

Before Communion



ACT OF HUMILITY But, O my Saviour, when Thou didst choose the womb of the glorious Virgin for Thy abode, Thou hadst but to leave one heaven for another. Thou hadst prepared her, from her conception, with every grace; and she, on her part, had been more faithful to Thee than all angels and men together. Whereas my heart has nothing in it which can induce Thee to come and make it Thy dwelling. How many times has it refused Thee admittance, when Thou didst stand at the door asking me to receive Thee? And even had I been always faithful, what proportion is there between its lowliness and Thy infinite greatness? Elizabeth humbled herself when she was visited by Mary, and exclaimed, **'How comes such an honour to me?'** And I am to receive a visit, not merely of the Mother of God, but of God Himself, and in such an intimate familiar manner, that a greater union cannot be. Thou sayest, **'He that eateth me, abideth in me and I in him':** O Son of God! Thou seekest, then, for what is lowest and poorest, and in that Thy heart loves to dwell. I am overwhelmed with admiration at this condescension; but when I reflect that Thou art going to show it me, I can do nothing but sink into my own nothingness, and there beseech Thee to show me more and more clearly, that I am but nothing; that so, when Thou hast come within me, my whole being may proclaim the glory, the mercy, the power of my Jesus. *Amen*

ACT OF FAITH Knowing that Thou art about to enter under my roof, O eternal God, Jesus, Son of the Father, I have need of all my faith. Yes, it is Thou who art coming to me, Thou who didst enter into Mary's virginal womb, making it the sanctuary of Thy Majesty. Thou didst send Thine angel to her, and she believed his word, when he said: **'Nothing is impossible to God: the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee.'** She believed, and then conceived in her chaste womb Him who had created her. Thou hast not sent an angel to me, O my Saviour, to tell me thou art coming into my heart. Thou hast spoken Thyself, and Thou hast said: **'I am the living Bread come down from heaven: he that eateth my Flesh and drinketh my Blood, abideth in me and I in him.'** Thou hast willed that those words of Thine, spoken so many hundred years ago, should reach me by Thy Church, that thus I might have both the certainty that they are Thine, and the merit of bowing down my reason to the deepest of mysteries. I believe then, O Jesus! Help the weakness of my faith. Enable me to submit, as Mary did, to Thy infinite wisdom; and since Thou desirest to enter under my roof, I bow down my whole being before Thee, using her blessed words: **'May it be done to me according to thy word;'** for how dare I, who am but nothingness, resist Thee, who art all wisdom and power! *Amen*

ACT OF CONTRITION Happy should I be, O Jesus, if I could feel that this, my nothingness, was the only obstacle to the glorious union to which Thou invitest me! I would then approach to Thee, after the example of Thy Immaculate Mother, my august Queen, and would dare to partake of the banquet at which she is on Thy right hand. But I am worse than nothing - I am a sinner: and surely there can be no union between infinite sanctity and sin, between light and darkness! I have been Thine enemy, O my Redeemer! and yet Thou wishest to come into my heart, with the sores of its shame and wounds barely closed; and Thou tellest me, that Thou, who couldst delight to dwell in Mary's heart, canst find pleasure in mine! Oh! how this teaches me the malice of my sins, since they offended a God so generous, so wonderful in His love for me! In these few moments, which precede Thy descending into the midst of my darkness in order to change it into light, what can I do but renew my sorrow for those many sins whereby I lost Thee, as also for those whereby I grieved Thee without losing Thy grace. Accept this my contrition, O my Saviour! It is thus that I would prepare Thy way to my heart, by removing everything which is in opposition to the righteous path of Thy Holy Law. *Amen*

After Communion



ACT OF LOVE I will love Thee, then, O Jesus! because Thou hast first loved me; and I will love Thee the more because, by this Thy visit to me, Thou hast so greatly increased my power to love. It was thus with Mary, when Thou didst choose her for Thy Mother. Up to that time she had been the most faithful of Thy creatures, and deserved the preference Thou didst give her, above all women, of being honoured with the high privilege of becoming Mother of God. But when Thou didst enter her virginal womb, when Thy divine Person came into that admirable contact with her nature, which, though holy, was human; Mary, transformed, as it were, into Thee, began to love Thee as she had never been able to do before. May it be so with me, dear Jesus! May my own life be lost in Thine! Is not the visit Thou hast paid me that of a God? The visits of creatures are but exterior; Thine to me is interior; Thou hast not entered my house and blessed it, Thou hast penetrated into the deepest recesses of my very soul; so that I live, no, it is not I, but Thou livest in me, as Thy apostle expresses the mystery. So that if I love myself, I must love Thee, since Thou abidest in me, and I abide in Thee. Can I ever separate from Thee again? No, my divine Master, I desire to have but Thee for my love and my very life, now and forever. *Amen*

ACT OF ADORATION O Sovereign Majesty of God! Thou hast, then, mercifully deigned to come down to me! This favour, which Thou didst heretofore grant to Mary, has been given to me too! Would that I, during these happy moments, could adore Thee as profoundly as she did! The sentiment of her lowliness and unworthiness, at that solemn moment, would have overpowered her, had not Thy tender love for her supported her to bear that ineffable union of the Creator with His creature. My lowliness, and still more my unworthiness, are of a very different kind from hers; and yet I find it so hard to feel them. This much at least I know, that in order thus to come to me, and be my own infinite treasure, Thou hast had to overcome immense obstacles. What, then, shall I do for Thee, that is worthy of Thee? How can I best compensate Thee for the humiliation Thou hast thus borne out of love for me? I can but adore Thee, and humble myself to the farthest depths of my own nothingness. And because this my adoration is not worthy of Thine acceptance, I presume to offer Thee that which Mary herself offered Thee the first moment she became Mother of God, and during the nine months Thou wast so closely united with her. Thou hast given her to me to be my own Mother; permit me to make this use of her wealth, which she loves to see her children so freely giving to Thy greater glory. *Amen*

ACT OF OBLATION But take heed, my soul: let not the love of thy God be mere sentiment. He that loves God, lives for Him. Jesus' presence produced in Mary, the moment it was effected, far more than the sentiment of total devotedness of herself to the interests and glory of Him who was both her God and her Son. It gave her a conformity to all God's appointments, which stood unshaken, without one moment of faltering, through all the trials of her long life. Thou hast visited me, dear Saviour, and courage is what Thou wishest to leave with me. Between this day and that of my death and my judgement, I am to go through many trials and temptations, all difficult, and some of them perhaps severe. If I love Thee, I shall triumph over them all. And how can I but love Thee, even at the bare remembrance of this Thy visit to me, which Thou art ready to repeat as often as I wish it! I am Thine, O God of my heart, as Thou art mine. Thou knowest my great weakness: give me courage and strength. Thou hast given me, this happy hour, the richest pledge of Thy mercy; on this infinite mercy I rest all my hope.

O Mary, pray for me, that I may profit by this visit of thy divine Son. Ye holy angels of God, defend me against my enemies, for your Lord has made me His dwelling place. All ye saints of God, pray for me, that I may never lose this sovereign Good, with whom ye are united for a happy eternity. *Amen*