

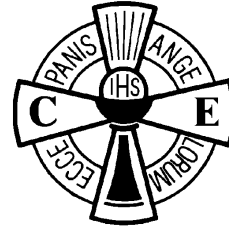
In the year 1014 she went with her husband to Rome and received the imperial crown with him from the hands of Pope Benedict VIII. With Saint Henry's consent, before their marriage she had made a vow of perpetual virginity. Calumniators afterwards made vile accusations against her, and the holy Empress, to remove the scandal of such a slander, trusting in God to prove her innocence, walked over red-hot ploughshares without being hurt. The Emperor renounced and condemned his own too scrupulous fears and credulity, and from that time on they lived in the strictest union of heart, working together to promote piety and God's honor in every sphere.

Going once to make a retreat in Hesse, Saint Cunegundes fell dangerously ill, and she made a vow to found a monastery at Kaffungen, in the diocese of Paderborn, if she recovered. This she executed in a stately manner, and gave it to nuns of the Order of Saint Benedict. Before it was finished, Saint Henry died in 1024. She earnestly recommended his soul to the prayers of the empire, and especially to her dear nuns, and expressed her longing desire to join the Sisters. She had already exhausted her treasures in founding bishoprics and monasteries and in relieving the poor, and she had therefore little left to give. But intending to embrace perfect evangelical poverty, to renounce all things in order to serve God without obstacle, she assembled a great number of prelates at the dedication of her church of Kaffungen, on the anniversary day of her husband's death, 1025. After the Gospel was sung at Mass she offered on the altar a relic of the true cross, and then, putting off her imperial robes, clothed herself with a poor habit. Her hair was cut off, and the bishop gave her the veil and a ring as a pledge of her fidelity to her heavenly Spouse.

After she was consecrated to God in religion, she seemed to forget entirely that she had been an empress, and served as the last in the house, being persuaded that she was such, before God. She prayed and read a great deal, worked with her hands, and took singular pleasure in visiting and comforting the sick. In this way she passed the last fifteen years of her life.

When her last hour was drawing near, perceiving that they were preparing a cloth fringed with gold to cover her corpse after her death, she ordered it to be taken away; and she could not rest until the promise was given that she would be buried as a poor religious in her habit. She died on the 3rd of March, 1040. Her body was carried to Bamberg and buried near that of her husband. She was solemnly canonized by Innocent III, in 1200.

Reflection. Detachment of the spirit at least, is necessary for those who cannot undertake to enter religion. "Every one of you," says Jesus Christ, "who does not renounce all that he possesses, cannot be My disciple." (Luke 14:33)



Handmaids of Christ and Children of Mary

Supplement to the Bulletin of the Eucharistic Crusade in Ireland

February/March 2009

Months of the Purification and of Saint Joseph

This leaflet is intended for high-school girls. Being part of the Eucharistic Crusade, you receive the bulletin of the Crusade and pray for the intentions of the Crusade. As girls, Our Lady is your special model. Therefore as well as being Crusaders and Handmaids of Christ, you are also Children of Mary. The purpose of these few pages is to help you in your spiritual life.

AN EASY WAY TO BECOME A SAINT By Fr Paul O'Sullivan, OP

Chapter 6 - AFTER HIS ASCENSION (4)

STILL ANOTHER INCIDENT

A gentleman and his wife, both staunch Protestants, had a business transaction with the priest in whose parish they lived. Unfortunately the settlement of this affair caused annoyance to both parties, and the Protestants became more embittered than ever against the Catholic Church. Some time elapsed, and the lady happened to be passing the church. Feeling tired, she went in to rest. She remained for twenty minutes, enjoying the calm and silence and looking at the High Altar. This visit was repeated frequently, at first merely with the wish to rest, but gradually this gave way to a feeling of pleasure and peace. A few months passed and both husband and wife became Catholics!

If then Our Sweet Lord works so wonderfully on those souls who did not even pray to Him, what will He not do for those who pray fervently to Him? As we get warmth and comfort when we approach a blazing fire in the wintertime, even so, our poor cold hearts are filled with the fire of love when we kneel lovingly before Jesus in the Sacrament of the Altar.

He is the same God Who in Heaven fills the Angels with love. Here in the Blessed Sacrament He is on a throne of mercy and wishes to fill our poor souls with peace and joy. We are in the midst of Angels, who stand around the Altar praying with us and for us.

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Our Lord has many times shown Himself in the Blessed Sacrament to help our faith.

We will mention just one fact. Thomas of Canimbre, the celebrated Dominican Bishop, famed for his profound learning and deep piety, describes a miracle which he himself witnessed in company with many others.

Having heard that Our Lord had appeared visibly in a consecrated Host in the Church of St. Amand in Douay, he immediately hastened thither and begged the priest to open the Tabernacle and expose the Sacred Particle. Many persons flocked to the church on learning of the Bishop's arrival and were privileged to see the miracle once more.

The Bishop tells us what he himself saw: "I saw my Lord face to face. His eyes were clear and had an expression of wondrous love. His hair was abundant and floated on His shoulders; His beard was long, His forehead broad and high; His cheeks were pale, and His head slightly inclined. At the sight of my loving Lord, my heart well-nigh burst with joy and love. After a little time Our Lord's face assumed an expression of profound sadness, such as it must have worn in the Passion. He was crowned with thorns and His face bathed in blood. On looking on the countenance of my Sweet Saviour thus changed, my heart was pierced with bitter grief; tears flowed from my eyes, and I seemed to feel the points of the thorns enter my head."

Though we do not see Our Dear Lord as the Bishop did, He is there on the Altar, the same loving Lord.

Instruction upon meditation

Meditation, or mental prayer, is a devout and fruitful consideration of Divine things, and of all that is conducive to the acquirement of virtue and of eternal salvation. It is not a difficult exercise; it requires attention and reflection, a desire to know God better in order to love Him more. It should be done in the company of Our Lady, the saints and our guardian Angel.

Refer to the previous issues of this bulletin to learn how to make meditation properly. Remember that as Handmaid, you promised to meditate 15 minutes every day. St Teresa of Avila says that he who spends 15mn a day in mental prayer cannot be lost.

Happy ears which receive the breathings of the Divine whisper, and take not notice of the whisperings of this world.

Imitation of Christ, Book 3, Chapter 1 "On the Internal Discourse of Christ to the Faithful Soul"

Meditation – On the Necessity of Penance - 1

From voluntary sin results the necessity of doing penance. Though we may have returned seriously to God, we have still great debts to discharge to his justice; for no sin committed after Baptism can be remitted without satisfaction proportionate to the offence. Every mortal sin which we may

have had the misfortune to commit, requires long and severe penance and great mortification. We may, and ought to endeavour to gain the indulgence of the Church, but a sincere penitent will not wish to defraud God's justice. If we gain indulgence, this ought to increase our gratitude and love for God, and excite in us a holy hatred of sin, which will only increase our desire to lead a penitential life.

Works of penance and mortification are very necessary, in order to subdue our former bad habits. We may, perhaps, have overcome some defects, but how many evil inclinations have we still to contend with? Every one of these must be mortified, if we would subdue them; and our will, which is prone to offend God, must be forcibly curbed, and brought into complete subjection to the holy will of God, and conformity to it.

As we do the Stations of the Cross during Lent, let us repeat, at the end of each station, with love and devotion, the following words of Saint Alphonsus Ligori:

I love Thee, Jesus, my Love ; I love Thee more than myself;

I repent with my whole heart of having offended Thee.

Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again.

Grant that I may love Thee always;

and then do with me what Thou wilt.

Spiritual Bouquet: Not every one who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the Will of My Father in heaven shall enter the kingdom of heaven. St. Matthew 7:21

SAINT CUNEGUNDES

Empress
(†1040)

Saint Cunegundes was the daughter of Sigefried, the first Count of Luxemburg, and Hadeswige, his pious wife. From her cradle her virtuous parents instilled into their daughter the most tender sentiments of piety. When she was of an age to marry, they chose for her spouse Saint Henry, Duke of Bavaria, who at the death of the Emperor Otto III was named King of the Romans and crowned on the 6th of June, 1002. Queen Cunegundes was crowned at Paderborn on Saint Laurence's day.

