

## An Exhortation To Hear Mass Devoutly

On "Gaudete" Sunday, as St. Gertrude prepared to communicate at the first Mass, which commences "Rorate," she complained to our Lord that she could not hear the Mass; but our Lord, who compassionates the afflicted, consoled her, saying: "Do you wish, My beloved, that I should say Mass for you?" Then, being suddenly rapt in spirit, she replied: "I do desire it, O beloved of my soul; and I most ardently beseech Thee to grant me this favor." Our Lord then intoned the "Gaudete in Domino semper," with a choir of saints, to incite this soul to praise and rejoice in Him; and as He sat on His royal throne, St. Gertrude cast herself at His feet and embraced them. Then He chanted the "Kyrie eleison" in a clear and loud voice, while two of the princes of the Choir of Thrones took her soul and brought it before God the Father, where she remained prostrate.

At the first Kyrie eleison, He granted her the remission of all the sins which she had contracted through human frailty; after which the Angels raised her up on her knees. At the second, He pardoned her sins of ignorance; and she was raised up by these princes, so that she stood before God. Then two Angels of the Choir of Cherubim led her to the Son of God, who received her with great tenderness. At the first Christe eleison, the saint offered to our Lord all the sweetness of human affection, returning it to Him as to its Source; and there was a wonderful influx of God into her soul, and of her soul into God, so that by the descending notes the ineffable delights of the Divine Heart flowed into her, and by the ascending notes the joys of her soul flowed back to God. At the second Christe eleison, she experienced the most ineffable delights, which she offered to the Lord. At the third Christe eleison, the Son of God extended His hands and bestowed on her all the fruit of His most holy life and conversation.

Two Angels of the Choir of Seraphim then presented her to the Holy Spirit, Who penetrated the three powers of her soul. At the first Kyrie eleison, He illuminated her reason with the glorious light of

divine knowledge, that she might always know His will perfectly. At the second Kyrie eleison, He strengthened the irascible part of her soul to resist all the machinations of her enemies, and to conquer every evil. At the last Kyrie eleison, He inflamed her love, that she might love God with her whole heart, with her whole soul, and with her whole strength. It was for this reason that the Choir of Seraphim, which is the highest order in the heavenly hosts, presented her to the Holy Spirit, Who is the Third Person of the Most Holy Trinity, and that the Thrones presented her to God the Father, manifesting that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God, equal in glory, co-eternal in majesty, living and reigning perfect Trinity through endless ages.

The Son of God then rose from His royal throne, and, turning towards God the Father, intoned the Gloria in excelsis in a clear and sonorous voice. At the word gloria He extolled the immense and incomprehensible omnipotence of God the Father; at the words in excelsis He praised His profound wisdom; at Deo He honored the inestimable and indescribable sweetness of the Holy Spirit. The whole celestial court then continued in a most harmonious voice, *Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis*. Our Lord being again seated on His throne, St. Gertrude sat at His feet meditating on her own abjection, when He inclined towards her lovingly; then she rose and stood before Him, while the Divine splendor illuminated her whole being. Two angels from the Choir of Thrones then brought a throne magnificently adorned, which they placed before our Lord; two princes from the Choir of Seraphim placed St. Gertrude thereon, and supported her from each side, while two of the Choir of Cherubim stood before her bearing brilliant torches; and thus she remained before her Beloved, clothed in royal purple. When the heavenly hosts came to the words *Domine Deus Rex Caelestis*, they paused, and the Son of God continued alone chanting to the honor and glory of His Father.

At the conclusion of the Gloria in excelsis, the Lord Jesus, Who is our true High Priest and Pontiff, turned to St. Gertrude, saying,

"Dominus Vobiscum, dilecta - The Lord be with you, beloved;" and she replied, "Et spiritus meus tecum, praedilecte - And may my spirit be with Thee, O my Beloved." After this she inclined towards the Lord to return Him thanks for His love in uniting her spirit to His Divinity, Whose delights are with the children of men. The Lord then read the Collect, Deus, qui hanc sacratissimam noctem, which He concluded with the words, Per Iesum Christum filium tuum, as if giving thanks to God the Father, for illuminating the soul of St. Gertrude, whose unworthiness was indicated by the word noctem (night) which was called most holy, because she had become marvellously ennobled by the knowledge of her own baseness.

St. John the Evangelist, then rose and stood between God and her soul. He was adorned with a yellow garment, which was covered with golden eagles. He commenced with the Epistle Haec est sponsa, and celestial court concluded, Ipsi gloria in saecula. Then all chanted the gradual Specie tua, adding the Versicle Audi filia et vide. After this they commenced the Alleluia. St. Paul, the great Doctor of the Church, pointed to St. Gertrude saying, "Aemulor enim vos - I am jealous of you" (2 Cor. xi, 2); and the heavenly choir sang the prose, Filiae Sion exultent. At the words Dum non consentiret, St. Gertrude remembered that she had been a little negligent in resisting temptations, and she hid her face in shame; but our Lord, Who could not bear to behold the confusion of His chaste queen, covered her negligence with a collar of gold, so that she appeared as if she had gained a glorious victory over all her enemies.

Then another Evangelist commenced the Gospel Exultavit Dominus Iesus, and these words moved the Heart of Jesus so deeply that He arose, and extending His hands, exclaimed aloud, Confiteor tibi Pater, manifesting the same thanksgiving and gratitude to His Father as He had done when He said the same words on earth, giving special thanks for the graces bestowed on this soul. After the Gospel He desired St. Gertrude to make a public profession of faith, by reciting the Creed in the name of the whole Church. When she had concluded, the choir chanted the offertory, Domine Deus in

simplicitate, adding Sanctificavit Moyses. The Heart of Jesus then appeared as a golden altar, which shone with a marvellous brightness, on which the angel guardians offered the good works and prayers of those committed to their care. The Saints then approached, and each offered his merits to the eternal praise of God, and for the salvation of St. Gertrude. The angelic princes, who had charge of the Saint, next approached and offered a chalice of gold, which contained all the trials and afflictions which she had endured, either in body or soul, from her infancy; and the Lord blessed the chalice with the sign of the cross, as the priest blesses it before Consecration.

He now intoned the words Sursum corda. Then all the Saints were summoned to come forward, and they applied their hearts in the form of golden pipes, to the golden altar of the Divine Heart; and from the overflowings of this chalice, which our Lord had consecrated by His benediction, they received some drops for the increase of their merit, glory, and eternal beatitude.

The Son of God then chanted the Gratias agamus to the glory and honor of His Eternal Father. At the Preface, He remained silent for an hour after the words Per Iesum Christum, while the heavenly hosts chanted the Dominum nostrum with ineffable jubilation, declaring that He was their Creator, Redeemer, and the liberal Rewarder of all their good works, and that He alone was worthy of honor and glory, praise and exaltation, power and dominion, from and over all creatures. At the words laudant angeli, all the angelic spirits ran hither and thither, exciting the heavenly inhabitants to sing the Divine praises. At the words Adorant Dominationes, the Choir of Dominations knelt to adore the Lord, declaring that to Him alone every knee should bow, whether in Heaven, on earth, or under the earth. At the Tremunt Potestates, the Powers prostrated before Him to declare that He alone should be adored; and at the Caeli caelorumque, they praised God with all the angel choirs.

Then all the heavenly hosts sang together in harmonious concert the Cum quibus et nostras; and the Virgin Mary, the effluent Rose of

Heaven, who is blessed above all creatures, chanted the Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, extolling with the highest gratitude by these three words the incomprehensible omnipotence, the inscrutable wisdom, and the ineffable goodness of the Ever Blessed Trinity, inciting all the celestial choirs to praise God for having made her most powerful after the Father, most wise after the Son, and most benign after the Holy Ghost. The Saints then continued the Domine Deus Sabaoth.

When this was ended, St. Gertrude saw our Lord rise from His royal throne and present His blessed Heart to His Father, elevating it with His own hands, and immolating it in an ineffable manner for the whole Church. At this moment the bell rang for the Elevation of the Host in the Church; so that it appeared as if our Lord did in heaven what the priests did on earth; but the Saint was entirely ignorant of what was passing in the Church, or what the time was. As she continued in amazement at so many marvels, our Lord told her to recite the Pater noster. When she had finished He accepted it from her, and granted that by this Pater noster they should accomplish everything which had ever been accomplished for the salvation of the Church and for the souls in purgatory. Then He suggested her to pray for the Church, which she did, for all in general, and for each in particular, with the greatest fervor; and the Lord united her prayer to those which He had offered Himself when in the flesh, to be applied to the Universal Church.

Then she exclaimed: "But, Lord, when shall I communicate?" And our Lord communicated Himself to her with a love and tenderness which no human tongue could describe, so that she received the perfect fruit of His most precious Body and Blood. After this He sang a canticle of love for her, and declared to her, that had this union of Himself with her been the sole fruit of His labors, sorrows and Passion, He would have been fully satisfied. Oh, inestimable sweetness of the Divine condescension, Who so delights in human hearts that He considers His union with them a sufficient return for all the bitterness of His Passion! and yet, what should we not owe Him had He only shed one drop of His precious Blood for us!

Our Lord then chanted *Gaudete iusti*, and all the Saints rejoiced with St. Gertrude. Then our Lord said, in the name of the Church Militant, *Refecti sibo*; He then saluted all the Saints lovingly, saying, *Dominus vobiscum*, and thereby increased the glory and joy of all the blessed. The Saints and Angels then sang, for the *Ite Missa est*, *Te decet laus et honor Domine*, to the glory and praise of the effulgent and ever peaceful Trinity. The Son of God extended His royal hand and blessed the Saint, saying: "I bless thee, O daughter of eternal light, with this special blessing, granting you this favor, that whenever you desire to do good to any one from particular affection, they will be as much benefitted above others as Jacob was above Esau when he received his father's blessing."

My dear reader, were our Lord to favor you but once with such a vision, how great would not be your devotion in hearing Mass! Ah! dear reader, our vision must be our faith; faith is the best of all visions, because it is not subject to any illusion. In the light of a lively faith you will see in every Mass all these marvels of Divine Omnipotence, Wisdom and Goodness, which St. Gertrude saw.

Fr. Michael Muller, C.S.S.R., *The Blessed Eucharist: Our Greatest Treasure*, October 22, 1867.