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affectionately to his breast. He took the soul in his hands, kissed it with tender pity, and then suddenly let it fall into the seething fire beneath. The agonising shriek that came forth from that soul the moment it left the angel's hands sent through my inmost being a thrill of horror that no words can describe, no time remove. I watched the soul of my dear young friend in its fearful descent and the instant it touched the molten mass of liquid fire a number of flaming sparks shot forth, one of which struck me on the side of the head and seemed as if it burnt right into the very brain.

Instinctively I raised my hand to knock off the fiery mass, whilst I uttered a yell of terror that soon brought the whole household around me.

They all with one voice asked what was wrong, and what had happened to cause me to give that unearthly scream.

For a time I was just as much puzzled as they were, but very soon I fully recovered consciousness and at once grasped the whole situation. When sitting snugly by the fire and thinking of going to visit my sick schoolmate I had leaned my head on my right arm, and rested both on a small shelf that was near the mantel-piece. In this position I fell fast asleep, and clearly saw in dreamland the wonderful things I have related above. My young brother came into the kitchen whilst I slept, and, as he is very fond of scientific experiments of all kinds, especially with explosives, he climbed upon the table just behind me, lit a large Chinese cracker at the gas-jet, and, not noticing where he threw it, flung it right down on the side of my head. Short a time as it remained there it was yet quite long enough to give me a severe burn and intense pain into the bargain. This was what I thought was a spark from purgatory; and though I know well that earthly fire is but a painted fire compared to that of purgatory, still I would willingly suffer any ordinary bodily pain for an hour rather than the acute agony I endured for the very short time that Chinese cracker was burning on my head.

My mother quickly applied a little salad oil to the burn, sprinkled it over with flour, and all the pain ceased. We then sat round the fire, and I related to them my strange dream. They listened to its recital in breathless silence, and when I finished the narration a sigh of relief escaped my mischievous young brother, who sat in the corner directly opposite to me, from which vantage ground he had kept his eyes riveted on me the whole time I was speaking. When he regained sufficient confidence he had a hundred questions to ask about the whole thing. He was particularly anxious to know where the angels got the golden chalices, and what the red liquid was which they carried therein. My eldest sister, who goes to the Convent school, at once undertook to explain this difficulty. She said that when the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered for the souls

in purgatory their holy guardian angels surround the altar in thousands and at the very moment the priest elevates the sacred chalice they come with their chalices to get each a few drops of the precious Blood our Lord with which they fly off at once to purify and release the poor suffering souls. This little explanation pleased us all very much, and we promised to remember it every time we were at Mass and to make at the elevation a special offering of the precious blood for all the dear souls that are burning in the cleansing fires of purgatory.

My mother took this opportunity of giving some very good advice to the whole of us on devotion to St Joseph. She said though the whole thing might be merely a dream still there could be no doubt that the prayers of St Joseph were most powerful with our blessed Lord, and that any of us who cherished a tender devotion to this saint during life would be sure to die a happy death. As it was now bedtime we knelt round our little altar and offered up our Rosary for the souls in purgatory. At mother's suggestion we each got our St Joseph's Prayer Book, and joined heartily in saying the Litany of the Foster-Father of our Lord. Not satisfied with this I asked them all to open out page 172, and then we sang devoutly the beautiful hymn, "Hail, Holy Joseph, Hail!" This ended our devotions for that night; and as long as we live we have fully made up our minds to be ever specially devoted to the great St Joseph.

Kindly excuse, dear James, the length of this essay. I find it is much longer than I had originally intended. If it prove of any little use to you or the rest of the lads, this alone will give the greatest pleasure to the heart of

Your affectionate schoolmate,

PATRICK O'DWYER

To Master James Murphy, etc.

(A little offering for Feast of the Patronage of St Joseph, third Sunday after Easter, May 5, 1885.)

It is reported at Rome that the Abbe L. Duchesne, of Paris, has been appointed to study the means of rendering it easy for Anglican members of the clergy to be received into the Catholic Church, and that he is inclined to recommend most lenient measures. Cardinal Vaughan will remain in Rome till the end of February at least.

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