

The Greatest Love Story

By Rev. B. Kunkel

There is no book written with a more appealing and thrilling love story than is portrayed by the crucifix. The tragedy is that only a few persons seem to be deeply interested in this Divine romance with loving souls. Those who are, enjoy a peace and happiness beyond description, and are enriched with an abundance of graces by the Divine Lover of souls.

Saintly persons have made a practice of spending long periods of time kneeling before a crucifix and looking intently at it. They would review in their mind the entire history of each wound inflicted on the Sacred Body of Christ and in His Holy Soul. The crucifix was their textbook in which they learned the intense love radiating from that Divine Heart of Jesus, that “burning furnace of charity .” This is, by the way, one of the best forms of simple meditation.



The veneration of the crucifix can do the same for each one of us. Through this practice, Our Divine Saviour will reveal to us many secrets now hidden from our eyes. We shall begin to understand as never before, how immense, how intense, how sweet and how beautiful is the Merciful Love of our Holy Saviour; Who came to this earth to rescue each one of us from the gaping jaws of hell at such great cost; and to supply each one of us with a superabundance of help to gain an eternity of exceeding happiness as a king or queen in His everlasting Kingdom.

Children should be trained to turn to the crucified Saviour frequently each day, particularly in times of temptation and danger. Also, to stand in spirit with Mary, the Sorrowful Mother, at the foot of the cross. With such a mental picture, they can with special advantage repeat the last two lines in the song, “Marylikeness,” “Jesus, make me just like Mary. Mary, make me just like You.”

Of course every truly Christian home will have one or more crucifixes hanging on the walls or standing on the shelves. But, in addition, each child (and adult, too) should have a smaller crucifix in his bedroom, hanging from the bed, or lying on the dresser or table, handy for veneration before retiring. At this time, it is highly recommended to kiss the crucifix in the hand whilst eliciting the nightly act of contrition and throughout the night prayers recited at the bedside, and to hang it about the neck or pin it on the chest for the night’s rest. The latter practice enables one to hold the crucifix whilst waiting for sleep to overtake him.

What blessings such pious practices bring! And how much more Marylike such children become during school hours, at home, and especially though the very dangerous hours of the night which they may spend in recreation and amusements.

Crucifixes can likewise be highly indulgenced. There is the so-called happy death indulgence. A dying person, who holds such an indulgenced crucifix in his hand, can gain a plenary indulgence at the very moment of death. All that is required is that he devoutly recommends his soul to God and is ready to receive death with resignation from the hands of the Almighty, it being assumed that he is truly contrite, has confessed and communicated, or if unable to do so, invoked the Holy Name of Jesus with the heart, if not the lips. This means that the soul of the person gaining this full plenary indulgence will go straight to heaven, without first passing through the fire of purgatory.

Further, the indulgence of the Stations of the Cross can be attached. This is very useful for a sick person, or for any person who is impeded from making the Stations in church. By holding the crucifix in his hand, meditating on the sufferings of Christ and saying 20 Our Fathers, 20 Hail Mary's, and 20 Glory Be's, such a person can gain the same indulgences as are gained by making the Stations in church.

