

# My Queen and My Mother

By R. G. S.

With Preface by the Bishop of Salford

Fourth Edition



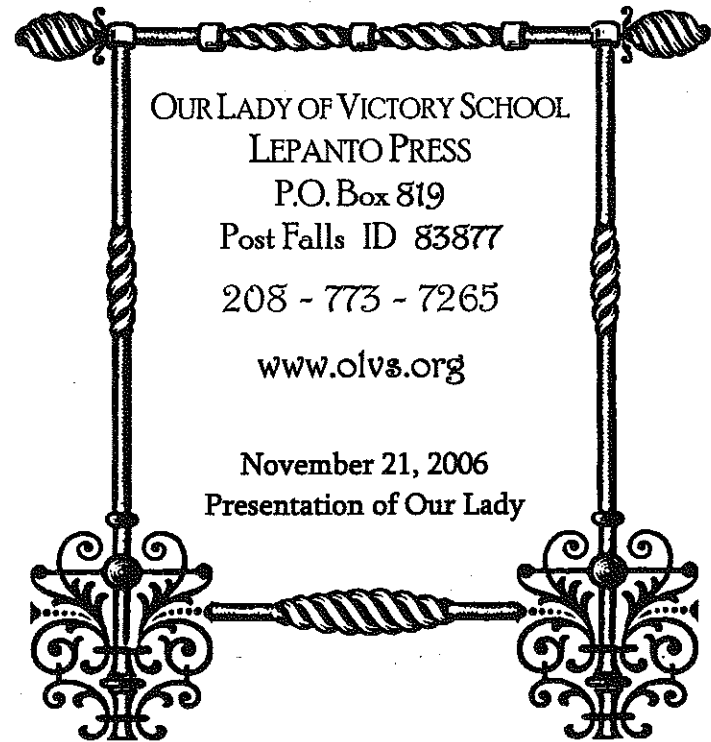
*Schola Art Beuron*

*Kuhlen M. Gladbach*

## My Queen and My Mother

Ave, Regina caelorum !  
Ave, Domina angelorum !

*Frontispiece*



OUR LADY OF VICTORY SCHOOL

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To

THE DIVINE BABE OF BETHLEHEM

GOD'S ETERNAL SON

AND

"MARY'S LITTLE ONE"

THIS WORK

IN PRAISE OF HIS HOLY MOTHER

IS DEDICATED

WITH THE DEEPEST REVERENCE

LOVE AND GRATITUDE

## Preface

THE first edition of this book appeared very appropriately in 1904, the Golden Jubilee year of Pope Pius IX's dogmatical definition of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which Jubilee was celebrated with an extraordinary outburst of faith and devotion, and a most abundant outpouring of Divine grace, throughout the Catholic Church, and nowhere more strikingly than in our own islands. Hence the new work was welcomed in a very special manner and enjoyed quite a remarkable popularity. But over and above this, there are reasons of a more general nature that will recommend this charming volume to all devout clients of Mary. To the very many pious souls who find a great difficulty in meditation, and yet are desirous of learning the art of meditation, these reflections, in the form of prayers, upon the various petitions and titles of the Litany, will afford an easy and most fruitful method of mental prayer. For it is wisely recommended to such persons by some spiritual writers and directors to practise mental prayer in this very way—that is to say, by selecting one or other of the familiar formulæ of prayer which we are accustomed to recite, such as the "Our Father," the Creed, the "Hail Mary," a Litany, the De Profundis, or other psalm, and

then by going slowly, one by one, through each of its component verses and petitions, expanding them in one's own thought and language, paraphrasing them, so to speak, and, in the words of St Francis of Sales, sucking from each its honey, as the bee does from every flower. Such is a highly profitable way of meditation, and the present little work will lead the pious reader easily and sweetly to the practice of this method applied to our Lady's Litany. And no better form of prayer could be found for the application of the above mode of meditation, as it covers the entire range of our religious belief and sentiment. The opening petitions fix our mind on Almighty God in His Unity and His Trinity, and upon God made Man in the Person of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Then follows the invocation of Christ's Blessed Mother under a wonderful variety of titles, all selected from the writings of the Fathers of the Church, as Mother, Virgin, the Woman of prophecy, Queen—that is to say, in her manifold relations to the Incarnation, to the Church and to our own spiritual life.<sup>1</sup> And the whole concludes with the solemn triple invocation of her divine Son as "The Lamb who was slain from the beginning," the Lamb of whom St John speaks in the Apocalypse, whose name appropriately closes the whole cycle of meditation and prayer, as it does the canon of Holy Scripture itself.

<sup>1</sup>See my articles "The Litany of Loreto and its History," in *The Rosary*, 1898.

One more merit of the present work we gladly note: it is the constant use of the very words of Holy Writ in elucidating and expanding each one of the successive petitions of the Litany, which will be found, we are sure, a very powerful aid to devout meditation, as well as to love and appreciation of the sacred text.

✠ LOUIS CHARLES,  
Bishop of Salford.

*St Bede's College, Manchester,  
May, 1905.*

## Notice

MOST sincere thanks are due to and prayer is asked for all who have kindly helped in procuring and giving pictures to illustrate this little work in honour of our Lady: notably the Rev. Benedictine Fathers of Beuron, the Rev. P. Chandlery, S.J., Mr. N. H. J. Westlake, Signor Capparoni, Signor Bottoni and Herr Kühlen.

Grateful acknowledgements are also made to Messrs Alinari of Florence, Mr Anderson of Rome, and others, for kindly allowing the reproduction of their photographs.

In the passages quoted from the writings of the early Fathers of the Church, the translations have mainly been taken from "The Blessed Virgin in the Fathers of the first six Centuries," by Thomas Livius, R.A., and the late Marquess of Bute's edition of the Roman Breviary.

It may be well to mention that some of the texts from Holy Scripture have been taken, not from the Douai Bible, but from an authorized translation of the Roman Missal.

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### Kyrie eleison

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak.—Ps. vi, 3.

Face 1

## My Queen and My Mother

### Kyrie Eleison

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak.<sup>1</sup>

And now, O Lord Almighty, the soul in anguish and the troubled spirit crieth to Thee; hear, O Lord, and have mercy, for thou art a merciful God; and have pity on us; for we have sinned before Thee.<sup>2</sup>

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I have cried to Thee all the day. Give joy to the soul of Thy servant, for to Thee, O Lord, I have lifted up my soul.<sup>3</sup>

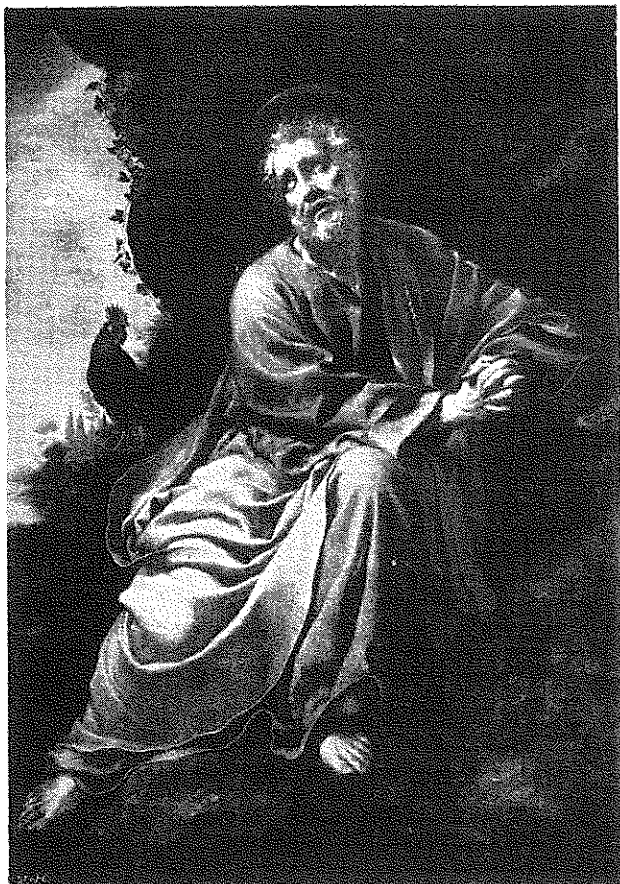
“HAVE mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak.” O God of might and power, Thou art so great and omnipotent that we feel we cannot appeal to Thee in any way more forcibly than by calling Thy attention to our weakness. We know that all that is noble in man is but a faint reflection of Thy perfection, and we know that few things appeal to a noble-minded, noble-hearted man as strongly as weakness, which looks to him for help and support. So, my God, confidently do I plead: “Have mercy on me, for I am weak.” We know Thou art a God of compassion. Who could read the history of Agar and not be touched at the thought of the goodness of so great a God

<sup>1</sup> Ps. vi, 3.    <sup>2</sup> Bar. iii, 1, 2.    <sup>3</sup> Ps. lxxxv, 3, 4.



in interesting Himself in the needs and sorrows of a poor weak creature of earth? Was it, my God, that when she was cast forth with her son, Thou didst see, in future ages, a far different Mother and Son sent forth also from their home and country by the jealousy of a fellow-creature, and so Thy heart went forth to Agar, and Thou didst hearken to the voice of Ismael for the sake of the divine Child Jesus and his Mother? Or was it rather that, seeing their anguish, Thy compassion made Thee determine that when the "Word was made flesh," He should pass through a like sorrow, so that none of Thy creatures who might find themselves exiles, houseless, homeless and in want, could feel that they were suffering that in which their Creator, being a stranger, could not compassionate with them? David says that Thou dost look forth from heaven to see if any of Thy people need thee. O my God, *I* need Thee and need Thee much; I am weak, and like Agar thirst for the waters of life. My soul thirsts for Thee, the strong, living God. It is true my weakness is all my own. I have squandered the graces that should have made me strong, but as the father of the prodigal did not reproach his son when he saw his forlorn condition, and his frame broken down by famine, so I also know that Thou wilt not reproach me, for Thou art compassionate and merciful and wilt have mercy on me, for I am weak.

Lord, have mercy on us.



Carlo Dolci

*(St Peter in tears)*

Phot. Alinari

### Christe eleison

Have mercy on me, O Lord for I have sinned.

Face 3

## Christe Eleison

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I have sinned.

We have sinned . . . . and we have all become as one unclean . . . . and we have all fallen as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away.<sup>1</sup>

Be of good comfort, my children, and cry to the Lord . . . . for as it was your mind to go astray from God, so when you return again you shall seek Him ten times as much.<sup>2</sup>

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me . . . . in the shadow of Thy wings will I hope, until iniquity pass away.<sup>3</sup>

“HAVE mercy on me, O Lord, for my sin is great.” This is plea that could only obtain with a God. Were we dealing with a fellow-creature we should strive to minimise the matter, and try to prove it to be less heinous than it appears. But we cannot deceive God, and to own its magnitude and our utter inability to pay our debt to Him and atone for our offences, is the best way of touching the heart of our merciful and compassionate Lord. How often has this little verse, with its simple, frank acknowledgement of guilt, brought hope and comfort to the heart of the sinner?

A colonel of the army, some years ago, was on his deathbed, and the priest beside him vainly endeavoured to bring him to fitting dispositions

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lxiv, 5, 6.    <sup>2</sup> Bar. iv, 27, 28.    <sup>3</sup> Ps. lvi, 2.

in which to go to God. The poor man seemed given over to despair, and nothing appeared to move or touch him. "It is no good, father, my sins are too great to be forgiven." The good priest, much distressed at the apparent fruitlessness of his efforts, took up a book of Psalms and began quietly reading them to the dying man, who listened with sullen, hopeless, icy indifference. The father read on, inwardly praying, but feeling more and more distressed at the state of this soul, when suddenly the colonel exclaimed, "What was that you said, father? Read that again." The good priest, somewhat surprised, repeated the last sentence he had read: "Thou wilt pardon me my sin, for it is great."<sup>1</sup> Did you say, Thou wilt pardon my sin, *for it is great?*" inquired the dying man with great agitation in his voice and manner. "Yes," said the priest, hope reviving in his heart. "O my God!" the other cried, his voice choked with sobs and emotion, "I can indeed say *that* prayer. Have mercy on me *for* my sin is great." With great contrition and the most consoling sentiments of love and hope, he then made his confession and died in the most beautiful dispositions.

Christ, have mercy on us.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxiv, 18



Guercino

(St Margaret of Cortona)

Phot. Anderson

### Kyrie eleison

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for my soul trusteth in Thee.—Ps. lvi, 1.

### Kyrie Eleison

Have mercy on me, O God, for my soul trusteth in Thee.<sup>1</sup>

My children, behold the generations of men, and know ye that no one hath hoped in the Lord and been confounded.

Woe to them that are faint-hearted who believe not God: and therefore they shall not be protected by Him.<sup>2</sup>

Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and the Lord shall be his confidence.<sup>3</sup>

“HAVE mercy on me, for my soul trusteth in Thee.” That, O Lord, is now my plea, and one we know which finds favour in Thy sight, for Thou hast said: “Because he hoped in Me, I will deliver him.” All we need is to pray Thee to give us this hopeful devotion, that we may be able to say with David: “I have loved, because the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer.” Not because He has heard, but because I am confident He will hear it. And what shall we ask for? O Lord, do Thou Thyself teach us what petitions to make. In the first place, that Thou wilt have mercy on us. Could we form a prayer more beautiful than that of St Ambrose, when he says: “For Thou hast mercy on all, O Lord, and hatest none of the things Thou hast made. Be mindful

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lvi, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Eccles ii, 11-15.

<sup>3</sup> Jer. xvii, 7.

of our substance, for Thou art our Father, Thou art our God. Be not very angry, nor withhold the multitude of Thy mercies from us, for we do not prostrate ourselves before Thee confiding in our own merits, but in the multitude of thy mercies. Take from us our iniquities, and kindle in us the fire of the Holy Spirit. Take away our stony hearts and give us hearts of flesh that will love Thee, delight in Thee and follow Thee. We implore, O Lord, Thy mercy, that Thou mayest deign to look upon us with benevolence . . . And that none of our desires may be displeasing to Thee, nor any of our petitions unfruitful, we beseech Thee Thyself to suggest to us prayers that Thou wilt graciously hear and be pleased to grant."

Yes, Lord, do not let us ask for what is not according to Thy holy will. Let all our desires be conformed to that. Of one thing we are certain: if we ask for the spirit of divine love we shall not be asking amiss, so with our whole hearts we will say confidently:

Come, Holy Ghost, send down those beams  
Which sweetly flow in silent streams  
From Thy bright throne above.  
Oh, come, Thou Father of the poor,  
Come, Thou the source of all our store,  
Come, fill our hearts with love.

Lord, have mercy on us.

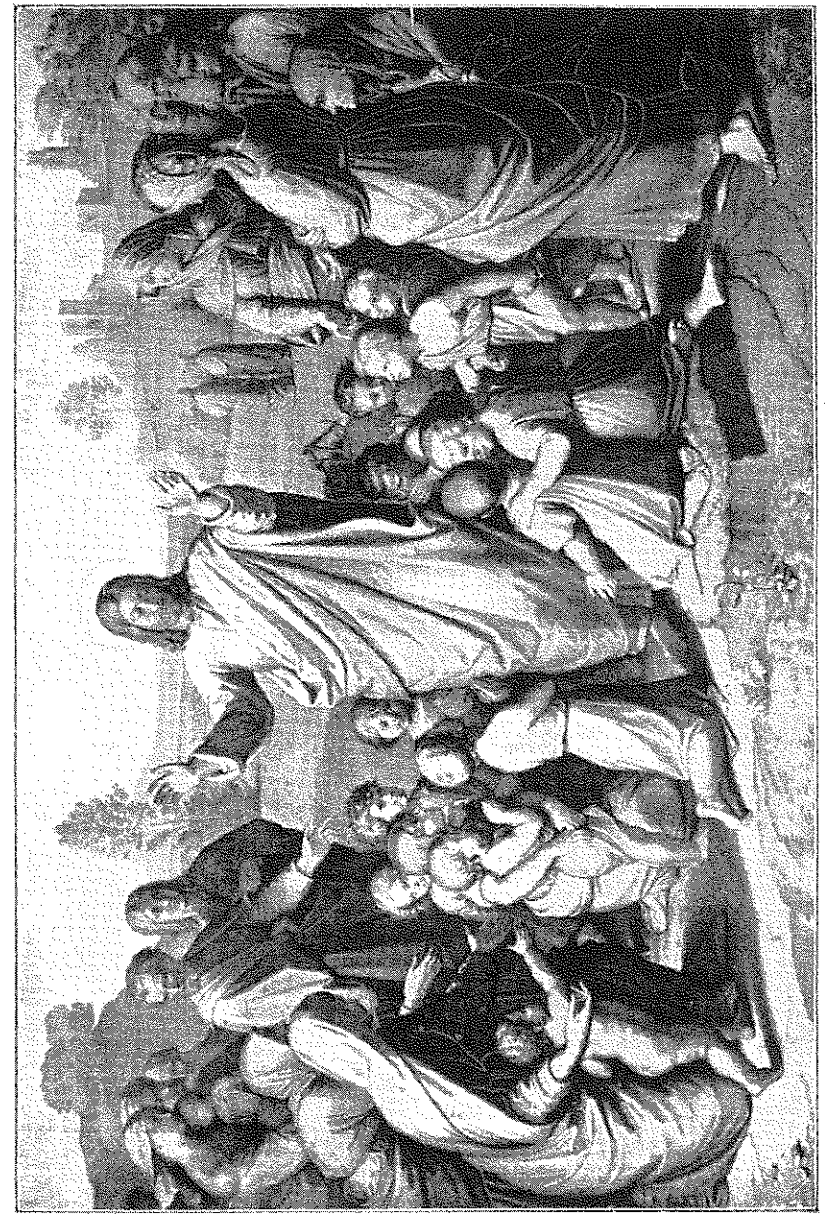
### Christe, Audi Mos

Hear, O Lord, my prayer: and let my cry come to Thee. Turn not away Thy face from me: in the day when I am in trouble, incline Thy ear to me.

In what day soever I shall call upon Thee, hear me speedily.<sup>1</sup> Attend to my supplication: for I am brought very low.<sup>2</sup> Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer, and attend to the voice of my petition.<sup>3</sup>

CHRIST, hear us. So we cry constantly, and when He inclines His ear, and bends down to our littleness, what have we to ask? Does He not often find our cry has been mechanical, and that no petition follows? And when we have one in readiness, is it always a wise one? We are told that we often ask and "receive not, because we ask amiss." What then are those things for which we should ask? David is a great model of prayer, so we shall not do ill if we make some of his petitions our own. On glancing through the Psalms we find he constantly prays to be delivered from his enemies. We have no greater enemy than self; all the rest, whether human or diabolical, can do us no *real* harm, unless we choose. Their very efforts, if we use them aright, will but promote our eternal interests; so let us pray that we may obtain the victory over self and selfishness in all its subtle forms. He cries again

Ps. ci, 2, 3.      <sup>2</sup>Ps. cxli, 7.      <sup>3</sup>Ps. lxxxv, 6.



Christe, audi nos

We come to Thee, sweet Saviour, and Thou wilt not ask us why: We cannot live without Thee, and still less without Thee die.—FABER.

to the Lord, and begs Him to pardon him his sins. So a prayer for merciful forgiveness is always acceptable to God. And on another occasion he says: "Give joy to the soul of Thy servant." Holy joy is therefore a grace we may lawfully ask. St John Berchmans used to say the "Hail Mary" three times every night to obtain it; nor did he ask in vain, for he was known among his fellow-religious as "the joyful saint." But of all David's prayers, there is none more far-reaching in its consequence than his cry: "In quacumque die invocavero te, exaudi me velociter—In whatever day I shall call upon Thee, hear me speedily." This petition is a very masterpiece of comprehensiveness, for could we but induce the Lord to hearken to us favourably at all times, we should indeed be able to verify in our persons the truth of the words "that a man of prayer is all-powerful." "*In whatever day.*" He does not limit the request to "the day of trouble," but begs to be heard in whatever day he calls on the Lord. In the day of joy and thanksgiving, listen indulgently to the words of praise that rise to my lips. When we use the aspiration taught us from our childhood in the Catechism, and pray for the grace of divine love, saying: "O my God, teach me to love Thee"; or when things are well with me, and I feel it is good for me to adhere to my God, and I cry out with St Augustine and St Ignatius: "Never permit me to be separated from Thee"; at those times hear me speedily, O Lord. And when I pray for those I love, for my brothers

and sisters throughout the world—for is not the whole human race akin?—oh, then bend down Thine ear and hearken to my prayer! When I pray for all in trouble, for all who are stricken by sickness, misfortune, remorse—for those in fear of their lives by violence, or in danger of starvation from poverty; for our brothers all over the world; young men struggling against the almost overwhelming tide of temptation to be encountered at the outset of life; careworn fathers of families, threatened with ruin, perhaps in consequence of some false or imprudent step; for our sisters, unhappy wives and mothers, or for young girls on the verge of being entangled in the meshes of some dangerous attachment; for little children in want or misery, or suffering from neglect or misunderstanding; for the troubled and perplexed; for the overworked, the sorrowful, the broken-hearted of all classes of society, of all countries, tribes and nations; whenever we pray, and for whatever we pray, in Thy loving compassion hear us, O Lord; and as David said, "Hear us speedily," for to us frail, puny mortals, a little delay seems a long period. As St Bernard says so simply: "A little while! O truly a *little while!* But how long a *little while* may be!"<sup>1</sup>

But whether we have a longer or shorter time to wait, we know that no prayer is uttered in vain, and every petition will have its answer, if not the one we expect, at any rate one which our all-wise Lord knows to be the best for us. What could be

<sup>1</sup> Serm. 74, on Cant.

more consoling than the following passage on this very subject?

"The time may be delayed, the manner may be unexpected, but the answer is sure to come. Not a tear of sacred sorrow, not a breath of holy desire poured out in prayer to God will ever be lost, but in God's own time and way will be wafted back again in clouds of mercy, and fall in showers of blessings on you and on those for whom you pray."

**Christ, hear us!**



**Christe, exaudi nos**

Sweet Heart of Jesus! bless all hearts that love Thee,  
And may Thine own Heart ever blessed be!