

**MEDITATIONS AND
PRAYERS PREVIOUS TO AND
DURING THE RECEPTION
OF THE HOLY COMMUNION**

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Meditations and Prayers Previous to and During the Reception of the Holy Communion by
Thomas Bowdler

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THOMAS BOWDLER

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J.H. 1825

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HOLY COMMUNION.



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P R E F A C E.

IN publishing this little Book, I do not presume to think I am giving to the Public any thing new, or more excellent than it at present possesses; many most incomparable books of meditation and prayer have been in the hands of all devout persons for the last two centuries, and Expositions of the Holy Communion are in every library, but they are, in general, treatises of considerable length, the devotional parts of which are mixed with much extraneous matter; and the more portable books of Preparation for the Sacrament, have been objected to as too enthusiastic, or as not sufficiently comprehensive. None of these are therefore in all respects adapted to the use of young persons; but it was thought that a little work

might be compiled from these various sources which would excite devotion without tiring the attention. Much, therefore, of this volume may be found in works already well known, particularly those of Bishops Taylor and Beveridge; from which have also been extracted most of the prayers. My most fervent wish is, that it may answer the end proposed, of making the Holy Communion more worthily thought of and more constantly attended.

MEDITATIONS,

&c.

MONDAY.

*On the benefits of Attendance on the Holy
Communion.*

THE sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross, is the consummation of all those promises made by a forgiving and merciful Creator to man in a fallen state, ever since the transgression of Adam. He was the Seed which was to bruise the serpent's head, the Star which was to give light to Israel, the Sceptre which was to rule over the nations, the Lawgiver who was to guide, the Messiah who was to save them. Till he appeared, and till he died, types and symbols kept up the hope and expectation of his advent, and sacrifices prefigured his death; but his cru-

cifixion closed the whole : he was the atoning Lamb, destined from the beginning of the world, to be slain for the sins of mankind : he was the universal Peace-offering ; he abolished by his death the sacrificial ordinances of the law, nailing them to his cross ; he opened a new and living way to everlasting salvation, and has not only left his example and precepts to guide us in it, but has promised the *continual* assistance of his Holy Spirit to encourage and comfort all, who, through well-doing, seek for glory and immortality.

Such being the importance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we might suppose that mankind would naturally cherish a continual remembrance of his death, which had secured to them such invaluable privileges ; but Jesus knowing the instability of man, even in things most essential to his own happiness, has himself commanded a perpetual memorial of the event. Three of the Evangelists, St. Matthew,

St. Mark, and St. Luke, describe particularly the manner of this institution. Our Saviour and his immediate followers had met to celebrate the Feast of the Passover, instituted in commemoration of that night when the blood of the slain Lamb saved the worshippers of the true God from the general destruction around them ; and was the type of the great and effectual deliverance made by Christ, our Passover. This had always been the most sacred festival amongst the Jews, but was now to become much more so ; hitherto they had only celebrated the image of heavenly things, but now the heavenly things themselves ; from henceforward they were to commemorate the real Lamb, who redeemed them from the spiritual bondage of sin, as the Paschal Lamb had from the temporal bondage of Pharaoh. Our Saviour's address to his disciples is entirely in reference to the circumstances of the feast. The Lamb was eaten with bitter herbs and unleavened