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**A TREATISE ON THE INEFFABLE MYSTERY  
OF OUR REDEMPTION**

By

LUIS OF GRANADA, O.P.

(*Translation by a Nun of Stambrook Abbey.*)

CHAPTER VII. (*cont.*)

Men can judge from this how they should love that Lord who, wicked as they were, and his deadly enemies,

forestalled them with his mercy and resolved to bestow on them this signal favour. Saint John, in his Epistle, extols this divine prevention, exhorting us to love our Redeemer, for he first loved us; that is, he determined to redeem those who were lost before we, being sons of wrath, could love him meritoriously since He had first to give us the power by the grace of the Redemption. Saint John extols this by the divine words, "God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son", (*John*, III, 16). And 'to give' him was to deliver him up to the most severe sufferings ever endured. If God had said that he gave Christ solely as King, or as Master, or as an example and model of all the virtues, (as in fact he did give him), we should not have been so astonished, for it is natural to that supreme Goodness to do good and to communicate himself to his creatures, but to "give him" meant to deliver Him over to the worst cruelty and insults ever known. This is what paralyses the minds of those who meditate upon it. For there was no other reason for it except that the Eternal Father knew what great and unspeakable benefits to mankind would ensue. God's love for us and desire for our welfare were so intense that he did not think the blood and death of his only Son too dear a price to pay for it.

Our wonder grows if we consider what were the men whom God thus sought to aid, as will be seen from the infinitude of sins with which the world was contaminated before it partook of Christ's Redemption. The Apostle names them in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. They included all the crimes and abominations the human intellect can conceive. For men, deprived of the grace of the Redemption and left to their own free will do not content themselves with falling into all the human vices but will imitate the ferocity of brutes, the subtlety of serpents, the poison of vipers, the cruelty of tigers, the ferocity of lions, and will devour men like the wolves. And worst of all, they will be as envious and proud as the devils themselves.

This will show how wondrous was the charity of our God! Enemy as he was of sinners and their crimes, he determined to reinstate man by delivering his only begotten Son to death for them. Who would not be aghast and stunned at such regal, such magnificent generosity and the infinity of God's love! For though the men who led such lives deserved a thousand hells, he sent them his only Son that at the cost of his life-blood they might deserve to enter the kingdom of heaven.

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*Of consequent grace, which is the cause of all the Saints, past and future in the Church.*

Let us speak of the other love, called consequent, which con-

cerns the beauty of souls redeemed, sanctified, and made temples of the Holy Ghost for which Christ feels a love that, (as the Apostle says) "surpasses all knowledge" (*Eph.* III, 19). Their number, which includes all the righteous from the beginning of the world until the last day, exceeds that of the stars of heaven.

This glorious company was beheld by Christ at the moment of his Conception as clearly as though seen by his bodily eyes. They were the Fathers of the Old Testament, Patriarchs, Prophets, Kings, and the hundred and forty four thousand signed, whom Saint John beheld, of every tribe of the twelve tribes of Israel. Our Lord also saw all the Saints of the New Testament, of whom the first belonged to the glorious company of the Apostles and Apostolic men, founders of the Faith, also the shining army of innumerable martyrs, men and women, old people and children, with the wounds and glorious emblems of their martyrdoms and triumphs; the holy Pontiffs and priests who guard their flocks day and night, and the saintly Fathers of the Church who by the light of their teaching and example nourish and cheer their flocks. Our Lord witnessed the purity of the holy confessors who shine like stars in the heaven of His Church, and the sublime lives of the holy monks who, dead to the world and living unto God, spend day and night in the contemplation of celestial things, dwelling in the flesh as though freed from it. And in this vision were millions of religious of various Orders who sacrifice their will to God and live under the secure yoke of holy obedience. Our Lord saw also the innumerable choirs of virgins, who, having renounced all the delights and flattery of the world, consecrated their bodies and souls to the heavenly Bridegroom. There was the fellowship of modest widows, among whom were the chaste Judith, Anna, the prophetess of the Gospel and numberless others who, having subdued the flesh by fasts and prayer had obtained the dignity of virgins and offered to their Creator the fruit sixty-fold. Nor were their wanting many married persons who, following the Apostle's teaching "that they also who have wives be as if they had none . . . and they who use this world as though they used it not" (*I Cor.* VII, 29). They numbered among them King David, the Patriarch Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Saint Louis, King of France, and Saint Edward, married yet a virgin, King of England, and many more. All this glorious company was beheld by the Saviour in spirit as distinctly as though they had been present, with the diversity of their graces, and virtues, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, with which, by the merit of his Passion, they would be resplendent.

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