

**HOLY
COMMUNION**

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Holy communion by Monseigneur de Gibergues

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MONSEIGNEUR DE GIBERGUES

**HOLY
COMMUNION**

HOLY COMMUNION

By MONSEIGNEUR DE GIBERGUES

Bishop of Valence

From the French of the Thirteenth Thousand

London

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PREFACE

HOW are we to speak worthily of Holy Communion?

Is there a subject on which the human tongue is more powerless to say anything that approaches the reality? A subject which impresses one more strongly with the need of adoration rather than of speech?

St. Bernard declared himself unworthy and incapable of writing well upon the love of God. And is not Communion the ever-burning hearth, the ever-living spring of the divine love? Is not Communion the act of Jesus giving Himself wholly to us, in order to transform us into Himself and to become one with us?

You, then, who read these pages, summon all the most loving faculties of your soul, appeal to all that is most generous and tender and strong in your heart, so that you may come to understand something of the ineffable prodigies of the divine love.

God said to Moses, when He spoke to him from the burning bush: "The ground on which thou treadest is holy: loose thou thy sandals." The table on which Jesus, full of love, comes to you is holy. To approach it, purge yourself of all profane thoughts, of all earthly emotions, of all idle imaginings, of all guilty affections! May the Spirit which proceeds from the Father

PREFACE

and from the Son descend upon you as it descended upon the Saviour by the Jordan, to open your mind to the sublime and inaccessible truths that you are about to consider, and fire your heart with all the ardour of the Seraphim on high, and the still greater love of the Most Holy Mother of Jesus !

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HOLY COMMUNION

CHAPTER I

UNION AND UNITY. DOUBLE NATURAL COMMUNION

"That they also may be one in us."—*St. John xvii. 21.*

THEOLOGY teaches us that the Eucharist has three aspects: in the tabernacle it is a mystery; on the altar, a sacrifice; at the Holy Table, a sacrament. In these pages the Eucharist will be regarded only as a sacrament. We will speak only of Holy Communion.

There is nothing in spiritual life more sublime than Holy Communion; nothing that more profoundly influences the soul; therefore there is nothing which it is of more importance to consider.

On the part of God Communion is truly the supreme effort and the consummation of His love; it is the gift pre-eminent among all, which contains and surpasses all others.

As for us, Communion is the source and origin of the supremest graces; and the saints are agreed in stating that one Communion well made is enough to sanctify a whole life. Communion, in fact, is not only the greatest of the sacraments, it is above all the centre and the source of all the sacraments, since it contains, not merely a certain