordid and the morbid than the Christian religion. If lived up to, it raises our lives to a supernatural level and enables us to live at our highest and best.

Harshness, unapproachability, and hypocrisy are foreign to the Christian spirit—to the Christ-like mind, which is gentle, humble and sincere.

Self-denial does not produce depressing re-actions. It develops will-power, and thus increases our ascendancy over the urge of passion and the allurements of sin. It enables us to lead well-regulated lives, and thereby promotes the best interests of both soul and body. The festive thus grows out of the penitential and the feast out of the fast. It is self-indulgence which has such bitter after-effects.

A Christian with a Christ-like mind radiates the sunshine of joy wherever he goes. He discharges his duties cheerfully and observes the courtesies of life amiably.

He lives in the sun rather than in the shadows and he is a source of inspiration to his neighbour. There is nothing of the croaker or the spoil-sport about him. His life is one grand, beautiful song. And so, his own little corner of the world is all the happier and brighter for his presence.

His is a merry heart and he will try to extract kindly humour out of disturbing incidents, such as a wet bank-holiday, a burnt dinner, or a cut in wages.

He preserves a smiling face before the world, even though his life is deeply scored with the sign of the Cross. He covers up heart-breaking sorrow with a laugh and a jest, as did St. Thomas More, who joked even on the scaffold.

Unlike the eye-watching Pharisees of old and their modern Puritan counterparts, he does not regard being merry as sinful, but as his special heritage as a Christian.

He does not confound abuse and excess with lawful use, and he indulges in wholesome forms of recreation and amusements. He accepts our Lord as his Companion and his Guide during his hours of leisure, no less than during his working hours.

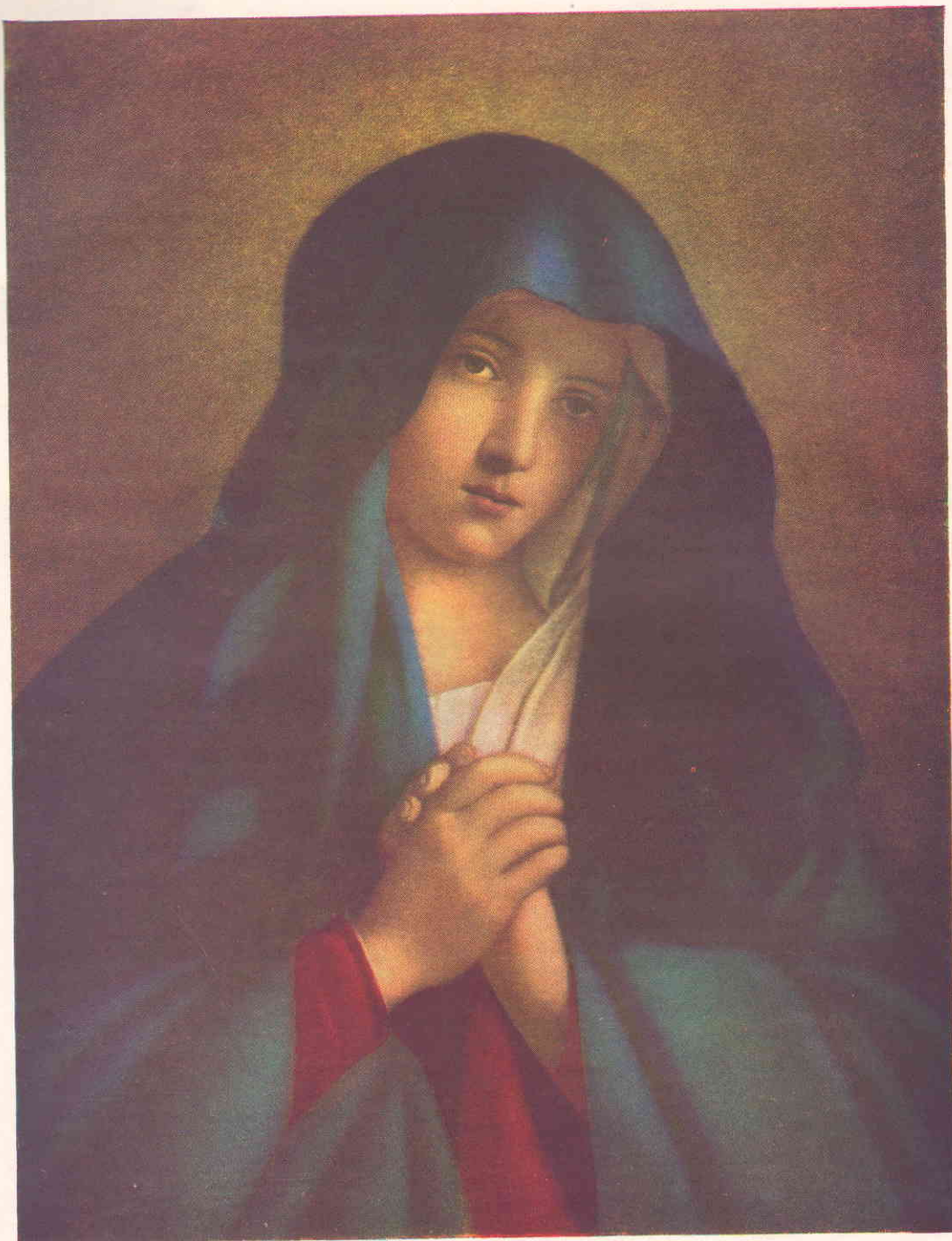
By His atoning death upon the Cross, Our Lord, Who was the incarnation of Divine Love, made peace between God and man. This peace was the good news—the Gospel—which the Apostles and their successors were to announce to the world.

Among the twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost, enumerated by St. Paul (Galatians, v, 22, 23), Joy holds the second place, immediately after Love. Joy was to be one of the Divine forces to turn the world upside down and win it for Christ. Love was to be the lever, and joy the fulcrum, for the conversion of the world.

To the Romans St. Paul said, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy." (Romans 15, 13). To the Philippians he gave the same message, "Rejoice in the Lord always: again, I say, rejoice" (Philippians 4, 4).

It was the exuberant joy of the early Christians, which startled the world into attention and aroused it into listening to a Gospel which proclaimed good news of great joy—the news of the redemption of the entire human race, wrought by the risen Saviour.

The Christian religion if lived up to expels from the soul uncharitableness, jealousy, anger, bad temper, sullenness, despair, cruelty, superstitious forebodings, neurotic phobias and all other loveless, misery-producing, joy-killing influences. "Let that mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2, 5). It bids us to rejoice with a joy that overflows and communicates itself to others.



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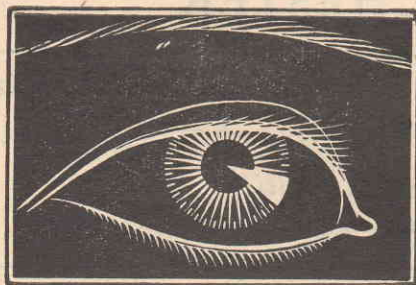
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HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION, 1948

(On which we are bound to hear Mass and
abstain from servile work).

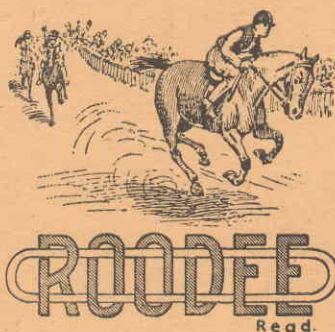
THE CIRCUMCISION	...	January 1st
THE EPIPHANY		January 6th
ASCENSION		May 6th
CORPUS CHRISTI		May 27th
SS. PETER and PAUL		June 29th
THE ASSUMPTION		August 15th
ALL SAINTS		November 1st
CHRISTMAS DAY		December 25th

MOVABLE FEASTS, 1948

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY	January 25th
ASH WEDNESDAY	... February 11th
EASTER SUNDAY	... March 28th
ASCENSION DAY	... May 6th
WHIT SUNDAY	... May 16th
TRINITY SUNDAY	... May 23rd
CORPUS CHRISTI	... May 27th
1st SUNDAY IN ADVENT	November 28th

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