

tery in which 'he would have us partake' (Postcommunion, Octave day) which is 'celebrated in the Sacrifice of the Mass' (Secret, Circumcision), wherein is 'revealed, immolated and received' he to whom 'the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh were once offered' (Secret, Epiphany). It is the mystery of the adoption of sons, of his birth in us and our birth in him, of his incorporation into a human family, in order that we, in our turn, may be incorporated into the family of the blessed Trinity. And if sons, heirs also, heirs to all the riches of the divinity which consist in God's knowledge and love of himself. Therefore the Word Incarnate and the Father love the soul into which they have infused a love for themselves, and they manifest themselves to it, first in the light of faith, and gradually, if it responds to their advances, in the 'light of the Incarnate Word', which becomes ever more luminous until the shadows retire and that eternal day dawns in which it will see the beauty of the divine Majesty in the light of the Word, in the home of eternal light—*patriam claritatis aeternae*. (Collect, Vigil of the Epiphany.) Until that day dawns it will be above all in and through the Liturgy in which Christ renews his mysteries and reproduces in his mystical body—as a whole and in individual members—those aspects of his life and love which these feasts set forth, that this manifestation will take place.

O God, who hast illumined this most sacred night with the brightness of the true light: grant, we beseech thee, that we who have known the mysteries of that light on earth may also enjoy its happiness in heaven. Amen. (Collect for Midnight Mass.)

ADVENT THOUGHTS FOR MENTAL PRAYER

BY

A DOMINICAN OF HEADINGTON

1. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.* The Word of the Father uttered from all eternity. Adore him in the bosom of the Father . . . rejoice and exult in his infinite perfections, thank him that he is himself. . . . Humble ourselves and be glad that our poor, puny minds cannot comprehend him. . . . Love him with the love of the Father and the Holy Ghost. 'The Word is in your heart'—he deigns to make his heaven within us. The generation of the Word is going on in our souls at this very moment. . . . What a stupendous thought! Ask him to let us think of nothing else, care for nothing else, and to make our souls truly his heaven. . . .

II. *And the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.*

The utter annihilation of the Incarnate Word. Beg him to give us a clearer understanding of it. . . . He who is co-equal with the Father now has a human body and a human soul. . . . He, Life itself, is dependent for his human life upon one of his creatures! Let us sink down into the abyss of our own nothingness that we may come nearer to him, though we can never sink low enough to reach him. Ask him to draw us to himself. . . . Love and adore him with Mary's love and adoration. Beg the Holy Spirit to overshadow us that we too may bring forth Jesus in our souls. Offer the Incarnate Word to the Father as our perfect adoration, love, reparation and thanksgiving.

III. *The Incarnate Word in the Blessed Sacrament.*

Every day he is born anew in us. Our hearts become the bosom of Mary. . . . Long for our Lady's purity and humility; above all for her love. *Non horruisti Virginis uterum!* Even our spotless Mother was unworthy to be the tabernacle of the Word . . . and we thank him for that incomprehensible love which makes him delight to dwell in us. 'He emptied himself'—O that we might empty ourselves of everything but the desire to love him and to make him loved! At least not of us let it be said: 'He came unto his own and his own received him not'.

IV. *And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come! Come Lord Jesus.* Long for the coming of Jesus. 'O that thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down!' The Spirit of Love within us excites our desires. . . . Beg the Word to listen to the 'unspeakable groanings' of the Holy Ghost and to our feeble cries united with his strong prayer. Unite our longings with the ardent desire of our blessed Lady to see the Sacred Face of her Babe. 'Show me thy Face, o my Beloved!' 'My soul hath desired thee in the night'. Ask him to give us such burning desires that he will be forced to give himself to our prayers. 'Reveal thy Presence and let the vision of thy Beauty kill me (i.e., all that is earthly in me)'. Behold the disease of love is incurable save in the possession of the Beloved—not thy gifts, not thy consolations but thyself—Come Lord Jesus!