



Our Sodality

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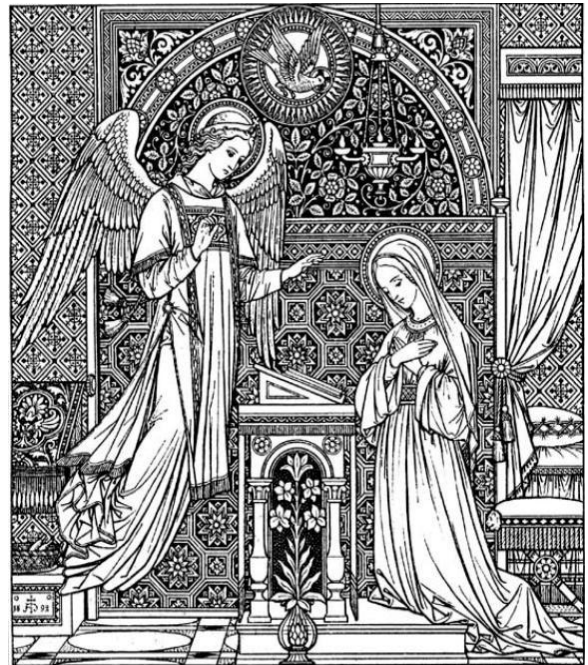
Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Patrick

THE FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION

From *The Liturgical Year* for 25th March, by Dom Prosper Guéranger, O.S.B.

THIS is a great day, not only to man, but even to God Himself; for it is the anniversary of the most solemn event that time has ever witnessed. On this day, the Divine Word, by Whom the Father created the world, was made flesh in the womb of a Virgin, and dwelt among us. [St. John i. 14] We must spend it in joy. Whilst we adore the Son of God Who humbled Himself by thus becoming Man, let us give thanks to the Father, Who so loved the world, as to give His Only-begotten Son; [*Ibid.* iii. 16] let us give thanks to the Holy Ghost, Whose almighty power achieves the great mystery. We are in the very midst of Lent, and yet the ineffable joys of Christmas are upon us: our Emmanuel is conceived on this day, and, nine months hence, will be born in Bethlehem, and the Angels will invite us to come and honour the sweet Babe.

A tradition, which has come down from the Apostolic ages, tells us that the great mystery of the Incarnation was achieved on the twenty-fifth day of March. [St. Augustine. *De Trinitate*, Lib. iv. cap. v] It was at the hour of midnight, when the most holy Virgin was alone and absorbed in prayer, that the Archangel Gabriel appeared before her, and asked her, in the name of the blessed Trinity, to consent to become the Mother of God. Let us assist, in spirit, at this wonderful interview between the Angel and the Virgin: and, at the same time, let us think of that other interview which took place between Eve and the serpent. A holy bishop and martyr of the second century, Saint Irenæus, who had received the tradition from the very disciples of the Apostles, shows us that Nazareth is the counterpart of Eden. [*Adv. hæreses*. Lib. v. cap. xix] In the garden of delights there is a virgin and an Angel; and a conversation takes place between them. At Nazareth a Virgin is also addressed by an Angel, and she answers him; but the Angel of the earthly paradise is a spirit of darkness, and he of Nazareth is a spirit of light.



Never was there a more entire or humiliating defeat than that which this day befell Satan. The frail creature, over whom he had so easily triumphed at the beginning of the world, now rises and crushes his proud head. Eve conquers in MARY. God would not choose man for the instrument of His vengeance; the humiliation of Satan would not have been great enough; and therefore she who was the first prey of Hell, the first victim of the tempter, is selected to give battle to the enemy. The result of so glorious a triumph is that MARY is to be superior not only to the rebel Angels, but to the whole human race, yea, to all the Angels of Heaven. Seated on her exalted throne, she, the Mother of God, is to be the Queen of all creation. Satan, in the depths of the abyss, will eternally bewail his having dared to direct his first attack against the woman, for God has now so gloriously avenged her; and in Heaven, the very Cherubim and Seraphim reverently look up to MARY, and deem themselves honoured when she smiles upon them, or employs them in the execution of any of her wishes, for she is the Mother of their God.

Therefore is it that we, the children of Adam, who have been snatched by MARY's obedience from the power of Hell, solemnize this day of the Annunciation. Well may we say of MARY those words of Debbora, when she sang her song of victory over the enemies of God's people: 'The valiant men ceased, and rested in Israel, until Debbora arose, a mother arose in Israel. The Lord chose new wars, and He Himself overthrew the gates of the enemies.' [Judges v. 7, 8]



VENERABLE MARIA TERESA GONZALEZ QUEVEDO Y CADARSO

Teresita of the Sodality of Our Lady – Part II – “I have decided to become a saint.”

by Ann Ball, authoress of: *Modern Saints, Their Lives and Faces*

“No me gusta!” – I don't like it! – was Teresita's frequent comment at table. Her finicky appetite often led to such outbursts of rudeness. Later, she said, “After such disagreeable outbursts – there were a number of them before I received my First Holy Communion – Tia (Teresita's aunt) would watch for the first sign of sorrow on my face. I never apologized, I am ashamed to say. What patience and kindness she possessed! Not a word about my bad behaviour to me, nor to Mama and Papa. She taught me many lessons in that way - patience and repentance. Without a word, she forced me to grow truly ashamed of myself.”

The happy but headstrong little girl apparently took the matter of her self-control upon herself. After her First Communion, her father noticed quite a change in Teresita. He wrote to his brother, “The extraordinary power she had acquired over her quick, impulsive nature touched me deeply.”

Later, as we learn from her confessor and her notes, she found another aid to self-control; this was her love for MARY. Every time Teresita triumphed over her revulsion for certain foods, or managed to put away her own will, she silently counted the incident as a little gift for MARY.

During much of the time of the Civil War in Spain, the Quevedo family lived away from their apartment in Madrid. During one of their stays in a fishing town, the cook noticed cakes and breads disappearing from the larder. Teresita's sister later confessed that Teresita had “snitched” them to take to the children of the fishermen. Even the plainest of fare from the wealthy Quevedo household was a rare treat for these children.

After the war, the family moved back to Madrid, where the girls attended Our Lady of Mount Carmel Academy. Teresita worked hard and made relatively good grades, but she also got into her share of schoolgirl mischief. At a designated period each day, the students were all supposed to be working in absolute silence on handwork. On one occasion, Teresita was embroidering a large tablecloth and enjoying a forbidden conversation with her cousin Angelines. Suddenly the two magpies heard the measured tread of a sister coming down the hall. Angelines had no book or embroidery – what was she to do? Quickly, her cousin threw the large tablecloth over Angelines, and with a smile and a nod Sister passed by the industriously sewing Teresita.

Each year the academy girls of a certain age made a retreat. In 1941, at the age of eleven, Teresita would normally have been too young to attend. However, she asked for and received special permission to go along with the other girls. During the retreat, each girl kept a little notebook of points to remember from the lectures and discussions. It is probable that Teresita did not understand all the items in the discussions, but one thought which the priest presented and which Teresita quickly grasped was the necessity of making a resolution for life. Teresita's resolution, later found in this notebook, was: “I have decided to become a saint.”

A PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH

From: *The Madonna*, March, 1928

SAINTS know thee best, O hidden, silent Saint;
And would that I could feel a little part,
Of that great love Teresa's kindred heart,
Felt for thee, Foster-Father! But the taint,
The chill, is on my soul; and few and faint,
The prayers that from this earthly bosom dart,
Up to that heavenly throne whereon thou art,
In glory, not too high to hear my plaint.

Patron of all who work in humble ways!
Pray that from pure and earnest motive, I,
May fill with patient toil the moments flying;
Patron of happy death-beds! When my days,
Have reached their term, be thou, dear Joseph, nigh,
With MARY and JESUS, while I'm dying.

Rev. Matthew Russell, S.J.

LET IT PASS

From *The Madonna*, February, 1933

ECHO not an angry word,
Let it pass!
Think how often you have erred,
Let it pass!
If for good you suffer ill,
Let it pass!
O, be kind and gentle still,
Let it pass!

Time at last makes all things straight;
Let us not resent, but wait,
And our triumph shall be great!
Let it pass!



THE SODALITY OF OUR LADY IN IRELAND IN THE 19TH CENTURY

By Charles O'Connor, S.J., from *The Jesuit Directory*, 1945, **Part V – A Slow Beginning**

FROM an analysis of the list of Sodalities aggregated between 1800 and 1900 it transpires that prior to 1850 five Sodalities only had been set up in Ireland, two of which, *viz.*, the Sodality at the Ursuline Convent, Waterford, and that attached to the Mercy Convent, Sligo, were extern, so to speak of the Society; of the other three recorded two were at Clongowes and one at Gardiner Street. The new tradition in the sodality world had obviously not yet begun to bear any considerable fruit in Ireland! How was it, we are naturally disposed to ask, that so little progress was made.

This is a big question to which no sufficient answer can be given off-hand. First of all we have got to bear in mind that in Ireland as elsewhere, and in some measure even, more than in other places, the Society had to rebuild its life from the very lowest foundations. Though soon numerically stronger than the Irish Jesuits of Penal times had ever been, their numbers were for long quite inadequate to meet the many demands upon them. By 1829 they had two colleges, Tullabeg and Clongowes, to staff; as well as to make provision for professors to conduct the philosophical and theological studies of their scholastics. Not long afterwards came the public church in Gardiner Street, and a little later the College at Belvedere.

We must, moreover, remember that the power of aggregating non-Jesuit sodalities to the *Prima Primaria* was itself something quite new. A certain time was naturally required for the Fathers in different places to become acquainted with its scope and application. Their familiarity with the older tradition was well illustrated in the sodalities, which they founded and founded at once at Clongowes and Gardiner Street. In passing judgement in this matter too, we must take due account of the position of the Church in general in Ireland at the time if we are to arrive at a satisfactory understanding of the case. That is why I stressed at the outset the necessity of shaking ourselves free from those prejudices, which arise from judging the Ireland of 100 years ago by the standards and conventions of to-day.



A COMMENT ON FORTITUDE

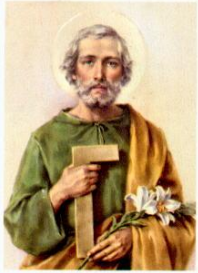
By Dom Prosper Gueranger, O.S.B.

...**THERE** are times, when the Holy Spirit requires from a Christian something beyond interior resistance of the enemies of his soul: he must make an outward protestation against error and evil, as often as position or duty demands it. On such occasions, he must bear to become unpopular, and console himself with the words of the apostle: "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." (Gal. 1:10) But the Holy Ghost will be on his side; and finding him resolute in using His gift of fortitude, not only will He give him a final triumph, but He generally blesses that soul with a sweet and courageous peace, which is the result and recompense of a duty fulfilled.

Thus does the Holy Ghost apply the gift of fortitude, when there is a question of a Christian's making resistance. But, as we have already said, He imparts also the energy necessary for bearing up against the trials, which all must go through who would save their souls. There are certain fears, which damp our courage, and expose us to defeat. The gift of fortitude dispels them, and braces us with such a peaceful confidence, that we ourselves are surprised at the change.

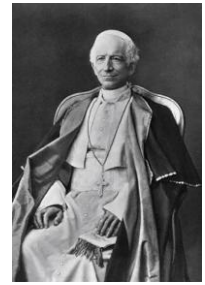
Look at the martyrs: not merely at such a one as Saint Mauritius, the leader of the Theban legion, who was accustomed to face danger on the battlefield; but at Felicitas, a mother of seven children; at Perpetua, a high-born lady with everything this world could give her; at Agnes, a girl of thirteen; and at thousands of others like them; and say if the gift of fortitude is not a prompter of heroism.

Where is the fear of death - that death the very thought of which is sometimes more than we can bear? And what are we to say of all those lives spent in self-abnegation and privation with a view to make JESUS their only treasure and to be more closely united with Him? What are we to say of those hundreds and thousands of our fellow-creatures who shun the sight of a distracted and vain world, and make sacrifice their rule? Whose peacefulness is proof against every trial, and whose acceptance of the cross is as untiring as the cross itself is in its visit? What trophies are these of the Spirit of fortitude! and how magnificent is the devotedness He creates for every possible duty! Oh! truly man, of himself, is of little worth but how grand when under influence of the Holy Ghost!...



ON DEVOTION TO ST. JOSEPH

From the Encyclical *Quamquam Pluries* of Pope Leo XIII, 15th August 1889.



THE special motives for which St. Joseph has been proclaimed Patron of the Church, and from which the Church looks for singular benefit from his patronage and protection, are that Joseph was the spouse of MARY and that he was reputed the Father of JESUS Christ. From these sources have sprung his dignity, his holiness, his glory. In truth, the dignity of

the Mother of God is so lofty that naught created can rank above it. But as Joseph has been united to the Blessed Virgin by the ties of marriage, it may not be doubted that he approached nearer than any to the eminent dignity by which the Mother of God surpasses so nobly all created natures. For marriage is the most intimate of all unions which from its essence imparts a community of gifts between those that by it are joined together.

Thus in giving Joseph the Blessed Virgin as spouse, God appointed him to be not only her life's companion, the witness of her maidenhood, the protector of her honour, but also, by virtue of the conjugal tie, a participator in her sublime dignity. And Joseph shines among all mankind by the most august dignity, since by divine will, he was the guardian of the Son of God and reputed as His father among men. Hence it came about that the Word of God was humbly subject to Joseph, that He obeyed him, and that He rendered to him all those offices that children are bound to render to their parents. From this two-fold dignity flowed the obligation which nature lays upon the head of families, so that Joseph became the guardian, the administrator, and the legal defender of the divine house whose chief he was... He set himself to protect with a mighty love and a daily solicitude his spouse and the Divine Infant; regularly by his work he earned what was necessary for the one and the other for nourishment and clothing; he guarded from death the Child threatened by a monarch's jealousy, and found for Him a refuge; in the miseries of the journey and in the bitternesses of exile he was ever the companion, the assistance, and the upholder of the Virgin and of JESUS.

Now the divine house which Joseph ruled with the authority of a father, contained within its limits the scarce-born Church. From the same fact that the most holy Virgin is the mother of JESUS Christ is she the mother of all Christians whom she bore on Mount Calvary amid the supreme throes of the Redemption; JESUS Christ is, in a manner, the first-born of Christians, who by the adoption and Redemption are his brothers. And for such reasons the Blessed Patriarch looks upon the multitude of Christians who make up the Church as confided specially to his trust - this limitless family spread over the earth, over which, because he is the spouse of MARY and the Father of JESUS Christ he holds, as it were, a paternal authority. It is, then, natural and worthy that as the Blessed Joseph ministered to all the needs of the family at Nazareth and girt it about with his protection, he should now cover with the cloak of his heavenly patronage and defend the Church of JESUS Christ.

FROM THE HOMILY OF POPE JOHN PAUL II, ON 19TH MARCH, 2001, SOLEMNITY OF SAINT JOSEPH

“**HERE** is the wise and faithful servant, whom the Lord has put in charge of his household” (cf. Lk 12: 42). This is how today’s liturgy presents St Joseph, Husband of the Blessed Virgin MARY and Guardian of the Redeemer. He was the wise and faithful servant who, with obedient docility, accepted the will of the Lord, who entrusted him with “his” family on earth to watch over it with daily devotion. St Joseph persevered in this mission with fidelity and love. The Church, therefore, offers him to us as an exceptional model of service to Christ and to his mysterious plan of salvation. And she calls upon him as the special patron and protector of the whole family of believers. In a special way, Joseph is presented to us on his feast day as the saint under whose powerful protection divine Providence has wished to place the persons and ministry of all who are called to be “fathers” and “guardians” among the Christian people.

“Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously’... ‘How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?’” (Lk 2: 48-49). In this simple, family conversation between Mother and Son, we find the characteristics of Joseph's holiness. They correspond to God's plan for him, which he, being the just man that he was, would fulfil with marvellous fidelity... In reminding his parents of the primacy of the One whom he called “my Father”, JESUS reveals the truth about MARY's and Joseph's role. The latter was truly MARY's “husband” and JESUS' “father”, as she affirmed when she said: “Your father and I have been looking for you”. But his being a husband and father is totally subordinate to that of God. This is how Joseph of Nazareth was called, in turn, to become one of JESUS' disciples: by dedicating his life to serving the only-begotten Son of the Father and of his Virgin Mother, MARY. It is a mission that he continues to carry out for the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, to which he never fails to give his provident care, as he did for the humble family of Nazareth.