

## **PRAYER.**

### **THE ANGELICAL SALUTATION.**

#### **Explanation of the Plate.**

**1.** *The Angelic Salutation* is so styled because it opens with the words wherewith the Angel Gabriel saluted the Blessed Virgin when announcing to her that she was to be the mother of the Saviour: « *Hail (Mary), full of Grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women.* » (Luke I, 28).

**2.** The words which follow, « *and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, (Jesus)* » were uttered by St. Elizabeth, while « *full of the Holy Ghost* ». (*Ibid*, 42.) The rest, in the form of a prayer, was added by the Church: « *Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.* »

**3.** « *Hail Mary!* » So spoke Gabriel (see the picture of MARY IMMACULATE over those words) as he announced to her that she had been chosen by God from among all women for the glorious privilege of becoming the Mother of His Son. His next words « *full of grace* » prove that Mary has never borne the stain of either original or actual sin and that from her birth she was fully adorned with sanctifying grace and with all the virtues and other heavenly gifts.

**4.** « *The Lord is with thee.* ». God abode both in her soul and in her body, in her soul through His grace, in her body through the Mystery of the Incarnation which His Omnipotence had just wrought within her. The picture over these words shows Mary holding the Infant Jesus in her arms and the Holy Ghost dwelling in her heart as in a temple.

**5.** « *Blessed art thou among women* ». Mary has been exalted above all other women in becoming a mother without ceasing to be a virgin and by bringing into the world a Son who is God Himself. In the picture she is raised above a crowd of saintly women, surpassing them in holiness, glory and power. One of these, leaning on a sword, is Judith, who cut off

the head of Holofernes (*Judith* XIII), thus prefiguring Mary's victory over the serpent.

**6.** « *And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus* ». By these words we are to understand that Jesus Christ, the Son of God made Man in the womb of the Virgin Mary, received from His Father countless blessings and that in Him all nations have been blest. Above the first three words we see St. Elizabeth addressing them to Mary, while above the rest, the Infant Jesus is blessing St. John the Baptist.

**7.** The words « *Holy Mary, Mother of God* » were formulated by the Church to avenge Our Blessed Lady on the Nestorius, who deny her this glorious title. The Corresponding picture shows Mary being crowned Queen of Angels and Men by the Three Divine Persons of the Trinity.

**8.** We repeat the words « *Pray for us sinners* » because Mary is for all men the great channel through which to obtain divine grace and is in a special manner the Advocate and Refuge of Sinners. In the corresponding picture we see her interceding for us in heaven with her Divine Son.

**9.** We ask Our Lady to pray for us « *now and at the hour of our death* », because we need her help all through this life and more especially at the moment we are about to leave it to enter into eternity. In the corresponding picture she is shown appearing to a dying person and offering to be her protectress during her last moments.

**10.** The Angelical Salutation enters into various pious exercises, the two most important of which are the Angelus and Rosary.

**11.** The *Angelus* is a short devotion in honour of the Incarnation to be repeated thrice daily, morning, noon and evening at the sound of the bell.

**12.** The *Rosary* consists of fifteen *decades* of the *Hail Mary*, each decade preceded by a short meditation and an *Our Father* and concluding with the doxology « *Glory be to the Father, &c.* » The subjects of the meditations are the principal events (*mysteries*) in the lives of Our Lord and His Mother. The Rosary is divided into three parts (*Chaplets*) of five decades each, each chaplet comprising five mysteries of the same class: (1) *Joyful*, (2) *Sorrowful*, and (3) *Glorious*. The five *Joyful Mysteries* are the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity of Our Lord, His Presentation in the Temple and the Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple. The five *Sorrowful Mysteries* are the Prayer and Bloody Sweat of Our Lord in the Garden, the Scourging at the Pillar, and the Crowning

with Thorns, Jesus carrying His Cross, and the Crucifixion. The five *Glorious Mysteries* are the Resurrection of Our Lord, His Ascension, the Descent of the Holy Ghost, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin and her Crowning in Heaven.

**13.** To obviate distractions from having to count the several *Hail Marys* and decades, the Rosary is, as we know, said on a string of beads, the larger ones representing the *Our Fathers*. A full Rosary of all fifteen decades being heavy and cumbersome, it is customary to have a string of only five decades (the chaplet) and to use it for all three classes of mysteries.

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