

intercession, and her motherly care keeps us in good spiritual health, seeing to it that we do not neglect to persevere in the following of Christ, even Christ crucified.

He has taught us what our prayer should be, 'Our Father who art in heaven . . .', but some of it requires great self-sacrifice to say and mean, 'Thy will be done. . . . Forgive us as we forgive . . .'. If we, in all our selfishness and weakness, are ever to be followers of Jesus Christ we need a constant and unsparing adherence to the care and guidance of the mother of God. 'He who reads my lesson aright will find in it life eternal.' By her aid we can become governed by the Spirit so that we can begin to say, 'I live, now not I, Christ liveth in me'. And because it is the life of the Son of God that we live, it is one in which we count nothing dearer than that we do the Father's will.



## FRIENDSHIP IN CHRIST

JANE FARRELL

They are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple, and he who is seated on the throne will diffuse his glory on them. No longer will they thirst or hunger. No longer will the sun or any heat strike them. For the Lamb before the throne will be their shepherd and will guide them to the springs of living waters, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. (Apoc. vii, 14-17.)

**A**LREADY, to us who are yet *in via*, there belongs some share in this apocalyptic vision. Already there is diffused upon us some measure of God's glory, in that grace which is the seed of glory. And so we need not wait until angelic trumpets herald the *parousia*; already God is accomplishing in us these very wonders that St John saw in heaven.

The Lamb is even now our shepherd, drawing us to himself, to himself as the well-spring of those still waters that inundate our total being, and quiet our every striving, our every hunger,

our every thirst. And when we are thus wholly drawn to him, that strange power which, far from ever doing away with our own weakness, intensifies our awareness of this, sometimes almost unbearably so, lest ever we should glory save in the cross of Christ—this strange power comes not from ourselves, but wholly from its source in Christ.

And, thus, there may be given to us, even here, some beginning of that knowledge in the Word which is proper to the blessed in heaven. St Thomas distinguishes in the blessed what St Augustine called morning and evening knowledge. For as the morning is as the principle from which the day proceeds, evening its terminus, so are creatures known in the Word, as in their principle, and this is morning knowledge; and they are known in themselves, inasmuch as their own proper being flows from this primordial being they have in the Word, and this is called evening knowledge. Some participation of this morning knowledge, whereby the blessed know all things in their beginning, may be had even *in via*, to the extent that we are united to Christ, so that our every movement is but an overflow of this union.

And so it happens sometimes in our friendships, when these derive their sustenance from our friendship with God, that God himself becomes as the medium in which our friend is known, and it is in God that he is loved. And here, also, as in his dealings with our own souls, the very gentle God, who has infinite reverence for his own creation, will do no violence to our own weakness. But whereas in our solitary relationship to God, we felt at times the sting of his anger, at times the warm breath of his love, there is here added a new dimension—that of reparation. And so at times God permits sin, even the sin of our own very dear friend, to flood our hearts, even to saturate our whole being, with all its acrid pain. And although, before, we were certain, and this with a certainty granted by God himself, that our sole desire was for union with him, yet for this, that only the bitter pain of this evil be wholly and eternally destroyed, for this we would be anathema for our brother. And this crucifying reparation is not ended until the final renunciation of self is wrung from us, as we see ourselves rejected, truly become anathema, by that God who is our only love, the source of all our other love, while another is preferred in our place. We are aware while making it that this renunciation is possible to us only because

God himself gives it, yet this is small consolation, that his parting gift in casting us off should merely enable us to accept this rejection. 'Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my friend, for the hand of the Lord has touched me' (Job xix, 21). But one's friend knows nothing of all this; his situation is apparently unchanged, and one can find no refuge from the rejection of both God and man.

But as our sufferings abound in Christ, so does our comfort more abound, and St John says that it is God himself who will wipe away our every tear. Even if he seems almost to require of us a renunciation of that very life of union with himself to which our total being is ordered, yet in that very second in which we grant him this, he gives a precious certainty that he will never, ever exact it of us, and that the beatitude we have just renounced is most certainly ours.

And yet he still retains the merit of our willing sacrifice, and seals our love with that sign which marks the most perfect of all friendships: greater love than this hath no man, that he lay down his life for his friend. From this time on, the pain becomes sweet, and the continued sacrifice easy of accomplishment.

If this union with each other in Christ thus characterizes a love for one lost on the way, it is even more intimate when the goal is one. Yet here, also, the white-hot flame of divine jealousy must consume every imperfection, and although this purgation is less violent than that mortal combat for a soul whose very salvation is at stake, it is not, for that, less bathed in pain, nor is the devil less palpably present; but—and this is really all that counts—neither is it less effective. The burden of a perfectly pure friendship, one which grants to our own *ego* no undue gratification whatever, can be unbearably oppressive when we are as yet unused to scaling such heights. And the devil makes use of our fatigue to invite us to all manner of self-indulgence, if only by this means we might lighten the leaden weight of this perfection of love. Yet if, with unrelenting tenacity, we ignore Satan—who could easily defeat us if he could entice us to do battle with him—and keep our whole gaze steadfastly turned toward the good shepherd who has purchased our redemption, then one day he will draw us to that side, wounded for us, whence spring the living waters, mingled with that blood which was the price he paid that we might drink of them. And then, most gently,

those tears will be wiped away, which prevented our seeing that our burden of sorrow was, in truth, but the burden of our intimacy with God.

When this purgative night is thus dispelled, we are in a certain measure released from the dark uncertainty of human judgments, to some glimpse of creatures in their dawning, and it is from this abundant source that we draw every understanding our friendship requires. It is Christ who, when we are concerned for our friend, stills our anxiety with a deep tranquillity no human assurance could give, and himself gives us to understand that the danger we feared is past. And this 'morning knowledge' of each other in God's Word gives a firm surety in action, so that the perfection of this divine source permeates every aspect of our friendship, perfecting it, divinizing it, in thus uniting it most intimately with that source whence it took its rise.

Already, then, we are, with St John, worshipping the Lamb glorified, and the wounds we share with Christ are painful, yes, and bleeding—bleeding our very life's blood, mingled with his. Yet already the redemptive power of Christ's blood is felt, God diffuses his glory on us, and there is begun in us *in via* that life of beatitude for which his blood was shed. Nor do we thirst or hunger, whom the Lamb, our shepherd, guides to the springs of living waters. And already—consolation dearer than any other—already it is God, it is God himself, who wipes away every tear from our eyes.



## A MISCELLANY OF MISSALS

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**I**T is to Pope St Pius X that the modern liturgical movement owes its greatest debt, and it is from his *motu proprio* of 1903, issued within three months of his election as pope, that all subsequent initiatives derive their authority. His immediate concern was the reform of sacred music, but he stated unequivocally the principles of any true liturgical advance, namely the need to 'maintain and promote the dignity of the house of God, in