

LIVING THE TRUTH

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Chapter 1

PLANT LIFE

Our job in this lesson is to find how plants differ from what are called inorganic or non-living things, such as the soil in which they take root, the air they breathe, and the sunlight which they turn to profit by means of the green colouring matter in their leaves.

To find how two things differ, it is no use looking at what they both have or both can do. Instead, we must look at what one of them has, but the other has not, or at what one of them does, but the other does not. These will tell us how they differ.

This seems just common sense, doesn't it? Yet, many fail to do it. How often, for instance, you hear a person say: "Man's body is like a monkey's: therefore, man is only a sort of monkey!"

To argue this way is just as silly as to say: "Billy Buttons sitting alongside me has two eyes; a fish has two eyes; therefore, Billy is just a fish." Nonsense, isn't it? To find how Billy differs from a fish, you do not look at what they have in common as animals. Instead, you study the things Billy can do, but the fish can never do. These will show you what Billy IS, and what the fish IS NOT; for we can always know what things ARE from what they DO.

For instance: Billy can enjoy reading a detective story; the fish cannot. He can do sums; the fish cannot. He can crack a joke; the fish cannot. He can say prayers; the fish cannot. He can practise virtues such as sincerity and honesty; the fish cannot. He can commit sin; the fish cannot. He can be in a state of grace; the fish cannot. He can go to heaven when he dies; the fish cannot. These things, and not the fact that Billy has two eyes, show how he differs from a fish.

It is the same with plants and inorganic things. To find how they differ, we do not say: "A rose is made up of atoms; so is a chunk of shaving soap; therefore, a rose is just a chunk of soap." That would

be as silly as the argument that Billy is a fish. Instead, we look at what plants can do, but things lower than plants can never do. These show us how they differ; for we can always tell what things ARE from what they DO.

Here, now, are plain facts: -

(A). PLANTS PERFORM LIVING ACTIVITIES

1. Plants Nourish Themselves.

How? By taking in NON-LIVING matter from the air, soil and sunlight, and making it part of their own LIVING substance. They impart their own LIFE to it. They endow it with plant LIFE. How marvellous! It is something like raising the dead to life!

2. Plants Grow.

How? Not by adding bits of the same material to their surface, as a crystal does when it gets bigger, or as a snowball does when you roll it along; but by DIVIDING and MULTIPLYING their own LIVING CELLS, within themselves. One cell forms two; these form four; these, eight; these sixteen, and so on till you get the millions of cells found in a fully-grown plant.

3. Plants Reproduce Their Kind.

How? By forming within themselves special CELLS that are able to produce other plants of the same nature as their own. Thus, carrots form seeds from which other carrots can be born. Think of all the seeds in a blackberry, or in a clump of ragwort! No wonder these plants spread rapidly!

These three activities are called NUTRITION, GROWTH and REPRODUCTION. Can you notice anything special about them? Ask yourself a few questions and you will see. What do plants nourish? THEMSELVES. What do they make bigger when they grow? THEMSELVES. What do they improve by reproduction?

THEMSELVES. A carrot that can produce other carrots is more valuable, hence more perfect than one that cannot, isn't it?

Notice, therefore, that these three activities are SELF-PERFECTING activities. They make the thing that does them more perfect. They all add some reality to it. They increase its perfection.

That is why they are called VITAL or LIVING activities; for a LIVING being is one that can PERFECT ITSELF by what it does.

Now, since all plants perform LIVING activities, it follows that they must be LIVING beings; since we can always know what things ARE from what they DO.

We must conclude, therefore, that PLANTS ARE LIVING BEINGS. Turn now to inorganic things. Here, again, are plain facts: -

(B). NO BEINGS LOWER THAN PLANTS EVER DO ANY OF THESE THINGS.

1. They Never Nourish Themselves.

You never come across a wheelbarrow having its breakfast. You never surprise a hunk of pig-iron at its dinner. Your watch may want winding at night, but it does not want any supper. Why not? Because things lower than plants never nourish themselves. Has a wheelbarrow ever nourished itself in the past? No. Will it ever do so in the future? No. Why not? Because in nourishing itself a thing gives LIFE to the non-living matter that it takes into itself. But a wheelbarrow has no LIFE to give, any more than a hunk of pig-iron has, or a watch. And NOTHING CAN EVER GIVE WHAT IT HAS NOT GOT.

2. They Never Grow.

A railway engine does not begin as a baby engine, and slowly grow into a giant locomotive, by dividing and multiplying its living cells. Has it ever done so in the past? No. Will it ever do so in the future? No. Why not? Because it has no LIVING CELLS to divide and multiply. And NOTHING CAN EVER DIVIDE AND MULTIPLY WHAT IS NOT THERE. Even God, Who is infinitely powerful, cannot do that.

3. They Never Reproduce Their Kind.

You do not leave a twenty-cent piece in your pocket in the hope that it will some day produce a dollar coin. Why not? Because you know that non-living things do not reproduce their kind. Have they ever done so in the past? No. Will they ever do so in the future? No. Why not? because in reproduction a being forms within itself special cells by which LIFE can be handed on to its offspring. But non-living things have no LIFE to hand on. And NOTHING CAN EVER HAND ON WHAT IT HAS NOT GOT.

It is a plain fact, then, that things lower than plants never nourish themselves, grow or reproduce their kind. They never perform any SELF-PERFECTING activities.

At best, their activities tend to maintain them in their present state, as do the activities in the atoms of a brick; but, for the most part, they EXHAUST THE ENERGY in the thing acting. Thus, a piece of coal thrown on the fire in your sitting-room makes the room cosy; but in doing this it does not PERFECT ITSELF. On the contrary, it USES UP its energy. It DESTROYS ITSELF. Its activity is therefore the very OPPOSITE of the self-perfecting activities proper to plants.

Since, therefore, things lower than plants never perform any self-perfecting or vital activities, we must conclude that INORGANIC THINGS HAVE NO LIFE.

We have now found what we set out to find in this lesson: how plants differ from inorganic things. The answer is:-

PLANTS HAVE LIFE; INORGANIC THINGS HAVE NO LIFE.

What important consequences follow from this? Here they are: -

(C). CONSEQUENCES.

1. Atheistic Evolution Is Absolutely Impossible.

Evolution is a teaching which says that long ago there was only non-living matter, and that this later evolved or changed into plants, these into animals, these into human beings. An atheist is a person who denies that there is any God. Hence atheistic evolution leaves

God completely out, when it teaches how things evolved. It denies that He had anything to do with the process, since it denies that He exists.

Atheistic evolution thus makes non-living matter evolve into plants BY ITS OWN POWER ALONE, unaided by God.

But this is absolutely impossible. Why? Because it makes non-living matter give itself LIFE. That's exactly as if you said: "Precisely inasmuch as I have not got a fifty dollar note, I can give you one right now." It's absurd – as absurd or self-contradictory as a square circle or an angel that needs a shave. And hence just as impossible. For, NOTHING CAN EVER GIVE WHAT IT HAS NOT GOT.

It is nonsense to say: "This pencil, BY ITS OWN POWER ALONE, wrote an essay." It can never have done this. Why not? Because an essay contains IDEAS, and a pencil has no ideas of its own; hence it can never express any. It cannot give what it has not got, any more than you can give your friend a million dollar note, or Julius Caesar's favourite hat.

You may as well expect a pencil to hop up on its own and write a play like *The Merchant of Venice*, as expect non-living matter ever to evolve into plants, by its own power alone. It cannot do this today, as all scientists admit when they teach that spontaneous generation is impossible. It cannot ever have done it in the past. It can never do it in the future. Time makes no difference at all. NOTHING CAN EVER GIVE WHAT IT HAS NOT GOT. Atheistic evolution involves a contradiction, as does a square circle. It is absurd, and as such, for ever absolutely impossible.

2. If Evolution Ever Did Take Place, God helped Matter to Evolve.

Notice that we do not condemn every form of evolution. It is only atheistic evolution that we reject. Long ago, non-living matter might have evolved into plants; but if it did, someone must have helped it. And who was this someone? Obviously, GOD. He IS LIFE ITSELF; hence He can GIVE life to the non-living matter that He has created.

This is exactly like saying: "If this pencil did write this essay, someone helped it." And what sort of someone? An intelligent being, for only such a being has ideas to give.

3. Science Demands The Existence Of God.

You sometimes hear people say: "Science has done away with the need of God" or "Science is opposed to God." By science, of course, they mean the lower or experimental sciences such as physics, chemistry, or biology, which, of themselves, have nothing to say for or against God's existence since this is right outside their scope. Only the higher sciences of PHILOSOPHY and THEOLOGY can deal with Him. Yet, even in this narrow sense, their statement is quite false. Why? Because these lower sciences teach three things that simply do not make any sense unless God exists. Here they are:-

- a). Long ago, there was no life anywhere.
- b). Today, there is life on our earth.
- c). Non-living matter does not give rise to life on its own.

Where, then, did life come from? According to "science," it must have come from NOWHERE, unless it came from GOD. Nowhere, or God! Nonsense, or God! There is no alternative! So you see that the teaching of the experimental sciences just doesn't make any sense at all, unless one takes into account the existence of God. In that way, then, "science" demands the existence of God.¹

4. Every Living Plant Has a Soul.

You never get just matter on its own. You get this or that KIND of material thing: a bit of iron, hydrogen, a turnip, a monkey, a man. And what makes it THIS KIND of thing, rather than any other, is called its form. Material things, then, are made up of MATTER and FORM.

When we come to LIVING material things such as plants, animals or human beings, we give a special name to the FORM, because through it they can perform SELF-PERFECTING activities. We call

¹ (Editor's Note: This in no way denigrates the authenticity of the experimental sciences, though it does highlight its natural limitations).

it a SOUL. Hence, the soul in a material thing is simply the LIFE in it. And since a plant is a LIVING material being, it obviously has a soul; for as we just said, this is nothing else than the PRINCIPLE OF LIFE in a being that has a body.

A plant's soul, of course, is not spiritual and immortal, as man's is. It is material, not in the sense that it itself is made of matter, but in the sense that it can neither exist nor act apart from matter. It is mortal, because it ceases to exist when the plant dies, just as the shape of a candle ceases to exist when the candle is burnt completely away.

5. A Plant Is Vastly Superior As a Being To All Non-living Things.

Do not judge by size alone. A star is much bigger than a rose. It is true: but in God's sight - and He is knowledge and truth itself - a rose is more valuable than all the stars. Why! Because it belongs to a higher order of being altogether. It is ALIVE. It has a SOUL. Hence, it is more like God. A star is like God inasmuch as He exists; but a rose is like God inasmuch as He is a LIVING Being. It shows forth His infinite perfection in a superior way. Hence it should always remind us more forcibly of Him.

Think seriously on what is contained in this first lesson. Do not regard it merely as something to be learnt by memory, like a date in history. Really understand it. Think it out for yourself. Ask your teacher to explain any points you have not fully grasped. Be convinced of its truth. Above all, LIVE it in your daily life.

SUMMARY

(A). PLANTS PERFORM LIVING ACTIVITIES.

- 1. They Nourish Themselves.** By taking in NON-LIVING matter, and making it part of their own LIVING substance.
- 2. They Grow.** By CELL-DIVISION, from WITHIN.
- 3. They Reproduce Their Kind.** By forming within themselves special cells that can produce other plants of the same nature as their own.

These are SELF-PERFECTING activities; hence, LIVING activities. Hence, PLANTS ARE LIVING BEINGS.

(B). NO BEINGS LOWER THAN PLANTS EVER DO ANY OF THESE THINGS.

1. They Never Nourish Themselves. They have no LIFE to impart.

2. They Never Grow. They have no living cells to divide and multiply.

3. They Never Reproduce Their Kind. They have no LIFE to hand on.

Their activities are never SELF-PERFECTING ones. Hence, BEINGS LOWER THAN PLANTS HAVE NO LIFE. Therefore, plants differ from inorganic things in that PLANTS HAVE LIFE; INORGANIC THINGS HAVE NO LIFE.

CONSEQUENCES.

1. Atheistic Evolution Is Absolutely Impossible. Non-living matter can NEVER have evolved BY ITS OWN POWER ALONE into plant life; for NOTHING CAN EVER GIVE WHAT IT HAS NOT GOT.

2. If Evolution Ever Did Take Place, God Helped Matter to Evolve. Cf. If this pencil did write an essay, some intelligent being helped it.

3. Science Demands the Existence of God.

(a) Once no life anywhere.

(b) Now life on this earth.

(c) Non-living matter does not give rise to life on its own. Hence, life came from God, or from nowhere. God, or nonsense.

4. Every Living Plant Has a Soul. The SOUL is the PRINCIPLE OF LIFE in a being that has a body. A plant's soul is MATERIAL and MORTAL.

5. A Plant Is Vastly Superior As a Being To All Non-living Things. It has a soul. It is alive. It resembles God, not merely inasmuch as He is a Being, but inasmuch as He is a LIVING Being.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks or cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. To find how an oil-burning locomotive differs from a coal-burning one, we must look at the (wheels) (the firebox) in each. We can always know what things are, from what they (...). 3. In nourishing itself a plant takes in (...) matter, and makes it part of its own (...) substance. 4. A plant grows by (...) and (...) its own living cells within itself, whereas a crystal gets bigger by additions to its (...). 5. In reproduction, a plant forms within itself special (...) that are able to produce other plants of the same (...) as its own. 6. Inorganic things can never nourish themselves, for they have no (...) to impart. 7. Nor can they ever grow, for they have no living (...) to divide and (...). 8. Nor can they ever reproduce their kind, for they have no (...) to hand on. 9. Nutrition, growth and reproduction are self-(...). 10. The activities in inorganic things are never self-(...). 11. Plants differ from inorganic things in that plants have (...), whereas inorganic things have not. 12. Iron is made up of matter and (...). 13. In gold, the form (is) (is not) called a soul. 14. The principle of life in a being that has a body is called its (...). 15. An angel is not a soul, for he is not destined to be united to a body, to form with it (...) being. 16. The form in a plant is called its (...), because it enables the plant to perform self(...) activities. 17. A plant's soul is neither spiritual nor immortal; instead, it is (...) and (...). 18. We hold that (...) evolution is absolutely impossible. 19. The type of evolution that says that non-living matter turned into plants by its own power alone is absurd, because nothing can ever give (...). 20. A flower (manifests) (does not manifest) God's glory in a more striking way than does a star.

(B). Think out carefully the answers to these questions: -

1. A boy says: "A cabbage is made up of atoms; so is a brick, therefore, a cabbage is only a sort of brick." What would you say to him?
2. A plane roars overhead when you are in class. You cannot see it, yet you are certain that it is a plane, and not a bulldozer. Explain why.
3. Little Peter thinks that if he buries his coins in the ground, they may produce other coins in the way that potatoes produce other potatoes. How would you enlighten him?
4. Ronald thinks that if he keeps a twenty-cent piece long enough it will grow into a twenty-dollar note. Would you agree with him? Give a reason.
5. Paul dreams that Mt. Egmont suddenly starts eating up all the cows in Taranaki. Why is this certainly only a dream?
6. There is a drawing of the teacher done in chalk on the board. He asks who did it. The class reply: "The chalk did it on its own, Sir." Is he likely to be satisfied with this explanation? Give your reason.
7. If there were just matter and no form in material things, could we ever distinguish silver from gold, or benzine from cylinder oil, or a cat from a carrot? Give a reason for your answer.
8. Your non-Catholic friend denies that man has a soul. He would be less quick to do this if he realised that even a plant has a soul. How would you go about convincing him that it has?
9. A person says: "Long ago non-living matter evolved into plants." In what sense may this be true? In what sense is it certainly false?
10. Our Divine Lord says: "Consider the lilies how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spin. But I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these." (Mat. 6:28-29). What useful lessons can you learn from these words?

(C). Ask yourself these questions, and answer them sincerely:

- a. Do I understand quite clearly why atheistic evolution is impossible?
- b. Does a blade of grass, a common vegetable, a fern, a flower, a tree remind me of God?
- c. Do I often thank God for giving us these things?
- d. In what ways can I LIVE in my daily life what I have learnt from this lesson?
- e. Do I realise that for me, as well as for a plant, to live is to perform self-perfecting activities; hence to perfect myself, so that if I want to live in the fullest sense of this glorious word, not just as a plant or even as a rational animal does, but as an adopted son of God does, I must avoid sin and practise all the virtues?

Chapter 2

ANIMAL LIFE

Like plants, animals have bodies. Hence, like plants, they need to be able to nourish themselves, grow and reproduce their kind. And so they can. They do these things in common with plants.

At the same time, however, they do many things that plants can never do; and it is to these that we look when we want to find how animals differ from plants. Here is what we find: –

(A). ANIMALS HAVE SENSE KNOWLEDGE, SENSE APPETITES AND PASSIONS.

(B). NO PLANTS HAVE ANY OF THESE.

I. Animals Have Sense Knowledge.

For an animal, to KNOW a thing is to be AWARE of its EXISTENCE; and, usually, as something USEFUL or HARMFUL to itself and to its species.

Watch how the cat reacts when a mouse comes into the kitchen. Pussy instantly stops blinking. She is all alert. She keeps her eyes on the mouse. She stalks it. She gets ready to pounce. She certainly knows that it is there. And what's more, she knows it as something useful to her.

Watch her again, when she is with her kittens, and a strange dog comes near. She arches her back, bristles up her fur, and spits in a most unladylike manner. She is clearly aware of the presence of the dog, as something harmful to her and to her species.

But, now, what sort of thing is a mouse? It is a MATERIAL thing. It has parts lying alongside parts, as your finger has. That is why it can be measured, photographed, cut into bits. That is why it can be

seen, heard, touched, tasted and smelt. That, too, is why puss can know it.

Can she know realities such as honesty, truth, man's soul, an angel, or God? No. She never gives the slightest sign of having any knowledge of these. Nor does any other animal lower than man. Why not? Because these realities have no MATTER in their make-up. They are immaterial or spiritual beings; hence they are forever beyond the scope of an animal's knowledge. It is limited to MATERIAL things.

And even with regard to material things, we have to limit it still further. An animal cannot know these in the way man can. An example may bring this home to you.

Draw a square on a piece of paper. You know instantly what it is. You know that it fulfils the definition of a square. You have insight into its nature. You do not merely see the square; you understand it. Now show it to your pup. Is he aware of its existence? Yes. He sees it, just as you do. Does he know what it is? Does he grasp the meaning and the truth of its definition? Has he any insight into its nature? Does he know what it has in common with all other squares? Does he understand it? No. Hundreds of thousands of experiments performed on animals prove that he can never do any of these things.

That is why you would never dream of saying to your pup: "Pugnose! Listen to me. A square is a geometrical figure with four equal sides and four right angles. Think over this definition tonight. If, tomorrow morning, you can tell me why the figure I shall show you is a square, I will give you an extra ration of meat for breakfast; if you can't, a smack-up." That would not be fair to Pugnose. After all, he is only a dog, not a human being. He has only SENSE knowledge of the things he knows.

How do animals know things? By means of their FACULTIES.

What do we mean by a faculty? Is it the animal's soul alone? No. Like the soul of a plant, an animal's soul can neither exist nor act apart from the body. Hence an animal cannot know things by its soul alone. Is the faculty, then, just a specially-designed part of the body, such as the eye or the ear? No. Without the soul, this would

be dead. And dead eyes and dead ears cannot see or hear any more than dead marines can.

A faculty is a combination of both soul and body. Just as an animal's soul unites with its body to form one being – one cat, one rat, one chimpanzee – so, too, its soul unites with a special organ of the body, such as the eye or the ear, to form with it one principle or means of knowledge. And this is the faculty.

How many faculties of knowledge do the more developed animals possess? They have five EXTERNAL, and four INTERNAL senses.

The External Senses are: –

1. SIGHT; 2. HEARING; 3. SMELL; 4. TASTE, and 5. TOUCH.

Sight.

It is obvious that a cat sees a mouse; and it is just as obvious that it sees it with its eyes, not with its ears or its tail. The eyes are the organs of the faculty of sight.

By this faculty, animals know things through their COLOUR. The eyes grasp LIGHT rays coming from the object seen, though these are travelling at the unimaginable speed of 186,000 miles a second. And the faculty registers these with perfect accuracy as SENSATIONS of sight. The animal is aware of something coloured.

Learn how the eye is built and how it functions, by reading for instance Chapter 5 of Fr. McEvoy's *"Things in me that make me a Believer,"* and you will realise that the design apparent in the eye is overwhelming evidence of the existence of God.

Hearing.

It is a fact that animals can hear things. You have only to whistle for your dog to realise this. And it is equally certain that they hear with their ears, not with their eyes or their nose. The organ of the faculty of hearing is the ear.

This faculty has, of course, its own way of getting at things. By it, the animal knows them by the SOUND they make. Its ears grasp sound waves that come from the object; and the faculty registers these most faithfully in the animal's consciousness as SENSATIONS of sound.

Consult Fr. McEvoy's little book again, this time Chapters 11 and 12. Find how the ear is made up and how it works. Does it not also, by its admirable design, bear striking witness to the creative genius of God?

Smell.

If you think animals cannot smell things, watch a dog following the scent of a hare that is well out of sight.

As its name implies, this faculty enables the animal to know things by means of their smell.

Its organs are found at the back of the nose. Tiny particles of the thing smelt are drawn with the air into the nostrils, and when they meet the organs of smell, they start a chemical reaction which the faculty registers accurately as a SENSATION of smell.

There are many different smells: fruity, oniony, fragrant, spicy, putrid, and so on. In man, this faculty is not well developed; yet even a man's nose can detect one part of mercaptan, a chemical that smells like garlic, in fifty billion parts of air. Not bad going, is it? All the same, a dog's nose is far more keen than this. It is specially true of a dog, then, that its nose knows.

Taste.

You have merely to pour a little vinegar into the milk that puss is lapping, to find that she can taste things. She will immediately stop drinking, give you one of those "never-touch-it" looks, and stroll away in disgust.

How does this faculty get at things? By their taste, of course.

Its organs are situated mainly along the surface of the tongue, in little cavities. They are called "taste buds." A soluble substance,

such as sugar or salt, placed on the tongue first melts. Then it flows with the saliva into the little cavities, where it comes into contact with the "taste buds," and sets up a chemical reaction. The faculty registers this faithfully as a SENSATION of taste: sweet, bitter, sour or salt. Marvellous, isn't it? If you meet a person who thinks it isn't, ask him to explain how it happens. He will never do that.

Touch.

It is evident that a cat can feel the heat of a fire, and the coldness of a bit of ice. It feels also the pressure of a chair on its tail, and the pain that this causes. It feels giddy if it turns round and round often enough, just as you do. It does these, and many other things as well, by means of its faculty of touch.

This fundamental faculty enables an animal to know things, not by means of their colour, as sight does, nor by means of their sound, as hearing does, but by means of their TEMPERATURE, and the PRESSURE they exert on its body.

The organs of touch are situated mainly in the second or third layer of the skin; but they are found also in almost every other part of the body. They are too minute and intricate for you to study at present; but if you do study them thoroughly later on, the marvellous design they manifest will keep you a believer in God to the end of your life.

The Internal Senses are: - 1. THE CENTRAL SENSE; 2. THE IMAGINATION; 3. THE MEMORY; 4. THE ESTIMATIVE SENSE.

The Central Sense.

Just as the telephone wires in a city run into a central exchange, so, too, the nerves from all the external senses run into a brain centre which is the organ of the central sense. This faculty, therefore, is the first of the internal senses to receive all the knowledge handed on by the external senses.

Here is what it enables an animal to do: -

- (a). To distinguish, say, a colour from a sound, a taste from a smell, a sound from a taste, and so on.

Show your dog a red light each night just before you give him a piece of meat. Soon, his mouth will water at the sight of the light. Then, one evening, instead of showing him the light, ring a little bell. His mouth will not water at the sound of the bell. This proves that he can distinguish a sound from a colour. He cannot do this by his faculty of sight. It can see, but it cannot hear. Nor can he do it by his faculty of hearing. It can hear, but it cannot see. He must, consequently, have a faculty that can grasp BOTH these sensations at once. This is his central sense.

- (b). To attribute the colour, sound, taste, smell, movement, etc. of a thing to the thing to which they belong.

How would a lion ever catch a deer if he attributed the deer's colour to one object, its sound to another, its taste to another, its smell to another, and its movement to another? He would starve to death. He saves himself from this sad fate by using his central sense.

- (c). To know that it knows.

An animal's eye cannot see itself seeing; nor can its ear hear itself hearing; nor its taste taste itself tasting. Yet the animal undoubtedly knows that it sees, hears and tastes things. How does it know this? By its central sense.

That is why an animal makes ready to act on its knowledge, as a rabbit does when it gets ready to bolt at the sight of a man.

The Imagination.

Have you ever watched a dog that is dreaming? He whimpers and growls, tenses his muscles and gnashes his teeth. He is fighting an enemy that does not happen to be present at the time – an imaginary enemy. He is using his imagination, just as you use yours when you dream.

The imagination, therefore, enables an animal: –

- (a). To store up images received from the external senses.
(b). To recall these when the things that caused them are absent.

- (c). To associate them one with another, as the dog associates the image of a red light with that of a meat supper.

The imagination is superior to the central sense in that it enables an animal to picture to itself things that are absent, whereas the central sense, like the external senses, can know only what is acting on it at the moment.

The Memory.

When you come home from school, your dog is very glad. His eyes are bright with welcome. He certainly remembers you. Otherwise, he would want to bite you, as he does a stranger.

Like the imagination, the memory enables an animal: -

- (a). To store up images received from the external senses.
(b). To recall these, when the things that caused them are absent.

Unlike the imagination, however, it enables the animal: -

- (c). To know the past as past, by recognising that a present experience is the same as, or at least very similar to, a past one. Hence, it enables the animal to profit by experience.

The Estimative Sense.

Animals can undoubtedly know things as USEFUL or HARMFUL to themselves or their species. They do this by their estimative sense.

Watch a sparrow building a nest. It hops to a bunch of straws. Picks one up. Rejects it. Tries another. Finally, it flies with one to its nest. It obviously knows this particular straw as something useful for this particular nest. Notice, too, how it keeps one eye on the cat all the time. It knows this particular cat as something harmful to itself.

But usefulness and harmfulness have no colour, remember. Hence, they cannot be known by the faculty of sight. They have no sound. Hence, they cannot be known by the faculty of hearing. They have no touch qualities, no taste, no smell. Hence, they cannot be known by any of the other external senses, either. Add to this the fact that

the internal senses can deal only with what is handed on to them by the outer senses. Then you will realise what an amazing faculty the estimative sense really is. You will agree that it is the noblest of the animal's faculties of knowledge. True, it is not a spiritual faculty, as man's intellect is, but it is the next best thing to it.

(2). Animals have Sense Appetites And Passions.

It would be useless for a sparrow to know a straw as useful and a cat as harmful, if it did not feel also an urge to do something about it. That is why animals have not only sense knowledge, but also corresponding sense appetites and passions.

The word "appetite" comes from the Latin "petere," to seek. You know how your appetite for food urges you to seek for pies after a football match. You are used to the word in this sense. At present, however, we are using it in a much wider sense, as the principle or source of ALL the urges that an animal can experience to fulfil its needs.

Animals have two sense appetites; and the functioning of these is called a PASSION.

Here are the main passions: LOVE and HATRED, DESIRE and AVERSION, JOY and SADNESS, HOPE and DESPAIR, COURAGE and FEAR, and finally, ANGER.

Even a hen LOVES her chickens. She HATES a weasel to come near them. She DESIRES food she sees in your hand. She has a strong AVERSION for water. Your dog manifests JOY when you let him loose in the morning, and SADNESS when you tie him up at night. He HOPES to get the meat you are holding. He will jump into the air to get it; but if you keep holding it too high, he will finally give up in DESPAIR. He will show FEAR when you brandish a stick at him; but he will manifest COURAGE as well as ANGER when he is fighting a dog bigger than himself.

It is obvious, then, that animals have not only sense knowledge, but sense appetites and passions as well.

We must conclude, therefore, that ANIMALS ARE ENDOWED WITH SENSITIVE LIFE.

Turn, now, to plants. Here is what we find: -

(B). PLANTS HAVE NO SENSE KNOWLEDGE, NO SENSE APPETITES OR PASSIONS.

A cabbage does not go all jittery when you come to cut its head off with a knife. It cannot see you coming. You do not have to stalk it noiselessly. It cannot hear. You don't mind boiling it alive. It cannot feel. It does not pull a funny face when you sprinkle it with spray that has a horrible taste. It cannot taste. Nor does it hold its nose when the wind blows from the ensilage pit. It cannot smell. The same applies to all other plants.

They have no ORGANS of sight, hearing, touch, taste or smell. Hence they have no external FACULTIES.

Nor have they any internal faculties - central sense, imagination, memory or estimative sense - because these would have nothing to work on, since they get all their material from the outer senses.

Nor have they any sense appetites or passions, for these presuppose knowledge.

We must conclude, therefore, that PLANTS HAVE NO SENSITIVE LIFE.

So we have found at last what we set out to find in this lesson: how animals differ from plants. The answer is this:-

ANIMALS HAVE SENSITIVE LIFE, PLANTS HAVE NOT.

Let us look, finally, at the consequences that follow from this. They are very important; and they deserve plenty of serious thought.

Here they are : -

(C). CONSEQUENCES.

1. Atheistic Evolution Is Absolutely Impossible.

It claims that plants evolved into animals BY THEIR OWN POWER ALONE, unaided by God. But this makes plants, precisely inasmuch

as they LACK sensitive life, give this to themselves. This involves a contradiction, just as a square triangle does or an angel with the flu. It is just as absurd, and just as impossible. NOTHING CAN EVER GIVE WHAT IT HAS NOT GOT.

2. If Plants Ever Did Evolve Into Animals, God Helped Them To Do So.

If this pencil did write a poem, something helped it. What sort of something? Not a microbe, not an orang-outang, but a human being; for he alone has ideas to give.

Similarly, if plants ever did evolve into animals, someone helped them. Who? God, Who IS Life Itself. He can endow a plant, that has the lowest form of life, with the higher kind of life proper to an animal, just as He can endow our human souls with sanctifying grace which is a supernatural life; for His own infinite life is limitlessly imitable.

3. An Animal's Soul Is Vastly Superior To The Soul In a Plant.

Knowledge is immeasurably superior as a LIVING activity to the activities proper to plants. By knowing things, an animal perfects itself in a way that belongs to a wholly different order altogether from that of nutrition, growth and reproduction. But the SOUL must be proportionate to the activities that come from it. Hence, an animal's soul is vastly superior to the soul of a plant. It is a different KIND of soul altogether.

4. We Should Be Kind To Animals.

You cannot imagine Our Divine Lord being cruel to animals. If the Father in heaven is thoughtful even to the lilies of the field by providing them with garments surpassing those of Solomon "in all his glory," surely His Divine Son was even more solicitous towards animals, since they are able to feel both joy and pain.

Let us imitate Our Divine Lord in this as in everything else. Let us never be cruel to animals, but strive instead to increase their pleasure and save them from unnecessary suffering, not because

they have any strict right to this, but because they are God's sensitive creatures, endowed with faculties of pleasure and suffering like our own. We owe it to ourselves as rational beings to treat them always reasonably.

5. We Should Cultivate Good Habits.

While studying animal life, let us not forget that we ourselves are animals. True, we are not mere animals. We are RATIONAL animals – animals endowed with REASON and WILL, two spiritual faculties rooted in our spiritual, immortal souls.

But, just because we are both ANIMAL and RATIONAL, it is absolutely necessary for us to DIRECT our animal appetites and passions on to worthy objects, and to CONTROL them according to the demands of right REASON, enlightened by divine FAITH.

To do this, we must cultivate from our earliest years GOOD HABITS, natural and supernatural.

Otherwise, through bad habits, we shall degrade ourselves to a level lower than that of the beasts, and hence win for ourselves, not true liberty and happiness, but bitter slavery and misery, in this world and in the next.

SUMMARY

(A). ANIMALS HAVE SENSE KNOWLEDGE, SENSE APPETITES AND PASSIONS.

1. Animals KNOW material things by means of their FACULTIES.

(a). EXTERNAL senses: 1. Sight; 2. Hearing; 3. Smell; 4. Taste, and 5. Touch.

(b). INTERNAL senses: 1. Central Sense; 2. Imagination; 3. Memory; 4. Estimative Sense.

2. Animals have:

(a). SENSE APPETITES.

(b). PASSIONS: 1. Love; 2. Hatred; 3. Desire; 4. Aversion; 5. Joy; 6. Sadness; 7. Hope; 8. Despair; 9. Courage; 10. Fear; 11. Anger.

THEREFORE, ANIMALS ARE ENDOWED WITH SENSITIVE LIFE.

(B). PLANTS HAVE NO SENSE KNOWLEDGE, NO SENSE APPETITES OR PASSIONS.

1. Plants have no ORGANS of sight, hearing, smell, taste or touch. Hence, no FACULTIES either. No EXTERNAL senses.
2. Hence, no INTERNAL senses, since these presuppose the external senses, from which they receive the KNOWLEDGE they work on.
3. No sense APPETITES or PASSIONS, for these presuppose knowledge. There can be no desire for what is not known.

THEREFORE, PLANTS ARE NOT ENDOWED WITH SENSITIVE LIFE.

CONCLUSION: Animals differ from plants in that ANIMALS HAVE SENSITIVE LIFE, whereas PLANTS HAVE NOT.

(C). CONSEQUENCES.

1. Atheistic Evolution Is Absolutely Impossible.

Plants have no sensitive life. Nothing can give what it has not got.

2. If Plants Ever Did Evolve Into Animals, God Helped Them To Do So.

Life Itself, He can give a higher life to plants.

3. An Animal's Soul Is Vastly Superior To The Soul In a Plant.

It is of a different order altogether, as knowledge is in regard to nutrition, growth and reproduction.

4. We Should Be Kind To Animals.

We owe it to ourselves as rational beings to treat them reasonably.

5. We Should Cultivate Good Habits.

To DIRECT and CONTROL our sense appetites and passions.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. A rabbit feels a pain in its appendix. It becomes aware of this pain first by one of its (external) (internal) senses. 2. A hen swung gently round and round feels giddy. It does this through its faculty of (...). 3. By using its (...) a mason fly knows exactly where to sting a spider, in order to paralyse it. 4. Animals (can) (cannot) know material things as related one to another. 5. By using its (...) a dog can distinguish a colour from a sound. 6. The organs of the faculty of taste are called (...). 7. The eye is the (organ) (faculty) of sight. 8. It is by using its (...) that a dog attributes the colour, smell and movement of a hare to the one being to which they belong. 9. A lamb runs away from a wolf, because the colour of the wolf hurts the lamb's eyes (true) (false). 10. In fighting a dog to defend its kittens, a cat manifests not only the passion of anger, but that of (...) as well. 11. A parrot (can) (cannot) understand what it says. 12. Which of the external senses enables an animal to know very distant things? (...). 13. In dreaming, a dog uses its (...). 14. It is by means of its (...) that a blackbird knows that it is hearing something. 15. It is its (...) that enables a sparrow to know a cat as something harmful. 16. An animal knows the past as past by means of its (...). 17. A pup (can) (cannot ever) be made to realise the meaning of the definition of a square. 18. Plants can never have given themselves sensitive life by their own power alone; for nothing can ever give (...). 19. We owe it to (animals) (ourselves) to treat them reasonably. 20. We can direct and control our passions only by cultivating good (...).

(B).

1. Ronald says: "Potatoes have eyes; hence they can see." Do you agree?
2. Peter asks you what a sense faculty is. How would you explain it?

3. James thinks his dog must have an intellect, since it can do clever tricks that he has taught it. How would you enlighten him?
4. Joseph wants to know how the internal senses differ from the external senses. Tell him.
5. James asks why the estimative sense is the most noble faculty of knowledge an animal has. Give him the answer.
6. Without having been taught by anyone, Harry's Irish setter has learnt how to open the garden gate. He thinks the dog must therefore have an intellect. Does it follow?
7. Because plants have no external senses, they can have no internal senses either. Explain why.
8. Why does the functioning of a sense appetite presuppose knowledge?
9. What simple experiment could you perform on a cat to show that its eyes are the organs of the faculty of sight?
10. A flock of starlings are feeding in a field. Explain briefly what is happening
 - (a). in their external senses;
 - (b). in their internal senses;
 - (c). in their appetites and passions.
11. Most of the sensations that we take to be tastes are really smells. Can you see now why things seem to taste differently when you have a bad cold in the head?
12. Some ants follow the leader. If, consequently, you force him to go round till he is immediately behind the last ant in the column, he too will follow this ant; and the whole lot will go round and round in a circle till they drop from exhaustion. Does this prove that the estimative sense is immeasurably inferior to the intellect? Why?
13. Brian says: "Long ago, plants evolved into animals." In what sense may he be right? In what sense is he certainly wrong?
14. Melchisedech cannot see why he should be kind to animals. Tell him.
15. James does not think he has any need to develop good habits. How would you convince him of this need?

(C). Ask yourself the following questions, and answer them sincerely: -

- a. Do I really realise why atheistic evolution is impossible when it teaches that plants evolved into animals?
- b. Do I realise how superior an animal's soul is to the soul of a plant?
- c. Do I reverence animals and treat them reasonably? Am I ever needlessly cruel to them?

Chapter 3

MAN'S LIFE

Man has a body. Hence he needs to be able to nourish himself, grow and reproduce his kind. And, of course, he can do these things in common with plants. But this does not prove that he is only a plant, any more than the fact that his body is two-thirds liquid proves that he is only a walking hot water bag.

He has sensitive life, too, in common with the animals: sense knowledge, sense appetites and passions. But this does not prove that he is only an animal, any more than being kept behind iron bars proves that prisoners of war are only monkeys.

Man is indeed an animal; but he is not a MERE animal, since he can DO many things that none of the lower animals can ever do. And it is to these things that we turn when we want to know how he differs from them. We can always tell what things ARE, from what they DO. Here is what we find:-

(A). MAN HAS INTELLECTUAL KNOWLEDGE, A RATIONAL APPETITE AND EMOTIONS.

(B). NONE OF THE LOWER ANIMALS HAVE ANY OF THESE.

1. Man Has Intellectual Knowledge.

(a). MAN FORMS IDEAS.

You cannot deny that you form IDEAS of things. If anyone asks you, "What is a square?" you reply: "A square is a geometrical figure with four equal sides and four right angles." You give the IDEA of a square. You give WHAT it is.

Nor can you deny that this IDEA is true of ALL Squares, without a single exception. Does it apply to large squares as well as to small ones? Yes. To squares made with chalk, as well as to ones made with pencil? Yes. To squares made in Napier, as well as to squares

made in Timbucktoo? Yes. To squares made a thousand years ago, as well as to squares made today? Yes. It holds good for ALL squares. It is a UNIVERSAL idea.

Why can it be applied to ALL squares? Because it ignores what is PARTICULAR to this or that INDIVIDUAL square – its colour, or the length of its sides – and gets at what is COMMON to all squares. That is why it is universal.

Contrast it, now, with the IMAGE of a square which you form in any of your internal senses – in your imagination, for example.

Imagine a square with ten centimeter sides, made with red ink on white paper. Then imagine one with twenty centimeter sides, made with white chalk, on the board. Will the previous image do for this one, too? No. You have to form a new image to represent it.

If you imagined five hundred different squares one after the other, you would have to form five hundred different pictures in your imagination – a new picture for each.

Notice, therefore, that while your imagination IMAGE can represent only ONE particular square at a time, your IDEA of square represents faithfully ALL squares. One is the very opposite of the other.

How is it, now, that the IDEA is UNIVERSAL, whereas the imagination IMAGE is necessarily INDIVIDUAL?

The reason is this: the IDEA is something SPIRITUAL, whereas the imagination IMAGE is something MATERIAL.

Look at your finger. What makes it to be THIS finger, and no other? It is the MATTER in it. Matter INDIVIDUALISES things. Now, your imagination IMAGE is a MATERIAL likeness; hence it can picture only the INDIVIDUAL. Your IDEA, on the contrary, is UNIVERSAL. Therefore, it must get completely away from what individualises. It must get right away from matter. It cannot have any matter in its make-up. It must be a SPIRITUAL reality.

But, since the IDEA is SPIRITUAL, it cannot be formed by the imagination or any other of the internal senses. It must be formed

by a SPIRITUAL faculty, instead; for the faculty must be proportionate to what it does. We can always tell what a thing IS, from what it DOES.

What name do we give to this spiritual faculty with which man forms universal IDEAS? It is called man's INTELLECT, or REASON, or UNDERSTANDING, or INTELLIGENCE.

Where does our intellect get its ideas from? Does it create them from nothing? No. Does it get them from God, as an angel does? No. It forms them itself from the raw material offered it by images in our imagination.

It does this, as we have already said, by ignoring what is particular to the individual thing there represented, and by getting at what it has in common with all others of the same kind. It thus presents to itself the ESSENCE of the thing, in an IDEA which enables us to have real INSIGHT into the thing's nature, to know WHAT it is, to UNDERSTAND it.

That is why a child blind from birth can never form an idea of colour. Just as the eye cannot see a tree which is not there, neither can the intellect form an idea from raw material which is not there. It cannot know colour, unless the imagination presents it with the image of a coloured thing. It cannot form ideas from nothing.

In knowing anything, then, man forms two likenesses of it: one in his imagination, the other in his intellect.

The likeness in his imagination is called an IMAGE. It enables man to have SENSE knowledge of things. It is MATERIAL in its make-up. Man has it inasmuch as he is an animal.

The likeness in the intellect is called the IDEA. It enables man to have INTELLECTUAL knowledge of things: to know WHAT they are, to UNDERSTAND them. It is UNIVERSAL; hence SPIRITUAL. Man has it inasmuch as he is a RATIONAL animal.

Do not confuse these two kinds of knowledge, if you want to have a correct idea of man. And do not neglect them, either. If you look just at man's sense knowledge, you will say that man is only an animal. If you look only at man's intellectual knowledge, you will

say that man is an angel. Look at them BOTH. Then you will see man as he is: an animal endowed with REASON. A RATIONAL animal.

(b). MAN FORMS JUDGMENTS.

It is not enough for man to form IDEAS. He must do something with them. And the first thing he does is this: he UNITES two of them as he does when he says, "Triangles have three sides," or he SEPARATES two of them, as when he says: "Man is not a beer bottle."

In uniting or separating two IDEAS in this way, man is said to JUDGE, or to form a JUDGMENT. It is the second intellectual act he does as a RATIONAL being.

All day long you are forming JUDGMENTS: This cat is skinny. That's the bell for dinner. The Latin to-night is difficult. Squares are not circles. Pigs are not parallelepipeds. And so on. And, since in each of these judgments, you unite or separate two IDEAS, which are SPIRITUAL realities, each judgment must itself be a SPIRITUAL activity. Hence, it cannot be formed by any of the internal senses. It can be made only by man's intellect. Any faculty must be proportionate to what it does.

(c). MAN REASONS THINGS OUT.

Just as in judging we unite or separate two IDEAS, so, in REASONING we unite or separate two JUDGMENTS, and draw a conclusion from them.

Thus, once we know that A is B, and that B is C, we conclude that A is also C. This is a reasoning process. Another example: Man is mortal; Peter is a man; therefore, Peter is mortal.

In ordinary life, of course, we do not set out our reasoning step by step in this way. We often just give the conclusion, as does your father who sees you rummaging in a box and yells: "Look out! There's a razor in there!" Set out in full, his reasoning would run like this: Razors are sharp and therefore likely to cut you. That thing in there is a razor. Hence it is sharp, and likely to cut you. So take care!

You are constantly reasoning things out like this. You simply have to do so, to live; for you are by nature a RATIONAL being. It is to act as a mere animal instead. To act otherwise is to cease to act as a human being.

(d). MAN REFLECTS ON THE WORKING OF HIS OWN INTELLECT.

The eye cannot see itself seeing, nor can the ear hear itself hearing. The central sense can indeed enable an animal to know that it is seeing or hearing. But when we come to man's intellect, we meet with something totally different. Why? Because it can know that it itself is knowing. It can watch itself functioning. It can make itself the subject thinking, and the object thought, at the same time. It can, as it were, bend itself back on itself, by what is called, consequently, an act of REFLECTION.

For instance, you can think of the tip of your nose, and at the same time think of what is thinking of the tip of your nose.

Obviously, only a SPIRITUAL faculty can do this. It is quite impossible for a material faculty thus to reflect on itself. You might as well try to stand twenty metres away from yourself, and take a photo of yourself; or stand on the side line and watch yourself kick a goal from the middle of the field. Only a RATIONAL being can reflect.

Daily experience proves, then, that man forms universal ideas; unites or separates these in judgments, unites or separates judgments in reasoning processes, and reflects on the working of his own intellect.

So we are forced to conclude that man has INTELLECTUAL knowledge; for, since each of these acts is a SPIRITUAL one, it cannot be done by any of the sense faculties that man has in common with the lower animals. It can be done only by an intellect; for a faculty must be proportionate to what it does.

2. Man Has a Rational Appetite And Emotions.

We have seen that it would be useless for an animal to have SENSE knowledge of a thing as beneficial or as harmful, if it did not also

feel an urge to act on this knowledge. That is why it has sense appetites and passions.

It would be equally useless for man to know a thing INTELLECTUALLY as good or evil, unless he also experienced an urge to do something about it.

So, just as man has sense appetites and passions inasmuch he is an animal, he has also a RATIONAL appetite and EMOTIONS, inasmuch as he is a RATIONAL animal.

His RATIONAL APPETITE is called his WILL.

The EMOTIONS are given the same names as the passions: LOVE and HATRED, DESIRE and AVERSION, JOY and SADNESS, HOPE and DESPAIR, COURAGE and FEAR, and ANGER.

Facts prove that man has a RATIONAL appetite or will:-

(a). MAN SEEKS GOODS KNOWN BY HIS INTELLECT.

Sometimes these are material goods such as health, food, money, or a new hat. Sometimes they are spiritual goods, like honour and justice, freedom and truth. Sometimes they are supernatural goods: grace, the supernatural virtues, the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, the beatific vision.

But, whether they be material or spiritual, natural or supernatural, they must first be appreciated INTELLECTUALLY. The WILL itself is not a faculty of knowledge. Its object is not truth, but goodness. It is a blind faculty. It cannot know anything. It must have things made known to it by the intellect, just as the sense appetites must have things made known to them by the estimative sense.

(b). MAN SEEKS TO AVOID EVILS KNOWN BY HIS INTELLECT.

Again, these may be physical evils such as disease or death, or they may be moral evils, like sin and vice. They may be evils that afflict us in this world, such as mumps or cancer, or they may be evils that afflict man in the next, such as the loneliness of hell, or its never-ending fire.

But, whatever sort they may be, they have to be appreciated INTELLECTUALLY. They must be known as evils by the INTELLECT and presented by it as such to the will.

(c). MAN MAKES FREE CHOICES.

Your consciousness makes it quite clear to you that you do many things FREELY. You FREELY choose to do them. Hence, you are RESPONSIBLE for them. You deserve the reward due to them if they are good acts, and the punishment due to them if they are bad. And in thus making you aware of your freedom, your consciousness is infallible. It cannot possibly be deceiving you.

You know, for instance, that you can get into ranks promptly when the bell goes, or that you can idle along and be late; that you can do your homework neatly and carefully, or just rush it through and hope for the best; that you can be polite to other people, or very rude to them; that you can think only of yourself at table, or be thoughtful of the wants of others; that you can play a game fairly, or try to cheat; you can be cheerful or sulk, manly or childish, and so on.

It is a plain fact, then, that man performs many free acts every day – acts for which he is responsible. And that he does this by means of his will.

Look now at the EMOTIONS he can experience.

Though these are given the same names as the passions, they differ from the passions inasmuch as they presuppose, not sense knowledge, but INTELLECTUAL appreciation of things.

A wee child who hits his head on the door and then starts to thump the floor for hurting his head, is manifesting anger which is a passion. He has no intellectual grasp of the event. If he had, he would not add to his pain by hitting the floor with his fist.

But the anger which Our Divine Lord displayed when He drove the money-changers from the Temple was something very different. It flowed from an intellectual appreciation of the irreverence shown to his Father's house. It was, consequently, not a passion but an EMOTION.

Thus, too, our LOVE of grace is an emotion, not a passion. So is our HATRED of sin. So, too, our AVERSION for the pains of purgatory, our DESIRE for deeper friendship with God, our JOY at having Our Saviour as our Guest after Holy Communion, our SADNESS at the thought of our sins, our HOPE that reaches even to the heights of heaven, our DESPAIR at avoiding death, our COURAGE in carrying our cross daily in union with Christ, our FEAR of being separated from God by sin, and the ANGER aroused in us by insults hurled at Our Lady by those who are ignorant of her dignity and of her love.

These facts compel us to conclude that man has not only intellectual knowledge, but also a corresponding rational appetite called the Will, and its various emotions. Turn, now, to the lower animals.

(B). ANIMALS LOWER THAN MAN HAVE NONE OF THESE.

1. They Have No Intellectual Knowledge Of Things.

Countless experiments performed on animals prove that no animals lower than man ever form UNIVERSAL IDEAS.

From this, it follows that they can never form JUDGMENTS in the proper sense of the term, for these presuppose ideas.

Nor can they ever unite or separate judgments in a reasoning process, for they have no judgments. They can never REASON.

Neither can they ever REFLECT on the working of their intellect, for they have none to reflect with or on.

That is why you can show a monkey the parts of a petrol engine, but you can never get him to know WHAT each is, or WHY it is made the way it is, or HOW all the parts combine to form an engine that MUST work the way it does. You can never get him to UNDERSTAND why the engine has cylinders, pistons, compression rings, spark plugs, and the rest. Incapable of forming IDEAS, the monkey can never have any INSIGHT into the NATURE and PURPOSE of these things. Hence HE can never hope to understand them, any more than a parrot can ever hope to understand a chemical formula it repeats from memory.

2. They Have No Rational Appetite, No Emotions.

They have no rational appetite or will, since this pre-supposes an INTELLECTUAL knowledge of things; and they have no intellect.

That is why when you catch pussy stealing meat, you do not give her a penance. You give her a whacking instead, so that in future she may associate the pain of the thrashing with the act of taking meat, and so avoid both.

Not possessing a free will, animals have no emotions either; for these are simply the functioning of the will.

A rooster does not manifest any LOVE of grace, nor any AVERSION for the sufferings of purgatory. It does not show any HATRED of injustice, nor any DESIRE for baptism. It does not display JOY when you speak to it of the resurrection, nor SADNESS when you remind it of hell. It does not HOPE for heaven; nor does it DESPAIR of getting there. It does not display COURAGE in acquiring heroic sanctity, nor show FEAR of the Last Judgment. Nor does its comb redden with ANGER when it hears insulting things about Our Lord or His Church. These emotions all presuppose an intellect and a will; and the rooster has neither of them.

Facts, therefore, force us to conclude that animals lower than man have no intellectual knowledge, no rational appetite, and no emotions.

What conclusion follows necessarily from all we have seen in this lesson? Here it is: -

CONCLUSION: Man differs from the lower animals inasmuch as man has intellectual knowledge, a rational appetite or will, and emotions. The lower animals have none of these. Man is a RATIONAL animal.

(C). CONSEQUENCES

We cannot give here all the consequences that flow from the fact that man is a RATIONAL being. We shall speak of only a few. Others will be dealt with later.

1. Man's Soul Is Spiritual.

By its two spiritual faculties, intellect and will, our soul performs many spiritual activities. Hence, it itself must be spiritual; for we can always know what a thing IS, from what it DOES.

Like the soul in a plant or an animal, it has no parts lying along-side parts, as your finger has. Hence, it has no length, no weight, no size, no shape. It has no colour, sound, taste or smell. Hence it can never be known by sense faculties. It can be known by the intellect alone.

Unlike the soul in a plant or an animal, however, it can EXIST and ACT apart from the body with which it unites in this life, as FORM, to constitute one human being, one person. It is INTRINSICALLY independent of matter. In other words, it is a SPIRITUAL reality.

2. Man's Soul Is Created, And It Is Immortal.

Since it is a spiritual reality, it cannot come from the body of the parents, in the way a plant's soul does, or an animal's. It must, therefore, be created by God, instead.

Again, because it is spiritual, and because it comes into being independently of the body, it must survive the dissolution of the body at death. It is therefore IMMORTAL.

3. Man's Soul Is Made In The Image Of God.

God is a spiritual Being. Hence, He KNOWS and LOVES Himself, infinitely, from eternity. From this act of knowledge the Son of God proceeds eternally from the Father, as the Second Person of the Trinity. And, from the mutual love of Father and Son, the Holy Ghost proceeds eternally, as the Third Person.

Man's soul, too, is spiritual. Hence, like God, he can KNOW and LOVE himself. And, in knowing himself, he forms in his intellect an idea of himself, which is another self – the self known. In loving himself, he forms in his will yet another self – the self loved; for the will becomes like the thing it loves. Therefore, in knowing and loving himself, man imitates in a created and immeasurably inferior way, of course, the infinite life God leads in the Trinity. Our soul is indeed made in the likeness of God.

4. Atheistic Evolution Is Absolutely Impossible.

It says that animals evolved into human beings BY THEIR OWN POWER ALONE, unaided by God. Hence it makes them give themselves INTELLECTUAL life, though they have none to give. But this is clearly just as much a contradiction as is a square without sides, or an angel suffering from yellow jaundice. Hence, it is just as absurd. Hence, absolutely impossible. Nothing can ever give what it has not got.

5. If Animals Ever did Evolve into Human Beings, God Helped Them.

If this pen did write a play, a human being helped it; for he alone has ideas to give.

If animals ever did evolve into human beings, God helped them. He is Life Itself. Hence He can raise animals to a higher kind of life, thus making them more like Himself, just as He gives our spiritual souls a share in His own divine life by grace. As God, infinitely perfect Being, He is limitlessly imitable.

SUMMARY

(A). MAN HAS INTELLECTUAL KNOWLEDGE, A RATIONAL APPETITE AND EMOTIONS.

1. He Has Intellectual Knowledge.

- a). He forms IDEAS. They are UNIVERSAL. Hence they enable man to know WHAT things are, to UNDERSTAND them, e.g. an engine.
- b). He JUDGES. By uniting or separating two IDEAS. e.g. Man is mortal. Man is not a beer bottle.
- c). He REASONS. By uniting or separating two JUDGMENTS. e.g. A is B; B is C; therefore, A is C.
- d). He REFLECTS. By making his own intellect watch ITSELF working, and thus know ITSELF.

These are all SPIRITUAL.

2. He Has a Rational Appetite And Emotions.

By his RATIONAL APPETITE or WILL, man:

- a). Seeks GOODS known INTELLECTUALLY, eg. health, freedom, heaven.
- b). Strives to avoid EVILS known INTELLECTUALLY. e.g. cancer, sin, hell.
- c). Performs FREE acts for which he is responsible. e.g. Choosing from a menu.

By his EMOTIONS man experiences love, hatred, desire, aversion, joy, sadness, hope, despair, courage, fear and anger concerning things known INTELLECTUALLY.

These, again, are all SPIRITUAL.

(B). ANIMALS LOWER THAN MAN HAVE NONE OF THESE.

They have no UNIVERSAL IDEAS; hence, no JUDGMENTS, no REASONING, no REFLECTION. Hence, also, no RATIONAL APPETITES and no EMOTIONS.

CONCLUSION: Man differs from the lower animals in that he has INTELLECTUAL KNOWLEDGE, A RATIONAL APPETITE AND EMOTIONS, whereas they have none of these. Man is a RATIONAL animal.

(C). CONSEQUENCES: -

- 1. Man's Soul Is Spiritual.** It performs spiritual acts by its intellect and will; hence must itself be spiritual. It can EXIST and ACT apart from the body.
- 2. Man's Soul is Created, And Is Immortal.** As a spiritual reality, it cannot come from the body. It must be created by God. As spiritual, it is IMMORTAL. It survives the destruction of the body.
- 3. Man's Soul Is Made In The Image Of God.** In KNOWING and LOVING himself by his intellect and will, man imitates in an infinitely distant manner the life that God leads in the Trinity.
- 4. Atheistic Evolution Is Absolutely impossible.** It makes animals give themselves INTELLECTUAL life, though they have none to give. Hence, it is a contradiction, like a square without

any sides. Hence, absolutely impossible. Nothing can ever give what it has not got.

5. If Animals Ever Did Evolve Into Human Beings, God Helped Them To Do So. If this pencil wrote a play, man helped it. He has ideas to give. If animals ever did evolve into human beings, God helped them. He is Life Itself. Hence, He can give a higher form of life to animals; His own is infinitely imitable.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in blanks or cross out wrong alternatives in the following:

1. Since my (idea) (imagination image) of a square applies to all squares it is universal. 2. Because it is universal, it cannot have any (...) in its make-up; for (...) individualises things. 3. My idea is a (material) (spiritual) reality. 4. My ideas are formed by my estimative sense. (True) (False). 5. In knowing anything I form two likenesses of it: one, called an image, in my (...); and one, called an idea, in my (...). 6. When I think of an angel, my (imagination image) (idea) presents the angel to me as he really is. 7. When I think of a myriagon as a figure with ten thousand sides, my (imagination image) (idea) is vague, whereas my (imagination image) (idea) is perfectly clear. 8. In forming a judgment I unite or separate two (...). 9. In reasoning I unite or separate two (...). 10. When I make my intellect watch itself functioning I perform an act of (...). 11. Judgment, reasoning and reflection are all spiritual acts because they imply (...) which are spiritual realities. 12. The will is a faculty which (knows truth) (seeks goodness). 13. When I choose a thing, I make myself like the thing chosen, so that I can tell what kind of person I am from what I deliberately choose. (True). (False). 14. The estimative sense (can) (cannot) reflect on itself. 15. The fact that I can judge two and two to be four proves that my soul is a (...) reality, and as such can never cease to (...). 16. In knowing and loving itself intellectually, my soul produces in itself a faint image of the life God leads in the (...); hence it is made in the image of God. 17. Our Divine Lord's sadness in the Garden of Olives was (a passion) (an emotion). 18. Since man is an animal endowed with reason, he is rightly defined as a (...) animal. 19. Since my intellect and my will are spiritual faculties, (...) alone can satisfy for ever their limitless yearning for truth and goodness. 20. Atheistic evolution is absolutely impossible because it teaches that animals

by their own power alone gave themselves (...) life, though they had none to give.

(B).

1. Ronald wants to know why an idea is necessarily a spiritual reality. Tell him.
2. Peter tells you that he has not got an intellect. How do you answer him?
3. On the bear's cage in the zoo you see a notice: "Don't feed the bear." You never see a notice telling the bear what to do: "Don't bite the hand that feeds you." Why not?
4. Little Robert is given a whacking by his father for swearing when under chloroform. Why did his father do wrong in thrashing him?
5. Entering a lonely shed in the backblocks, you see the body of a man hanging by the neck from a rafter. The hands are tied to the sides of the body. The rope which passes over the rafter is fixed at the other end of the shed. Would you say that this is a case of murder or one of suicide? Give your reasons.
6. James thinks he is not free in anything he does; hence he should never get a smack-up. What would you say to him?
7. Imagining an angel, you picture him as a child with wings. This does not represent him as he really is. Why not? Why can it never do so?
8. What is the difference between the imagination image and the idea you form of a myriagon as a figure with ten thousand sides?
9. Harry wants to know why a child that has been deaf from birth can never form an idea of sound. Tell him.
10. Of all animals, man is the most helpless at birth; yet he rules over the lower animals. How is this?
11. I can judge what sort of a character I have from what I freely choose to love. Why is this?
12. Why is atheistic evolution absolutely impossible when it is question of the evolution of animals into human beings?

(C). Ask yourself these questions, and answer them sincerely: -

- a. Every time I form an idea, judge, reason, reflect, love a spiritual good or hate a spiritual evil, or do a free act, I have

experimental evidence that my soul is spiritual, and therefore can never cease to exist. Do I realise this?

- b. Do I control my emotions especially my moods?
- c. Do I realise that God alone can satisfy my spiritual yearning for truth and goodness?
- d. Do I realise that man's soul is made in the image of God? Do I reverence it as such, in myself, and in all others?
- e. Do I act now as I shall wish to have acted when death puts me in eternity?

Chapter 4

OBJECTIONS

Here are objections people make: –

(A). ANIMALS DO CLEVER THINGS; HENCE THEY HAVE AN INTELLECT.

Of course animals do clever things. The cuckoo lays an egg spotted like the wren's, if she wants to put it into a wren's nest. If the egg were not like the wren's, the wren would throw it out. But the marvel of it is this: the cuckoo cannot see far enough into the wren's nest to notice the colour of its eggs. Yet she imitates these so well that a man can hardly tell the difference.

Imagine a teacher coming into the drawing class with a leather bag and saying, "Boys, I have something in this bag which I want you to draw. I'm not going to open the bag so that you can see what it is. You have to draw it without seeing it." How would you like the job? Yet the cuckoo imitates something it has never seen. Clever, isn't it?

Yes. But does the cuckoo think it all out for herself? Does she invent a sort of X-ray that enables her to see through the wren's nest, and so know the colour of its eggs? And then think out what special diet she must follow, to lay eggs spotted like the wren's!! No. She performs her task without having to learn, without understanding how, and without realising why she does it. She does it by INSTINCT.

Have you heard of a tarantula? It is a spider – a deadly poisonous one, the sort of thing we would willingly avoid. But there is a wasp which is not afraid of it. On the contrary, she looks for it, and attacks it. She stings it in a certain nerve centre, and thus paralyses it without killing it. Then she lays an egg on it. When the egg hatches out into a frail little grub, the youngster has live spider to feed on. If the spider were not paralysed, his least movement would kill the grub. If he were dead, his corrupt flesh would poison him.

Being paralysed, he can do neither. He has to put up with being eaten alive. Smart bit of surgery on the part of the wasp, isn't it?

Yet she does the job perfectly the very first time. She's got to, of course; otherwise, the tarantula kills her. So, you see, she does not have to learn her art. Does she understand how she does it? Does she know all about the nervous system of tarantulas? Does she know why she must sting this particular nerve centre and no other? Does she think out the right kind and the right amount of poison to use? Obviously not. If she knew these things, she would have an intellect as good as, if not superior to man's. Then she would be able to write a book on how to paralyse tarantulas, with diagrams and index complete. But she cannot do that. She does the job, therefore, not by using ideas, judgments and reasoning, as a man would do it, but just by INSTINCT.

A trapdoor spider fits a door over his home, which is a burrow in the ground. Threatened by an enemy, he runs home, slips down the burrow, and pulls the door shut after him. He cannot lock the door, but by clinging to loops fixed to its lower side, he stops his enemy from opening it. In fact, he can hang on so hard that you can even bend the blade of a small knife trying to force an entry.

Clever little chap, isn't he? But does he realise how clever he is? Does he understand how it all works? No. If you put a bit of a wooden match against the door and so stop it from coming down, the spider will cling to the door for dear life, though it is not half shut, and therefore offers him no real protection. It never occurs to him to remove the match first. This shows that he acts, not through insight, but through INSTINCT. Nothing intellectual about it.

INSTINCT, then, is an INBORN power that animals have of doing clever things, WITHOUT HAVING TO LEARN, WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING HOW OR WHY THEY DO THEM.

It implies mainly the use of the animal's: -

- (a). Estimative Sense.
- (b). Sense appetites and passions.
- (c). Motor activities.

So there is absolutely nothing INTELLECTUAL about it - no universal ideas, no judgments, no reasoning, no reflection.

And this is brought home to us by the following facts: -

1. Instinct Does Not Progress.

INTELLECTUAL knowledge is constantly progressing. Men are ceaselessly inventing new things, solving new problems, increasing their knowledge. Because man can form universal ideas, judgments and reasoning processes, he can and must keep adding to his knowledge. Compare the knowledge of a well-educated man today with that of the ancient cave-man. The amount is vastly different. Intellectual knowledge is essentially progressive.

INSTINCT, on the contrary, never progresses. The bee makes its cell today exactly the same as it did in the days of Virgil. The spider builds a logarithmic curve into its web now, just as it did in the time of Pythagoras. Think of the different kinds of dwellings man has made, from the ancient cave to the modern skyscraper. Then think of the nests that birds have made during these same centuries. They make them today in exactly the same manner as their ancestors did thousands of years ago. Instinct does not progress.

2. Instinct Is Limited To Its Own Groove.

Man's INTELLECT is not limited to one way of doing things. Think of the many ways man has of getting from place to place: he can crawl, walk or swim; ride on a donkey, a horse or a camel; use a push-bike, motor cycle, car or truck; go by submarine, boat or train; or he can fly in a modern jumbo jet. Think of the many ways he has discovered of communicating with his fellowmen, of curing diseases, of catching fish, and so on. Then you will realise that our intellect can vary endlessly its ways of doing things. It is essentially versatile.

INSTINCT, on the contrary, is limited to its own little groove. It is tied down to one way of doing a thing. It knows no other. Its cleverness is rigorously limited. It is the very opposite of versatile; hence the very opposite of the intellect.

You cannot imagine bees, for example, getting tired of having a queen, and choosing to set up a democracy instead. They cannot ever think out new ideas like this, for they have no intellect to think with. They have only sense knowledge, which is limited to individual things, and can never get beyond them. With them, consequently, variety is impossible.

3. Instinct Is Perfect Or Almost Perfect From The Start.

For some years after a child is born, his intellect does not function at all. Then it develops slowly. It takes a child a long time to realise that its toes are part of itself, whereas the bedclothes are not; to discriminate between its mother and other women; between its father and its uncle, and so on. A child is not a D.D. or an M.Sc. the day he is born. Complete intellectual development is the job of a lifetime.

In a few cases instinct can be perfected a little. Chicks, for example, may first peck at inedible or harmful things like small bits of tin or wasps; but they soon learn to avoid these. In the vast majority of cases, however, instinct is perfect in its activity right from the start. It has to be if the animal is to survive. In this, again, it is the very opposite of intelligence.

4. Instinct Can Lead An Animal To Do Silly Things.

By his INTELLECT a man knows why a means will achieve an end. This is because he knows the means AS MEANS and the end AS END, and understands the RELATION between them. Having real insight into the natures of things, he knows also the purposes they serve. Thus he knows why a machine MUST work, provided he adapts each part to the end it is meant to achieve.

INSTINCT, on the contrary, does not enable animals to know the means AS MEANS or the end AS END, or to understand the RELATION between them. You can prove this by altering a little the conditions under which their instinct normally works. You will find that it then leads them to do ridiculous things which they would never do if they had any true insight. Here are a few examples: -

There is an insect which builds a cell, fills it with nectar, seals it over, and then starts another on top of it. If the insect happens to be

building the cell, and you break it, the insect will mend the break. But, if it happens to be filling the cell, and you puncture the bottom, it will not mend the puncture. Instead, it will go on filling in nectar for the rest of the season, though it all runs out as fast as it is put in. Hardly intelligent, is it? Can you imagine a child putting money day after day for months into a pocket that had a hole in it through which the money ran out and was lost? It shows that the insect does not understand the PURPOSE of mending. If it did, it would immediately mend any break that was letting nectar escape, just as a child would mend a hole in his pocket.

Just as a bird gets an urge to make a nest, so does a rat. Get hold of one that has this urge. Put it in a room. Give it some straw, but not enough to make a complete nest. The rat will use up all the straw, then go round looking for more. Tie a bit of straw to its tail. Running about, the rat will suddenly notice this straw. It will pick it up eagerly, carry it to the nest, and arrange it there most carefully. Out it will go again, taking the same straw with it. Noticing it again, it will take it to the nest. Out again; in again; for days with the same straw!

Nothing intellectual about that, is there? What would you think of a man who, while building his own house, would put on a brick most carefully, then immediately knock it off again, for months on end? You would rightly think him a lunatic; for man is supposed to know what he is doing, and why he is doing it. A rat is not. Its instinct is not an intellect.

You've seen a dog burying bones in the garden. Well, a squirrel buries nuts. His instinct enables him to make a good job of this in the bush; but put him into a room instead, and see what a fool it makes of him. Give him more nuts than he can eat. After eating his fill, he will look round to make sure no one is looking, then start to "bury" the rest. He will go through the actions of digging a hole in the floor, putting in the nuts, and covering them over. Of course, he has not made any hole at all; nor has he covered the nuts with anything. But he will feel quite satisfied with the job, though the nuts are as visible to everyone as when he started. Instinct can be stupid, can't it?

If you want to see how unintelligent a monkey is, get him in a room where there is a loop in the ceiling, into which you can fix a hook on

the end of a ladder. Hang bananas near the loop. When the monkey is hungry, show him how to get at the bananas by fixing the ladder to the loop, climbing up, and securing the fruit. He will try to imitate what you have done. He will get the ladder, poke it up towards the loop, and start to run up it as fast as he can. Since the ladder has not been fixed to the loop, however, it will fall straight to the ground, and the monkey with it. He will rub his head or his rump, look puzzled, and try again. Same result. Plenty of bruises, but no bananas. Obviously, he does not understand the purpose of the hook and the loop. Instinct, yes; but no intelligence.

Recently in America a monkey was trained to put one box on another, another on that, and so on till he could reach bananas hanging from the roof. When fully trained, he was to have a movie picture taken of his feat, to show the world that he had an intelligence. The great day came at last. So did a crowd, including the movie maker. The starving monkey duly piled box on box. The crowd applauded. Cameras whirled and clicked. When the monkey finally put the last box in position, the applause was deafening. But it died down suddenly. What had happened? The starving monkey had put the last box on with the open side uppermost. He had gone into the box, and fallen asleep! He had done something he could never have done if he had an intelligence. The experiment proved the very opposite of what it was intended to prove. Lots of good film was wasted that day.

A man called Koehler did many experiments with apes at Teneriffe, from 1913 to 1917. In the end, he admitted that they have only what he called "insight." By insight he did not mean what we mean: something intellectual, implying ideas. He meant, as he himself said, nothing more than the animal's power of associating images in its imagination. Any universal ideas? No. Any judgments? No. Any reasoning? No. Any reflection? No. Anything intellectual at all? No. Just sense knowledge and sense appetites. And all other experiments ever performed on animals prove the same thing.

And the point to grasp is this: since we can explain all the clever things animals do, by having recourse to their animal faculties, especially their Estimative Sense, Sense Appetites and Passions and their Motor Activities, we are NOT ALLOWED to attribute to them any higher faculties such as intellect or free will. We are forbidden to do this by what is called in science the PRINCIPLE OF THE

MINIMUM. Just as we are forbidden by the same principle to say that a cure at Lourdes is a miracle, when it can be explained by natural powers alone. It is quite unscientific, then, to say that animals lower than man have an intelligence. They have not.

(B). ANIMALS LEARN BY EXPERIENCE; HENCE THEY HAVE AN INTELLECT.

It is true that animals learn by experience; but do they learn things INTELLECTUALLY, as a child does? Experiment with a rat, and see for yourself. Make a maze of cardboard, with plenty of blind alleys in it. Put a bit of cheese at the centre. Let a hungry rat find his way from the entry, to the cheese. He will take a long time at first, because he will go along blind alleys. With practice, however, he will learn to avoid these, and go straight to the cheese.

Has he learnt INTELLECTUALLY? No. You have merely to shorten one of the corridors a few inches, and he will run flat into the end of it. This shows that he is being guided solely by MEMORY and by muscular sensations, which are sensations of TOUCH. Intellect does not come into it. There is nothing intellectual in running full tilt into a wall, is there? Bruised snout? Yes. Intelligence? Not a sign of it!

As with instinct, we can explain all animal "learning" by having recourse to the animal's sense knowledge and sense appetites; so, by the principle of the MINIMUM we are forbidden to attribute any higher faculties to them.

The same applies, of course, to tricks that animals are taught by men.

Some years ago, a man brought a number of trained dogs to Wellington. They did many tricks. The last item on their program amused the audience most. One dog played a small piano, while the others, dressed as ladies and gentlemen, danced in pairs on the stage. Towards the end of the dance, as the dogs swept gracefully round, a man at the side of the stage undid the knot in the ribbon that kept up the trousers of one of the gentlemen dogs. The trousers, naturally, began to fall. But the dog was equal to the occasion. Holding up his pants with one of his front paws, he deftly steered his partner off the stage with the other, dancing all the time. A man did things up for him again, and he appeared with his

partner on the stage once more, intent on seeing the dance to the end. The audience was fully impressed with his "intelligence," of course.

There was an intelligence behind it all, indeed; but it was in the trainer, not in the dog, just as there is an intelligence behind the design in a motor car, but it is in the designer, not in the car itself. There is an intelligence behind instinct, too; but this intelligence is in God Who endows the animal with instinct, not in the animal itself.

The fact that we train animals, not by giving them ideas, but by giving them physical rewards and punishments that appeal to their sense knowledge and sense appetites is proof that their learning is done, not by an intelligence, but by these animal faculties alone. Lumps of sugar, not ideas, are the means we use to train a parrot.

(C). ANIMALS HAVE A LANGUAGE OF THEIR OWN; HENCE AN INTELLECT.

Animals certainly have cries that warn their companions of the presence of something useful or harmful. A dog yelps frantically to call his mates to join him in chasing a hare. A hen clucks ominously to warn her chicks of a hawk, so that they can hide in the grass.

However, it is not accurate to speak of animals having a language. Only human beings have that. Our words express not only feelings or passions but also ideas, judgments and reasoning. The noises made by animals never express ideas, judgments or reasoning, but only feelings or passions such as those of anger, fear or pain, in somewhat the same way as a thermometer expresses temperature, or a barometer the pressure of the air.

And remember this: the more highly developed animals have vocal chords that can express words, as a parrot does. And, if these animals had an intelligence, they would have to have as well a proper language like our own. The fact that none of them have such a language proves that none of them have an intellect.

(D). MAN'S SOUL CANNOT BE SPIRITUAL, BECAUSE HE GOES UNCONSCIOUS WHEN HIS BRAIN IS INJURED.

We have seen that our intellect gets all the raw material for its ideas from images offered to it by the senses. That is why a child blind from birth can never form an idea of colour; and why, if none of a child's external senses functioned from birth, he would not know that he existed till he died.

Hence, too, if the brain is injured by a kick, say, or a disease, the imagination cannot present any raw material to the intellect to form ideas from. Unable to form any thoughts, a man is then unconscious. He is no more aware of his existence for the moment than he is when in a dreamless sleep, or than a child is whose senses have not yet functioned. The intellect itself, of course, is not hurt in any way. It is a spiritual faculty; hence it cannot be injured. But the imagination has the brain for its organ as a faculty; hence any serious injury to the brain stops it from working, just as any serious injury to the eye stops the faculty of sight. Hence, the fact that a man goes unconscious when his brain is injured merely proves that our intellect is dependent on the imagination for the material from which it fashions its ideas; and this is exactly what we teach about the human mind. It proves that our teaching is true. It is no argument at all against the spirituality of the human intelligence, or of the soul in which it is rooted.

Just because your radio breaks down and refuses to convey anything to you, it does not follow that the man speaking over the air has dropped dead, does it? It is not he who has failed, but the instrument he has been using. It is the same with the intellect and the imagination. Just because the instrument it uses to form ideas had been injured, the intellect cannot fashion any thoughts; but this does not prove that it itself is impaired in any way. As a spiritual faculty it is beyond the reach of any kick or any disease whatever.

It may not be out of place here to remind you of the proof you have already seen of the spirituality and immortality of the human soul; and to add another which is even immeasurably more convincing still.

WHY WE ARE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT OUR SOUL IS SPIRITUAL AND IMMORTAL.

We are absolutely certain that our soul is spiritual and immortal, because we can prove it from: –

1. REASON and 2. GOD'S WORD.

1. Proof From Reason.

Every day we perform many SPIRITUAL activities by means of our INTELLECT and our WILL. For example: -

(A) BY OUR INTELLECT: -

1. We form UNIVERSAL IDEAS.

eg.

Our idea of a square applies to ALL squares. By it we know WHAT a square is; we get real INSIGHT into its nature; we UNDERSTAND IT. And, because universal, our idea must get completely away from matter which INDIVIDUALISES. It cannot have any matter in its make-up. It must be INTRINSICALLY independent of matter. It must be itself SPIRITUAL. A universal material thing such as an imagination image is a contradiction. It is as absurd as a round square or an angel with whooping cough; and just as impossible.

2. We form JUDGMENTS.

e.g.

All triangles have three sides. Triangles are not circles. Here we unite or separate two IDEAS. Since ideas are spiritual, judgments must be spiritual also. Moreover, in every positive judgment we IDENTIFY two ideas. Material things cannot be thus identified, as every collision on land, sea or air proves.

3. We REASON things out.

e.g.

A is B; B is C; therefore, A is C. Here we unite or separate two JUDGMENTS; hence reasoning must itself be a spiritual activity.

4. We REFLECT on the working of our own intellect.

e.g.

You can think of the tip of your nose and at the same time think of what is thinking of it. You can watch your own intellect at work, as you do when you find out how it forms ideas, what it does when it judges, reasons or reflects. No material thing can thus make itself subject and object of its own activity, any more than a man can stand twenty metres away from himself, and from that distance shake hands with himself. Reflection is most certainly a spiritual activity.

And so on for many other things we do daily by means of our intellect.

(B). BY OUR WILL: -

1. We seek goods known intellectually, even SPIRITUAL and SUPERNATURAL ones such as sincerity, grace, and God's friendship.
2. We strive to avoid evils known intellectually, even SPIRITUAL and SUPERNATURAL ones such as sin and the loneliness of hell.
3. We hope for goods known intellectually, even SPIRITUAL and SUPERNATURAL ones such as the beatific vision in heaven.
4. We perform FREE acts, for which we are responsible, as when we make a choice from a menu, or deliberately choose to commit a sin or resist a temptation.

And so on for many other things we do daily by means of our will.

These are all SPIRITUAL activities, because the will is an appetite corresponding to and proportionate to our intellect which is itself spiritual; and also because a spiritual faculty alone can seek spiritual goods or strive to avoid spiritual evils.

What CONCLUSION must we draw now from these facts? It is this:

-

Since our SOUL performs many SPIRITUAL acts by means of our INTELLECT and WILL, it itself must be a SPIRITUAL reality; for we can always know what a thing IS from what it DOES.

And because our soul is spiritual, it must also be IMMORTAL. It must continue to exist after the dissolution of man by death; for a thing is spiritual only because it can exist and act apart from matter. It has no principle of corruption in its make-up. Moreover, created by God, the human soul begins to exist independently of matter; so it must be able likewise to continue to exist independently of the body. It must go on existing forever, when the body at death returns to the dust whence it was taken in the beginning.

The spirituality of the human soul is brought home to us, too, in many ways other than those we have just mentioned. For example: the numerous sciences man has thought out; the literature he has written; his achievements in music, sculpture, painting and architecture; his social institutions, his laws and forms of government; his ability to build his own moral character; his rights and obligations; his practice of religion; the fact that he alone of all the animals has an articulate language, manufactures goods, has a sense of humour; the fact that he alone can be psychoanalysed, that he alone buries his dead – these and countless other things show us that his soul is spiritual. They are for ever beyond the powers of the lower animals, for they imply an intellect and a will, spiritual faculties rooted in an immortal soul.

Our REASON, therefore, using its own natural power, gives us the greatest possible NATURAL certitude that our soul is SPIRITUAL and IMMORTAL. But we have a proof immeasurably better than even this. Here it is: –

2. Proof From God's Word.

All sacred Scripture, Old and New Testament alike, implies that man's soul is spiritual and immortal. So does all Christian Tradition.

That is why the Old Testament reminds us of God's decree that at death "The dust return into its earth whence it was, and the spirit return to God Who gave it." (Eccles. 12:7). What a sharp distinction

this text makes between the lot of the body and the lot of the soul. One, to dust; the other, to God!

No wonder Our Divine Lord warns us most solemnly of the care we should take of our soul: "Fear not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul," He says, "but rather fear Him that can destroy both soul and body in hell." (Mat. 10:28). And again: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul? What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark, 8:36-37).

And how gloriously St. Paul speaks of the immortality of our soul when he says: "We know if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved that we have a building not made with hands, ETERNAL in heaven." (2 Cor. 5:1). How certain he is! "We KNOW," he exclaims; and well he may, for it is God Himself Who has assured us of the immortality of our souls.

God knows with infinite certitude that our soul is spiritual and immortal; for He is Knowledge and Truth Itself. It is infinitely impossible for Him to be ignorant of anything, or to be in error, or to tell us a lie. He tells us that our soul is spiritual and immortal, and He gives us the priceless gift of divine FAITH which enables us to accept His teaching in a supernatural way; hence to share in His limitless knowledge and certitude.

By our divine faith, therefore, we have SUPERNATURAL certitude, proportionate to God's AUTHORITY on which alone it is based, equal, therefore, in a real sense, to His own. That is why we are so absolutely sure that our soul is spiritual and immortal. That is why we can LIVE this glorious truth in all its fullness.

SUMMARY

(A). ANIMALS DO CLEVER THINGS: HENCE THEY HAVE AN INTELLECT.

They do them, not by INTELLECT, but by INSTINCT.

INSTINCT - an inborn power animals have of doing things without having to learn, and without understanding how or why they do them. It implies mainly the working of the animal's: -

(a). Estimative Sense.

(b). Sense appetites and passions.

(c). Motor activities.

No ideas, judgments, reasoning or reflection. Nothing intellectual whatever. This is seen from the fact that: -

1. Instinct does not progress.
2. Instinct is limited to its own little groove.
3. Instinct is perfect, or almost so, from the very start.
4. Instinct can lend an animal to do most stupid things.

We can account for anything any animal does instinctively, by having recourse to its animal powers. The PRINCIPLE OF THE MINIMUM forbids us to attribute any higher ones to it.

(B) ANIMALS LEARN BY EXPERIENCE: HENCE THEY HAVE AN INTELLECT.

They learn not by means of ideas, judgments, or reasoning, but solely by sense knowledge, sense appetites and passions. The PRINCIPLE OF THE MINIMUM applies here, too.

(C). ANIMALS HAVE A LANGUAGE OF THEIR OWN: HENCE AN INTELLECT.

Our language expresses ideas, judgments, reasoning and reflection as well as feelings and passions. Animal cries express only the latter, e.g. pain, anger or fear. Nothing intellectual about it.

(D). MAN'S SOUL CANNOT BE SPIRITUAL: FOR HE GOES UNCONSCIOUS WHEN HIS BRAIN IS INJURED.

This merely proves our teaching that man's intellect gets the raw material for its ideas from images in the imagination. Cf. The fact that your radio breaks down does not prove that the man speaking over the air has dropped dead.

WHY WE ARE ABSOLUTELY SURE THAT OUR SOUL IS SPIRITUAL AND IMMORTAL.

1. From REASON:

(a). We perform SPIRITUAL acts by our INTELLECT and WILL.

INTELLECT	WILL
1. We form universal IDEAS.	1. We seek goods known intellectually, even

	spiritual and supernatural ones.
2. We form JUDGMENTS.	2. We strive to avoid evils known intellectually, even spiritual and supernatural ones.
3. We REASON things out.	3. We hope for goods known intellectually, even spiritual and supernatural ones.
4. We REFLECT.	4. We perform free acts for which we are responsible.

(b). THEREFORE, our soul itself must be spiritual; for we know what a thing IS from what it DOES.

2. From GOD'S WORD

God knows with infinite certitude that our soul is spiritual and immortal. He tells us that it is. He gives us FAITH to accept His teaching in a SUPERNATURAL way. Our certitude in this is proportionate to His AUTHORITY. Hence, in a sense, equal to His own.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. Instinct is an inborn power animals have of doing clever things without having to (...), and without understanding (...) or (...) they do them. 2. It implies mainly the working of an animal's (...) sense, sense (...) and (...), and (...) activities. 3. Instinct (implies) (does not imply) ideas, judgments and reasoning. 4. When in a hatching mood, a hen will sit for twenty-one days on golf balls, keeping them at a temperature of 104 degrees. It is her (intellect) (instinct) that makes her do this. 5. A moth's (intellect) (instinct) leads it to commit suicide by flying into a candle. 6. Gannets fly from New Zealand to Siberia by (inventing a compass) (using their instinct). 7. You train a parrot by giving it (ideas) (sugar). 8. Animal cries express (ideas) (passions). 9. The fact that I can understand my language proves that my soul is spiritual. (True) (False). 10. Since my idea of a square applies to ALL squares, it is said to be (...). 11. I (can) (cannot) draw a universal square. 12. In making a judgment, I unite or separate two (...). 13. In reasoning, I unite or separate two (...), and draw a conclusion from them. 14. When I make my intellect study itself functioning, I perform an act of (...). 15. A cat (can) (cannot) examine its conscience. 16. It is by my (intellect) (will) that I freely choose to do things. 17. Reason assures me with the greatest (natural) (supernatural) certitude that my soul is spiritual. 18. When I accept God's word that my soul is spiritual, I

have (natural) (supernatural) certitude of this truth. 19. Our Lord warns me to save my soul at all costs when He says: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the (...) and suffer the loss of his (...)" 20. My certitude in divine faith is proportionate to God's (...) upon which alone it is based.

(B).

1. Your dog refuses meat you offer him on a Friday, when you say: "Paddy, it's Friday!" Your friend wants to know how you trained him. Tell him.
2. A monkey was trained to pile box on box to get fruit from the roof of its cage. One day, not having any boxes, it got a sheet of paper and, standing on this, tried to get at the fruit. Did this prove that monkeys have an intellect? Give your reasons.
3. Peter wants to know how human language differs from cries made by animals. Tell him.
4. Ivanovich does not believe that there is a God. How would you convince him that man's soul is spiritual?
5. What texts can you give by heart from Scripture to prove that your soul is spiritual?
6. Jim thinks his soul is spiritual, but not immortal. How would you prove (i) from reason and (ii) from Scripture that it is also immortal?
7. A parrot will never use human language unless it hears someone speak. How does this prove that the parrot's soul is not spiritual?
8. "Instinct is blind," said Professor Knowall. What did he mean by this?
9. How would you show that a rat can learn to get to the centre of a maze? How would you prove that he learns this by sense knowledge?
10. An insect cuts a figure 8 from a leaf, and then sticks the edges together so as to form a little ball. Man imitates this, in covering a tennis ball. Can you think of other ways in which man does clever things by imitating animal instincts?

(C). Ask yourself the following questions, and answer them sincerely: -

- a. Do I really grasp the great difference between instinct and intellect?
- b. Do I understand thoroughly the proof from reason that my soul is both spiritual and immortal? Do I see why it gives us the greatest possible natural certitude?
- c. Do I know by heart texts from Scripture that show that God has told us that our soul is spiritual and immortal? Do I see why the certitude given by divine faith is immeasurably superior to any natural certitude?
- d. Do I realise that 999999999 years from the present moment I shall still be aware of my existence? Will it be in hell, purgatory or heaven?
- e. Do I act now as I shall wish I had acted when death plunges me from time into eternity?

Chapter 5

HOW MAN DIFFERS FROM THE LOWER ANIMALS

You will meet people who say: "Man's body is like a monkey's; therefore, man is just a sort of monkey that shaves and cultivates a hair-swot." This, of course, is as silly as to say: "Man has two legs; so has a hen; therefore, man is only a hen." It leaves out the very things that make man a different KIND of being from the lower animals; for these are to be found, not in man's body, but in his soul. Here are some of them: -

1. Soul.

Man's soul is different from an animal's because of its:-

(i). NATURE. (a). Man's soul is SPIRITUAL. It can exist and act apart from the body. (b). An animal's soul is not spiritual. It can neither exist nor act apart from the body, any more than the shape of a candle can exist or act apart from the candle.

(ii). ORIGIN. (a). Man's soul is CREATED by God. He makes it without using anything to make it from. (b). An animal's soul is not created. It comes from the body, just as the shape of a candle comes from the wax.

(iii). DURATION. (a). Man's soul is IMMORTAL. Being spiritual, it can never cease to exist. After death, it must go on existing for ever in eternity. (b). An animal's soul is not immortal. At death, it ceases to exist as a soul. It is not annihilated, but becomes another form of energy, just as electric energy becomes heat energy in a light globe or a stove. It can no more survive the dissolution of the body than the shape of a candle can continue after the candle has been burnt completely away.

Here, then, is our first proof that man is different in KIND from the lower animals: Man's soul is SPIRITUAL, CREATED, IMMORTAL. Theirs is not.

2. Knowledge.

(a). Man has BOTH sense knowledge and intellectual knowledge.

(b). Animals have ONLY sense knowledge.

Because man is an animal, he has sense knowledge. Like the other animals, he has five external senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch; and four internal senses: the central sense, imagination, memory and estimative sense.

But he has intellectual knowledge as well. He can form universal ideas, and so know what things are and understand them. He can know not only material things, but also spiritual and even supernatural realities such as his own soul, his guardian angel and God. He can form judgments. He can reason things out. He can reflect on the working of his own intellect.

Think of all the books, poems and plays man has written; of the music he has composed; of the pictures he has painted; of the statues he has chiselled; of the cathedrals he has built. Think of the sciences he has developed; of the inventions and discoveries he has made; of the things he has manufactured. Think of the governments, the laws, the many societies he has set up. These and many other things that are the result of intellectual effort bring home to us the difference between man and the lower animals.

Rats do not write plays or novels. Bears do not compose sonatas. Chimpanzees do not chisel statues to honour their famous dead, nor do they build skyscrapers to house the living. Fish produce no text books of chemistry, mathematics, medicine or philosophy. Sparrows do not manufacture thrushes' nests and sell them by the thousand ready made. Bees do not oust their queen, and set up a democracy in the name of progress. Snails do not publish laws forbidding speeding, nor invent atomic bombs to protect themselves against blackbirds. Cows do not try to psychoanalyse their wayward calves. Only intellectual beings can do these things. Animals can never do

them, for they have no intellects. They have sense knowledge, but it alone.

This consequently is another proof that man is different in kind from the lower animals: Man has intellectual knowledge of things. They have none.

3. Appetites.

- (a). Man has an intellectual appetite as well as sense appetites.
- (b). Animals have ONLY sense appetites.

In addition to the sense appetites that man has in common with the animals, he has an intellectual appetite called his WILL.

By it man seeks material goods known intellectually, and also spiritual and even supernatural goods such as the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, and the vision of God in heaven. By it, too, he strives to avoid spiritual evils such as sin and vice and the unimaginable misery of hell. By it he makes free choices for which he is responsible, as when he deliberately chooses to go to Mass, or to resist a temptation for the love of God.

By it, again, he loves, desires and hopes for spiritual goods, even the highest God can offer; and he rejoices in them when possessed. By it, he can display a courage as heroic as a martyr's. By it he hates spiritual evils; shows aversion for them; and is saddened when they afflict him. By it he can be tormented with despair; and he can wither away with fear at the thought of God's judgment that will determine for ever the destiny of his immortal soul.

Since man's will is a tendency to good, it is an appetite. And since it is a tendency to good known intellectually, it is an intellectual appetite. Hence it is spiritual, as is the intellect to which it corresponds.

But a tendency towards a good that could never be known would be a contradiction, like a square triangle or an angel with meningitis. That is why animals can never experience a tendency towards goods known intellectually. They can never know anything

intellectually. Having no intellectual knowledge, they can have no intellectual appetite either. No will.

That is why you do not expect a cat that has stolen fish from the pantry to make an act of perfect contrition. Nor do you advise pussy to join her front paws and say her prayers every evening. Nor do you exhort her to practise heroic sanctity. She has no intellectual appetite. No will. Hence these things are quite beyond her in this world and in the next.

Here, therefore, is another proof that man is different in kind from the lower animals: man has an intellectual appetite or will. They have not.

4. Passions and Emotions.

(a). Man has BOTH passions and emotions.

(b). Animals have ONLY passions.

Passions are simply the functioning of the sense appetites. Because man has sense appetites, he has passions, just as an animal has. The main ones are: love and hatred, desire and aversion, joy and sadness, hope and despair, courage and fear, and anger. They are aroused by things known through the senses, such as an ice cream or a pain in the appendix, a thump on the nose or a horrible nightmare.

In addition to these passions, however, man has emotions. They are given the same names as the passions, but they are different from them inasmuch as emotions are in man's spiritual appetite or will, and they can be aroused only by an intellectual appreciation of an event or a thing.

A wee child who bumps his nose on the floor and who then thumps the floor for hurting it is obviously giving way to anger which is a passion. There is no intellectual appreciation here. Just sense knowledge instead. How different this is from Our Lord's sadness in the Garden of Gethsemane. His sadness was an emotion, not a passion. It flowed from an intellectual appreciation of the horrors of His Passion and the ingratitude of men.

Do not confuse emotions with passions. Many people do. When going to confession, for instance, they are not satisfied unless they FEEL sorrow for their sins. Sorrow for sin, however, is an act or state of the WILL, which is a SPIRITUAL faculty. Feelings, on the contrary, are material things, in our nervous systems. That is why contrition, being spiritual, can never be felt. We can no more feel contrition than we can feel our intellect adding two and two to make four. So we can have very sincere and very intense contrition without feeling it in any way. What counts in confession is not our feelings, but the SINCERITY of our sorrow and of our resolution to avoid sin in future. It is this we should aim at when preparing for this sacrament, not at feelings.

We have now another proof that man is different in kind from the lower animals: man has emotions as well as passions. They have only passions.

5. Freedom.

(a). Man has free will.

(b). Animals have no free will.

A dog running about in a paddock is free in the sense that he is no longer tied up. Here, "free" means simply "let off the chain." He is not free, however, in the sense that he is freely choosing where he runs. He is acting spontaneously, but not freely. He just has to go where his senses and appetites direct him. He cannot help going where he goes.

Why not? Because, not having an intelligence, he cannot have any will. Free will presupposes knowledge of the good AS SUCH - a universal idea of the good; and this can be had only in an intellect.

My consciousness assures me that I do thousands of things FREELY, every day; and in assuring me of this it cannot possibly be deceiving me. It is infallible here.

It does this BEFORE I act, WHILE I am acting, and AFTER I have acted.

Before acting, I am aware that I am free: that I can open my hand, for instance, or shut it; that I can look out the window, or refuse to do so; that I can wiggle my toes or not, as I choose. Even when I feel an urge to do something – to put sugar in my tea, for example – I can still refuse to do this. And when I am obliged by some law such as that which commands me to go to Mass on Sunday, I am still perfectly free to obey this law or to violate it.

While acting, I am conscious that I am acting freely. When drawing a line on paper, or when I am reading a book, I am aware that I am quite free to stop at any moment. And I can prove this by stopping.

After acting, I experience satisfaction if I have chosen to do a good thing, and dissatisfaction if I have chosen to do an evil one. If I have deliberately resisted a temptation to sin, I feel happy. If I have deliberately given way to it, I feel miserable. I know I could have resisted.

If man were not free, all laws, all exhortations, all advice, all commands, all education, all rewards and punishments would be without a purpose. Human life itself would be impossible. That is why freedom is prized so highly. Wars have been fought to defend it.

This, then, is another proof that man is different in kind from the lower animals: man has free will. They have none.

6. Personality.

- (a). Man has a personality.
- (b). Animals have no personality.

Because man has an intellect, a will and a spiritual soul, he is a PERSON.

There is in each of us a reality that owns our soul, our body and all our faculties, and owns, consequently, the actions we deliberately perform by means of them. That is why we can speak of “my” soul, “my” intellect, “my” homework. This reality is called our SELF. We refer to it every time we use the words “I”, “You”, “He” – and so on.

This SELF is our PERSONALITY.

Everything we deliberately do is attributed to it. Thus we do not say, "His foot kicked me," but "He kicked me." We rightly attribute the action to the PERSON who does it.

If you ask WHAT man is, you are asking about his NATURE. The answer is: a rational animal. If you ask WHO such and such a man is, you are inquiring about his PERSONALITY. The answer may be Jim Brown or Frank Fathead.

In each of us there is one nature and one personality. In Our Divine Lord, however, there are two NATURES – that of God and that of Man, for He is both God and Man; but only one PERSONALITY – that of the Second Person of the Trinity.

Personality is a term of dignity. We keep it for beings that have an intellect and a will. For they alone can OWN things. They alone are RESPONSIBLE for their deliberate acts. They alone can say "I." They alone are wholes that can never be part of anything else. They alone are INCOMMUNICABLE.

By your personality, you are cut off from all other beings. No one can be born for you. No one can live your life for you. No one can die your death for you. You have to be born yourself. You have to fight the battle of life yourself. You yourself must die. You must save your soul yourself, by co-operating with grace; no one can save it for you. It is yours and yours alone.

How we long to get those we love to change their way of life when they have strayed from the truth! "If I were you," we say to our friends, "I would return to the practice of my religion," or "I would not marry outside the Church," or "I would have my children brought up in a Catholic school" – and so on. We can give good example to our friends. We can pray fervently for them. Offer Mass for them. Beg and implore them. But we cannot lead their life for them. It is they themselves who must use God's grace, and change their lives. They are PERSONS, hence masters of their own actions, and of their lot in this world and in the next.

But remember also this: just because each of us is a person, each of us can give God a special glory that no one else can give Him, here and in eternity. Each of us has a unique job to do for God.

And our personality should often remind us that man is different in kind from the lower animals; for men are persons, animals are not.

7. Obligations.

(a). Man has obligations.

(b). Animals cannot have obligations.

Since God is infinitely wise, He must always act for a purpose. What purpose has He in giving us existence? This: that we may gain heaven, by obeying and loving Him on earth.

In heaven, we shall know God even as He knows Himself, love Him even as He loves Himself, and be happy with His happiness for ever. This is called the beatific vision. It will satisfy all our needs and desires perfectly, and for eternity.

Now, God has the sovereign RIGHT that we as rational beings should fulfil the plan He has in creating us, by obeying His laws. And from this right in God there follows in us a corresponding OBLIGATION to do His will and save our souls.

Only a SUPERIOR can impose an obligation. God, our infinite Superior, puts on each of us the obligation of gaining our last end which is the bliss of heaven.

Since we are intelligent beings, we can KNOW this obligation. Since we have free will, we can FREELY choose to co-operate with grace and so fulfil this obligation by saving our souls. And since we are PERSONS, no one else can save our souls for us. We cannot get anyone else to fulfil our obligations for us. We must do it ourselves, alone.

Animals, obviously, cannot have an obligation. They have no intelligence with which they could know an obligation, and no free will with which they fulfil it. It is as impossible for them to have an

obligation, therefore, as it is for them to have as their last end the knowledge, love and happiness of heaven.

So, when discussing the difference between man and the mere animals, remember this: human beings have obligations. Animals have not.

8. Rights.

(a). Man has rights.

(b). Animals have no rights.

In putting on us the obligation of gaining heaven, God at the same time gives us a RIGHT to things necessary or useful for gaining it.

A RIGHT is a MORAL power of having or doing something.

The word “moral” is here opposed to “physical.” A man with more physical power than you may have forcibly taken your hat from you. But, in taking it, he does not take your RIGHT to it. That is a moral, not a physical power. Hence, it cannot be grabbed and taken away. That is why when a man steals your hat, you still have a right to it, and you can claim it by law. It is still yours.

You can have a right, as we have just said, to anything necessary or useful to get you to heaven. Thus you have a right to worship God according to your conscience, to select your vocation in life, to marry the girl of your choice, and to educate your children in the school you choose. You have a right to receive a living family wage for honest work. A right to decent conditions of work. A right to own a reasonable amount of property. A right to life and health. A right to truth. You have a right to think, say and do, not what you like, but what you OUGHT, i.e. what is in line with reason, your own nature, and the infinitely wise law of God.

No man can ever have a right to commit sin – to tell lies, for instance, or to teach untruth, or to deprive labourers of a just wage – because sin can never help us to get to heaven. We have rights, remember, only because of our obligation to gain heaven. Hence we can have rights only to those things that help us to gain it.

Since animals cannot have any obligations, they cannot have any rights, either. That is why it is not a sin of murder to kill a sheep for food, or to shoot a rabbit or catch a fish. These have no right to life, as man has. They have no rights at all.

Of course we must be kind to animals, and not cause them any unreasonable suffering, because we owe it to ourselves as rational beings to act reasonably towards even the lowliest of God's creatures, but especially towards animals, since they have sense faculties of joy and suffering like our own.

Here, then, is another proof that man is different in kind from the animals: he has rights. They have none.

9. Morality.

(a). Man's acts can have morality.

(b). The acts of animals cannot.

Non-living things and plants obey God's law and do His will without either knowledge or freedom. Animals lower than man obey Him and do His will through instinct; hence, with sense knowledge, but without freedom. Man, however, has to obey God's laws and do His will with intellectual knowledge and freedom. He has to win heaven by freely co-operating with the grace of God.

His deliberate acts have what is called MORALITY. They are morally good, when they agree with God's law; morally bad, when they violate it. By the MORALITY of an act, then, we mean its AGREEMENT or DISAGREEMENT with the law of God.

Man has an intelligence that can KNOW God's law. He has a will that can FREELY obey this law, or refuse to obey it. That is why his deliberate acts can be MORALLY good or MORALLY bad, virtuous or sinful. That is why they have moral value. That is why they have morality.

Animals have no intellect or free will. Hence their acts can have no morality. Animals can never be virtuous. Nor can they ever be sinful. Their acts are right outside the order of morality, just as an earthquake is, or the working of their liver.

Here, therefore, is another fact that brings home to us the difference between man and the animals: man's deliberate acts have morality. The acts of animals have none.

10. Virtues And Vices.

(a). Man can have virtues and vices.

(b). Animals cannot.

A virtue is simply a good habit. A vice, a bad habit. And a habit is good or bad accordingly as it helps us to gain heaven, or stops us from getting there.

Telling the truth, purity of mind and body, sincerity, loyalty, justice, diligence - these are all virtues, provided that, as habits, they are deeply rooted in our faculties. Lying, impurity, insincerity, injustice, laziness - these are vices when, as habits, they are firmly rooted in us.

Virtues are glorious things. They make our acts easy to perform, pleasant, perfect, and worthy of a great reward. They build up our character. They give us health of mind and body. They ennoble us. They increase our self-control, and with it our freedom. They promote our happiness both in this world and in the next.

Vices are repulsive, disgusting, degrading things. They ruin our character completely. They undermine our health of mind and body. They degrade us to a level lower than that of the beasts. They bring, not happiness, but misery to us, in time and in eternity.

Only beings with intellect and will can have virtues and vices, since these presuppose freedom and responsibility. That is why animals can never have them. No animal can ever be a saint; nor can any ever be a sinner. The Church does not canonise cows for giving lots of creamy milk, nor does she excommunicate sheep from her fold for being public and notorious fence breakers. Virtues and vices are quite beyond their scope.

Here, consequently, is another proof that man is different in kind from the animals: man can have virtues and vices. They cannot.

11. The Supernatural Order.

- (a). Man can be raised to the supernatural order by grace.
- (b). Animals cannot.

Sanctifying grace gives us a real if limited share in the very life of God. It thus raises us from the natural to the supernatural order - the order that is natural to God alone. God can confer this priceless privilege on us, because our soul is spiritual, made in His image, and our intellect and will are somewhat like His own.

You can share your thoughts and friendship with another human being, because by means of his intellect and will he can have thoughts and friendship like your own. You cannot share your thoughts and friendship with an animal, for the simple reason that it has none of these to share. No thoughts, because no intellect. No friendship, because no will.

So, too, because our soul is made in God's image, and because our intellect and will are created likenesses of God's, He can give us a share in His life of thought, love and happiness, if He wills to do so. This He does by sanctifying grace in this life, and by the beatific vision in the next.

Just as you would have to destroy an animal's nature first, by giving it an intellect, a will and a spiritual soul, before you could share with it your intellectual life of thought and friendship, so, too, God would have to destroy an animal's nature first by giving it an intellect, a will and a spiritual soul, before He could share His infinite life with it by sanctifying grace. You do not baptise a batch of kittens; because only spiritual beings can be given grace - beings made in the image of God.

This gives us another proof that man is different in kind from the animals: man can be raised to the supernatural order by grace. They cannot.

12. Adoptive Sonship.

(a). Man can be an adopted son of God, and a joint-heir with Christ to heaven.

(b). Animals cannot.

When a person adopts a child, he takes it into his family and gives it a right to share his riches. Now, God adopts us as His children. He takes us into the Family of the Blessed Trinity, and gives us a right to share His riches: His knowledge and love of Himself and His infinite happiness.

He does this by means of sanctifying grace. For sanctifying grace enables each of our FREE, UNSINFUL acts to merit heaven. And in heaven the soul knows God in the way He knows Himself, loves Him in the way He loves Himself, and is happy with God's own happiness, for ever.

In the beatific vision, therefore, God gives us all His riches. He gives us HIMSELF, known, loved and enjoyed for all eternity! In giving us Himself, He gives us all, Infinite though He is, He has nothing more to give. And, think of it! He gives us the same reward as that which He gives to His own Divine Son! For, as St. Paul says, by grace we are made "sons of God" and "heirs also - heirs, indeed, of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8:17.)

This, then, is our final proof that man is different in kind from the lower animals: man can be an adopted son of God, and a joint-heir with Christ to heaven. Animals cannot.

Think, therefore, not merely of man's body, but mainly of his soul, if you want to realise how he differs from the lower animals.

SUMMARY

Man differs from the lower animals in regard to: -

1. Soul.

- | | |
|--|--|
| (i). Its nature: (a). Man's soul is SPIRITUAL. (b). An animal's soul is not. | (ii). Its origin: (a). Man's soul is CREATED by God. (b). An animal's soul is not. |
| | (iii). Its duration: (a). Man's soul is IMMORTAL. (b). An animal's soul is not. |

2. Knowledge.

- (a). Man has BOTH sense knowledge and intellectual knowledge.
- (b). Animals have ONLY sense knowledge.

3. Appetites.

- (a). Man has an INTELLECTUAL appetite as well as sense appetites.
- (b). Animals have only SENSE appetites.

4. Passions and Emotions.

- (a). Man has BOTH passions and emotions.
- (b). Animals have ONLY passions.

5. Freedom.

- (a). Man has FREE WILL.
- (b). Animals have no free will.

6. Personality.

- (a). Man has a PERSONALITY.
- (b). Animals have no personality.

7. Obligations.

- (a). Man has OBLIGATIONS.
- (b). Animals cannot have obligations.

8. Rights.

- (a). Man has RIGHTS.
- (b). Animals have no rights.

9. Morality.

- (a). Man's acts can have MORALITY.
- (b). The acts of animals cannot.

10. Virtues and Vices.

- (a). Man can have VIRTUES and VICES.
- (b). Animals cannot.

11. The Supernatural Order.

- (a). Man can be raised to the SUPERNATURAL order by grace.
- (b). Animals cannot.

12. Adoptive Sonship.

- (a). Man can be an adopted son of God, and a joint-heir with Christ to heaven.
- (b). Animals cannot.

CONCLUSION: There is a difference in KIND between man and the lower animals. He is as different from them as the spiritual is from the material.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. To find how human beings differ from the lower animals, we look mainly at their (bodies) (souls). 2. A being that can exist and

act apart from matter is said to be a (...) being. 3. When God makes a creature without using anything to make it from He is said to (...) it. 4. Since man's soul is spiritual, it is also (...). 5. Man has both (...) knowledge and (...) knowledge. Animals have only (...) knowledge. 6. Man has (...) as well as passions. Animals have only (...). 7. Man's intellectual appetite is also called his (...). 8. To see and understand what is written on this page, I use my (sense knowledge alone) (intellectual knowledge alone) (both). 9. The fact that I can understand what I read proves that I am a (...) animal. 10. If I hate sin because I realise how much suffering it caused Our Lord during His Passion, this hatred is (an emotion) (a passion). 11. When I commit a deliberate sin by neglecting penance on Friday, it is my (imagination) (will) (intellect) (hand) that commits sin. 12. A dog running round in a paddock (is) (is not) using free will. 13. Only a being with an intellect can have free will, for free will presupposes a (...) idea of the good. 14. Another name for my SELF is my (...). 15. No one can die my death for me, because I am a (...). 16. With God, (right) (obligation) comes first in His relations with us. 17. In our relations with God, (right) (obligation) comes first. 18. Our first and most important obligation is that of gaining (...). 19. An obligation can be put on us by (an inferior) (an equal) (a superior). 20. Because we have from God an obligation to gain heaven, we have from Him also a (...) to what is useful or necessary for gaining it. 21. A man (can) (cannot) have a right to teach atheism. 22. A workman has a right to a living (...) wage, provided he works honestly at his job. 23. "A" says that we have obligations because we have rights. "B" says that we have rights because we have obligations. Which is correct? A or B? (...). 24. It is God's priceless gift of (...) grace that raises us to the supernatural order. 25. If we are in a state of grace, every (...) and (...) act we do merits a reward in heaven. 26. God makes us His (...) sons by sanctifying grace. 27. St. Paul reminds us that if we are sons of God, we are also heirs of God, in fact, "(...)-heirs with Christ." 28. In heaven God gives us the same reward as that which He gives to His own divine (...). 29. By the morality of an act we mean its agreement or disagreement with the (...) of God. 30. Only those acts that we do (...) can have morality. 31. A virtue is a good (...); a vice is a bad (...). 32. We can be healthy and happy in this world and in the next only by practising daily all the (...).

(B). 1. Little Peter wants to know how man's soul differs from the soul in an animal. Tell him.

2. James thinks that the only difference there is between our knowledge and a cat's is that we have more of it than a cat. Show him how he is wrong.

3. John cannot see how a man's anger can be any different from a dog's. Enlighten him.
4. Your non-Catholic mate does not believe that he has a free will. How would you convince him that he has?
5. Your friend Albert wants to know what our personality is. Tell him.
6. Patrick thinks he has rights, indeed, but he denies that he has any obligations. What would you say to him?
7. Little Cuthbert wants to know why, when a man steals your boots, he does not take away your right to them. Tell him.
8. Ivan, who is not a Catholic, wants to know why the Church does not canonise faithful animals. Give him the reason.
9. Your school mate, Alphonsus, wants to know how he can become an adopted son of God. Show him how.
10. A man sitting next to you in the train asks you what Catholics mean by the beatific vision. Tell him.
11. A person next to you in the bus says: "Animals have a right to be treated reasonably." Would you agree? Give your reason.
12. Cynical Cyanide tells you that his dog is a better friend than any human being can ever be, because it will never let him down. What would you say to him?
13. Flora Fishface thinks her Pekinese has "a charming personality." How would you enlighten her in a polite way?
14. What benefits do we derive from being in a state of grace?
15. The happiest man on earth is the saint. Explain why.
16. The twelve points treated in this lesson show that atheistic evolution is nonsense. Can you see why?
17. Why do we define man as: "A rational animal"?
18. A Communist tells you that man's end is to live and die for the state. Do you agree?
19. Each of us can give God a special glory that no one else can give. Why?
20. Compare God's adoption of us, with a man's adoption of a child.

Chapter 6

TRUTH AND CERTITUDE

During His Passion Our Lord told Pilate that He had come into the world to “give testimony to the truth.” (John 18:37). Pilate seems to have been what we call a SCEPTIC – a person who DOUBTS that we can ever know truth; for he asked Our Saviour: “What is truth?” as if to say: “I’ve never met a man who knew what truth is: and I don’t think that you do, either.”

There are many Pilates in the world today. So we have to answer his question for them. We have to be able to tell them what truth is, and prove that we can know it. More still, we have to show them by our EXAMPLE not only that we possess the truth, but that it possesses us, since we LIVE it in our daily life.

Of course there are different kinds of truth. We cannot deal with all of them at present. We shall have to limit ourselves to two: TRUTH IN THOUGHT and TRUTH IN ACTION.

(A). TRUTH IN THOUGHT.

1. What It Is.

If you think that there is a mountain called Egmont, your thought is true, because Mt. Egmont does really exist. If, on the contrary, you think that there is no such mountain, your thought is not true. It does not square with reality. It does not agree with what actually is.

If you think that man is not a tadpole, your thought is again true, because man is not, in fact, a tadpole. This time you judge that not to be which actually is not.

Truth, then, is simply the AGREEMENT OF OUR MIND WITH REALITY.

In which faculty is it found? In our INTELLECT, of course. And in which of its acts? In its JUDGMENT.

We have truth, therefore, when our intellect judges that to be which really is, and that not to be which really is not.

2. How It Is Gained.

(a). BY EXPERIENCE.

Sitting in class with your books on the desk, you know that it is true for you to say: "There are books on my desk," because you can SEE them there. And your external senses are infallible. They cannot err.

After a really good "smack-up" you realise that it can hurt. You had an inkling before. Now, you KNOW. Experience is a great teacher.

(b). BY REASONING.

Looking at a seaplane, you know that it did not make itself. You know, too, that a magpie did not make it. Nor did a microbe. REASON assures you that only a being with an intelligence could make it. Hence, that man made it. In exactly the same way, too, your REASON tells you that God made the universe. No man, no seaplane. No God, no universe, no anything. We can learn many most important truths by REASONING.

(c). BY MERELY UNDERSTANDING A TRUTH.

Some truths we do not have to argue to by reasoning from others already known. We know them first pop. We know that they are true, immediately we understand them. They THEMSELVES show us that they are true. Hence, they are called SELF-EVIDENT truths.

Once you know what the whole of an apple is, and what a part of the same apple is, you know immediately that the whole is greater than the part. There is no reasoning here. No looking outside the truth itself for proof. It bears within ITSELF its own evidence. It is SELF-EVIDENT.

(d). BY ACCEPTING TRUTH ON THE AUTHORITY OF ANOTHER.

Many truths we have to accept on the authority of others. By a person's **AUTHORITY** we mean his **RIGHT** to be believed, on account of his **KNOWLEDGE** and **TRUTHFULNESS**.

Every day you accept scores of truths on authority. Your father sends you a message saying that your mother is seriously ill. You believe him. You ring up to find when a bus leaves. A man tells you. You take his word for it. You know the date of your birthday on the authority of your parents. It is the same for numberless other truths that you learn from the press, from the radio, from history, and so on.

It is the same, too, for all truths of divine **FAITH**. We accept them on the infinitely reliable **AUTHORITY** of God - His **RIGHT** to be believed on account of His infinite **KNOWLEDGE** and **TRUTHFULNESS**. If it is reasonable for us to believe our fellow men, it is far more reasonable for us to believe God, since He IS Knowledge and Truth Itself.

3. Our Attitude Towards Truth.

Sometimes, when a person asks a question or makes a statement, we reply: "I doubt it." At other times, we say: "It is my opinion that..." At other times again, we answer: "I'm certain that..."

So our minds can be in any one of these three states concerning a truth: **DOUBT**, **OPINION**, **CERTITUDE**.

(a). DOUBT.

At times, you feel no more inclined to accept a statement than to deny it. Your mind cannot incline to one side or to the other. It is equally balanced between them. You are just as afraid of being wrong if you say yes, as you are if you say no. You are said to be in **DOUBT**.

Suppose a person asks you whether your First Fifteen is going to win its biggest game this year. You may have five good reasons for thinking that it will, and five equally good ones for thinking that it will not. You cannot incline to yes or to no. You have to say: "I **DOUBT** it."

(b). OPINION.

Sometimes your mind does incline to one side rather than to the other; but there is a REASONABLE fear of error all the same. Then you are said to have an OPINION.

If you have five good reasons for thinking your team will win, and three good ones for thinking it will not, you can honestly say: "It is my OPINION that it will win." You are not sure, however, because the fear that it may lose is a REASONABLE one.

(c). CERTITUDE.

Often we accept or deny a statement without having any REASONABLE fear of error. Then we are said to have CERTITUDE concerning it. Our mind rests peacefully in the truth.

There are three kinds of certitude: -

(i). MORAL CERTITUDE.

This is based on the normal conduct of men inasmuch as they are MORAL beings, responsible for their acts.

When you ring to find when a train leaves, you accept the answer without any REASONABLE fear of error. You are certain that it is right. Of course, it is not absolutely impossible for it to be wrong. The man answering may be so distracted by worry or love that he has given you the wrong time. But it is unreasonable for you to think so, unless you have some evidence.

You would not ring the office at the station, then ring the guard, then the foreman, then the station-master. This would be a mark, not of prudence, but of an unreasonable fear, like that which prompts a little boy to wear a pair of braces as well as a belt. Moral certitude does not exclude ALL fear of error; but it does exclude all REASONABLE fear.

(ii). PHYSICAL CERTITUDE.

This is based on the PHYSICAL laws of nature.

You have PHYSICAL certitude that a man thrown into boiling oil will be burnt to death. Yet, even here, you are not absolutely

certain. Why not? Because God may save his life by a MIRACLE, as He did for St. John at Ephesus.

However, since miracles are very rare, physical certitude is more satisfying than moral certitude.

(iii). METAPHYSICAL CERTITUDE.

“Meta” means “beyond.” So “metaphysical” means simply “beyond, or superior to, the physical.”

METAPHYSICAL certitude is superior to physical certitude, because it is based on the NATURES in things. Since these natures are ways in which God's perfections can be imitated by creatures, He cannot alter them.

Thus, we have METAPHYSICAL certitude that the diagonal in a square will be longer than any one of its sides. There can be no exception by a miracle here. That is why metaphysical certitude is the best, the most reassuring, the most satisfying that we can possibly have.

4. Why We Reject Scepticism.

A sceptic is a person who doubts that our minds can ever know truth. His teaching is called SCEPTICISM.

We reject scepticism because it is absurd. Moreover, it does not square with facts. For these two reasons, therefore, it is false.

It is absurd, because a sceptic can never be certain of anything - even of the fact that he is a sceptic.

Hence, he must begin by doubting everything. Then, in order not to be certain that he doubts, he must doubt that he doubts. Not to be certain that he doubts that he doubts, he must doubt that he doubts that he doubts. Then doubt that he doubts that he doubts that he doubts. And so on for ever. But this is clearly absurd.

Besides, scepticism does not square with facts. It is an undeniable fact that you are certain of many things: that you exist, for

example, and that two plus two makes four, and that the whole of a meat pie is bigger than part of it. Think of the numberless truths concerning which you have moral, physical or metaphysical certitude, and you will realise that scepticism is false. It just does not square with reality.

We cannot deal with all the truths of which we can be certain; but we must consider some that are extremely important, since all our knowledge is based on them. They are called FIRST PRINCIPLES, because they are the fundamental LAWS of all reality. Hence, of all thought also. Here are two of them:-

5. Two First Principles.

(a). THE PRINCIPLE OF IDENTITY.

This assures us that A THING IS WHAT IT IS.

Your dog, for instance, is really a dog, isn't he? He is not a cogwheel, or a plum pudding, or a gorse bush. He is what he is. He may be asleep one minute and awake the next; fat one week and skinny another; in a good mood today and a bad one tomorrow, but till he dies he will keep his nature. He will be a dog, and nothing else.

If, when you were playing with him, he suddenly became a bit of cheese, then a set of bagpipes, then the square root of -R, then a toothbrush, you would not believe your eyes. You would resolve to consult a doctor, or to put more water with it next time. You would feel like the man in Lewis Carroll's poem:

"He thought he saw an Elephant
That practised on a fife;
He looked again and found it was
A letter from his wife.
'At length I realise,' he said,
'The bitterness of life'."

Read the rest of this delightful poem. It will show you what life would be like if the principle of identity were not a law of all things. Hence also of our thoughts which are determined by things.

It is a universal law: it applies to everything, from the atoms in a brick to God Himself. Without it, nothing could exist. There could be no beings, no knowledge, no thoughts whatever.

To try to deny it is to make all further thought and all expression of thought absolutely impossible. It is to commit complete mental suicide. It is to condemn oneself to the lifelong silence of a turnip.

"Prove that it is true," a person may say. But it does not need proving. It is a SELF-EVIDENT truth. Once we know what "is" means, and what "is not" means, we know that "is" can never be "is not." We have metaphysical certitude of that.

"I deny the principle of identity," another may say. But he cannot even try to deny it without taking it to be a valid law keeping the word "deny" identical with itself, so that it is the word "deny" and not the word "accept", which it could be but for the principle of identity. He must use it to deny it. He is like a lunatic who tells you that he is dead, and who thus uses his life to deny that he has any. His statement refutes itself.

(b). THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-CONTRADICTION.

This is the same law put in a negative way. It tells us that A THING CANNOT BE AND NOT BE, AT THE SAME TIME AND FROM THE SAME POINT OF VIEW.

Your teacher marks a sum wrong. Why? Because it cannot be right and wrong at the same time. If it could, it would violate the principle of contradiction. Then, it would not be an answer, but an absurdity, a contradiction in terms, like a brick with a headache or an angel with false teeth.

If a man seriously thinks that he is a door-knob, a tomato, and a town clock all in one, he is put into the asylum. Why? Only because he is breaking the principle of non-contradiction which makes it impossible for him to BE a man, yet NOT BE a man, at the same time and from the same point of view.

Like the principle of identity, the principle of non-contradiction is a universal law: it applies to all creatures and to God. It is likewise a SELF-EVIDENT truth. We have metaphysical certitude concerning it. And to try to deny it is to make all further thought and speech absolutely impossible. It is to commit complete mental hara-kiri.

There are several other first principles, of course; but these two will do for the present. Since we are absolutely certain of them, they are quite enough to prove that scepticism is false.

And, since they are the first laws of all thought, you should respect them always. They will keep your thinking sane, all through life. They will enable you to sift truth from falsehood; for, IF ANY TEACHING VIOLATES THEM, YOU HAVE METAPHYSICAL CERTITUDE THAT IT IS FALSE.

People today often fail to apply these principles in their search for truth. The result is most alarming. It is heart-breaking. Never before, perhaps, in history have men yearned more ardently for truth than they do today. But, through ignoring first principles, they have made it impossible for themselves ever to find the truth, or to recognise it when found.

(B). TRUTH IN ACTION.

It is not enough for us to know the truth. We must also love it, and, above all, LIVE it in our daily life. Truth in action. Truth in life. Truth lived. This is indeed a precious thing. It is our chief title to respect and honour. It wins for us the respect even of God Himself, for it enables Him to see in each of us the sublime dignity of an adopted son, a joint heir with His own Divine Son to heaven.

1. What It Is.

Truth in action is THE AGREEMENT OF OUR ACTIONS WITH AN UPRIGHT WILL.

So, never forget this: unless our will is upright, unless it is ennobled and strengthened by those good habits we call VIRTUES, it is impossible for us to LIVE the truth in all its fullness.

From this, you can realise the absolute necessity of GOOD HABITS, and the criminal neglect of parents and teachers who fail to induce children to acquire and increase them.

2. Rules For Living The Truth.

Here are some rules that will help you to live the truth. Put them into practice every day:-

(1). DO GOOD. AVOID EVIL.

These are the fundamental laws of right conduct, just as the principles of identity and non-contradiction are of right thought.

(2). DO WHAT GOD'S LOVE REQUIRES.

Should I go to Mass when I am not obliged to go? Should I try to be a priest? Or a saintly layman? Solve problems like these by asking: "What does God's love for me and my love for Him urge me to do?" Then, do it.

(3). DO WHAT OUR LORD WOULD DO IF HE WERE IN YOUR PLACE.

When tempted to be uncharitable, for instance, or to yield to feelings of hatred, ask yourself: "What would He do if He were in my place?" Then, imitate Him. He is our perfect Model.

(4). DO WHAT YOU WILL WISH TO HAVE DONE AT DEATH.

Before making a serious decision, ask yourself: "What shall I wish to have done at death?" Do that. Act always in the light of ETERNITY. You will never regret it.

(5). DO ONLY WHAT YOU CAN OFFER TO GOD.

On waking, say: "Dear God, I wish to do everything through love of you and for your greater glory today." Then make sure that everything you think, say or do is worthy to be offered to God.

(6). PROFIT BY THE ADVICE OF OTHERS.

Do not be shy in asking advice from persons older, wiser and more experienced than yourself. It is prudent to profit by the experience of others who have profited by their own.

(7). PRAY AS IF ALL DEPENDED ON GOD. MAKE AN EFFORT AS IF ALL DEPENDED ON YOURSELF.

In doing this, you will live the teaching given in these two texts of sacred Scripture: "Without Me, you can do nothing" (John 15:15); and "I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

(8). AVOID UNNECESSARY DANGEROUS OCCASIONS OF SIN.

Remember Our Lord's words: "If thy right hand scandalise thee, cut it off" (Mat. 5:30). It shows how strict we should be in regard to persons, places or things that may lead us into sin.

(9). SEE CHRIST IN EVERYONE, ESPECIALLY IN THE POOR.

If you do this, He will say to you at the Last Judgment: "As often as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it unto Me" (Mat. 25:41). And He will reward you with the bliss of heaven.

(10). THINK OFTEN OF HELL AND OF HEAVEN.

When tempted to mortal sin, hear Our Divine Saviour putting this momentous question to you: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul?" (Mark 8:36). And remember that He is God. He SEES hell in all its hideous depths: its remorse, its despair, its fire, its unspeakable loneliness, and especially its eternity. He SEES, too, the unimaginable glory of Heaven, which is a sharing of GOD's knowledge, love and happiness for ever. He knows what He is talking about.

3. Effects Of Living The Truth.

The good effects of living the truth are innumerable. Here are a few: –

1. Health of mind and body.
2. Peace of soul, the result of right order in our lives.

3. Constant growth in grace and virtue.
4. Daily increase of merits for heaven.
5. True development of personality.
6. The glorious liberty of God's children.
7. An intimate friendship with God.
8. An admirable Christian character.
9. A great influence for good on others.
10. Genuine, deep happiness in this world, and a pledge of everlasting bliss in the next.

If you LIVE the truth fully, you will be able, through the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, to become so intimate with God dwelling in your soul that you can enjoy His sweet companionship by an experience which is a real foretaste of the peace and the happiness of heaven.

Better still! You will bring others to enjoy this same privilege. Seeing Christ in you, they too will come to know and love Him. And they have a right to see Him in you. They expect to see Him. Never disappoint them. BE LOYAL TO THE ROYAL IN YOU. Act always in a way worthy of your high calling as an adopted son of the King of Kings, and joint-heir with His own Divine Son to heaven.

SUMMARY

(A). TRUTH IN THOUGHT

1. What It Is.

The agreement of our judgment with reality.

2. How Gained.

- (a). By experience.
- (b). By reasoning.
- (c). By the mere understanding of a self-evident truth.
- (d). By accepting truth on the authority of another.

3. Our Attitude To Truth.

- (a). DOUBT: We cannot incline to either side.
- (b). OPINION: We incline to one side, but with a REASONABLE fear of error.

- (c). CERTITUDE: We accept a truth firmly, without any REASONABLE fear of error.

KINDS OF CERTITUDE: (i). MORAL. (ii). PHYSICAL (iii). METAPHYSICAL.

4. Why We Reject Scepticism:

- (i). It is absurd.
(ii). It does not square with facts. e.g. our certitude of First Principles.

5. Two First Principles:

- (a). The principle of IDENTITY: A THING IS WHAT IT IS.
(b). The principle of NON-CONTRADICTION: A THING CANNOT BE AND NOT BE, AT THE SAME TIME, AND FROM THE SAME POINT OF VIEW.
(i). These are SELF-EVIDENT truths.
(ii). We have METAPHYSICAL certitude concerning them.
(iii). They are the fundamental LAWS of all beings and of all thought.
(iv). They enable us to sift truth from falsehood. If a teaching violates them, we are absolutely certain that it is false.
(v). To try to deny them is to commit complete mental suicide.

(B). TRUTH IN ACTION.

1. What It Is.

The agreement of our actions with an upright will.

Hence: the absolute necessity of VIRTUES or GOOD HABITS.

2. Rules For Living The Truth.

1. Do good. Avoid evil.
2. Do what God's Love requires.
3. Do what Our Lord would do if He were in your place.
4. Do what you will wish to have done at your death.
5. Do only what you can offer to God.
6. Profit by the advice of others.

7. Pray as if all depended on God. Make an effort as if all depended on yourself.
8. Avoid unnecessary dangerous occasions of sin.
9. See Christ in everyone, especially in the poor.
10. Think often of hell and of heaven.

3. Effects Of Living The Truth.

1. Health of mind and body.
2. Peace of soul, the result of right order in our lives.
3. Constant growth in grace and virtue.
4. Daily increase of merits for heaven.
5. True development of personality.
6. The glorious liberty of God's children.
7. An intimate friendship with God.
8. An admirable Christian character.
9. A great influence for good on others.
10. Genuine, deep happiness in this world, and a pledge of everlasting bliss in the next.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. Truth in thought is the agreement of our (...) with reality. 2. The whole of an apple is bigger than half of it. This is a (...) -evident truth. 3. By a person's authority we mean his (...) to be believed on account of his (...) and (...). 4. If we are no more inclined to accept a statement than to deny it, we are said to be in (...). 5. We have an opinion when we incline to one side, but have a (...) fear of error. 6. We have certitude when we accept a truth firmly, without any (...) fear of being wrong. 7. We have (moral) (physical) (metaphysical) certitude that Julius Caesar existed. 8. We have (...) certitude that the sun will rise tomorrow morning. 9. A thing is what it is. This is the principle of (...). 10. A thing cannot be and not be, at the same time and from the same point of view. This is the principle of (...). 11. We have (...) certitude of these two principles. 12. They are the fundamental laws of all (...); hence also of all (...). 13. If any teaching violates them, we are absolutely certain that it is (...). 14. To try to deny them is to commit complete mental (...) by making

all further thought and speech absolutely impossible. 15. Scepticism is false because it is (...), and because it does not square with (...). 16. Truth in action is the agreement of our conduct with an (...) will. 17. It (is) (is not) possible for us to live the truth fully if we have not good habits. 18. I should act now as I shall wish to have acted when (...) plunges me from time into eternity. 19. I should pray as if all depended on (...), and make an effort as if all depended on (...). 20. When puzzled as to the best thing to do, I should ask myself: "What does God's (...) require me to do?" and do that.

(B). Complete the following texts from sacred Scripture: -

1. Our Divine Saviour told Pilate that He had come into the world in order to "give testimony to the (...)."
2. "I can do (...) things in Him who strengtheneth me."
3. "Without Me you can do (...)."
4. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his (...)?"

(C).

1. Little Peter wants to know why he cannot make a square circle. Tell him.
2. John cannot see how atheistic evolution violates the principle of non-contradiction. Show him.
3. Arnold tells you that he is a sceptic. How would you prove to him that scepticism is absurd, and that it does not square with facts?
4. A non-Catholic wants to know why you believe in hell. Tell him.
5. Peter says he will never become a Catholic because he knows some Catholics who are bad men. What would you say to him?
6. A person tells you that we ought doubt everything. You say: "So you're a sceptic, are you?" He replies: "Yes." Then you say: "You really mean it? You're not just pulling my leg? You're quite sure?" He answers: "Too right I am!" Why has he refuted himself?
7. Which of the following violate the principle of contradiction?
 - (a). God is one in Nature, three in Person.
 - (b). I am one person, but three persons at the same time.

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- (c). Our Lord is God, because He has a divine Nature, and Man because He has a human Nature; hence He is God and Man at the same time.
 - (d). This square is at the same time a circle.
 - (e) The eternal Son of God was once three days old.
8. Arnold, a non-catholic, is amazed at the saintly lives some Catholics live. He asks you what he must do to imitate them. Tell him.
 9. Percy says he cannot see the good of living a saintly life. Point out ten good effects that follow from living the truth fully.
 10. Patrick wants to know why God cannot make a square circle, though He can work miracles. Enlighten him.

Chapter 7

SEEKING AND KEEPING THE TRUTH

Here are some rules that will help you to find and keep the truth.

1. Do Not Let Your Imagination Lead You Astray.

You have seen that whenever we know anything, we form two likenesses of it: one in our IMAGINATION, the other in our INTELLECT. An angel does not do this. He gets his ideas ready-made from God. But we are not angels. We are rational animals. That is why our intellect has to form its ideas from images in our imagination. It has to do this even when thinking of spiritual realities – even when thinking of God.

Now the trouble is this. It is easier for us to fix our attention on the images in our imagination than on the corresponding ideas in our intellect. Why? Because the images are material, whereas the ideas are spiritual. It is easier for you to pay attention to a football match than to your guardian angel, isn't it? Why? Same reason.

Moreover, we have the habit of doing this from childhood. Many never get rid of this habit. They never grow up intellectually. And the results can be disastrous as far as right thinking goes.

Why? Because such persons are often led astray by their imagination. It does this in two ways. It leads them either to think that everything is as their imagination pictures it, or to deny the existence of anything that cannot be imagined.

This, of course, is childish. Why? Because the imagination cannot picture faithfully even all MATERIAL things: a myriagon, for instance, or the speed of light, or the numbers involved in multiplying 123456789 by itself. And when it comes to SPIRITUAL realities, it is quite hopeless. We can know these by our intellect, but we can never imagine them as they really are, because there is no matter in them, and the imagination is limited to material things.

Yet even when dealing with spiritual things, many rely on their imagination rather than on their intellect to lead them to truth. No wonder they fail to find it.

Mention God to such a person. What happens? He forms in his imagination a picture of God as an old man with a beard, something like Moses. Then, he either thinks that God is just that, and so gets a wholly wrong idea of God by reducing Him to the level of a creature; or he realises that, if God is only a man, He cannot have created the universe any more than Moses can. So he is led to deny that there is any God. This error is even worse than the other. In either case, you see, he makes a serious mistake.

If, instead of trying to IMAGINE God, he had tried to THINK of what He is, and had reasoned to His existence as a self-existing, infinitely perfect Being, the Uncaused Cause of all else, he would have avoided error. He would have prevented his imagination from leading him woefully astray.

Tell a person that his soul will exist forever. In nine cases out of ten he will try to IMAGINE an existence without end. Of course he cannot do this, any more than he can imagine a stick without an end. So he is led to THINK that the immortality of the soul is just as impossible as an endless stick. He denies that the soul is immortal.

If he paid attention to what his INTELLECT has to tell him, he would not make this mistake. For it compels us to admit that something has existed from eternity. Why? Because, otherwise what exists today would have come from nothing, which is absurd; hence, absolutely impossible. And if something has existed from eternity, why cannot something go on existing forever? Our intellect can find no reason why it shouldn't. And, as rational beings, we should be guided by this faculty, not by our imagination. We are men, not chimpanzees.

So, get the habit of paying attention to the IDEAS in your intellect, as well as to the IMAGES in your imagination. Keep in mind the fact that your imagination cannot picture faithfully even all material things, and that it is utterly unable to represent spiritual realities truthfully. Try to realise how childish it is to think that everything is as our imagination pictures it, or to deny the existence of whatever cannot be imagined. None of the great realities can be faithfully imagined: essence or existence, for instance, or your soul, virtues

and vices, grace, heaven or God. We can know these only by our intellect. Rely on it, therefore, not on your imagination, in your search for truth. It is made for truth.

2. Use The Right Science.

There are scores of sciences; but they fall into one of these four grades:

- (a). The experimental sciences.
- (b). Mathematics.
- (c). Philosophy.
- (d). Theology.

The first three are called NATURAL sciences, because they are built up by us, using the natural powers of knowledge God has given us. Theology, on the contrary, is a SUPERNATURAL science, because it deals with truths not discovered by us, but revealed to us by God. There are, of course, many experimental sciences: physics, chemistry, astronomy, biology, botany, and so on. Mathematics is divided into arithmetic, algebra and geometry. Philosophy has also many divisions. And theology is divided into DOGMATIC, which tells us what we have to BELIEVE on God's authority, and MORAL, which tells us what we have to DO in order to live as we ought and save our immortal souls.

Why are the sciences graded like this? The reason is simple. Just as each faculty has its own way of getting at what it knows in things – the eye by their colour, the ear by their sound, and so on – so, too, the sciences in the different grades have their own method of gaining knowledge. And, as with the faculties, this is called their FORMAL OBJECT.

Thus, the EXPERIMENTAL SCIENCES get at things inasmuch as they are OBSERVABLE, just as the eye gets at them inasmuch as they are visible, and the ear inasmuch as they are audible. MATHEMATICS gets at things inasmuch as they are MEASURABLE. PHILOSOPHY gets at them inasmuch as they are BEINGS. That is why it is not limited to material things, as are the experimental sciences and mathematics, but can tell us about all beings from a grain of dust to God. THEOLOGY gets at truths inasmuch as they have been REVEALED to us. So, like the faculties, the sciences are graded according to their FORMAL OBJECTS.

Are the sciences all equal in excellence and nobility? No, not any more than our faculties are. The FURTHER AWAY FROM MATTER our faculties get, the more noble they are. That is why our intellect and will are more noble than our internal senses, and why these in their turn are superior to our external ones. Now it is the same with the sciences. Mathematics gets further from matter than do the experimental sciences because it ignores sensible qualities, and fixes its attention on QUANTITY alone. That is its formal object. Philosophy gets wholly away from matter in its way of studying things, since it considers them as beings. Hence, it is superior to mathematics. It is the queen of the natural sciences. Above them all towers theology. As a supernatural science, it is raised immeasurably above the rest, as heaven is above earth, or grace above nature.

In other words, the sciences form a HIERARCHY - a graded order of excellence. You can represent it by drawing a triangle with sides twenty centimetres long. Opposite the apex, write Theology. Five centimetres below, opposite a line drawn parallel with the base, put Philosophy. And five centimetres below this, opposite a similar line, Mathematics. Opposite the base. The Experimental Sciences. Try it.

Now make another triangle similar to this. Opposite the apex, write Christ and the Pope. Opposite the next line, put Bishops. Opposite the next, Priests. Opposite the base, Laity. It represents a hierarchy too - one found in the Church. What do you notice about it? Obviously this:

- (i). The higher guides the lower, and protects it from error.
- (ii). The lower should not try to do what only the higher can do.
Nor should the higher try to do what only the lower can do.
Each should stay within the limits of its grade.
- (iii). All should work in harmony for the common good.

You do not expect a layman to hear confessions or say Mass. Only a priest can do that. A priest is not asked to rule a diocese. That is a bishop's job. An ordinary bishop is not expected to rule the whole church, and give infallible decrees. That's for the Pope to do. Nor can he do what he likes as Head of the Church; for he is the VICAR of Christ. Similarly, the Pope is not asked to do what the bishop of Auckland does. Nor is a bishop expected to do what a parish priest does. Nor is a priest required to do what a layman does. Each must

restrict himself to his duties of state. Only by doing this can all work together for the common good.

Now, it is exactly the same with the sciences. The higher should protect the lower by checking them when they try to answer questions that lie outside their scope. The lower sciences should never try to do what only the higher ones can do. Nor should the higher try to do what only the lower can do. Each should keep within the limits set for it by its FORMAL OBJECT. None should clash with any of the others. All should work together in harmony for the spread of knowledge and truth.

Hence, if you want to learn about MATERIAL things, inasmuch as these are OBSERVABLE, study the EXPERIMENTAL sciences. If you want to learn about NATURAL things, inasmuch as these are MEASURABLE, read books on MATHEMATICS. If you want to learn about anything, MATERIAL OR SPIRITUAL, inasmuch as it is a BEING, go to PHILOSOPHY. Finally, if you want to know what God has REVEALED, ask THEOLOGY. But do not ask theology to give you a mathematical description of the forces at work in an atom. Only mathematical physics can do that. And do not ask the experimental sciences or mathematics to tell you what man is, or what your soul is, or what God is. Only philosophy and theology can do that. Choose the right science, if you want to find truth.

3. Do Not Be Led Astray By a Scientist Who Is Using His Science To Answer Questions That Are Beyond Its Scope.

Each scientist should keep within the limits set by the FORMAL object of his science; and never ask it to solve problems it is never meant to solve. Otherwise, he is like a man who expects his eye to hear and his imagination to think; or like one who expects a layman to do the job of a priest, a bishop or the Pope. He is expecting the impossible. He must end in error. Yet few scientists realise the limitations of their science, particularly those who specialise in the lower sciences. They get the habit of thinking of everything in terms of their own pet science. They become intolerably narrow-minded. Many come finally to think that:

- (i). Their method of gaining knowledge is the only one.
- (ii). Their science is the only one.
- (iii). They can ask it to answer any questions whatever.

- (iv). If it can give an answer, this contains the whole truth. Nothing further can be added by any other science.
- (v). If it cannot answer a question, no other science can either.

Dozens of examples could be given from writers living today; but we have space for only a few. We shall take them from men who specialise in mathematical physics, for these seem the worst offenders.

First, however, notice what mathematics does to anything it studies. It reduces it to MEASUREMENTS or NUMBERS. It cannot do otherwise! Why? Because the formal object of mathematics is QUANTITY.

Consider a sum in physics. It starts, we'll say, like this: "An elephant slides down a grassy slope." To you AS PHILOSOPHER, what is this elephant? A being, anyway. And what sort? One endowed with sensitive life. He can nourish himself, grow, reproduce his kind, know material things, get angry, and so on. But what is he to you AS MATHEMATICIAN? Nothing. As mathematician you do not care two hoots whether it is an elephant that slides down the slope, or a bulldozer, or your aunt Sally. Same for the grassy slope. It, means something to the elephant whether the slope is covered with grass or with broken bottles; but it makes no difference to the mathematician. So you read on hurriedly. "The elephant weighs two tons." Ah! now you've got something. Down it goes on your sheet of paper: weight of elephant - 2 tons. Why? This is a number; and mathematics can deal with numbers. And what have you done, AS MATHEMATICIAN, to poor Jumbo? Reduced him to a mere number. As mathematician, you can do nothing else. You read on. "The angle of the slope is 60 degrees." Down goes the 60. Why? Another number. And so on for the rest of the sum, till you come to the answer which gives the time it takes Jumbo to reach the bottom. This is, of course, another number - 5 seconds or something like that. See what mathematics has done to this picturesque event? It has drained it of almost all its reality. It has reduced the BEINGS in it to mere MEASUREMENTS.

If a mathematician realises that his science does not give him insight into ALL the reality in the things it studies, since it takes them not as BEING but only as MEASURABLE, all is well. He will be ready to consult other sciences for knowledge that his own

cannot give. But, as we have said, many fail to do this. Here are a few examples.

Listen to what one scientist has to say about his table. He is giving what his pet science of mathematical physics has to tell us about it. He says that it "is mostly empty space. Sparsely scattered in that emptiness are numerous electric charges rushing about with great speed; but their combined bulk amounts to less than a billionth of the bulk of the table itself." He then reminds us that the table is not a thing, a substance, a being at all, but just a sphere of "influences." So far, so good. He has kept within the limits of his science. But can he stay there? Not a hope. He immediately adds these amazing words: "I need not tell you that modern physics has by delicate test and remorseless logic assured me that my scientific table is the ONLY one which is really there." This sentence is surely worth reading twice.

Is it true? Does mathematical physics tell us that the table, AS IT KNOWS IT, is the only table that is really there? No. It is the AUTHOR himself who tells us that, not his science. His science merely tells us that, on account of the limits set for it by its FORMAL OBJECT, this is all that it can tell us about the table. It does not claim to have exhausted ALL the reality knowable in the table. It does not deny the right of other sciences to give us further knowledge. It merely says: "I've done all I can. If you want further information, consult other sciences," just as your eye, if it could speak, might say of an apple: "I've given you its colour. If you want to know its taste or smell, ask another faculty to give it to you." No! Mathematical physics cannot make the absurd claim that it is the only science. Only a physicist can do that - if he is sufficiently narrow-minded.

We would like to see the author put his "remorseless logic" to a "delicate test" by walking into a cabinet-maker's shop, and say to the man behind the counter: "I want to buy a thing - well, really I should not use this horrible unscientific word - for what I want is not really a thing, but a sphere of influences, mainly emptiness. Sparsely scattered in this emptiness are electric charges rushing about with great speed, but their combined bulk amounts to less than a billionth of the whole thing. Dash it! There's that beastly word again. Anyway, have you got one?" Could you blame the salesman if he slipped quietly to the telephone to inform the police that he had a lunatic in the shop?

Not so long ago, another scientist informed us that modern physics tends to reduce all matter to “waves, and nothing but waves.” These, he said, are of two kinds: bottled-up waves, which we call matter, and unbottled waves which we call light. So far, so good. But then, referring to the universe, he added: “The whole story of its creation can be told with PERFECT ACCURACY and COMPLETENESS in the six words: God said, 'Let there be light'.” Sounds good, doesn't it? But wait a bit. What is light according to modern physics? A wave and nothing but a wave. A wave of nothing? A contradiction in terms like a square triangle or a cabbage with the giggles. This scientist makes God do the one thing that God can never do: create something which is a contradiction, hence an absurdity. And he claims that he is giving us the story of creation with “perfect accuracy and completeness.”

Quite recently, this same scientist has got a new idea. He still admits that matter is of two kinds, and that it is made up of waves. Waves of nothing? No. Waves of knowledge, and waves of ignorance. Amazing, isn't it? Have you ever thought of your head or the tip of your nose as a wave of knowledge or a wave of ignorance? And which would you say each was? And what about a cabbage, or your mother-in-law? Anyway, notice well where his mathematics has landed him. He has reduced the material universe to what? To KNOWLEDGE. To something that can exist ONLY in his own mind. He has fallen into the dreadful error of thinking that the only existence things have is that which they enjoy inside his own mind. He has become an IDEALIST, in philosophy. He can now make the mad boast of the SOLIPSIST who says: “I alone exist!” It serves him right, anyway, for asking his pet science of mathematics to do a job that philosophy alone can do. Let us leave him in his utter loneliness, and get on with our lesson.

4. Get a Knowledge Of All The Causes In Things.

Science is sure knowledge gained through studying the CAUSES of things. Hence, to know all about a material thing, such as a wooden statue, we have to know all about its FOUR CAUSES. Here they are:-

- (i). Its MATERIAL cause: The unshaped wood from which it is made.
- (ii). Its EFFICIENT causes: God, who gives being and activity to the

	sculptor. Its First Efficient Cause.
	The sculptor. Its secondary cause.
	The chisel. Its instrumental cause.
(iii).	Its FORMAL cause: The form or idea
embodied in the statue.	
	That which makes it be a statue, and
not a	
	table or a desk.
(iv).	Its FINAL cause: The purpose it fulfils:
to represent St.	
	Joseph, for example. The end for which
the	
	sculptor makes it: to earn money; to
	manifest his skill; to honour St. Joseph;
to	
	give glory to God, and so on.

All are necessary if the statue is to exist. No wood, no wooden statue. No God, no anything. No sculptor, no statue. No chisel, no statue. No idea of what a statue is, no statue. No purpose served in making it, no statue. Obvious, isn't it?

If you knew all about each of these causes, you would know a great deal, wouldn't you? How childish it is, then, for a scientist to describe the universe in terms of atoms, electrons, protons and so on; and then think that he has given us ALL we can know about it. He has said nothing about its efficient cause, God, without whom it could not possibly exist. Nothing about its formal cause: the mighty plan upon which it is built. Nothing about its final cause: the grand purpose God has in creating it. He does not even tell us all we can know about its material cause, since his mathematics reduces all things to the dead level of mathematical formulae, and thus robs the universe of its matchless variety in plant and animal life. Yet he thinks he has told us ALL we can know about it.

So, beware of the scientist who says that man is just a lump of matter. He is looking at man's material cause alone. Beware of the writer who tells you that man is an angel. He is looking at man's formal cause alone. Think always of ALL the four causes of man,

especially of God, his First Efficient Cause, and of his final cause, which is Heaven. See man as he really is. See him whole. Then you will realise that he is not just a whirligig of atoms, not just a wave of ignorance, but a human being, made in God's image and destined to share His knowledge, love and happiness in eternity.

5. Do Not Think The Latest Is Necessarily The Best.

People hate to be thought out of date. They seek the new just because it is new. They despise the old, just because it is old. They do this not only in regard to cars and radios, or fashions in haircuts and hats, but in regard to every branch of knowledge. For them, the newest and latest is necessarily the best.

Quote a bit of Aristotle's philosophy to a student in physics, and watch his reaction. "Aristotle!" he will gasp. "That guy! Think of the rubbish he taught in physics: that there are only four elements; that minerals are formed by the condensation of smoke, metals, by that of vapour; and so on. Anyway, Aristotle's dead, you know. Dead as a mummy! We've moved ahead a lot since his day."

He does not realise that a wee bit of Aristotle's philosophy would have saved him from the logical blunder he has just made by thinking that, because Aristotle was not much at physics, he was poor also in philosophy. This is as silly as to argue that Ikey cannot be any good at playing a Jew's harp, because he does not know all about the inner workings of a snifter valve or a fish.

Nor does he realise that the latest theory is not necessarily the best in philosophy, as it is likely to be in physics. Why? Because the way in which physics progresses is totally different from the way philosophy does. It is a capital error to confuse them.

Like the technical arts, the lower sciences progress by SUBSTITUTION. They substitute one theory for another, just as the technical arts substitute one invention for another. Compare the first motor cars with the best streamlined cars of today, and you will see what is meant. One invention ousts another, making it out of date. It, in its turn, is outmoded by another. And so on, without end. It is the same for theories in sciences. Man-made, they can be changed by man.

But the higher sciences cannot progress this way. Philosophy cannot. Why not? Because it is based on the NATURES in things, and on the FIRST PRINCIPLES of being. These can never change, any more than the multiplication table can, or the law of buoyancy which applies as much to the Queen Elizabeth today, as it did to the coracle of the woad-covered Briton.

It is God, not man, who gives things their natures and the laws that flow from these. Man cannot alter them. He cannot substitute others for them. What principles, for instance, can he put in place of the principles of identity and non-contradiction? None. Abolish these as out of date, and what happens? You make all further thought and speech absolutely impossible. You make it as impossible for yourself to think or say anything, as it is for a carrot. You commit mental suicide.

Philosophy can progress, therefore, not by SUBSTITUTION, but by PENETRATION - by a deeper understanding of the principles of being, and by a more faithful application of them to reality. In this way the philosophy that Aristotle taught can progress endlessly. But the method and the principles that he used can never go out of date, any more than a square can. They depend on God and on the ways in which His infinite perfection can be imitated by creatures. They are as unchanging as He. That is why it is sheer nonsense to talk about Aristotle's philosophy being out of date; or to expect it to progress by casting away its method and its principles, and replacing them by others.

It is the same, too, in theology. This studies realities made known to us by God: the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Sacraments, the Mass, and so on. We cannot progress here by substituting one revelation for another. God has made only one. We can progress here only by clinging to the truths He has revealed, trying to penetrate more deeply into the realities they make known, and especially trying to LIVE them more perfectly in our daily life.

Here is progress indeed, and fresh discoveries in plenty. Here is unlimited scope for research and prayerful thinking. But it is a progress achieved without destruction, without breaking with the past. Instead, it demands an organic unity with the past, as do the words of our Saviour Himself: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Spoken by Him who is Truth Itself, this sentence is at once a guarantee of the unity of His own

science, and a rebuke to those who foolishly expect His eternal truths to change ceaselessly, with fashions set by the puny mind of man.

No! In the nobler spheres of man's activities the newest and latest is not the best. The best epics of our age cannot compare with those of Homer. The statues of Epstein look like the efforts of a Hottentot, compared with those of ancient Greece. The modern buildings that mar the beauty of our cities are incomparably less graceful than are the cathedrals of Rheims and Cologne. In music and painting, no one today can produce works equal to the great masterpieces of the past. In philosophy, who today can compare with Aristotle, or with his disciple, St. Thomas Aquinas, who had a genius equal to that of his master, and who added to it the sanctity of a saint? These two prodigious thinkers have left us a majestic system of philosophy that can never grow old or be out of date, for it is founded on what is enduring in things – the only philosophy that can stand the test of time, and the only one capable of healing the world's intellectual wounds and of routing its despair.

In theology, too, we have to go a long way back for the best – back to Christ Himself and to the truths He revealed to us, preserved as they are in their fullness and interpreted without possibility of error by His infallible and indefectible Church, to which He addressed the soul-stirring words: “Go, therefore, teach all nations... And behold I am with you all days, even to the end of the world.” Precious words, these, falling from the lips of God, guaranteeing to us that His own Wisdom is within the grasp of even the least of us; and that it will be ever at the disposal of those who seek it with humility, with a reverence for reality, and with a courage that can make the sacrifices required to gain and practise it.

To expect the wisdom proper to the higher sciences to progress in the same way as do the lower is indeed a capital error. It is to degrade these noble sciences to the level of a cross-word or a jigsaw puzzle – something to interest for a brief moment and then to cast aside for ever. It is to drag them down to the level of the barber's or tailor's art whose one aim is to keep pace with the changing fashions and to satisfy man's craving for the new. It is in fact to destroy these sciences; hence to deprive man of that wisdom without which he cannot be genuinely happy in this world or in the next. Remember this, when you hear people say that the newest and latest is necessarily the best.

Other rules could be given for seeking and keeping the truth; but we have no space left. However, we must mention one final rule – the best of them all. It is this: LOVE AND LIVE THE TRUTH. If you do this, you will recognise the truth by a sort of divine instinct, as the disciples recognised Christ at the breaking of the bread. And the truth will shine more and more clearly in your intellect as you go through life; till at death, through the light of glory, it will open on to the beatific vision, where “Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him.” (1 Cor. 2:9).

SUMMARY

SEEKING AND KEEPING THE TRUTH.

1. Do Not Let Your Imagination Lead You Astray.

- (i). It cannot picture faithfully even all MATERIAL things: a myriagon.
- (ii). It can never picture SPIRITUAL things as they are: the soul, God. Hence, childish.
 - (a). To THINK that everything is as the imagination pictures it: God, an old man. The Trinity, a leaf.
 - (b). To DENY the existence of anything that it cannot picture: God, the immortality of the soul, heaven.
- (iii). Use your INTELLECT, not your IMAGINATION, in searching for truth.

2. Use The Right Science.

- (i). Four Grades:
 - (a). Experimental Sciences: know things as OBSERVABLE.
 - (b). Mathematics: know things as MEASURABLE.
 - (c). Philosophy: know things as BEINGS.
 - (d). Theology: know things as REVEALED.
- (ii). Graded according to their FORMAL OBJECTS. Cf. The faculties.

(iii).Hierarchy:

- a) Higher guides and protects lower from error.
- b) Lower should not try to do what only the higher can do; nor higher, what only the lower can do. Each should keep within limits set by its FORMAL OBJECT.
- c) All should work in harmony for the common good. Cf. Hierarchy in the Church.

3. Do Not Be Led Astray By a Scientist Who Is Using His Science To Answer Questions That Are Beyond Its Scope.

Danger of SPECIALISATION, especially in the lower sciences.

- (i). My method of gaining knowledge is the only one.
- (ii). My pet science is the only one.
- (iii). I can ask it to answer any questions whatever.
- (iv). If it can give an answer, this contains all the truth. Nothing can be added by any other science.
- (v). If it cannot answer a question, no other science can either. e.g. A table - merely fields of force; the universe - waves of nothing; matter - waves of knowledge and waves of ignorance.

4. Get a Knowledge Of All The Causes In Things.

Science - sure knowledge gained through studying the CAUSES of things. Four Causes of a wooden statue: -

- (a). MATERIAL cause: The wood.
- (b). EFFICIENT causes: God; the Sculptor; the chisel.
- (c). FORMAL cause: The idea embodied in the statue.
- (d). FINAL causes: The purpose it serves: to represent St. Joseph. The ends the sculptor has in making it: to gain money; show his skill; give glory to God, etc.

ALL must be studied, if our knowledge is to be complete. Cf. Universe = atoms; Man = just matter; Man = an angel.

5. Do Not Think That The Latest Is Necessarily The Best.

Progress (i). By SUBSTITUTION - lower sciences and technical arts.

(ii). By PENETRATION – higher sciences and higher arts.

Philosophy – no new First Principles.

Theology – no new revelation.

True Philosophy: that of ARISTOTLE and ST. THOMAS AQUINAS.

Final Rule: LOVE AND LIVE THE TRUTH.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. In knowing anything, I form two likenesses of it: one in my (...) and one in my (...). 2. My imagination (can) (cannot) picture all material things faithfully. 3. It can never picture (...) things truthfully. 4. I should rely on my (...) when seeking truth. 5. I am sure that since something exists today, something has existed from (...); otherwise something must have come from (...), which is absurd. 6. If I want to learn about material things, inasmuch as they are observable, I study (Philosophy) (The Experimental Sciences) (Theology) (Mathematics). 7. If I want to learn about material things inasmuch as they are measurable, I study (...). 8. If I want to learn about things inasmuch as they are beings, I go to (...). 9. If I want to know what God has revealed, I ask (...). 10. The sciences are graded according to their (...) objects. 11. In this, they are like our (...). 12. To ask physics to tell me ALL I can know about a table is like asking my eye to tell me ALL I can know about an apple (True) (False). 13. A modern scientist says that God is “The harmony of epochal occasions” – something like a recurring decimal. He is obviously a specialist in (...). 14. Mathematics reduces everything to (...), because its formal object is (...). 15. The wood in a statue is its (material) (efficient) (formal) (final) cause. 16. God is its (...) efficient cause. 17. The ends gained by making a statue give us its (...) causes. 18. A man who describes the universe in terms of atoms is giving only its (...) cause. 19. Its efficient cause is (...). 20. The lower sciences progress by (...); the higher, by (...). 21. Aristotle's philosophy can never be out of date, for it is founded on the (...) principles of being, and on the (...) in things. 22. There can be no new Theology, for there can be no new public (...) from God. 23. Men (can) (cannot) replace the principles of identity and contradiction by others. 24. A person who thinks that he alone exists is called an idealist in philosophy; he is also called a (chiropodist) (ventriloquist) (solipsist) (geologist). 25. He (can) (cannot) explain his sad plight to anyone else.

(B).

1. Little Billy wants to know why he so easily forgets all about his guardian angel, though the latter is an admirable companion. Tell him why.
2. A non-Catholic friend says: "I can no more imagine my soul existing forever than I can imagine a stick with no end." What do you say?
3. A geologist writes a book about Mt. Egmont, and claims that he has told us ALL we can know about the mountain. What other writers or scientists can rightly object to his claim?
4. Alfred Noyes says that a specialist is "a man who knows more and more about less and less." What do you think he meant?
5. Peter wants to know why the teacher gave him "a blast" for bringing his science book to mathematics class. Tell him why. Be fair to teacher.
6. Jimmy asks you to explain the four causes of man. Do so.
7. Your next-door neighbour says: "I've just heard a scientist saying over the air that all matter is a wave of ignorance. I'm material. So I must be just a wave of ignorance." How would you console him?
8. Your big brother says that he heard a teacher at the university say that Aristotle's philosophy is out of date. Will you agree?
9. Why is it as useless to ask mathematics to tell you what God is, as it is to ask a layman to say Mass or hear confessions?

Chapter 8

REASON PROVES THAT GOD EXISTS

I. Introduction.

In every being that exists, we can consider WHAT it is, and also THAT BY WHICH it is. What it is is called its ESSENCE. That by which it is is called its EXISTENCE.

We get at the ESSENCE of a thing by forming an IDEA of it, as when we think of a square as a geometrical figure with four equal sides and four right angles. We get at the EXISTENCE of a thing, however, by forming a JUDGMENT about it. When you say: "This is a square" your mind gets at one which actually exists before your eyes, not at one that may exist a year from now. Notice, therefore, that your idea of a square would be true, even if no human beings ever made a square. Your judgment, on the contrary, is true only if a square actually exists.

Now, of everything that exists we can ask: HOW DOES IT EXIST? Note that the question is not, How did it begin to exist some time ago? But how does it exist at this moment? And the answer must be ONE of the following: Either it is SELF-EXISTING, or it is RECEIVING ITS EXISTENCE from another. Note again that it is not a question of the past, but of the present. If a thing exists at this instant, but is not self-existing, it must be getting its existence here and now from another.

Few people realise this. That is why they do not realise the necessity of God. They think, for example, that they have fully accounted for the existence of a pencil by saying that a man made it some time ago. But have they? Think it out well for yourself.

A man can make a pencil, and it will go on existing after he has finished making it – even after he is dead. Why? Because in making it, he does not give it ALL the reality that is in it. He does not CREATE it from nothing. Instead, he uses some existing material to

make it from. If, in making it, he DID give it ALL the reality that is in it, he would have to CONTINUE to give it this, as long as the pencil continued to exist. Once he ceased to give it ALL the reality that is in it, it would instantly LOSE ALL ITS REALITY. It would wholly cease to be. It would fall into nothingness. It would be annihilated. Try to realise this. Once you realise it, you will realise also the necessity of God.

The man who made the pencil was certainly a true cause of its BEGINNING TO BE AS A PENCIL. But he is not a cause of its CONTINUING TO BE AS A BEING. If the pencil is not a SELF-EXISTING being, it must be RECEIVING its existence at present from another. If the "other" from whom it is getting its existence is not the man who made it, we have to find out who it is. But we must not go too fast.

Can it be that the pencil IS self-existing? How can we tell? What sort of being must a self-existing one inevitably be? Well, here is what your REASON tells you about it.

A SELF-EXISTING being must BE his own act of existing. WHAT he is must be the same as THAT BY WHICH he is. His ESSENCE must be TO BE EXISTING. His ESSENCE, and his EXISTENCE must be one.

From this it follows that a SELF-EXISTING being can never be GIVEN his existence by another. Why not? Because he IS his act of existing. He IS his existence. Of all other beings we can and must ask: "Who gives them their existence?" for they have only a RECEIVED existence. But this question has simply no meaning if it is asked of a self-existing being. Try it and see: "Who gives existence to this being who can never be given his existence?" It does not make sense, does it?

Moreover, since his essence is to exist, he cannot have an existence like ours, which is such that each of us is able NOT TO EXIST. There was a time not so long ago when we did not exist, wasn't there? A SELF-EXISTING being, IF he exists at all, must exist in such a way that he cannot possibly NOT EXIST. He must be a NECESSARY being.

Hence, he can never have begun to exist. Nor can he ever cease to exist. He must be an ETERNAL being. He must BE eternally.

Nor can he be imperfect in any way. His essence, remember, is existence. And, just as the essence of a tree excludes all that is not-tree, so the essence of a self-existing being must exclude all that is not-being, all non-being, all lack of being, all imperfection of any kind. He must be an INFINITELY PERFECT being. He must be BEING, hence PERFECTION ITSELF.

Hence, he can never CHANGE. If a being changes, it either acquires a perfection that it did not have, or it loses one that it had. In either case, it cannot be infinitely perfect. It is clear, then, that a self-existing being must be absolutely UNCHANGING.

We are quite certain, therefore, that IF there is a SELF-EXISTING BEING, he is an UN-MADE, NECESSARY, ETERNAL, INFINITELY PERFECT, UNCHANGING being, in whom ESSENCE and EXISTENCE are one.

Now you can tell whether your pencil is self-existing or not. Is its essence to exist? No. It is that of a pencil. Is the pencil such that it cannot possibly be given existence by another? No. A man made it. Is its existence a necessary one? No. Some time ago it did not exist. Soon it will cease to exist. Has it existed from eternity? No. Is it infinitely perfect? No. It has only the limited perfection of a pencil. Is it impossible for it to change? No. It is changing all the time. It must soon be all used up, or rot away. So it has none of the features of a self-existing being. It has instead only those of a being which RECEIVES its reality ceaselessly from another.

We have seen what a SELF-EXISTING being must be like, IF HE EXISTS. Now comes the question: IS THERE ANY SUCH BEING? This question is all-important. Why? Because if such a being does exist, then GOD exists; for that is exactly what we mean by God.

2. How We Can Know Whether God Exists.

Can we know that God exists by using merely our external senses? Can we see Him or hear Him or touch Him? No, if He exists, He must be a SPIRITUAL being, since He must be infinitely perfect, and matter is the most imperfect of all realities. As spiritual, He must be forever beyond our sense faculties.

Can we “see” Him by our intellect, in the way that we “see” a self-evident truth, such as the whole of an apple is greater than part of it? No. Such a vision into God's essence is reserved for heaven.

Is it enough for us merely to form an idea of Him, in order to be sure that He exists? No. Our idea of God will merely assure us that IF He does exist, He will have a necessary existence, not one like ours. It will never make us certain that He DOES actually exist.

Can we be certain that He exists from some experience we have of His activity in us – from the fact that we feel Him comforting or enlightening us, for instance? No. We cannot be sure that it is He who is doing this. It may just be our digestive system or our liver.

How, then, can we know that God exists? We can be absolutely certain that He exists, by PROVING it scientifically.

And WHICH SCIENCE must we use to do this? One of the EXPERIMENTAL SCIENCES? Not a hope. They are for material things. They rely on observation and experiment. But God is not a material Being. He cannot be observed or experimented with. You cannot get Him into a test tube, or heat Him over a bunsen, or take His temperature. As an infinitely spiritual Being, He is wholly beyond the scope of the experimental sciences.

What about MATHEMATICS, then? No hope here either. Mathematics gets at things inasmuch as they are measurable. God is not measurable. There is no matter in Him to measure. If you force mathematics to tell you about God, it will reduce Him to a number, like the square root of -R. Imagine yourself kneeling beside your bed tonight, saying: “Dear Square Root of -R, make Dad more generous with my pocket-money; inspire Mum to send another cake; give them a win at the next races; and, above all, do not let me get appendicitis or measles just before the term holidays begin.” Do you think the Square Root would oblige?

What about PHILOSOPHY? Can we use it? Yes. It can consider the things that exist on our earth and out in space inasmuch as they are BEINGS; and it can see that, because they are NOT SELF-EXISTING, they demand the existence of ONE WHO IS. As creatures, they point irresistibly to their Creator. And here is how they do it.

3. Ways In Which Creatures Show Us That God Exists.

No matter from what aspect we study the things that exist in the universe, we see that as beings, they are all **ABSOLUTELY INCAPABLE OF ACCOUNTING FOR THEIR EXISTENCE**. They show us this in innumerable ways. For instance: –

(A). THEY ALL CHANGE CEASELESSLY.

Consider any beings you can think of other than God – stars, plants, animals, men. You cannot help noticing that they change unceasingly. No one can deny it. It is a fact borne in on us irresistibly by our external senses and by our consciousness, both of which are infallible. You have only to think of the changes you experience in yourself every day to realise it.

Starting then with this undeniable fact, how can we prove from **REASON** that God must exist? The argument is simple. It is this: –

- (i). All creatures **CHANGE** ceaselessly.
- (ii). Therefore, they are **NOT INFINITELY PERFECT**.
- (iii). Therefore, they are **NOT SELF-EXISTING**.
- (iv). Therefore, they are **RECEIVING** their existence at this instant from another.
- (v). From **WHAT SORT OF OTHER?**

From others that have only a **RECEIVED** existence themselves? No. You might as well try to explain why the hands of your watch go round by merely multiplying the cogwheels in it, as try to explain the existence of creatures by saying that they are receiving their existence from others that are in the same plight as they are themselves. It is no use multiplying cogwheels indefinitely. Each one you add is utterly incapable of accounting for the movement of the hands. You are getting **NO NEARER** an explanation. It is like adding noughts in an addition sum; or like asking an unlimited number of persons for a dollar when none of them has one to give. You are getting nowhere.

To account for the movement of the hands, you have to go **OUTSIDE** the order of cogwheels. You have to get to something which is **NOT** a cogwheel. You have to get to something which does not just

TRANSMIT the movement it receives. You have to get to a SOURCE of movement, such as a spring.

And it is exactly the same with creatures. To account for their existence at this moment, you have to get right OUTSIDE the order of creatures. You have to get to someone who is NOT a creature. You have to get to someone who does not merely HAND ON what He receives. You have to get to a SOURCE of existence. You have to get to a Being WHO DOES NOT RECEIVE HIS EXISTENCE FROM ANOTHER. In short, you have to get to the SELF-EXISTING BEING whom we call GOD.

(vi). CONCLUSION: THEREFORE, GOD EXISTS.

(B). THEY ALL BEGIN TO BE AND CEASE TO BE.

Another thing you cannot help noticing about the things in the universe is the fact that they all BEGIN to exist and CEASE to exist.

Take yourself, for example. Have you been on earth from eternity? If you are in any doubt, think of your next birthday. No. A few years ago you began to exist as a man. Soon death will come to you. Your soul will then go on existing, of course, but a soul is not a human being. As a human being, you will cease to exist.

It is the same for all plants and animals, even for the stars. Scientists say that the sun gives out every second energy worth \$350,000,000,000,000. If we had to pay for the light it gives us daily, the cost would make our national debt look like a tram fare. Yet we get only a small fraction of the light it sends out. It could supply two billion earths like ours. Well, it cannot keep doing that forever, any more than you can keep giving dollar coins for ever when you have only a limited supply of them. Even the sun must some day cease to be.

Starting now with the undeniable fact that all things in the universe begin and cease to be, we can prove from REASON that God must exist. Again, the argument is simple. It runs this way: -

- (i). All things in the universe BEGIN and CEASE TO BE.
- (ii). Therefore, they are NOT NECESSARY beings.
- (iii). Therefore, they are NOT SELF-EXISTING.

(iv). Therefore, they are RECEIVING their existence at this moment from another.

(v). FROM WHAT SORT OF OTHER?

From others in the same plight as they are themselves? No. You might as well expect to get water from a pipe by merely increasing the length of the pipe indefinitely. You must get to something which is NOT a pipe. You must get to a SOURCE of supply, such as a reservoir. It is exactly the same with beings that begin to exist and cease to exist. You must get to a Being who is NOT just another of them. You must get to a Being who is a NECESSARY Being, One who cannot ever NOT BE. In other words, you must get to the SELF-EXISTING Being whom we call God.

(vi). CONCLUSION: THEREFORE, GOD EXISTS.

(C). THEY ALL ACT IN AN ORDERLY MANNER.

Another thing you cannot help noticing about the universe is the fact that there is ORDER in it. What if there wasn't? What would be the consequences?

In the first place, all the sciences would be impossible. There could be none of them. Why? Because they are all based on the order that exists in nature. How would your chemistry book be able to say that the formula for water is H_2O , if water could be formed by any other combinations of any of the other elements? Science is founded on what is stable and enduring in things. Its laws are necessary and universal.

In the second place, you could not possibly live. How could you, if the water you drink could act as strychnine, or the meat you eat could act as sulphuric acid, or the earth you live on could act as an exploding atomic bomb?

In the third place, nothing could exist. For things can exist only as this or that KIND of thing: as oxygen, as a carrot, as a rat, as a man. They can exist only if each has a NATURE. But once a thing has a nature, there is an order in it: NATURE, INCLINATION to act in accordance with this, FACULTIES that enable it so to act, and ACTIVITIES proportionate to these. Just as it is impossible for you to make a square without placing an order, such as the relations

that exist between its sides, or its angles, or its diagonal and one of its sides, so, too, it is impossible for anything to exist without order.

And the order in the universe is not merely that found in each individual thing; there is order also in the universe as a whole. If each individual thing acted in an orderly way according to its nature, but not in harmony with anything else, the universe would not be a cosmos but chaos; just as if each player in an orchestra played a definite tune, but all played a different one, you would get chaos and not a symphony. What use would the eye be, if material things had no colour and so could not be seen? What use would your lungs be if there were no air to breathe, or if air did not contain oxygen? Just as your eye sees, but does not hear, and your ear hears but does not see, yet both work harmoniously in giving you knowledge; just as your heart pumps blood but does not purify it, and the lungs purify it but do not pump it, yet both work harmoniously for the good of the body, so, too, all things in the universe work together for the good of the whole. To deny order in the universe is like trying to deny the principle of identity: the denial simply could not be a denial, unless the letters that express it acted in an orderly way.

Now, since this order is not self-existing, it demands a CAUSE, just as much as the beings themselves do. And what sort of cause? An INTELLECTUAL one. Why? Because order can be due only to an INTELLECT. This follows from its very nature. For what is order? It is the PROPORTION OF MEANS TO END. And how can means be proportioned to an end, unless the end is first KNOWN AS END by an intellect? How can you possibly set about making a henhouse, unless you first know what a henhouse is? The end to be achieved is the FINAL cause of the activity exercised in achieving it. And the FINAL cause has to be the FIRST of the four causes to act. Until it has acted, none of the other causes can start to act. Why not? Because their activity is determined or specified by it. You set about making a henhouse in a different way from that in which you set about making a hat. That is why scientists who try to give a complete explanation of things by referring to their efficient causes alone, are doomed to failure and contradiction.

Order, then, can be due only to an INTELLECT, for this alone can know the end AS END, and the means AS MEANS, and make one proportionate to the other. Order is the invincible imprint of intellect wherever it is found. That is why wherever there is

activity, whether it be in a grain of dust, a plant, an animal or man, there is evidence of an intellect. If this is not in the thing acting, it must be in its MAKER, as it is in the maker of a razor or a radio.

And to WHAT SORT OF INTELLECT must we attribute the ORDER which is everywhere evident in the universe and in man's own intellect itself? To an intellect which is LIMITED like ours? No. That sort of intellect needs to be proportioned, itself, to its object and its activity. By appealing to it, you get no nearer an explanation. To what sort of intellect, then? To one that does NOT need to be adapted to its object or its activity. To one, consequently, which IS its activity and its object. To the INFINITE INTELLECT, identical with the INFINITE BEING, who alone IS His activities. To the SELF-EXISTING Being whom we call GOD.

From the undeniable fact of order in the universe, we can therefore prove from REASON that God exists. The proof is this: -

- (i). There is ORDER in the universe.
- (ii). This order demands a CAUSE.
- (iii). Its cause can be only an INTELLECTUAL one, since order is the proportion of means to end, and the end must be first known as end before the means can be adapted to it. Only an INTELLECT can know the end as end, and the means as means.
- (iv). WHAT SORT OF INTELLECT?

One limited like our own? No. We must get instead to one that does NOT need to be itself proportioned to its object and its activity: one, therefore, which IS its activity and its object - the INFINITE INTELLECT, identified with the INFINITE BEING who alone IS His activities - the SELF-EXISTING Being whom we call God.

- (v). CONCLUSION: THEREFORE, GOD EXISTS.

We have considered creatures from three points of view: inasmuch as they all change, inasmuch as they all begin to be and cease to be, and inasmuch as they all act in an orderly manner. We have seen how in each case they point irresistibly to God. Did space permit, we could consider them from many other points of view, and come to the same conclusion: that creatures are absolutely incapable of accounting for themselves, and so demand the existence of God. We could argue, for instance, like this: human beings possess a limited

truth; therefore, there must exist One who IS Truth Itself. Creatures have a limited goodness; therefore there must exist One who IS Goodness Itself. They have a limited beauty; therefore there must exist One who IS Beauty Itself. And so on.

These, you will have noticed, are perfections which, though limited in US, do not of themselves imply limitation. When it is question, on the contrary, of perfections that imply imperfection by their very nature, we cannot argue from their existence in creatures to their existence in God. Since they can NEVER exist without imperfection, they cannot be found in God, for He is necessarily infinitely perfect. Thus, we cannot argue that, because there is anger in man, or heat in the fire, there must exist a being who is ANGER ITSELF, or HOTNESS ITSELF. God, of course, can be said to be angry, but the words are used only in a figurative sense, not in a proper sense. When, on the contrary, we say that God is BEING ITSELF, or PERFECTION ITSELF, or KNOWLEDGE ITSELF, or TRUTH ITSELF, we do not mean the words to be taken in just a metaphorical sense, but in their proper sense. The being, the perfection, the knowledge, the truth that are found really existing in creatures having corresponding to them in God a Being, a Perfection, a Knowledge, a Truth that is each infinite.

4. The Absurdity Of Atheism.

Even atheism can turn us to God. Why? Because the atheist's account of things is absurd. Hence utterly unreasonable. But, if it is thus utterly unreasonable for man to deny that God exists, it must be just the opposite, it must be eminently reasonable for man to hold that He does exist. In what ways is the atheist's account of things absurd?

Like you, the atheist must admit that SOMETHING HAS EXISTED FROM ETERNITY. Why? Because otherwise something must at some time have come from nothing, since things exist today. But nothingness can never by its own power give rise to something. It is absurd to say that it can.

What is the "something" he puts existing from eternity? It is NON-LIVING MATTER. He cannot put anything else. Does he account for its existence? It is either self-existing or it RECEIVES its existence eternally from another. Is it self-existing? No. It changes unceasingly. Does it, in his theory, get its existence from another?

No. He denies the existence of any other. So he has to make it receive its existence from no one, from nothing. This is the first absurdity he falls into. He gets something from nothing.

Then he has to make this non-living matter give rise to plant life by its own power. He has to make it give what it has not got. Again, he gets something from nothing. Another absurdity. After that he has to make plants give rise to animal life, by their own power. He has to make them also give what they have not got. He again gets something from nothing. Another absurdity. Finally, he has to make animals give rise to the rational life in man, by their own power. He has to make them give what they have not got. He has to get something from nothing. Another absurdity. Hence, his account of things is absurd from start to finish. Hence it is utterly unreasonable.

Contrast with it your own account. From the undeniable fact of the existence of things that are not self-existing, you prove from reason that God must exist as a SELF-EXISTING BEING, ETERNAL, NECESSARY and INFINITELY PERFECT. Who made Him? No one. He cannot be GIVEN existence. He IS His act of existing. He IS His existence. He IS BEING ITSELF. Where did non-living things come from in the beginning? From Him. Since He IS existence itself and Being Itself, He can give existence and being to creatures. Where did life come from – plant life, animal life, man's rational life? From Him. He is Life Itself. Hence He can give life to His creatures.

Thus, your account of things accounts for the existence of God by realising that He is SELF-EXISTING. It accounts also for the existence of every creature, from non-living things to man. In doing this, it respects and applies the principles of identity and non-contradiction. It avoids every absurdity that the atheist falls into. His account is unreasonable, unscientific and absurd. Yours is the very opposite: perfectly reasonable; absolutely scientific; and absolutely necessary. It is perfectly in line with your dignity as a RATIONAL being, made in the image of God. So, cherish it all through life; and LIVE it every day.

5. Consequences.

Here are some consequences that will be developed later.

REASON PROVES THAT GOD EXISTS

1. GOD IS OUR CREATOR, CONSERVER IN BEING, AND LAST END.
2. GOD IS OUR SUPREME LAW-GIVER.
3. MIRACLES ARE POSSIBLE.
4. RELIGION IS MAN'S FIRST DUTY AS A RATIONAL BEING.
5. CREATURES ARE MEANT TO UNITE US TO GOD, NOT TO SEPARATE US FROM HIM.

6. Practical Conclusions: -

1. I should not take creatures for granted. Instead, I should see them as granted by God.
2. I should see God acting in every creature, giving it being, and co-operating with all that is real and positive in its activity.
3. I should use creatures in such a way that they unite me more and more to God. I should never use them sinfully.
4. I should respect them as His. I should respect especially all my fellow-men, for they are made in His image.
5. I should thank God every day for giving me existence.

SUMMARY

1. Introduction.

- (a). In every creature that exists, we can consider: -
 - (i). ESSENCE - WHAT it is - got at by an IDEA.
 - (ii). EXISTENCE - THAT BY WHICH it is - got at by a JUDGMENT.
- (b). Every being that exists is either: -
 - (i). SELF-EXISTING, or
 - (ii). It IS RECEIVING its existence at this moment, from another.
- (c). A SELF-EXISTING being must be an UN-MADE, NECESSARY, ETERNAL, INFINITELY PERFECT,

UNCHANGING being, in whom ESSENCE and EXISTENCE are identical. His ESSENCE – TO BE.

- (d). Is there any such being? If there is, then, God exists; for this is what we mean by God.

2. How We Can Know That God Exists.

- (a). By merely using our external senses? No. God is spiritual.
- (b). By “seeing” Him in the way we “see” a self-evident truth? No.
- (c). By merely forming an idea of Him as a self-existing Being? No.
- (d). By PROVING His existence SCIENTIFICALLY? Yes. By which science?
 - (i). One of the experimental sciences? No. God is not observable.
 - (ii). Mathematics? No. God is not measurable.
 - (iii). Philosophy? Yes. It considers creatures as BEINGS; hence can see that they are not SELF-EXISTING, though they exist. Hence, that they must RECEIVE their existence from One who is SELF-EXISTING.

3. Ways In Which Creatures Show That They Are Not Self-Existing; Hence, That God Exists.

(A). THEY CHANGE UNCEASINGLY.

- a. Therefore, they are not INFINITELY PERFECT.
- b. Therefore, they are not SELF-EXISTING.
- c. Therefore, they ARE RECEIVING their existence from another, at this instant.
- d. From WHAT SORT OF “OTHER”?
- e. From others in the same plight as they are themselves? No. (Cf. cogwheels). We must get OUTSIDE THE ORDER of such beings to a being who does NOT receive His existence from another – to One who IS His act of existing – to the SELF-EXISTING Being whom we call GOD.

CONCLUSION: THEREFORE, GOD EXISTS.

(B). THEY BEGIN TO BE AND CEASE TO BE.

- a. Therefore, they are not NECESSARY beings.

- b. Therefore, they are not SELF-EXISTING.
- c. Therefore, they ARE RECEIVING their existence, now, from another.
- d. From WHAT SORT OF "OTHER"?
- e. From others in the same plight as they are themselves? No. (Cf. pipe and water). We must get OUTSIDE THE ORDER of such beings, to One who cannot ever NOT-BE - to the NECESSARY Being - to the SELF-EXISTING Being whom we call God.

CONCLUSION: THEREFORE, GOD EXISTS.

(C). THEY ACT IN AN ORDERLY MANNER.

- a. The ORDER in the universe demands a CAUSE.
- b. This can be only an INTELLECT.
- c. WHAT SORT OF INTELLECT?
- d. One that needs to be proportioned to its object and activity? No. One that IS its object and activity; hence identical with the INFINITE BEING who alone IS His activities - the SELF-EXISTING BEING whom we call God.

CONCLUSION: THEREFORE, GOD EXISTS.

4. The Absurdity Of Atheism.

- (i). It makes matter exist with a RECEIVED existence, yet denies that there is anyone to GIVE it this existence. It makes it get SOMETHING from NOTHING, which is absurd.
- (ii). It makes non-living matter BY ITS OWN POWER give itself plant life, though it has none to give. It makes it get SOMETHING from NOTHING, which is absurd.
- (iii). It makes plant life BY ITS OWN POWER give itself animal life, though it has none to give. It makes it get SOMETHING from NOTHING, which is absurd.
- (iv). It makes animal life BY ITS OWN POWER give itself RATIONAL life, though it has none to give. It makes it get SOMETHING from NOTHING, which is absurd.
- (v). It violates the principles of IDENTITY and NON-CONTRADICTION. Hence it is utterly unreasonable and unscientific, because absurd.

Our teaching, on the contrary,

- (i). Avoids all these absurdities.
- (ii). Accounts for the existence of God, by arguing from undeniable facts to the existence of a SELF-EXISTING BEING, who IS eternally His own act of existing.
- (iii). Accounts for the existence of creatures: God, who IS Being and Existence Itself, gives them being and existence; God, who IS Life Itself, gives them life.
- (iv). Respects and APPLIES the principles of IDENTITY and NON-CONTRADICTION.
- (v). Hence is eminently reasonable, absolutely scientific, and absolutely necessary if we are to avoid absurdity, which as rational beings, we are obliged to do. GOD or ABSURDITY. There is no alternative.

5. Consequences.

- 1. God is our CREATOR, CONSERVER, and LAST END.
- 2. God is our Supreme LAWGIVER.
- 3. MIRACLES are possible.
- 4. RELIGION is man's first duty as a rational being.
- 5. Creatures are meant to UNITE us to God, not to separate us from Him.

6. Practical Conclusions.

- 1. I should not take creatures for granted. Instead I should see them as granted by God.
- 2. I should see God acting in every creature, giving it being and co-operating with all that is real and positive in its activity.
- 3. I should use creatures in such a way that they unite me more and more to God. I should never use them sinfully.
- 4. I should respect them as His. I should respect especially all my fellow-men, for they are made in His image.
- 5. I should thank God every day for giving me existence.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. What a thing is is called its (...); that by which it is called its (...). 2. In all creatures essence and existence are (distinct) (identical). 3. A self-existing being (can) (cannot) receive his existence from another. 4. A self-existing being (can) (cannot) begin and cease to be. 5. A self-existing being must exist from all (...). 6. In a self-existing being essence and existence are (distinct) (identical). 7. A self-existing being (must be) (need not be) infinitely perfect. 8. If a being is material, (it can still be) (it cannot be) self-existing. 9. Could anything exist to-day if, in the past, there was once just nothing at all existing? (Yes) (No). 10. Once God has made a thing, can it then go on existing without any further help from God? (Yes) (No). 11. If you put non-living matter existing from eternity, but deny that God exists, can you find a reason why this matter should exist rather than not exist? (Yes) (No). 12. We prove that God exists by using (an experimental science) (mathematics) (philosophy). 13. Which of the four causes must be first known before any of the others can begin to act? (...). 14. This shows that the order in the universe can be due only to an (...). 15. If a thing can begin and cease to be, it cannot be a necessary being; hence neither can it be self-(...). 16. You (can) (cannot) find a sufficient reason for the movement of the hands of a watch by multiplying the cogwheels indefinitely. 17. God co-operates in all that is (...) and (...) in the activity of every creature. 18. If, in making a pencil, a man gave it ALL the reality that is in it, it would be instantly (...) if he did not continue to make it. 19. Order is the proportion of (...) to (...). 20. If there were no God every existing creature would be a contradiction in terms, an absurdity like a square triangle or a cabbage with a fit of the giggles (True) (False).

(B).

1. Joseph wants to know whether you can prove that God exists from the fact that your pencil exists. Tell how you can do this.
2. Peter thinks that if he multiplies hens and eggs back without end he explains the existence of the present-day hen and egg. Show him where he is wrong.
3. What conclusions can you draw from the fact that everything in the universe changes unceasingly?
4. What conclusions can you draw from the fact that everything in the universe begins and ceases to be?

LIVING THE TRUTH

5. Explain what order is; and show that the order in the universe proves the existence of God.
6. James argues this way: "There is anger in man; hence there must exist a being who is Anger Itself." Show him where he is wrong.
7. Percy thinks that the universe might have made itself. Tell him why it can never have done this.
8. Think of a lovely home: its large rooms, its proportions, its many lights, its carpeted floors, its walls hung with exquisite paintings, its dining room table loaded with a rich variety of meats, vegetables and fruits, its charming music – and so on. Then think of what corresponds to these in the universe and on our earth. Which manifests more clearly the greatness of the mind of the maker?
9. Compare a submarine with a fish; your eye with a camera; your nerves with telephone wires; a plane with a bird. Which, in each case, shows the more intricate design? Why?
10. Show why atheism is absurd.

(C). READINGS: –

"Almighty Magic," by R. J. Southard. This excellent pamphlet gives most interesting material for the argument from order in nature.

"If I Were God," by Daniel Lord, S.J. A good C.T.S. pamphlet.

"Atheism Doesn't Make Sense," by Daniel Lord.

Chapter 9

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

God's ATTRIBUTES are His PERFECTIONS. We must study them in order to realise what SORT OF A BEING God is – what sort of a Being we receive in Holy Communion, tell our sins to in the confessional, speak to in our prayers, and visit daily in the Chapel. For Our Saviour is God. He is God the Son made Man for love of us. Here are some of His perfections inasmuch as He is God.

(1). GOD IS ETERNAL

At the mention of eternity, your imagination pictures it as a sort of TIME, without beginning or end. But this will never give you a right idea of God's eternity. His eternity is nothing like time. It is as different from time as is His goodness or His mercy.

Time is the measure of material movement, as when we say that a man can do the hundred metres in ten seconds dead. Hence, it has of necessity a PAST, a PRESENT, and a FUTURE. And its present is necessarily an EVER-MOVING present. It can never stand still. Think of what “now” means. Before you can even say the word, the instant it referred to has gone. It is no longer the present. It is the past. Try to pin it down. You cannot. It is gone before you can do anything about it. It is indeed a FLEETING present.

Now, time, with its past which has gone forever, its present which is always on the move, and its future which is not here yet, has NO MEANING at all, if applied to God, Why not? Because there is nothing material in Him; and He cannot change. Hence, He is WHOLLY OUTSIDE TIME. You can no more apply it to Him than you can apply a plaster to your guardian angel or to your soul.

So do not pay any attention to your imagination image if you want to know what God's eternity is. Look at your idea of it, instead. It tells you that His eternity is not TIME, but LIFE. And what sort of life? One of infinite KNOWLEDGE, infinite LOVE and infinite HAPPINESS. One, moreover, in which there is NO PAST and NO

FUTURE, but only an abiding PRESENT. His eternity is LIFE, OUTSIDE TIME.

It has been defined as "The simultaneously full and perfect possession of unending life." How majestic the words are, and what an abyss of reality they unveil to us! Just as a scientific formula may express a prodigious activity like that of an atomic bomb, so these two words, God's eternity, open to us an abyss of infinite activity and life, before which the angels themselves tremble in reverent adoration and love. Think of it. No past. No future. Infinite life compressed and concentrated, lived and enjoyed ALL AT ONCE, in an infinitely rich present that can never pass away!

Practical Conclusions:

1. Thinking of eternity, I must not be led astray by words that imply time: "Before creation," for example. Time began with the creation of material things. Hence, there was no "before," before creation; for there was no time. "God foresees." He does not. He sees. Everything is present to Him.
2. I should love to think of God's eternity, and hope to share it after death, in the beatific vision.
3. When Our Saviour comes to me in Holy Communion, I should ask for light to realise what eternity is; love, to urge me to seek the things that endure; and courage, to keep on seeking them to the end.
4. I should try to realise the value of the present moment, and use it to gain as much merit as I can for heaven.
5. I should think often of the words: Ever. Never. They helped to make St. Teresa of Avila a saint. They can do the same for me.

(2). GOD IS INFINITE GOODNESS

A being is good to the extent that it can satisfy our needs and our desires. Thus, a razor is good to shave with, an aeroplane, to travel in, an apple, to eat, and so on.

And the goodness in a thing is proportionate to its being or perfection. Since God is infinite Being, therefore, He must also be

infinite goodness. In Him there is not the slightest absence of being; hence, not the slightest absence of goodness either. He is Sovereign Goodness. He is Goodness Itself.

Practical Conclusions:

1. It is right to love a thing according to the goodness in it. Since, then, God is infinite Goodness, I should love Him above all other beings.
2. I should hate deliberate mortal sin above all other evils; for it is the only thing that can separate me from God in eternity.
3. I should hate deliberate venial sin as the greatest evil after mortal sin, because it offends God who is infinitely good.
4. I should think of heaven as a supreme witness to God's goodness, for He there gives me the same object of knowledge, love and happiness as He Himself has, for ever.
5. I should think of hell, too, as a witness to His goodness, inasmuch as it shows His inalienable right to be loved above everything else, a right that flows from the fact that He is Goodness Itself.

(3). GOD IS INFINITE KNOWLEDGE AND TRUTH

The more a being is raised above matter, the more perfect is its knowledge, because knowledge is an immaterial union between the knower and the known. That is why our intellectual knowledge is so superior to our sense knowledge; and why an angel's knowledge is so much more excellent than ours. Since, therefore, God is infinitely spiritual, He must be Knowledge Itself.

Truth is the agreement of the mind knowing with the thing known. God knows Himself eternally in one infinite act of knowing, in which there is identity between the Knower and the Known. Hence, God is Truth Itself.

In knowing Himself, He knows the limitless ways in which creatures can imitate His perfections. He thus knows all that He could create, if He willed to do so, as well as all that He will actually create. In knowing Himself, He knows all things.

Sometimes people say to themselves: "God knows whether I shall be saved or lost. If He knows I'll go to heaven, I needn't make any effort to get there. If He knows I won't, there is no use my making any effort." This is childish. It is just like saying: "God knows whether there will be turnips growing in my field in two years' time, so it's no use my doing anything about it." If He knows that they be there, He also knows HOW they will come there: as a result of my using my free will to plough the ground and sow the seed. It is the same for Heaven or Hell. He knows HOW I shall go there: by USING MY FREE WILL to co-operate with His grace, or by refusing to do so. He sees me FREELY deciding my destiny in eternity.

Practical Conclusions:

1. I ought to accept with love and gratitude all the truths God has made known to us, since He is Knowledge and Truth Itself.
2. I ought to often thank Him for giving us His infallible, everlasting Church, to guard His truths and give us their exact meaning without even the possibility of error, on to the end of the world.
3. I ought to rejoice in the supernatural certitude I have of His revealed truths - a certitude which is proportionate to His infinitely reliable authority upon which it is based.
4. I ought to live my faith in all its fullness, since it is so absolutely certain. In doing this, I cannot possibly be wrong.
5. When tempted to sin, I should realise that God sees me; and that He knows even the most secret decisions of my will which are hidden from the angels. "You won't be found out" does not apply here.

(4). GOD IS INFINITE LOVE

Knowing Himself eternally as Infinite Goodness, God loves Himself eternally with an infinitely holy love. That is why St. John can say: "God IS Love." (1 John 4:16). This is not selfishness on God's part, for selfishness consists in preferring oneself to the Supreme Good. When we commit a deliberate mortal sin, we are selfish. God cannot do this. He IS the Supreme Good. His love for Himself is essentially a holy love.

For, what is holiness? It is a firm and enduring union with God. It implies an absence of sin. Sin is a turning away from God. God cannot sin. He cannot turn away from Himself. He must, on the contrary, hate sin with an infinite hatred, equal to His love of the Supreme Good, which is Himself.

God loves Himself necessarily; but He loves us freely. True, His goodness tends by its very nature to give goodness to others; but we know from revelation that this infinite yearning to communicate goodness is fully satisfied in the Blessed Trinity. There He communicates His infinite goodness to the three Divine Persons. Hence, He is left free to create us or not according to His will. Our existence, then, is a gift from God. It is a witness to His mercy, goodness and love.

God's love, of course, is different from ours. We love beings because we find them good already. God's love GIVES them all the goodness that is in them. It is a CREATIVE love. That is why it is so infinitely pure and so unselfish. It is a sheer GIVING.

And this gives the foundation of the lovely virtue of HUMILITY. For humility is based on TRUTH - a true recognition of the fact that all the goodness, natural and supernatural, that is in us comes ultimately from God. Error, lying, sin - these are from us alone; for they are not goods. They are not beings. They are, instead, the ABSENCE of perfections that OUGHT be present in our acts, but are not. All that is REAL and POSITIVE in our actions comes from God as the First Cause, and from our free will as secondary cause, co-operating with His grace. But our sins, inasmuch as they are a FAILURE on our part to use His grace, are ours alone.

Hence, St. Paul can say: "What hast thou which thou hast not received? And if thou hast received, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received?" (1 Cor. 4:7). From this, you can see what a terrible perversion PRIDE is. It is indeed the root of all sin; for sin is an attempt on the part of a creature to be independent of God.

God is the only Being who can say to each of us: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Before our mother's love bent over us in the cradle, before there was even any human being on earth to think of us, God thought of us, God loved us. And at the moment decreed by His wisdom, He brought us into existence from the depths of the nothingness in which we must otherwise have

remained forever. He made us human beings so that our souls might be raised to the supernatural order and thus given a share in His own divine life by sanctifying grace here on earth, and by the beatific vision in eternity.

Think of the gifts that God has given to you: excellent parents, early training in good habits, health of mind and body, the gift of faith, a Catholic education, and so on. Think of Bethlehem, Nazareth, Christ's public life, Calvary. Think of the infallible Church, the Mass, the Sacraments, grace, the supernatural virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. Think of God as your Father, Our Saviour as your Brother, the Holy Ghost as your Enlightener and Comforter, our Blessed Lady as your Mother, omnipotent in her power of intercession. Think of the grace of final perseverance and of the heaven to which it leads at death. Then you will realise the truth of St. John's words: "Let us love God, because He has first loved us." (1 John 4:19). And remember this: "God's love is a love of FRIENDSHIP. It is meant to be reciprocated. It calls for a return of love on our part – a love which is, as far as possible, as generous, as unselfish, as loyal as His own.

Practical Conclusions:

1. I should often think of God's eternal love for me, coming as it does from beyond the limits of time and space, and manifesting itself in so many gifts that find their culmination in heaven.
2. I should do my very best to co-operate with His grace, and thus love Him with a love of friendship modelled on His own.
3. I should avoid above all else the sin of pride, since it is the root of all other sins. It is the devil's sin; and He is the father of lies.
4. I should strive instead to live the truth in genuine humility, after the example of my Saviour who was ever "meek and humble of heart."
5. My love of God should increase constantly in intensity and thus enable me to enjoy the sweet presence of God in my soul, in an experience which is a foretaste of heaven.

(5). GOD IS INFINITE POWER

Since God is infinite in being, He is infinite also in operation, because the activity of any being is proportionate to its nature. God, therefore, is omnipotent. He can do all things.

He cannot make a square circle, or a stick with only one end, or a star so big that He cannot shift it, for these are not things. They are absurdities, contradictions. They cancel out like plus and minus and amount to nothing. Because God is infinite Wisdom, He cannot do what is absurd. Knowledge Itself, He cannot be ignorant of anything. Holiness Itself, He cannot commit a sin. Ignorance and sin are not beings. They are the absence of a reality or perfection which ought be present. They are not things. So, though God cannot do what is absurd or commit sin, He can still do all things.

His infinite power is shown in creation. In creating a thing, God gives it ALL the reality that is in it, without using any previous material to make it from. That is why He must keep on giving it being as long as it exists. Otherwise, it must instantly lose ALL its reality. It must be annihilated. That is why the heavens show forth the glory of God, and even a tiny grain of dust is an irrefragible witness to His existence.

His infinite power is shown also in miracles; for, in working a miracle, God produces an effect which is above the power of all created nature.

It is shown, again, in the forgiving of sin. It is a greater thing for God to put a sinner in a state of grace than it is for Him to create the universe. It is shown, finally, in the beatific vision where a created intellect is enabled by the light of glory to know God even as He knows Himself, so that the will can love Him as thus known, and the whole man be made splendid with the splendour of God.

Practical Conclusions:

1. I should have limitless confidence in God's omnipotence, which He puts at my disposal to enable me to save my soul.
2. I should put myself completely into His hands, realising that He has my welfare more at heart than I can ever have it myself.

3. I should have a reasonable distrust of my own powers, knowing that of myself, apart from His grace, I can only fall into error and sin.
4. I should try to be perfectly honest with God, by paying as fully as I can the debt of worship I owe to Him as my Creator, Preserver and Last End. I can do this by attending the whole Mass fervently, saying my prayers devoutly, doing all my work for God, and so on.
5. I should not be afraid even to ask God for a miracle, if the occasion warrants it, that He may be better known and honoured by men.

(6). GOD IS INFINITE JUSTICE

Justice is a virtue that moves us to give another his due. It is perfection that does not necessarily imply any imperfection, so it must be found in God. He is Justice Itself.

God's justice does not demand that He give equal excellence to every creature. If He is going to make man, for instance, He must also make a world for him to live on, and give him plants and animals to feed on. As a gesture of infinite generosity, He can even throw in with these an angel, to guide and guard him. A hierarchy of beings is the result.

His justice shows itself in the fact that He gives every creature the means to attain its end. That is why Our Lord can say: "Behold the birds of the air. They neither sow, nor do they reap... And your heavenly Father feedeth them." (Mat. 6:26). And, when it is question of man, God's solicitude is far greater, for man is made in His own image. He even became Man Himself, and went through the horrors of the Passion, to enable us to gain our end, which is heaven. To all who come to the use of reason in moral matters, He gives abundant graces to enable them to save their souls. To some, He gives more than to others. Those who receive more are expected to give more in return. Each is expected to develop to the full the talents given him. No one, no matter how poor or uneducated he may be, who does what he can to be saved can ever lose his soul.

God's justice is seen, too, in the way in which He rewards the good. Reward is proportionate to merit. The degree of glory in heaven is

measured by the degree of charity in the soul at death. But God's supernatural gifts are not always proportionate to His natural gifts. He often gives abundant graces to the poor and the despised of this world. Benedict Joseph Labre was but a verminous vagrant in the eyes of the worldly, but in the sight of God he had the heroic sanctity of a saint.

His justice is seen, finally, in the punishment He inflicts on those who deliberately refuse His grace, and die in mortal sin. By committing a deliberate mortal sin, a person freely chooses himself as his last end, instead of God. Death makes all further human acts impossible. It makes this choice of self irrevocable, and with it the separation it implies from God. And this is hell.

Practical Conclusions:

1. The thought of God's justice should fill me with hope, for it assures me of abundant grace to save my soul.
2. At the same time, I ought have a prudent fear of hell; and this should prevent me from taking unnecessary risks with sin.
3. I should remember that every free, un sinful act merits a reward for me in heaven, provided I am in a state of grace. How consoling this is!
4. I should try to get as much merit as I can from even the most trivial acts, by doing them from a pure motive and with intense love of God.
5. I should often think of these two sentences: "Come, ye blessed." "Depart from Me, ye cursed." Which will be mine? Which would be mine if I died this instant?"

(7). GOD IS INFINITE MERCY

He who is Being Itself must also be infinite Mercy; for it belongs to mercy to come to the assistance of those in need, to stoop to wretchedness, to bring being out of nothing and good out of evil.

We must first exist, before God can give us any other gift. That is why creation is an effect of God's mercy, as well as a striking manifestation of His goodness and power.

But His mercy is shown especially in the way He treats sinners. Since sin is an effort to withdraw from God's conserving influence, it should end in the annihilation of the sinner. When Adam sinned, the human race should have been annihilated. Instead, what an amazing drama of mercy is enacted in heaven. The Son of God becomes Man. A Cross is raised between earth and heaven. And God incarnate hangs there, a unique Martyr in an indescribable martyrdom. Infinite justice and infinite mercy meet on Calvary. The central Cross there shows God's justice exacting full reparation for sin. It shows also His mercy. It shows that we have been redeemed "with a great price."

And how amazingly kind Our Divine Saviour was to repentant sinners whom He met on earth! Think of His lovely parables of mercy: the lost groat - a wee coin; the lost sheep - something more valuable than a coin; the prodigal son - something more precious still, a human soul made in the image of God. Think of how He treated repentant sinners: the woman whom the Jews wanted to stone to death, Mary Magdalen, the thief on the cross, St. Peter. Think of His words to His executioners on Calvary: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34). They are perhaps the loveliest words ever spoken by the lips of God. And remember this: they apply to each of us today just as much as they did to those who nailed Him to the Cross. They could well be written in letters of gold over every confessional in the world, where His infinite mercy forgives sin every day, and will continue to do so, on to the end of the world.

Practical Conclusions:

1. I should never give way to despair by thinking that God will not give me enough grace to save my soul. It is a hideous sin. It denies not only God's justice, but also His mercy. It makes a mockery of Calvary.
2. Nor should I ever yield to presumption, by thinking that God's mercy will save me no matter how unfaithful I am to His grace. It is the height of folly to make His mercy a reason for offending Him.
3. Instead of making me rebellious and bitter, my failings ought to teach me to be humble, and spur me on to greater efforts to co-

operate with God's grace in the future. I should also learn from experience.

4. I should try to realise the astounding power of a sinner's plea for mercy: the greater his sin, the more eagerly does God come to His assistance.
5. I should see in the Sacrament of Extreme Unction an amazing witness to God's mercy, since this Sacrament can forgive sin even in a person who is unconscious, provided he has made an act of contrition before losing consciousness. Could God do more than this to save a soul?

(8). GOD IS INFINITE WISDOM

Wisdom ordains all things to their ultimate end. Infinite in every perfection, God is Wisdom Itself.

His wisdom is shown especially in His PROVIDENCE. By this, He knows our last end, gives us the means to gain it, and directs us to it.

Our end is to manifest God's glory by being happy in eternity. And He has so arranged things that no one can possibly fail to attain his end, unless he deliberately chooses to do otherwise. A child that dies without baptism before coming to the use of reason enjoys in LIMBO a vision of God, as the Author of the natural order. And this fulfils perfectly every natural desire the child can have for ever. He is perfectly happy with man's happiness in eternity. A person who comes to the use of reason receives grace to avoid deliberate mortal sin, and to be sorry for any committed. So death must find him in a state of grace or in a state of mortal sin. If he dies in grace, he shares God's happiness in heaven. If he dies in mortal sin, he is separated from God for ever, but only because he deliberately chooses to be that way. Thus, everyone is happy in eternity unless he freely chooses to be otherwise.

But what about suffering? Is that not against God's wisdom, seeing that the good have often to suffer more than the bad on earth? If man were made only for this life, suffering would indeed be a mystery. But man is made for eternity; and, seen in the light of eternity, suffering has an important part to play in man's life on account of sin – one's own sins, or the sins of others. You have only

to look at a Crucifix to realise that. We are absolutely certain that God is infinitely good and wise, and that He loves us with an infinite love. Hence, we are equally certain that He permits suffering only for our greater good, just as He Himself suffered for our welfare on Calvary. If you know that your father is a good father, and that he loves you dearly, you also know that when he does anything that causes you suffering, it can only be for your greater good. It is the same with our infinitely perfect Father in heaven.

The mothers of the Holy Innocents were doubtless tempted to rail against Providence; but had they known that their little ones were the first martyrs of the Church, they would have rejoiced instead. It is often the same with us. At the moment when suffering comes, we do not see its purpose. Later, however, we see in it the tender, loving Providence of God. He sees our life in His abiding present. He sees it whole, even into eternity. And He has our eternal welfare at heart, as we would have it ourselves, were we as wise as He. So, while doing our best to avoid any unreasonable suffering, especially that caused to others, let us accept unavoidable suffering with loving resignation to God's all-wise and all-holy will, realising that He knows what is best for us, not merely in this life, but in eternity.

It is not suffering itself which is so heart-rending. It is suffering not turned to profit. Let us therefore make sure to benefit by our sufferings by keeping in a state of grace, by accepting them with loving resignation, by using them to ennoble and strengthen our character, to develop our talents and our sympathy for others, to do away with our purgatory, to gain merits for heaven, to win graces for others, and thus to co-operate with Our Divine Saviour in the greatest of all works: the sanctifying and saving of souls.

And let us remember always the three crosses on Calvary. The unrepentant thief suffered because he deserved to suffer on account of his sins; but, as far as we can judge, he derived no benefit from his suffering. That is the way we should never suffer. The repentant thief suffered also because he deserved it on account of his sins; but he turned his suffering to profit. By it, he won heaven. This is the way we should suffer. Christ suffered, not because He deserved it, since He was infinitely sinless, but for the eternal welfare of others. This is the noblest suffering man can undergo. A few great saints have been asked by God to suffer this way, after they have paid all debt of temporal punishment due to their own sins. It is the highest vocation a human being can have; for it is co-operating most

intimately with Our Saviour and His Mother in the salvation of the world.

Practical Conclusions:

1. I should have unlimited confidence in God's Providence, since He is my infinitely wise, loving and powerful Father.
2. I should not put imaginary difficulties to myself, saying: "Would I be faithful to Him even in martyrdom?" for God always gives exceptional help in exceptional circumstances.
3. I should keep my soul always in a state of grace, so that I can win merit for heaven by my sufferings.
4. I cannot be too resigned to God's Providence in things over which I have no control, such as the weather, earthquakes, the death of friends.
5. I should often record these most consoling words of Sacred Scripture: "To those that love God, all things work together unto good." (Roms. 8:28).

There are of course many other attributes of God which we could consider, did space permit; but these few will help you to realise what kind of a Being God is. Try to realise that He is infinitely good and infinitely loving; hence that He yearns always to help you. That He is infinitely powerful; hence that He can always help you. That He is infinitely merciful; hence, that even your sins can plead for help from Him provided you are sorry for them and resolved to avoid them in future. Remember, finally, that he is not only your Creator, Conserver, and Last End, but above all your Father and your Friend; and that He wishes you to treat Him as such, by living in a way befitting your high calling as His adopted son, and as a joint-heir with His own Divine Son to heaven.

SUMMARY

1. God Is Eternal.

I should live in such a way as to merit an eternity of happiness with Him in heaven.

2. God Is Infinite Goodness.

I should love Him above all else. He alone can satisfy all my desires for ever.

3. God Is Infinite Knowledge And Truth.

I should accept His revelation on His own infinitely reliable authority; and live it since it is so certain.

4. God Is Infinite Love.

I should try to love Him with a love of friendship which is, as far as possible, as generous, unselfish and loyal as His own.

5. God is Infinite Power.

I should hope to gain heaven with His all-powerful help.

6. God Is Infinite Justice.

I am certain He will give me the means of saving my soul; I should have a reasonable fear of hell.

7. God Is Infinite Mercy.

I should never despair. Nor should I ever give way to presumption.

8. God Is Infinite Wisdom.

I should be perfectly resigned to His all-wise and all-holy will; He has my eternal welfare at heart as my Father and Friend.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. "The simultaneous, full and perfect possession of unending life." This is a definition of God's (...). 2. In God's eternity there is no past and no future, but just an enduring (...). 3. A thing is good to the extent that it can satisfy our (...). 4. (...) alone can satisfy all our desires for ever. 5. We should love a thing in proportion to the amount of (...) in it. 6. I should hate (...) sin above every other evil. 7. Next to it, I should hate (...) sin. 8. Even hell witnesses to God's goodness, because it shows His inalienable (...) to be loved above everything else. 9. Knowledge is a (material) (immaterial) union between knower and known. 10. The more a being is superior to matter, the more perfect is its knowledge. (True) (False). 11. The agreement of the mind knowing with the thing known is called (...). 12. Since God is Knowledge and Truth Itself, I should accept whatever He has (...). 13. In doing this, my certitude is proportionate to His infinite (...) upon which alone it is based. 14. I should thank God for giving us His (...) and (...) Church to guard and interpret His truths without possibility of error. 15. God not only knows whether I shall go to heaven or hell, but He also knows how I

shall get there, namely, by using my (...). 16. It (is) (is not) selfish for God to love Himself. 17. Holiness is a firm, enduring union with (...). 18. Alfred says that a person is good because God loves that person. Peter says that God loves the person because he is good. Which is right? (...). 19. God is our (...); Christ is our (...); the Holy Ghost is our (...); Our Lady is our (...) so we have nothing to fear. 20. St. Paul says: "What hast thou which thou hast not (...)" 21. God (can) (cannot) make a square circle. 22. God (is) (is not) responsible for our sins. 23. God co-operates in all that is (...) and (...) in my actions. 24. St. John says: "Let us love God, because He has first (...)." 25. A mutual, unselfish love is called a love of (...). 26. Humility is based on (...). 27. I pay my debt of worship to God by practising the virtue of (...). 28. To think that God will not give me enough grace to save my soul is to give way to the sin of (...). 29. To think that God will save me no matter how unfaithful I am to grace is to commit the sin of (...). 30. Merit in heaven is proportionate to the degree of (...) in the soul at death. 31. In limbo a soul enjoys a vision of God as the Author of the (...) order. 32. In heaven a soul enjoys a vision of God as the Author of the (...) order. 33. No one can be unhappy in eternity unless he deliberately chooses to be that way. (True) (False). 34. The Holy Innocents were the first (...) of the Church. 35. I can win merit for heaven by my sufferings provided I am in a state of (...). 36. It is better to suffer with merit on earth than to go to (...) where one's sufferings can no longer merit. 37. I (should) (should not) seek suffering for its own sake. 38. Every (...) and (...) act that I perform will merit a reward in heaven, provided I am in a state of grace. 39. St. Paul tells us that "To those who love God, (...) things work together unto good." 40. I ought always remember that God is not only my Creator, Conserver and Last End, but above all my (...) and my (...).

(B).

1. Your non-Catholic friend thinks that God is electricity. What can you say to enlighten him?
2. What would you say to a person who thinks that God is a circle whose centre is nowhere and whose circumference is everywhere?
3. Your companion says: "Let's raid Mr. Sweetapple's orchard. He's away. We won't be found out." Do you agree?
4. James wants to know what good he can get from his sufferings. Tell him.

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5. Your neighbour, who has appendicitis, refuses to consult a doctor on the plea that this would be acting against Providence. What can you say about his conduct?
6. Pat thinks that because God knows whether he is going to be saved or lost it is no use his doing anything about it. Why is he wrong?
7. Tom thinks it is selfish for God to love Himself. Enlighten him.
8. God plus the universe equals God. The Universe minus God equals 0. Do you agree?
9. Your non-Catholic friend thinks that hell cannot be reconciled with God's infinite goodness. Show him how it can.
10. Tell little Peter what a parable is. Illustrate by relating the parable of the lost groat, the lost sheep, and the prodigal son. Show him the lesson taught by each.

Chapter 10

THE NEW TESTAMENT AS AN HISTORICAL RECORD

The Bible is divided into the Old Testament and the New. The Old Testament deals with the creation of the universe and of man, his fall from grace, the promise of a Redeemer, prophecies concerning Him, and many other things that happened to the Chosen People up to the coming of Christ. The New Testament tells us how He came, what He taught and did; and it relates events that happened in the early life of the Church. At present, we are concerned with only the New Testament. And we are concerned with it, not as INSPIRED or written by God, but merely as a record of HISTORY.

It is made up of four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, many Epistles and the Apocalypse. In one short chapter we cannot hope to prove that all these books are reliable records of history. That would require, not a chapter, but a large volume - in fact, several of them. We shall have to restrict ourselves to the Gospels. Even then, we can give but the barest outline. In his book on Christ, Father Grandmaison writes over two hundred pages to show that the Gospels give us true history, though he is not treating this matter for its own sake, but just by way of introduction to his life of Our Saviour. A whole library of books has been written on the subject. So, at best, we can merely try to show how historians and Biblical scholars go about proving that the Gospels are reliable records of history. And what we say of them applies with equal truth to the other books of the New Testament.

Our word "Gospel" comes to us from a Greek word meaning "good news." The early Christians rightly thought that the coming of the Redeemer was the best good news that the world had ever heard. So they called Our Lord's TEACHING the "GOSPEL," the "GOOD NEWS." Later, some of His teachings came to be written down in four books. So they called each of these BOOKS the Gospel, also: the Gospel according to St. Matthew, the Gospel according to St. Mark, the Gospel according to St. Luke and the Gospel according to St. John. Thus, the early Christians used the word Gospel to mean

both Christ's TEACHING and these BOOKS, just as we use it today. Now, the question is this: Are these four Gospels reliable records of HISTORY? Do they tell us the TRUTH about Christ? Here is an outline of the way we prove that they do.

1. Proof From History.

If you want to find out whether any history book is reliable, what do you do? You answer these four questions: (i). Was it written by the man to whom it is attributed? (ii). Was he a reliable person, and in a position to know the truth? (iii). Did he tell the truth? (iv). Has his book come down to us without any substantial alteration?

As long as these conditions are fulfilled, it does not matter how old a book may be. Some of the most reliable history records are much older than the Gospels - that of the Persian invasion of Greece, written by Herodotus who died in 425 B.C., for example; or that of the Peloponnesian War, written by Thucydides, who died only twenty-five years after him. Nor does it make any difference if our copies of an old book are only translations, provided they can be proved to be accurate ones. Historical facts do not change with the passing of the years. Nor are they changed by being told in a different language. Applying, now, our questions to the Gospels, we find that history answers them as follows: -

(i). The Gospels were written by the men to whom they are attributed.

It is easy enough for a man in Australia today to deny this, provided he has never studied the matter, and knows nothing about it. Australia is a long way from Palestine; and ignorance can be colossal. But it is impossible for a man like Father Lagrange, for example, to deny it. Why? Because he has spent the greater part of his life in Palestine, studying the Scriptures. He is thoroughly acquainted with the people who live there. He knows their languages perfectly, their age-old customs, their history, the places described in the Gospels, and thousands of other things connected with them. He knows what he is talking about when he writes his

excellent books on Scripture. He cannot deny that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John each wrote the Gospel attributed to them.

Nor could the learned men who studied them, say, in the fourth century. Why not? Because they lived comparatively near to the times of the Apostles; and they had at their disposal many documents which have since crumbled to dust. A thousand years from now, men may feel inclined to deny many facts which we accept today concerning the Reformation, especially if atomic bombs have helped to destroy the evidence for them. But we cannot deny these facts. We live too near the time of the Reformers. We have too much proof. It was the same, remember, for the great writers of the fourth century. None of them, whether they were pagans or Jews, heretics or Catholics, could deny the authorship of the Gospels. The evidence was too clear.

Take a man like St. JEROME, for instance. Who was he? Was he in a position to know the truth about the Gospels? Read his life, and see for yourself. Born in Dalmatia in 341, he studied in Rome. He travelled much through Thrace, Bithynia, Pontus, Cappadocia and Cilicia. He went to Palestine. Then to Antioch. Then to Constantinople. Then back to Rome. He met everywhere the most learned men of the time - Jews, pagans, heretics, and Catholics. He found out what they all accepted concerning the authors of the Gospels; and why they did so. In 385, he settled in Bethlehem, where he directed a monastery and a school, and gave himself entirely to the study of the Scriptures. Here, he completed his great works, including his translation of the Bible, known as the VULGATE. Because of his fierce, uncompromising and critical nature, because, too of his vast knowledge of sacred Scripture and of his many journeys which brought him into contact with scholars in all parts of the civilised world, and because, finally, of his long residence in Bethlehem, he is recognised today as the greatest Biblical scholar in the whole history of the Church. He certainly knew what he was talking about when he dealt with the Gospels. And here is what he said: -

"Matthew, also called Levi, who, from being a publican, became an Apostle, first of all wrote a Gospel of Christ in Judaea, in Hebrew letters and words, for the sake of the converted Jews."

"Mark, the disciple and interpreter of St. Peter, wrote at the request of the brethren in Rome a brief Gospel according to what

he had heard of the preaching of Peter. And, when Peter heard of it, he approved of it; and, of his own authority, ordered it to be read in the churches, as Clement in the 6th book of his 'Outlines' tells us, and Papias, the Bishop of Hierapolis." Papias, remember, was for years a friend of St. John, the Apostle, or of John, the Ancient, so he belongs to the times of the Apostles themselves, and is consequently an invaluable witness to the authorship of the Gospels.

"St. Luke, a doctor of Antioch, has written the Gospel of which St. Paul has said: 'I have sent with him a brother whose praise is in the Gospel'."

"The Apostle John, whom Jesus loved exceedingly, was the son of Zebedee and the brother of the Apostle, James, whom Herod put to death. He wrote his Gospel last of all, and at the request of the Bishops of Asia, as an antidote to Cerinthus and other heretics." Cerinthus denied the Divinity of Christ.

Could any testimony be clearer? Could any in that age be more reliable? Did any enemy of the Church, pagan, heretic or Jew, deny what St. Jerome said? Not one. They all accepted the authorship of the Gospels as an incontrovertible fact. They had to, on account of the evidence that existed at the time.

Similar testimony could be given for other great scholars of the fourth century - men like St. Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386), St. Gregory Nazianzen (325-389), St. Chrysostom (344-407), not to mention the incomparable St. Augustine (354-430) of whom a modern critic says: "He was one of the most prolific geniuses that humanity has ever known. He is admired not only for the number of his works, but also for the variety of his subjects embracing the whole realm of thought." But we must pass now to earlier writers.

What about writers of the third century - Jews, pagans, heretics as well as Catholics? Were they unanimous in holding that the Gospels were written by the men to whom they are attributed? Yes. Why? Because they were NEARER still to the times of the Apostles. They were in an even better position to know the truth.

Take, for example, EUSEBIUS. Born in Caesarea in Palestine in 260, he was made a bishop in 315. At the great Council of Nicaea, he sat on the right of the Emperor, and gave the opening address.

Clearly, then, he enjoyed great prestige. He wrote much on all kinds of things: the martyrs, theology, the Scriptures, but his main work is his History, which has won for him the title: "The Founder of Church History." A modern writer says of him: "He came forward at a critical moment with his immense stores of learning, and preserved priceless treasures of Christian antiquity." He is acknowledged to be a competent and reliable witness to the belief of his century. And here is what he tells us about the Gospels:-

"Matthew, after having evangelised the Hebrews, when he was about to go to other nations, delivered to them as a compensation his Gospel written in the native tongue."

"So greatly did the splendour of piety illuminate the minds of Peter's hearers, that they were not satisfied with hearing once only, and were not content with the unwritten teaching of the divine Gospel; but, with all sorts of entreaties, they besought Mark, a follower of Peter... that he would leave them a written monument of the doctrine that had been orally taught to them. Nor did they cease till they had prevailed with the man, and had thus become the occasion of the written Gospel which bears the name of Mark." Eusebius goes on to say how Peter approved of the Gospel, and of its use in the Church.

"Luke, a native of Antioch, a doctor as regards science, composed the model of his art to heal souls, in two inspired books: the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles."

"John, the last of them all, when he noticed that in the Gospels compiled by the others were narrated things pertaining to the Body of Christ, being himself filled with the breath of the Divine Spirit, wrote a spiritual Gospel, at the request of his acquaintances." John's Gospel is more spiritual than the others inasmuch as it was written to prove the Divinity of Christ.

Or, consider the testimony of ORIGEN. Born in 185, he became head of the great Catechetical School at Alexandria. Eusebius describes him as a man of exceptional mental and moral gifts, studious, austere, ardent and zealous almost to indiscretion. He travelled much in Italy, Arabia, Palestine and Greece. In 231 he set up a School in Palestine, and there carried on the work he had done at Alexandria. He gave himself wholly to study, especially that of the Scriptures. Horribly tortured for his faith during the Decian

persecution, he died soon after as a result of his sufferings. St. Gregory of Nyssa calls him "The Prince of Christian learning in the third century" - a title not unmerited in an age of champions of the faith. What does he say about the Gospels? Here it is:-

"Among the four Gospels which are the only indisputable ones in the Church of God, I have learnt by tradition that the first was written by Matthew, who was once a publican but afterwards an apostle of Jesus Christ, and delivered to the Jewish believers, composed in the Hebrew tongue."

"The second Gospel is according to St. Mark; and this he wrote as Peter taught him."

"As I have learnt touching the four Gospels which are alone received without opposition in the Church of God... the Gospel of Luke is in the third place."

He also unhesitatingly places the Gospel of St. John among "the four Gospels which are the only indisputable ones under heaven."

Other testimonies just as reliable could be given from writers of the third century; but these will suffice to show the universal belief of the scholars of the time. Not a single protest is raised against it.

What about the second and the first century? Nearer still to the times of the Apostles, the scholars of these two centuries were in the best position of all to know who wrote the Gospels. And they, again, are unanimous in ascribing these books to the authors to whom they are ascribed today.

Look, for example, at IRENAEUS. Born in Proconsular Africa in 115, he was the friend of Bishop Polycarp, who was himself a disciple of St. John. His book, "*Against Heresies*," gives us valuable information about the teaching of Christianity from the beginning to the end of the second century, and his "*Proof of Apostolic Teaching*" contains much precious matter about the Scriptures. Educated in Asia Minor and also in Rome, he witnesses to the teaching of both the East and the West. Learned, sincere, and linked as he was to the Apostles themselves through Polycarp, his testimony is of the greatest value. And here is what he tells us about the Gospels : -

"Matthew published his Gospel among the Hebrews in their own language, when Peter and Paul were preaching the glad tidings in Rome and founding the Church there. After their death, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, wrote what had been preached by Peter. Luke, too, a companion of Paul, recorded in a book the Gospel preached by Paul. Later on, John, the disciple of the Lord, who had reclined on His breast, published his Gospel, while living at Ephesus in Asia."

To this perfectly clear and reliable testimony, we can add that of the *Muratorian Canon* – a list of the sacred books drawn up about the year 170; Tatian's "*Harmony of the Four Gospels*" composed about the same year; the Titles of the Gospels themselves, given them about the year 100; the testimony of Polycarp who wrote about the year 112; that of Ignatius, who wrote about the year 107, and many others. And these witnesses are merely recording a universal belief that has come to them from the times when the Gospels were written. For no protest whatever arises on the part of the enemies of the Church. By showing that the Gospels had not been written by the men to whom they are attributed, the Church's enemies could have destroyed all her arguments at one blow. But none of them resorted to this. The evidence was too much for them. They would have been laughed to scorn, just as a person would today, if he held that Chesterton did not write "*The Everlasting Man*" or the poem called "*Lepanto*." We are quite certain, therefore, that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are the authors of the Gospels attributed to them. Now, for the second step in the proof.

(ii). These men were reliable, and in a position to know the truth.

That they were reliable is acknowledged now by all critics; for Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were obviously quite normal persons, not dreamers, cranks, or fanatics.

That they were in a position to know the truth is equally clear. Two of them, Matthew and John, were constant companions of Christ, during the whole of His public ministry. The other two, Mark and Luke, were the secretaries of Peter and Paul respectively; and merely wrote what these Apostles preached. In reading St. Mark's Gospel, you are really reading St. Peter's; and in reading St. Luke's, you are reading St. Paul's. All four evangelists had merely to write down what they heard and saw; and with them, as with us, the external senses were infallible.

(iii). They told the truth.

This, again, is admitted by all today. In the first place, it is clear from every page of their writings. A man's writing reflects his character and his personality. In the second place, they all suffered martyrdom – either a quick or a slow one – for the faith that they preached. No humble, sane man will thus die for what he knows to be a lie.

(iv). The truth as they told it has come down to us substantially unchanged.

This is clear from the following facts : –

(a). From the very beginning, the Christians regarded the Gospels as not merely historical records, but as SACRED books, inspired or written by God, as well as by man. Hence, they guarded them with a unique care. They were ready to die a martyr's death rather than alter or destroy the smallest part of them. They regarded them, as St. Augustine says, as “God's letters” to us His little ones.

(b). Moreover, the numerous copies made from the beginning, in different parts of the world, prevented any substantial change from being adopted. A Christian scribe might unintentionally make a mistake in copying a manuscript; but when this copy was later compared with copies made by others, his error would be immediately seen and corrected, since it would not exist in the other copies. Thus it became impossible for anyone to falsify the books in a permanent way. By comparing the thousands of manuscripts that exist from the early days of the Church, and the many quotations made from them by the Fathers of the first centuries, Biblical scholars can be certain of the original words used by the Evangelists.

(c). The Gospels were read so widely by the early Christians – at every Mass, for instance – that the faithful soon came to know them by heart. And, since they cherished them more than life itself, they protested most vehemently against any attempt to change them even in the slightest way, just as we would protest today.

Thus it is proved that the Gospels have come to us without any SUBSTANTIAL change. There have been minor changes in spelling

and the like, but these do not affect the teaching in any way; nor do they lessen the value of the Gospels as records of true history. And what we have said of the Gospels applies also to the other books of the New Testament.

2. Proof From The Sublimity Of The Doctrine Taught In The Gospels.

The Gospels tell us what we must BELIEVE in order to live a Christian life, and what we must DO. And the truths that they make known to us in both these spheres are so sublime that supreme geniuses like St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, as well as mystics and saints of every age since Christ, have not been able to exhaust the riches of knowledge and wisdom contained in them. Is it possible that men like Sts. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John could have invented truths so sublime? That would have been the miracle of miracles. They are obviously truths taught by Christ, and merely recorded faithfully by the authors of the Gospels. They are so far above the natural powers of man's intellect, that their very excellence proves that they can have come from God alone.

3. Proof From Recent Discoveries.

In recent years many discoveries have been made in connection with the Scriptures. And every one of these discoveries has been in favour of the historical value of these writings. We have space for only one example. St. Luke speaks of a census of the Roman Empire which Augustus ordered to be taken. Biblical critics maintained that this was unhistorical, since they could find no reference to this census other than St. Luke's. They also said that St. Luke made a mistake when he referred to Quirinus as Governor of Syria at the time when Christ was born, because Quirinus was not appointed to that position till six years later. However, we now possess some of actual census returns sent in from Egypt by Roman subjects there; and it has also been proved that Quirinus was twice Governor of Syria, and that his first term of office corresponded with the birth of Christ. Many other examples could be given. Every new discovery has been in favour of the historical worth of the Gospels. Not a single one has been against it. This speaks for itself.

4. Proof From Prophecies In The Gospels.

The Gospels contain prophecies which depend for their fulfilment on the free will of man. Take, for example, Our Lady's words: "All generations shall call me blessed." Or Our Lord's promise to His Church: "Behold, I am with you all days, even to the end of the world." Both of these astounding statements have been fulfilled perfectly, for two thousands years and, as even H. G. Wells admits, it looks as though they will continue to be fulfilled, right to the end of time. Could men like Matthew, Mark, Luke and John have invented such prophecies? It is impossible.

5. Proof From Arguments Used By Our Enemies.

Most critics who have denied that the Gospels give true history have based their arguments not on HISTORY itself, but on some prejudice such as this: "Miracles are impossible; hence, any record of a miracle is by its nature unhistorical." Such a line of argument is, of course, quite illogical. It begs the question, as they say in logic. It takes for granted the very thing that has to be proved. Hence, it is quite unreasonable. People who use this argument should visit Lourdes or Fatima, and see for themselves what facts, tested scientifically, have to say about the possibility of miracles. Others apply to Scripture a method of internal criticism which, if applied to any other historical record, would destroy its value. They make history impossible. If you read Father Ronald Knox's "Essays in Satire" you will see what is meant. In one of these essays, he applies the method of these Biblical critics to Tennyson's "*In Memoriam*"; and proves conclusively that this poem was not written by Tennyson at all, as historians believe, but by Queen Victoria. His essay is, of course, just a skit; but it is not more grotesque or incredible than many of the Biblical criticisms made by our enemies today. We can only conclude that, if this is all they have to say against the historical value of the Gospels, they have a very poor case indeed.

6. Proof From Admissions Made By Hostile Critics.

At the turn of the twentieth century, it was the fashion for hostile critics to deny the historical value of the New Testament. But much research has been made since then, with the result that many of the most learned of them have been forced to admit that these books do give us true history. Take Harnack, for example. This illustrious Protestant critic can hardly be said to be prejudiced in favour of the Catholic Church.

Yet he writes: "Sixty years ago (before the 1960's), David Frederic Strauss thought that he had deprived the first three Gospels of almost all their value.... the historical and critical labour of two generations has succeeded in restoring it to them.... The Gospels are not 'party documents'.... They belong, in their essentials, to the primitive, Judaic period of Christianity.... It is a happy accident, for which we ought to be thankful to history, that we still possess accounts dating from this period.... The absolutely unique character of the Gospels is today universally recognised by critics.... That in them we are, for all essentials, face to face with primitive tradition, is incontestable." Coming as it does from a man like Harnack, such an admission speaks volumes.

Other arguments could be given, did space permit. But, what we have said will suffice to show you how Biblical scholars and historians set about proving that the Gospels give us true history. Later in life, you can read the proofs more fully from the many excellent books written by non-Catholics as well as Catholics, on this important subject.

SUMMARY

1. Proof From History.

Reliable evidence from history proves that: -

- (i). The Gospels were written by the men to whom they are attributed.
- (ii). These men were reliable, and in a position to know the truth.
- (iii). They told the truth.
- (iv). The truth as they told it has come down to us substantially unchanged.

2. Proof From The Sublimity Of The Doctrine Taught In The Gospels.

3. Proof From Discoveries Made In Recent Years.

4. Proof From Prophecies Contained In The Gospels.

5. Proof From Arguments Used by Our Enemies.

6. Proof From Admissions Made By Hostile Critics.

EXERCISES

1. To prove that any history book is reliable, you answer four questions concerning it. What are they?
2. The bitter opponents of the early Church could have pulverised in one blow the arguments given in her favour by the Fathers, if they could have shown that the New Testament was unhistorical. Did they ever adopt this line of argument? Why not?
3. What do you know about St. Jerome? What is his translation of the Bible called?
4. Who was Eusebius? Why is he called "The Founder of Church History"?
5. Who was Irenaeus? Why is his testimony of the utmost value?
6. What were the following, and why are they important? The Muratorian Canon; Tatian's Harmony of the Four Gospels.
7. Who was Origen? Why was he a reliable authority on the Scriptures?
8. Give two discoveries that have proved the Gospels correct.
9. Give two prophecies that have been fulfilled. Why could the Gospel writers not have invented these?
10. What has Harnack been forced to admit?

Chapter 11

CHRIST'S CLAIM AND HOW HE PROVED IT

1. Reason Shows That God Can Make Known Truths To Us. And That He Is Likely To Do So.

We have seen that REASON proves that God exists. And what sort of a Being is He? A bit of electricity that can know nothing? No. A being who can tell us a lie? No. He is knowledge and Truth Itself. Hence He knows countless things that we do not know. He is an intellectual Being. Each of us, too, has an intellect. So He can make known truth to us, as He wills. Nothing more obvious. But is He likely to do this? Yes. He is not only Knowledge and Truth Itself. He is also infinitely good and loving. He has our welfare, especially our eternal welfare, far more at heart than we can ever have it ourselves.

What sort of truths is He likely to reveal to us? How to make an aeroplane or a vacuum cleaner? No. These things are not necessary for our happiness. Thousands of saints were extremely happy in this life and are now sharing God's happiness in heaven, though they had none of these machines when on earth. Moreover, we can think these things out for ourselves. When, however, it is question of our LAST END, God is likely to help us by telling us what we must know and do in order to gain it. Why? Because on this depends our happiness in this world and in the next.

If He decides to raise us to the SUPERNATURAL order by making us for the Beatific Vision, He simply has to reveal this fact to us, since we can never know it by our reason alone. But He is also likely to tell us many truths that we can know by our unaided reason: that our soul is immortal, for example, or that we have free will, or what we must do to keep the natural law. Why? In order that we may know these truths with the greatest ease, with absolute certitude, and without even the possibility of error, and so live them fully in our daily life.

Thus, our REASON assures us that God can make known truths to us, and that He is likely to do so. But, to find if God has ever actually done this, we must turn to HISTORY. It can tell us. Here is what it says:

2. History Proves That God Has Made Known Religious Truths To Us.

History assures us that God has made known truths to us through the PROPHETS in the Old Law, and through CHRIST in the New. Since we have just proved that the Gospels are a reliable record of history, we shall restrict ourselves to them. As books of history, what do they tell us? These two facts:-

(A). A Man called Christ claimed that God sent Him to teach religious truths.

(B). He worked miracles for the very purpose of proving this claim.

In a later chapter, we shall prove that Christ is truly God as well as Man; but for the present we shall consider Him merely as a Man.

(A). His claim.

No one who admits that the Gospels give us true history can deny that Christ claimed that God sent Him.

Whenever the Jews asked Him if He was the Messiah foretold by the Prophets, He said explicitly that He was. When, for instance, John the Baptist's messengers asked Him if He was the promised Messiah, He told them that He was. (Mat. 11:2-5). He told the Samaritan woman at the well side. (John 4:25-26). He told His judges during His Passion. (Mat. 26:63-64). He told His Apostles over and over again. (Mat. 16:15-17, Luke 24:25-27, etc.).

Read the eighth chapter of St. John's Gospel and you will find that in this one chapter alone Christ claims no fewer than seven times that God has sent Him:

1. "I am not alone, but I and the Father who sent Me."
2. "The Father who sent Me giveth testimony of Me."
3. "He that sent Me is true; and the things I have heard of Him, these same I speak in the world."
4. "I do nothing of Myself, but as the Father hath taught Me, these things I speak."
5. "He who sent Me is with Me, and He hath not left Me alone; for I do always the things that please Him."
6. "I speak that which I have seen with my Father."
7. "If God were your Father, you would indeed love Me; for from God I proceeded and came; for I came not of Myself, but He sent Me."
8. "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father that glorifieth Me, of whom you say that He is your God."
9. "Abraham your father rejoiced that He might see my day; He saw it, and was glad."

And just before His ascension He says to His Apostles: "As the Father hath sent Me, so also I send you. Going, therefore, teach all nations." (John 20:21-23, Mat. 28:19-20). He gives them exactly the same mission to teach as He Himself received from His Father.

It is quite certain, then, that Christ claimed that God sent Him.

(B). How He proved it.

Christ proved the truth of this claim by working miracles FOR THAT VERY PURPOSE.

God alone can be the cause of a miracle. And it is quite impossible for Him to work one in favour of a false claim. To do this would be to co-operate in a lie. It would be to deceive us. And God can never do that. Hence, the miracles worked by Him for the express purpose of proving Christ's claim are God's own seal, His very signature, to the truth of that claim. It is infinitely impossible for it to be false. But to appreciate this, we need to understand clearly what a miracle is.

(a). What a miracle is.

In the first place, a miracle is a FACT, an actual happening, an event. The raising of Lazarus from the dead is an example. So is the Immaculate Conception. But, of course, not all facts are miracles. It is a fact that the sun shines from time to time in Inglewood; but that is not a miracle.

A miracle is a fact which no creatures can ever produce by their own NATURAL powers. By creatures we mean all beings other than God: atoms, stars, plants, animals, men, angels. Whether these act singly or in union with others or all together, they can never produce an effect which is miraculous. Why not? Because by its very definition a miracle is an event which is BEYOND the power of any created or creatable natures.

Every creature has a NATURE of its own, whether it be a hydrogen atom, a carrot, a rabbit, a man or an angel. With this it has an inclination to act, powers of acting, activities and effects proper to itself. And, just as its nature is limited, so too are the effects it can produce. Thus, a hydrogen atom cannot grow by cell division. A carrot can. A carrot cannot dream. A rabbit can. A rabbit cannot form universal ideas. A man can. A man cannot know his own substance directly. An angel can. And the ORDER that arises from the NATURAL activity of every creature is called the NATURAL ORDER. Well, a miracle is completely BEYOND this. It is a SUPERNATURAL event.

That is why the shining of the sun is not a miracle. True, it can penetrate ninety-three million miles of darkness. Imagine a car headlight that could do that! Still, it is due to natural forces alone. Hence it is not miraculous. If Old Nick began to toss the furniture about in this room, this would not be a miracle. He would be using merely the natural power he has over matter as far as moving it is concerned. A miracle, we repeat, is a SUPERNATURAL occurrence. Not a natural one.

In other words, it is one that God alone can produce. But understand the word "alone." It does not mean necessarily "on His own." In working a miracle, God may act just on His own, as He did when He sanctified Our Lady's soul at the moment He created it. But He may also make use of a creature, as He does today when He uses Lourdes water to cure a cancer. A pen cannot write an essay on its own, can it? But you can use it to write one. Similarly, water cannot work a miracle on its own. But God can use it to work one. If

He does, He is said to be the PRINCIPAL cause of the miracle. The water is its INSTRUMENTAL cause. No creature can ever be the principal cause of a miracle, any more than your pen can ever be the principal cause of an essay. That is what we mean when we say that God alone can work a miracle.

But do not get the idea that everything God alone can do is a miracle. He does millions of things daily, either on His own or through the medium of His creatures, which are not miracles. Why not? Because they are done by Him in accordance with the FIXED LAWS of His ORDINARY providence, either in the natural or in the supernatural order.

The laws of His ORDINARY providence in the NATURAL order are made known to us in the way things act with their natural powers, as principal causes, each producing effects proportionate to the nature He has given it. Thus, it is part of God's ORDINARY providence that oxygen should unite with hydrogen to form water; that metals should expand when heated; that plants should multiply by reproduction; that a wound should heal gradually by the multiplication of cells; that God should create a human soul when the parents have disposed the matter to receive it; and so on. We know the laws of God's ORDINARY providence in the NATURAL order from experience and the use of our reason.

The laws of His ORDINARY providence in the SUPERNATURAL order are made known to us by God Himself. Thus, we know that whenever we make an act of perfect contrition, sin is forgiven us; whenever a priest consecrates validly at Mass, the substance of bread is changed into the substance of the Body of Christ; whenever the Pope speaks with the required conditions, he is infallible; and so on. We know the laws of God's ORDINARY providence in the SUPERNATURAL order from His revelation alone.

Now, a miracle is an event produced by God in a way that is right OUTSIDE the fixed laws of His ORDINARY providence, whether these belong to the natural or to the supernatural order. It belongs to His EXTRAORDINARY providence, which we cannot know in any way, either by our reason or by revelation. Hence, it is a most EXTRAORDINARY event. That is why it causes such amazement. That is why it is called a "miracle"; for the word comes from the Latin verb "mirari" meaning "to be amazed."

From what has been said, you can see that three conditions are required for a miracle:-

- (i). It must be a fact, an actual happening, an event.
- (ii). It must be one which is wholly beyond the natural powers of all creatures, so that it can have God alone as its cause.
- (iii). It must be produced by God in a way that is right outside the fixed laws of His ordinary providence, in the natural or in the supernatural order.

Hence, to tell whether an event is a miracle or not, you have merely to see whether ALL these conditions are fulfilled. If any one of them is missing, it is not a miracle.

Take your baptism. Was it a miracle? Was it a fact? Yes. Was it one that only God could accomplish? Yes. In accomplishing it did He act outside the laws of His ordinary providence? No. Hence, it was not a miracle. Take the creation of your soul. Was it a fact? Yes. Was it one that God alone could accomplish? Yes. In accomplishing it did He act outside the laws of His ordinary providence? No. Hence, again, no Miracle. Take Our Lady's prophecy that all generations would call her blessed. Was it a fact? Yes. Was it one that God alone could accomplish? Yes. In accomplishing it did He act outside the laws of His ordinary providence? Yes. So, it was a miracle.

(b). Kinds of miracles.

- (i). Miracles can be VISIBLE or INVISIBLE.

The multiplication of the loaves, the raising of Lazarus, the stilling of the storm - these were VISIBLE miracles. The Immaculate Conception, the sanctification of the soul of John the Baptist before his birth, the Incarnation - these were INVISIBLE ones.

- (ii). Miracles can be of the PHYSICAL, MORAL or INTELLECTUAL order.

The instant cure of a cancer by Lourdes water is a miracle of the PHYSICAL order. The conversion of St. Paul was a miracle of the MORAL order. The prophecy of Our Lord concerning His Church is a miracle in the INTELLECTUAL order.

(c). How we can know a miracle.

First, its occurrence. If it is a visible miracle we can know that it has happened just as we can know that any ordinary visible event has happened, by using our external senses, which are infallible. If it is an invisible miracle, we can know of its occurrence through God's revelation, which is also infallible.

Secondly, its miraculous character. We can judge this by asking two questions: Was it an event that God alone could accomplish? And, if so, was He acting outside the laws of His ordinary providence? If the answer to both these questions is "yes," we are faced with a miracle. If the answer to either of them is "no," the event is not a miracle.

A cancer wound is instantly cured by water at Lourdes. Can the water do this by its natural power alone? No. Neither can any other creature. Why not? Because the natural curing of a gaping wound requires the GRADUAL production of millions of cells by cell-division. This, as all doctors admit, demands a certain minimum time which nature can never lessen. The instantaneity of the cure puts it beyond the natural power not only of water, but also of even the highest angel God could create. Yet the water DOES produce the cure. Hence, we are forced to conclude that it is helped by God. Acting as the principal Cause of the cure, He uses water as the instrumental cause. And in doing this, He is acting outside the laws of His ordinary providence. Otherwise, every cancer would be cured at Lourdes, just as every child validly baptised has sanctifying grace given to his soul. Hence, the cure is truly a miraculous one.

Is it necessary for us to consult doctors and other scientists in order to be certain that an event is a miracle? For many miracles, this is not necessary. For example, those worked by Christ. A mere word calms a raging sea. The mere touching of the hem of His garment cures a disease. A mere command brings Lazarus forth alive from his tomb. And so on. Here, we have merely to apply the principle: EVERY EFFECT MUST HAVE A PROPORTIONATE CAUSE. And we do not need a specialist to assure us that a few vibrations made in the air by a human voice can produce by their natural power effects so stupendous. For that we need only common sense and intellectual honesty.

However, for some miracles such as those worked today in favour of the canonisation of a saint, a doctor can be extremely helpful. He can testify to the existence of the disease; to its complete and

permanent cure; and to the manner in which this was accomplished. And in the case of nervous cures, he can tell us whether the trouble was merely a functional one, or something organic. If merely functional, its cure will not be recognised as a miracle, since it may be due to natural causes alone. The principle of the minimum applies here. If, however, the trouble was due to organic lesions, the cure may be judged miraculous. However, the final decision about a miracle depends, not on medicine, but on philosophy or theology. So it remains for the Church to give the final verdict.

(d). Why people deny miracles.

(i). Some deny miracles because they have wrong ideas about God.

If a person thinks there is no God, or if he holds that creatures are not really distinct from God, or if he says that God is only a mathematical formula or anything other than a self-existing Being, he cannot accept miracles. Such a man ought study the miracles at Lourdes or Fatima to find whether they are genuine or not. Then revise his ideas about God.

(ii). Others deny miracles because they have wrong ideas about the laws of nature.

Some go to one extreme by saying that things in nature produce their effects with such necessity that nothing can ever prevent them. This, however, is quite wrong. It does not square with facts. Daily experience proves that things produce their natural effects PROVIDED they are not prevented by other things more powerful than themselves. Gravity, for instance, keeps your pen on the desk, PROVIDED you do not lift it off the desk. A match lights a bit of paper, PROVIDED you do not soak the paper in water. A stream dashes down a cliff; but sap rises in the trees alongside it. And so on for numberless other examples.

The worst offenders here are specialists in mathematics. They will say to you: "Two and two make four, don't they! God can't make them equal five, can He? How, then, can He work a miracle? He might as well try to make a square circle." They forget that mathematics can never take into consideration either EFFICIENT or FINAL causes. And that the working of a miracle depends on these, and on these alone. Look at it this way: If you put two coins

in your desk on Monday, and another two on Tuesday, according to the laws of mathematics there will be four there on Wednesday. And, of course, there will be, PROVIDED no one steals any of them in the meantime. But, what if someone does steal three of them? Then, according to the laws of mathematics again, there will be only one there on Wednesday. And the point is this: mathematics can never tell you whether someone will steal them or not. That is a question of efficient and final causality. Hence, it is quite beyond the scope of mathematics.

It is the same for a miracle. Is a miracle possible? That depends on the answers you give to these questions: Does God exist as the Creator of all creatures? Did He create freely? Can He have a worthy motive in working a miracle? And only PHILOSOPHY can answer them. They are forever beyond the realm of mathematics. As mathematician, a man can only say: "As far as my science goes, I cannot tell whether miracles are possible or not." And, if he is intellectually honest and not intolerably narrow-minded, he will try to find the truth by having recourse to a nobler and competent science. He will see what PHILOSOPHY has to say.

Some go to the other extreme. They think that there are no laws at all in nature. In 1927, a man called Heisenberg found that it is impossible to measure quite accurately both the position and the velocity of a particle moving in an atom. The more accurate the measurement of its position is, the less accurate is that of its velocity; and vice versa. From this, many scientists jumped to the conclusion that the activities of particles in an atom follow no law, and are therefore causeless events. Hence, they said, there are no laws in nature. Mathematics is the trouble again, you see. Not being able to measure accurately both the position and the velocity of a particle, scientists cannot express their relation in a mathematical formula or "law." And, since the only laws of nature they know are mathematical equations, they conclude that there is no law governing the activities of an atom. But, as even Bertrand Russell admits, it is quite unreasonable to hold such a conclusion. He points out the fact that everything in nature acts according to law; and that it is simply suicide for a scientist to deny the principle of causality. Its denial makes all science impossible. We agree with Russell, for once. A causeless event is a contradiction in terms like a bilious angel or a cabbage suffering from schizophrenia. Moreover, mathematical equations are not the only laws in nature. They are wholly dependent on much more fundamental laws: the

laws of being. Finally, if man's ignorance of a law were a guarantee of the non-existence of this law, all further discoveries in science would be impossible. It is not easy to be patient with men who use nature's laws to tell you that there are no laws. They are like a person who uses the principle of non-contradiction to assure you that there is no such principle. They are like one who uses his life to tell you that he is dead. You can afford to forget them.

Others, again, think that all science would be endangered if miracles were possible. Why? They think that miracles imply the destruction of nature's laws. But do they? On the contrary, miracles are possible only if there ARE laws in nature. How could we regard the raising of Lazarus as a miracle, if it were not a law of nature that a corpse cannot give itself life? A miracle no more destroys the laws of nature than you destroy the law of gravity by lifting up your hand. Instead, it presupposes them.

Others say that miracles are causeless events; hence impossible. Realising that water cannot cure a broken leg instantly by its own power, they think that the cure has no cause at all. They forget that it has the omnipotent and free Creator for its cause. He whom every creature must obey, since it receives unceasingly from Him all that it is and has.

(iii). Others deny miracles because they have not seen one in the laboratory.

This is surely childish. They might as well argue that there are no icebergs either, because they have never seen one in the lab. If a real scientist wants to know whether there are such things as icebergs, he gets on a ship or an aeroplane and goes to look for them. He does not stay in his lab. and deny that they exist. A real scientist does the same for miracles. He goes to Lourdes or Fatima, and finds out the facts for himself. But real scientists are rare.

(e) Christ's miracles.

We should really devote a whole chapter to the miracles of Christ. But you can read them for yourself in the Gospels. You will notice that He worked them humbly, for the noblest of purposes, without the slightest show of vanity, and without the least effort. He worked them infallibly. He worked every kind of miracle: physical, moral, and intellectual. He worked them concerning every kind of

creature. He showed that He had complete control over spiritual substances, for instance, when He cast out devils from the possessed; over heavenly bodies, when the sun itself was darkened at His death; over human beings, when He cured diseases of every kind; over irrational creatures, when He stilled the storm with a word; over His own Body, when He raised it in glory from the dead. Finally, He worked His miracles not in secret darkened rooms before only a select audience, but in the open, in broad daylight, before the public, for all who wished to see. And He communicated this power to His Apostles, who worked many miracles in His Name.

Why, now, did He work them? It was for the express purpose of proving that God had sent Him.

Over and over again, He appealed to them as an irrefutable proof of His mission from God. For instance, when the Jews asked Him if He was the promised Messiah, He replied: "The works that I do in the name of My Father, they give testimony of Me." (John 10:24-25). All critics admit that the word "works" here means "wonderful words" or miracles. Again: "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though you will not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I am in the Father." (John 10:37-38). When He raised Lazarus from the dead, He told His heavenly Father that He was working that miracle for the sake of the people witnessing it: "That they may believe that Thou hast sent Me." (John 11:41-42).

The well-disposed Jews recognised Christ's miracles as a proof of His claim. Nicodemus said to Him: "We know that Thou art come a teacher from God; for no man can do those signs which Thou dost, unless God be with Him." (John 3:2). St. John wrote: "Many other signs (i.e. miracles) also did Jesus in the sight of His disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing, may have life in His name." (John 20:31-32.). A glorious text! It promises us eternal life, if only we believe in Christ with a living faith, a faith lived. And how can we possibly have an excuse for not believing?

3. Conclusion.

We have seen that history proves that Christ claimed to be sent by God, and that He worked miracles for the express purpose of proving this claim. We have seen, also, that God alone can work a miracle; and that it is infinitely impossible for Him to work one in favour of a false claim. The conclusion we must draw is obvious. It is this: WE ARE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT CHRIST WAS SENT BY GOD TO TEACH US RELIGIOUS TRUTHS.

4. Consequences.

1. WE ARE OBLIGED TO ACCEPT WHAT CHRIST TAUGHT, ON THE AUTHORITY OF GOD WHO SENT HIM.

Once we are quite certain that God exists, and that He has spoken to us through Christ, we are OBLIGED to accept what He teaches. Since He is knowledge and Truth Itself, He has a right that we accept His teaching. Corresponding to this right in Him, there is in us an obligation to believe what He tells us. And it is a grave one.

2. OUR ACT OF DIVINE FAITH IS IN ACCORD WITH OUR DIGNITY AS RATIONAL BEINGS.

To accept what Christ teaches, on the AUTHORITY OF GOD who sent Him, is to make AN ACT OF DIVINE FAITH. Since REASON proves that God exists as a Being who knows all things and who cannot possibly tell us a lie, and since HISTORY proves that He sent Christ to teach us truths, it is clear that our act of divine faith is in no sense a blind, irrational feeling, as "faith" is for many outside the Church today. Instead, it is justified by both REASON and HISTORY, and is in every way worthy of our dignity as rational beings, made in the image of God.

3. THE CERTITUDE IN OUR ACT OF DIVINE FAITH IS THE GREATEST POSSIBLE.

Our proofs from reason that God exists, and our proofs from history that He sent Christ to teach us truths show that our act of divine faith is in line with reason; but they are not the MOTIVE in our faith. Its MOTIVE is simply and solely the AUTHORITY OF GOD - God's right to be believed, since He is Knowledge and Truth Itself. And the CERTITUDE in our act of divine faith is PROPORTIONATE TO GOD'S AUTHORITY. That is why it is the greatest possible

certitude we can have in this life. It is a SUPERNATURAL certitude, proportionate to the infinitely reliable authority of God.

4. GOD'S REVELATION IS A MOST STRIKING PROOF OF HIS LOVE FOR US.

Revelation literally means the removal of a veil or a covering from the eyes. So it is used to indicate both the act by which God makes known truth to us, and the truths themselves thus made known. By His revelation, then, God deigns to share His confidence with us. He confides to us the secrets of His own inner life. He opens His Heart to us. But who opens thus his heart to another except through LOVE? And of what does love first speak if not of itself? Revelation, consequently, is God's love, speaking and manifesting itself to men, especially through the lips of Christ who, as we shall later prove, was not only God's messenger, but also His own Divine Son, made Man for love of us.

5. WE SHOULD TREASURE GOD'S REVELATION ABOVE ALL HUMAN WISDOM.

"O ineffable mercy of God," exclaims Bossuet, "to give us ignorant ones such a Teacher. Come, O ye wise of the age, come to this excellent Teacher who has the words of life. Leave Aristotle with his subtlety of reasoning. Leave Seneca with his superb opinions. Leave Plato with his vain eloquence. The simplicity of Jesus is more majestic and more powerful than all their affected gravity." Without neglecting the wisdom of Aristotle or that of any other merely human writer, let us go to Christ to have man's natural wisdom confirmed and complemented by the supernatural, the infinite wisdom of God.

SUMMARY

1. Reason Shows That God Can Make Known Truths To Us, And That He Is Likely To Do So.

- (i). He has truths to give. We have an intellect to receive them.

- (ii). He wants us to gain our last end; hence He is likely to reveal to us what we must know and do to gain it.

2. History Proves That God Has In Fact Made Known Religious Truths To Us.

- (i). Through the PROPHETS in the Old Law.
- (ii). Through CHRIST in the New.

The GOSPELS, taken as reliable records of HISTORY, prove that: -

- (A). Christ claimed that God sent Him to teach religious truths.
- (B). He worked MIRACLES for the express purpose of proving His claim.

- (A). Christ's claim: Shown by
 - (i). His way of acting.
 - (ii). His explicit words.

(B) How He proved it: By working miracles for that very purpose.

(a). A Miracle:

- (i). A fact or event.
- (ii). Beyond the natural powers of all creatures; hence, SUPERNATURAL, due to GOD alone.
- (iii). Accomplished by God acting OUTSIDE the fixed laws of His ORDINARY providence, in either the natural or the supernatural order.

(b). Kinds:

- (i). VISIBLE and INVISIBLE.
- (ii). Of the PHYSICAL, MORAL or INTELLECTUAL order.

(c). How known:

- (i). As an event: If visible, by the external senses. If invisible, by revelation.
- (ii). As miraculous: Can God alone be its principal cause? Every effect must have a proportionate cause. Is God acting OUTSIDE the laws of His ORDINARY providence?

(iii). When and how doctors can be helpful.

(d). Why denied:

- (i). Wrong ideas about God.
- (ii). Wrong ideas about nature's laws: Laws cannot be prevented from having their effects. There are no laws of nature. Miracles are causeless events.
- (iii). Miracles do not happen in laboratories.
- (e). Christ's Miracles: Their number. Variety. The way He performed them. The circumstances. The purpose.

3. Conclusion: We Are Absolutely Certain That Christ Was Sent By God To Teach Religious Truths.

4. Consequences:

1. We are obliged to accept what Christ taught, on the authority of God who sent Him.
2. Our act of divine faith is in accord with our dignity as rational beings.
3. The certitude in our act of divine faith is the greatest possible.
4. God's revelation is a most striking proof of His love for us.
5. We should treasure God's revelation above all human wisdom.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. We prove that God exists by using our (feelings) (reason) (imagination). 2. (Experience) (mathematics) (history) proves that Christ claimed to be sent by God. 3. Whenever the Jews asked Christ if He was the promised Messiah, He (said) (denied) that He was. 4. Christ proved that God sent Him by working (...) for that express purpose. 5. (...) alone can be the principal cause of a miracle. 6. God (can) (cannot) work a miracle in favour of a false claim. 7. Christ's miracles are God's own (...) to His claim. 8. The order that arises from the natural activity of all creatures is called the (...) order. 9. A miracle is a (natural) (supernatural) event. 10. If the devil threw the furniture about in this room this (would) (would not) be a miracle. 11. In working a miracle God must act in a way that is outside the laws of His (...) providence. 12. It is by experience and the use of our (...) that we know the laws of God's ordinary providence in the natural order. 13. We know the laws of His providence in the supernatural order from (...). 14. Our Lord's prophecy that the gates of hell would never prevail against His Church is a miracle in the (physical) (moral) (intellectual) order. 15.

The instant cure of tuberculosis by Lourdes water is a miracle in the (...) order. 16. Every sudden cure of a nervous malady (is) is (not) necessarily a miracle. 17. In deciding whether an event is a miracle or not we apply the principle: Every effect must have a (...) cause. 18. When God uses the relics of a saint to cure a disease He is the (...) cause of the miracle; the relics are its (...) cause. 19. Water (can sometimes) (can never) be the principal cause of a miracle. 20. Mathematics (can) (cannot) tell us whether miracles are possible. 21. Christ appealed to His miracles as a proof that God sent Him when He said: "The (...) that I do in the name of My Father, they give testimony of me." 22. It was (...) who said to Christ: "We know that Thou art come a teacher from God; for no man can do those signs which Thou dost unless God be with him." 23. Once a person is quite certain that God exists, and that He sent Christ, that person is obliged under pain of (mortal) (venial) sin to accept Christ's teaching on the authority of God who sent Him. 24. To accept a truth on the authority of God is to make an act of divine (...). 25. The certitude in our divine faith is the greatest possible, because it is proportionate to the infinitely reliable (...) of God on which alone it is based.

(B).

1. Your friend wants to know whether miracles ever happen today. Give a brief account of Lourdes and Fatima.
2. How would you answer a man who says: "Nature's laws are so determined that even God cannot stop them from having their effects?"
3. An atheist once said to Pat: "Pat, what's a miracle?" Not knowing how to define it, Pat asked the atheist to turn round. Then he gave him a rousing kick. "Did you feel that?" Pat asked. "Of course, you idiot," replied the atheist. "Well, now," said Pat, "it would be a miracle if you didn't." Do you think Pat was right?
4. Peter wants to know why God can work miracles, though He cannot make a square circle. Tell him.
5. Alfred says: "I can't see why baptism is not a miracle. God uses water to cause grace, just as He uses water to cure a cancer at Lourdes." Tell him the difference.
6. When crossing the border, an Irish woman had a bottle amongst her luggage. "What's in here?" asked the customs officer, holding up the bottle. "Sure, it's only Lourdes water," she replied. He took a sniff at it. "Lourdes water!" he exclaimed in derision. "It's whisky '!" "Oh glory be to God!" replied the woman, "A miracle

already! Give it to me.” Would this be recognised as a miracle by the Church?”

7. Why can the natural cure of a large wound never be instantaneous?
8. Why do Christ's miracles prove that God sent Him to teach us truths?
9. How does our act of divine faith differ from a blind, irrational feeling?
10. Why is the certitude in our act of divine faith so great?

Chapter 12

CHRIST STILL TEACHES US THROUGH HIS CHURCH

1. Introduction.

We have seen that REASON proves that God exists as a Being who knows everything, and who cannot tell a lie. And that HISTORY proves that CHRIST said that He was sent by God, and worked MIRACLES for the very purpose of proving it, so that they are God's own signature to the truth of His claim. Hence, it is quite reasonable for us to accept what Christ taught on the AUTHORITY OF GOD who sent Him.

In addition to this, however, we need to be certain of two other things: that the truths He taught have been preserved intact, and that we can be sure we are giving them the right meaning.

Had we lived with Christ, we could have gone to Him with our problems. For instance, we could have said to him: "You stated yesterday that you are the Son of God, didn't you? What did you mean? Son of God in the strict sense, so that you are God as well as Man? Or adopted son of God, as we can be by grace?" And He would have answered us with infallible certitude. We would know not merely what He said, but also what He meant when He said it.

But we cannot consult Him personally now. He is in heaven. Yet He came, remember, to teach you and me, just as much as the few who could listen to Him when He was on earth. So we expect Him to have left us something that can tell us with absolute certitude what He said, and what He meant when He said it, just as He could if He were still with us today. Nor are we disappointed.

For HISTORY proves that Christ established an EVERLASTING and INFALLIBLE CHURCH, for the purpose of PRESERVING His teaching intact, and GIVING US ITS EXACT MEANING, without even the possibility of error, right to the end of the world.

Through the LIVING VOICE of His Church, He speaks to you and to me today. He enlightens our intellects. He inflames our wills. He answers our questions. He solves our problems. He banishes our doubts. In a word, He TEACHES us with the same incomparable certitude as that with which He taught His Apostles.

To realise this, let us see what the GOSPELS, taken as HISTORY, tell us about the origin, the nature and the purpose of the Church.

2. How Christ Prepared For The Establishment Of His Church.

(a). He chose His Apostles.

Christ began by gathering followers about Him. Disciples, they were called. A mixed lot of men. Some, too scared to be seen with Him in public, came by night, like Nicodemus. Others were only occasional followers. Others, more whole-hearted. From these, He chose THE TWELVE. He called them His "Apostles." Why? Because the word means "one sent" - a sort of ambassador. And Christ intended to send them later to teach the world, just as He had been sent by God. They formed a select group, united by the common bond of their calling, and the work they had to do. They were specially trained by Him. They heard all His discourses. They saw His miracles. They received many private instructions. They enjoyed His intimacy. They formed the nucleus, the kernel of His Church.

(b). He decided the Form of Government to be used in His Church.

His Church is to be a SOCIETY. Hence, it will need some form of government, just as a family does, or the state. Which form will He choose? Will He make it a DEMOCRACY, in which everyone will have a say in running it? Or an ARISTOCRACY, in which only a few experts will govern? Or a MONARCHY, in which one alone will be the head? Read St. Matthew's vivid description of the incident at Caesarea-Philippi (Chapter sixteen), and you will see which form Christ intended to give his Church, and why.

Democracy may be good in a temporal society where the citizens are educated to use their powers wisely. But, where SUPERNATURAL MYSTERIES are at stake, it is, as Christ here shows, quite hopeless. "Whom do MEN say that I am?" "Some say

John the Baptist; others, Elias; others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." Unity and certitude? Not a trace of them. Instead, confusion, contradiction, chaos, doubt and despair. Democracy won't do. It stands condemned by its fruits.

Aristocracy, too, may be good in a temporal society, in certain circumstances. But, as Christ next shows, it is quite incompetent when it is question of SUPERNATURAL TRUTHS. "Whom do YOU say that I am?" YOU, my Apostles, my experts, my aristocrats? The answer? They can give none. They are silent. Aristocracy, too, stands condemned by its fruits.

And how does the answer finally come? From ONE of them alone. From Peter, but only because he is inspired from ABOVE. It comes from GOD. "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee, but MY FATHER who is in heaven."

By this practical demonstration of the value of each form of government, Christ shows His Apostles that His Church will be a monarchy. It will be governed by one man. Then He promises to make Peter its first head.

(c). He established the Sacrament of Baptism.

Why Baptism? Because by it we become PUBLICLY and OFFICIALLY members of His Church. It imprints on the soul a CHARACTER, which marks us off from all other men as belonging to Christ. It is the ceremony of initiation or entry into His Mystical Body on earth.

(d). He established the Eucharist.

Why? Because it is the central Sacrament for the sake of which all the others exist. It contains the Author of Grace Himself. And its purpose is to increase our supernatural CHARITY. Moreover, there is no limit to the extent to which it can do this. One Communion received with perfect dispositions would make each of us a saint.

(e). He established the Mass.

By its very nature, religion demands the offering of SACRIFICE to God. That is why the central act in Christ's life was the offering of

His Sacrifice on the Cross. That, too, is why He instituted the Mass at the Last Supper. It is a perpetuation of Calvary. It is the central act of Christian worship.

Such was the way in which Christ, as a divinely-wise Builder, prepared for the establishment of His Church.

3. The Establishment Of The Church.

After His resurrection, Christ says to His Apostles: "As the Father hath sent Me, so also I send you." "Going, therefore, TEACH all nations, BAPTISING them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to OBSERVE all things whatsoever I have COMMANDED you. And behold, I AM WITH YOU ALL DAYS, even to the consummation of the world." (John 20:21., Matt. 28:16-20).

What is He doing? He is establishing His Church. A society is founded at the moment it receives AUTHORITY or power to carry on its work. And Christ is here giving His Church a threefold power:

(a). TO TEACH.

How? As He Himself had taught, not by writing a book and handing it to people to interpret for themselves, but with its LIVING VOICE, which is at the same time His, since it speaks in His name and with the AUTHORITY OF GOD. Whom? All nations. Everybody. No one is excluded. How long? For all time. And with what assurance? That He Himself will be WITH it in its teaching every moment of every day to the very end of the world.

(b). TO SANCTIFY.

How? As He Himself had sanctified, by giving us grace and means to increase it daily. Whom? All men - Jews and Gentiles, blacks and whites, slaves and freemen, rich and poor. And with what assurance? That He will be always WITH His Church, so that it can never lose any of the means of sanctification He has given it, nor ever substitute others that would be useless or even harmful to souls.

(c). TO GOVERN.

Guided and enlightened from above, as Peter was at Caesarea-Philippi, the Popes will govern the Church as Christ's vicars on earth. Through them in every age He will supply to His Church its FORMAL cause; for this is nothing other than the AUTHORITY exercised by its rulers over the rest. Hence, it will ever retain its identity. It will remain the one society, the one organic body, from its foundation, to the end of the world.

Thus did Christ establish His EVERLASTING and INFALLIBLE Church, through which He can carry on His work of teaching, sanctifying and saving souls, just as successfully as if He Himself remained on earth to the Last Day. Now you realise how He can teach you and me today, and sanctify us too, and lead us to heaven. And others after us to the end of time. To appreciate this, however, we must go more fully into the nature of His Church.

4. What The Church Is.

(a). It is a SOCIETY.

A society is a number of human beings bound together in a stable manner, and having a common end. Spectators at a rugby match do not constitute a society. There is no bond uniting them in an enduring way. They are just a crowd. But a family is a true society. So is the state. So is the Church.

Why did Christ think of a society? Two reasons. Unlike its members who come and go, a society can go on existing for centuries even to the end of the world if God helps it to do so. Moreover, through those of its members who occupy official positions, it can listen to objections, answer questions, and give directions. In other words, it can TEACH and GUIDE us with a LIVING voice. And, if it is protected from error by God, it can do this INFALLIBLY. Through it, GOD Himself can teach and guide us, century after century, to the end of time.

(b). It is a MONARCHICAL Society.

(i). Christ's Promise to Peter.

Recall the scene at Caesarea-Philippi. After approving of Simon's answer, and telling him that it has come from God, Christ gives him a new name. Why? To show that He is about to confer on him an

important office indicated by this name. That is why He calls him Peter. In the language Christ is using, the word Peter also means a ROCK or a STONE, just as “Pierre” does today in French. Then, addressing him by his new name, He says to him:

“Thou art Peter (i.e. the Rock), and upon this rock I will BUILD My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. To thee will I give the KEYS of the Kingdom of Heaven. WHATSOEVER thou shalt BIND on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and WHATSOEVER thou shalt LOOSE on earth, shall be loosed also in heaven.” (Mat. 16:18-19).

To whom is Christ speaking? To Peter alone, or to all the Apostles? Clearly, to Peter only, whose name alone He has changed.

And what is Christ doing? He is making a solemn promise. He is promising to make Peter the HEAD of His Church. And He drives this home to His hearers by means of three images with which they were perfectly familiar from the Old Testament.

He first compares the Church to a BUILDING, of which Peter is to be the rock foundation. His hearers know well from their Scriptures that a building derives its STABILITY and its UNITY from its foundation. So Christ here assures them that His Church will derive an everlasting STABILITY and UNITY from the fact that it is built into the solid rock, which is Peter and his successors to the end of the world. At the same time, He mentions another building, symbolised by “the gates of hell” - the citadel of Satan which will war against His Church in all ages, but never be able to destroy or even shake the rock foundation into which it is built.

He next refers to the KEYS of this building, which He promises to give to Peter. In the Old Testament, keys are always a symbol of supreme AUTHORITY and POWER. So, here again, Christ is using an image with which his hearers are perfectly familiar. To them, His words can mean only one thing: that He will give Peter supreme AUTHORITY over “the Kingdom of Heaven” which, as we see from His parables, can be nothing other than His Church.

His third image is that of BINDING and LOOSING. And once again his hearers know exactly what He means. For, what was forbidden by the Jewish Law was said to be “bound”; and what was permitted,

was said to be “loosed.” And in both cases, it was a question of conscience. So Christ is here telling them that the authority He will give to Peter will include the MORAL power of making laws that bind in conscience. And notice how complete it is. No limits are set to it. “WHATSOEVER thou shalt bind” “WHATSOEVER thou shalt loose....” Notice also that, whether Peter binds or looses, his action will be ratified or backed by God. From this it is clear that his primacy is not just one of honour, like that accorded the oldest religious when he is given the highest place at the table, but a true primacy of JURISDICTION, the exercise of which is to be confirmed by God Himself in heaven.

And it is surely equally clear that Christ attaches this power not to Peter as a man, but to the OFFICE he will hold, so that it will be handed on to his successors. Peter himself will die a martyr's death, as Christ foretells. But his OFFICE will remain. And it will be held by Pope after Pope as long as the world lasts. Exercising the power attached to it by Christ, the Popes will be in every age the rock foundation of His Church, against which even the forces of hell will dash themselves in vain.

(ii). How Christ fulfilled this Promise.

Look now at another touching scene described in the Gospel. Christ is sharing a friendly little meal with His Apostles. He compels Peter to profess his love three times, to make up for his threefold denial during the Passion. After the first profession of love, Christ says to him: “Feed My lambs.” After the second, the same thing. But after the third: “Feed my sheep.” (John 21:15-17).

He is speaking to Peter only, not to all the Apostles. And He is appointing him to an office. He is giving him an authority, a power. What power? That of acting as SHEPHERD to Christ's whole flock, lambs and sheep alike. Hence, that of GUIDING, PROTECTING and RULING them. He who is Himself “the good shepherd,” and who is about to go up to heaven, is here handing over the sheepfold to Peter's care. Christ will, of course, continue to be what Scripture calls “the chief shepherd” of the flock. (1 Peter 5:4). That is why He uses the word “My.” But He is now appointing Peter His VICAR. He is fulfilling the promise He made to him. He is making him supreme head of His Church on earth, so that by ruling, guiding and protecting it, Peter and his successors may defeat the attacks of

hell itself, and do this not for a few years or a few centuries, but all days to the very end of the world.

You can see now why Peter is mentioned nearly two hundred times in the New Testament, whereas St. John, who comes next, gets fewer than thirty mentions; why Peter is always given as the leader of the Apostles; and why, especially, he presides over the COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM, the first UNIVERSAL COUNCIL of the Church. You can see also why history records the astounding fact that, though we live nearly two thousands years from the time of the Apostles, we can trace the Popes back - nearly two hundred and sixty of them in all - in an unbroken line from the present Pope to Peter, who was made the first of them by Christ.

(c). It is a SUPERNATURAL society.

The Church is a SUPERNATURAL society, not a natural one as is the family or the state. It is supernatural in its ORIGIN, for it comes from Christ Himself. In its END, since this is the beatific vision. And in the MEANS it uses to gain it, for these are belief in revealed truths, the practice of the supernatural virtues, the reception of the Sacraments, and the like. That is why Christ could say to Pilate: "My Kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36). As a supernatural society, it is distinct from the state, and superior to it.

(d). It is an INFALLIBLE Society.

Infallibility does not mean that those exercising it cannot sin. Nor does it mean that they receive special knowledge from God. Nor that they know all things. It means that, when the required conditions are present, they are PROTECTED FROM ERROR by God, in preserving and interpreting His truths.

PROOFS THAT THE CHURCH IS INFALLIBLE

(A). CHRIST SENT HIS APOSTLES TO TEACH WITH THE AUTHORITY OF GOD.

Christ Himself taught, as we have shown, with the authority of God. But He gave His Apostles exactly the same mission to teach, as He had received from His Father. "As the Father hath sent Me, so also I send you." "Going therefore, TEACH all nations." From this it

follows that the Apostles also taught with the authority of God. Hence, INFALLIBLY.

(B). CHRIST SAID HE WOULD BE WITH HIS CHURCH IN ITS TEACHING, EVEN TO THE END OF THE WORLD.

“Going therefore, TEACH all nations... Behold, I AM WITH YOU (in your teaching) ALL DAYS, even to the consummation of the world.” But if Christ is to be with His Church in its teaching every moment of every day to the end of time, it cannot go astray. It cannot teach error. He would have to teach error with it. But this is the absurdity of absurdities. So its teaching must be infallible.

(C). CHRIST PROMISED THAT THE HOLY GHOST WOULD ABIDE WITH HIS CHURCH FOREVER, AND GUIDE IT INTO ALL TRUTH.

“I will ask the Father,” He says to His Apostles, “and He will send you another Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, that He may ABIDE WITH YOU FOREVER.” (John 14:16-17).

Again: “But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He will TEACH YOU ALL THINGS, and BRING TO YOUR MINDS all things whatsoever I shall have said to you.” (John 14:26).

And again: “He (i.e. the Holy Ghost) will GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH.” (John 16:13).

But if the Holy Ghost is to abide with the Church forever, and bring to its mind all that Christ taught it, and guide it into all truth, how can it err in its teaching? How can it not be infallible?

(D). CHRIST SAID THAT IN HEARING THE CHURCH, WE ARE HEARING HIM.

“He that hears YOU,” He said to His Apostles, “hears ME; He that despises YOU, despises ME; and he that despises Me, despises HIM WHO SENT ME.” (Luke 10:16). Since we cannot hear the Church teaching without hearing God, and cannot despise its teaching, without despising Him, it is surely obvious that its teaching is infallible.

(E). CHRIST THREATENS WITH ETERNAL PUNISHMENT THOSE WHO CULPABLY REFUSE TO ACCEPT THE TEACHING OF HIS CHURCH.

After giving His Apostles their mission to teach, Christ adds these significant words: "He that believeth shall be SAVED; he that believeth not shall be CONDEMNED." (Mark 16:16). And, just as "saved" means "saved in heaven," so "condemned" must mean "condemned to hell." If the Church teaches infallibly, as God's representative on earth, Christ can rightly oblige us to accept its teaching under pain of mortal sin, since to refuse to listen to it, is to refuse to listen to God. And His threat is justified. But how can He possibly make this threat if the Church's teaching is not infallible? It would be monstrous for Him to do so. Yet He DOES make it. Hence, the Church MUST be infallible.

Other proofs could be given from the New Testament, but these are enough to show that the Church, as God's living voice on earth, is as St. Paul so aptly puts it, "the pillar and the foundation of truth," (1 Tim. 3:15) - its support and foundation, so that through her it will remain firm and immovable to the end.

What persons are infallible in the Church? Its OFFICIAL TEACHERS of course. These are the BISHOPS, taken not as individuals, but as a BODY. And there is the POPE. It is clear that the Bishops as a body are infallible, since they are the successors of the Apostles. But what proofs have we to show that the Pope as an individual is infallible? Here are three:

(a). His position as Head of the Church.

Christ makes the Pope head of the Church. Christ at the same time makes the Church infallible. Hence, He must make the Pope infallible. Why? Because if the Pope taught error, the Church, by Christ's own ruling, would have to obey Him as its head. Yet it could not do this, for, by Christ's own ruling again, it is infallible. And Christ Himself would be responsible for this contradiction. But He can never be responsible for any contradiction. Hence, He must have taken the only means of avoiding it, by making the Pope infallible.

(b). Christ's Prayer for Peter.

You have only to recall Christ's prayer for Peter, to see that He did make the Pope infallible. Speaking to ALL the Apostles, Christ said: "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have YOU (He uses the plural here since He is referring to them all) that he may sift YOU as wheat; but I have prayed for THEE (He uses the singular here for He is referring to Peter alone) that THY faith FAIL NOT; and that THOU being once converted, CONFIRM THY BRETHREN." (Luke 22: 31-32). Since this prayer was an UNCONDITIONAL one, it must be answered by God. And, since Peter's faith is never to fail, and he is to keep others from straying into error, he and his successors must be infallible.

(c). Christ's Command to feed the whole flock.

Christ commanded Peter to feed the whole flock entrusted to him. But how can he and the Popes who come after him do this to the end of the world, unless each of them is infallible? The human intellect can be fed and nourished by truth alone.

So the Pope is infallible on his own, apart from the other Bishops. But not in everything he says. He must speak under certain conditions, to be protected from error by God. And here they are:

(i). He must speak AS HEAD of the Church.

When the Pope speaks just as a private person, as he would speak to you if you visited him in Rome, he is not infallible. He must speak "ex cathedra," as the saying goes - "from the chair" of Peter. Hence, officially, as Peter's successor, as Vicar of Christ, as Head of the whole Church.

(ii). He must speak about matters of FAITH OR MORALS.

Even though he speaks as Head of the Church, but deals with something which does not concern faith or morals, he is not infallible. He is infallible only when he is dealing with something we have to believe and do to progress in virtue and save our souls. All revealed truths such as the Incarnation, the Redemption, the Trinity are obvious examples. So also are naturally known truths such as the immortality of the human soul, the obligations of the natural law, or the nature of morality, which are necessary to explain and

defend the truths made known by God. But in questions of physics, or mathematics, or politics that have no connection with religion, the Pope is clearly not infallible.

(iii). He must intend to DEFINE A TRUTH.

He must make it clear that what he is saying is absolutely final, so that it can never be changed or questioned by Catholics at any future time. It is definitive.

(iv). He must by his decision bind the WHOLE CHURCH.

Why? Because he is infallible as shepherd of the WHOLE flock. If his decision binds only a part of the Church - only New Zealand, for example, it is not infallible.

When ALL of these four conditions are present, a papal utterance is infallible. In hearing it, we are hearing Christ Himself. In submitting to it, we are submitting to Him. "This is why," writes Fulton Sheen, "there is on the part of the Holy Father no complacent re-echoing of the inanities of the hour; no revision of eternal truths to suit the new astro-physics; no compromising with morals to suit immoral ways of living; no attempt to please the world to win its favour; but there is an unmistakable effort to salt the earth, to save men's souls, and to lead men to God."

Through the infallible teaching of His Church, Christ Himself warns and protects us against each new error as it comes along. He listens to our questions, and answers them. He solves our problems. He dispels our doubts. And, by the incomparable certitude which He thus gives us in regard to the truths of our faith, He enables us to live these fully and wholeheartedly, and thus progress steadily in sanctity, even to the heroic sanctity of His saints.

5. Consequences.

1. THE COMPLETE REASONABLENESS OF OUR ACT OF FAITH CAN NOW BE SEEN.

(a). REASON proves that God exists as a Being who knows all things, and who cannot tell us a lie.

(b). HISTORY proves:

- (i). That Christ said God sent Him, and worked miracles to prove it, so that they are God's signature to His claim.
- (ii). That Christ established an infallible and everlasting Church to preserve His truths and give us their exact meaning without even the possibility of error, to the end of the world.

Hence, if we are asked: "Why do you believe in heaven?" we reply: "Because God, who is Knowledge and Truth Itself, has told us that heaven exists." And this answer is final. We accept the existence of heaven, on the AUTHORITY OF GOD, revealing it. If we are then asked a quite different question: "How do you know that He did reveal this?" we answer: "We are absolutely certain that He did, because the Church teaches this infallibly." And this answer is equally final. It is the same, of course, for every other revealed mystery. We do not have to interpret Scripture and Tradition for ourselves, with the chance of giving them a wrong meaning. The Church interprets them for us, infallibly. She gives us their right meaning, without even the possibility of error, just as Christ Himself would if He were still on earth. Hence, the complete reasonableness of our act of divine faith, and its supernatural, and therefore, incomparable certitude.

2. GRATITUDE TO GOD.

We ought thank God daily, for giving us His infallible Church.

3. OBEDIENCE TO THE CHURCH.

We can never obey the Church too promptly, too lovingly, or too completely; for, in obeying Her, we are obeying God Himself.

4. LOYALTY TO THE CHURCH.

As Her children, we have the duty of absolute loyalty to Her. By baptism She engenders us in the supernatural order, as adopted sons of God, and heirs to His riches in heaven. She is our Mother.

5. LOYALTY TO THE POPE AND TO OUR BISHOPS.

As Christ's Vicar, the Pope has a right to our unswerving loyalty. As successors of the Apostles, the Bishops have the same right. We should often pray for His Holiness, and for our Bishops, and often remember them in our Communions.

SUMMARY

1. Introduction.

- (i). Need of an INFALLIBLE and EVERLASTING CHURCH.
- (ii). TO PRESERVE Christ's truths intact, and
- (iii). To GIVE US THEIR RIGHT MEANING, to the end of the world.

2. How Christ Prepared For the Establishment of His Church.

- (a). He chose His APOSTLES.
- (b). He decided on the form of GOVERNMENT to be used in the Church.
- (c). He established the Sacrament of BAPTISM.
- (d). He established the EUCHARIST.
- (e). He established the MASS.

3. The Establishment Of The Church.

- (i). A society is established when it gets its power to carry on its work.
- (ii). By saying: "As the Father hath sent Me, so also I send you."
"Going therefore, teach all nations...." Christ gave His Church the power:

TO TEACH

TO SANCTIFY

TO GOVERN all men, in His name, to the end of the world.

4. What The Church Is.

- (a). A SOCIETY. Hence it can: (i). Exist for ever, and
(ii). teach with a living voice.
- (b). A MONARCHICAL Society:
 - (i). Christ's PROMISE to Peter.
 - (ii). His FULFILMENT of this promise.
- (c). A SUPERNATURAL Society:
 - (i). in ORIGIN, END and MEANS.
 - (ii). Hence DISTINCT from the state.
- (d). An INFALLIBLE Society.
 - (i). Meaning of Infallibility.
 - (ii). Proofs that the CHURCH is infallible: -
 - (A). Christ sent His Apostles to teach with the AUTHORITY OF GOD.
 - (B). He said He would be WITH His Church all days in its teaching.
 - (C). He promised that the HOLY GHOST would ABIDE with His Church FOREVER, BRING TO ITS MIND ALL HE HAD TAUGHT, and GUIDE IT INTO ALL TRUTH.
 - (D). He said that to hear the CHURCH is to hear HIM.
 - (E). He THREATENS with ETERNAL PUNISHMENT those who culpably refuse to accept the teaching of His Church.
 - (iii). Persons who are infallible:
 - (a). The BISHOPS as a whole BODY.
 - (b). The POPE AS AN INDIVIDUAL.
 - (iv). Proofs that the Pope is infallible: -
 - (a). His position as Head of the Church.
 - (b). Christ's prayers for Peter.
 - (c). Christ's command to Peter to feed the whole flock.

- (v). Conditions that a Papal utterance must have to be infallible:-
- (a). The Pope must speak as HEAD of the whole Church.
 - (b). The Pope must speak about matters of FAITH or MORALS.
 - (c). The Pope must intend to DEFINE a truth.
 - (d). The Pope must make his decision BIND THE WHOLE CHURCH.

5. Consequences: -

1. The complete REASONABLENESS OF OUR ACT OF DIVINE FAITH: we have GOD'S assurance not merely for the fact that Christ said this or that, but also that we are giving His words the right meaning.
2. Gratitude to God.
3. Obedience to the Church.
4. Loyalty to the Church.
5. Loyalty to the Pope and our Bishops.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. History proves that Christ left us an (...) and (...) Church to (...) His truths, and give us their right (...) without even the possibility of (...), to the end of the world. 2. Before establishing His Church, Christ chose twelve men whom He called (...). He also established two sacraments, namely (...) and (...). And the (...) which is a perpetuation of the sacrifice of Calvary. 3. He also promised to make His Church a (democracy) (an aristocracy) (a monarchy). 4. He gave Simon the new name of (...) which means a (...). 5. He promised to make him head of the Church when He said to him: "Thou art (...) and upon this (...) I will build my (...); and the gates of (...) shall not prevail against it. To thee will I give the (...) of the (...). Whatsoever thou shalt bind on (...) shall be bound also in (...); and whatsoever thou shalt loose on (...) shall be loosed also in (...)." 6. A building gets its (...) and its (...) from its foundation. 7. Christ

promised Peter a primacy of (honour) (jurisdiction). 8. Christ fulfilled this promise when He said to Peter: "Feed my (...)" "Feed my (...)" "Feed my (...)." 9. The successors of Peter are the (...); those of the Apostles are the (...). 10. Christ (did) (did not) intend the primacy to pass to Peter's successors. 11. Christ established the Church when He said to His Apostles: "As the (...) hath sent Me, so also I send (...)." "Going, therefore, (...) all nations, (...) them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to (...) all things whatsoever I have (...) you. And behold, I am (...) you all days, even to the (...) of the world." 12. The Church is supernatural in its (...) (...), and (...); hence, quite distinct from the (...). 13. Christ said that the (...) would abide with the Church forever; bring to the minds of its teachers all He had taught; and guide it into all (...). 14. One (can) (cannot) hold that the Church went astray in its teaching in the early centuries without making Christ and the Holy Ghost go astray with it. 15. Christ threatens with (...) punishment those who culpably refuse to accept the teaching of His Church. He can do this only because its teaching is (...). 16. The Pope is infallible when he teaches us (...) something concerning (...) or (...), which he intends to (...), and make binding on the (...) Church. 17. "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat." These words refer to (all the Apostles) (Peter only). 18. "But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and that thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren." These words refer to (all the Apostles) (Peter only). 19. As Bishop of Rome, the Pope (is) (is not) infallible. 20. Through His infallible Church, Christ teaches you and me today just as successfully as He taught His Apostles; for the Church speaks as His own living (...) on earth.

(B).

1. Twinkletoes asks you why Christ established the Church. Tell him.
2. How did Christ prepare for the establishment of the Church?
3. Why did He choose a society to carry on His work of teaching and saving souls?
4. What three great powers did He give His Church? Quote His words to prove what you say.
5. What texts from Scripture show that Christ promised to make Peter the Head of His Church, and later fulfilled this promise?
6. In what way does the Church differ from the state?

7. Give five proofs to show that the Church is infallible.
8. How do you prove that the Pope is infallible?
9. Give in outline a proof that our act of divine faith is completely reasonable.
10. How would you answer a person who says:
 - (i). "History shows that the Popes have made mistakes in matters of politics; hence they cannot be infallible."
 - (ii). "The Church should change to a democracy, to be in line with modern thought."
 - (iii). "I prefer to interpret Scripture myself. I may make mistakes, of course, but I am free."
 - (iv). "We Catholics should get an infallible decree with our paper every morning at breakfast."
 - (v). "I think that the authority Christ gave to Peter ended at Peter's death."
 - (vi). "The Catholic Church went astray in the early centuries, and remained in error till the Reformers brought back the truth again to men."

Chapter 13

THE MARKS OF THE TRUE CHURCH

We have seen that Christ obliges all to belong to His Church under pain of mortal sin. But thousands of churches today claim to be His. How can men know which is the true one?

Well, just as a footballer wears a special jersey to let the referee know which side he is playing for, so, too, the Church established by Christ has certain MARKS which show that She is His. They are UNITY, SANCTITY, UNIVERSALITY and APOSTOLICITY.

Why are they MARKS of the true Church? In the first place, they are VISIBLE things, easily seen by all. In the second place they belong of NECESSITY to the Church founded by Christ, and to it alone. Any church that has them must be His. Any church that lacks even one of them cannot be His. They mark off His Church from all others. By them, men can easily recognise which is His, and so fulfil their obligation of belonging to His fold.

When did Christ give them to His Church? When He gave His Church her four CAUSES. Each mark flows from each cause as its ESSENTIAL PROPERTY. Hence the marks are as inseparable from the causes as your intellect and will are from your soul. That is why there are four of them. Let us study each in turn.

(1). THE MARK OF UNITY.

(A). CHRIST MADE UNITY A MARK OF HIS CHURCH.

He did this when He gave His Church her FORMAL cause. This is the bond which unites her into ONE society, and makes her ONE Church. UNITY flows from this as an ESSENTIAL PROPERTY - as something inseparable from it. And, since it is a VISIBLE property, it is mark of the Church.

What kind of unity is it? Think of what the Church is, and you will see. She is a SOCIETY. Hence, She must have unity of GOVERNMENT. She is ONE society, not a number of separate, independent ones. Hence, She must have unity of COMMUNION. She is a society of BELIEVERS. Hence, She must have unity of FAITH. She is a RELIGIOUS society. Hence, She must have unity of WORSHIP.

In giving Her Her FORMAL cause, then, Christ gave Her at the same time the fourfold unity inseparable from it: unity in GOVERNMENT, COMMUNION, FAITH and WORSHIP.

Time and again Christ refers to this fourfold unity in His Church. You have already seen several texts. "Thou art PETER," "Upon this ROCK," "To THEE will I give the keys" - unity of government, obviously. "I will build my CHURCH," "The gates of hell shall not prevail against IT" - unity of communion. "One fold and one shepherd" - both these unities. And so on. Other texts could be given, but we have space for only one.

It is that sublime prayer which Christ offers to His Father, just before the Passion. Praying for His Apostles, and for all those who through their teaching will believe in Him, He says: "That all may be ONE..." "That they may be one IN US..." "That they may be one EVEN AS WE ARE ONE..." "That they may be made PERFECT IN ONE..." "That the WORLD MAY KNOW THAT THOU HAST SENT ME." (John 17:11-28).

How insistent this prayer is! And how emphatic! And notice the following:-

(i). It is an UNCONDITIONAL prayer. Christ does not say: "Provided the Popes are learned or saintly men." He does not put in any conditions whatever. Hence, it must have been answered by His Father.

(ii). In it He begs a perfect UNITY for His Church. He asks that all in it may be one even as God Himself is one: "Even as We (the Persons in the Trinity) are one" - one in nature, one God. Impossible to think of a greater unity than this!

(iii). This unity is to come from GOD, not from the state. He asks that the faithful may be one "in US." Hence, not in a state or a

nation, nor in anything else belonging to this world, but in the bonds uniting them to Himself, the Father and the Holy Ghost. Other nations may have a borrowed unity due to the nations to which they are attached. But His Church will get Her unity from God. That is why She will be able to overcome all national barriers and prejudices, and unite people from every nation in a supernatural unity that can last to the end of the world.

(iv). It is to be a VISIBLE unity. It will, of course, presuppose an internal unity of grace and charity. But it will not be something MERELY internal. It will be shown externally, so that all can see it. For Christ says that it is to be a SIGN to the world. A sign of what? A sign that God has sent Him. "That the world may know that Thou hast sent Me."

(v). It is to be a MIRACULOUS unity. Since it is to be proof of His divine mission, it must be a unity that is so far beyond the powers of nature that it can be due to God alone. It must be a miracle in the MORAL order. Hence, God's own seal to the claim made by His Son.

No church, then, can rightly claim to be Christ's unless it has the perfect, fourfold unity for which the Saviour prayed the night before He suffered. Which church has it?

(B). THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS THE MARK OF UNITY.

She has unity of GOVERNMENT. The Pope is Her supreme head on earth. Anyone can see this, just as anyone can see who is King of England or Prime Minister of Australia. It is an obvious fact.

She has unity of COMMUNION. She is ONE society in time and place. In time, for She has kept Her identity from the days of the Apostles. In place, for She is one Church spread throughout the world. A Catholic Hottentot who can neither read nor write is just as much one of Her members as St. Thomas or Maritain¹ is, or the Pope himself.

She has unity of FAITH. All Catholics are willing to accept all truths proposed to them by Her infallible teaching. She has unity of faith, not because Her members are more learned or more credulous than non-Catholics, but because She has a PROPORTIONATE CAUSE of unity in Her INFALLIBILITY, and in Her consequent obligation to

¹ Maritain – A 20th Century Thomistic philosopher. (1882-1973).

EXCOMMUNICATE or expel from Her fold those who persist in denying any of the truths committed to Her care.

She has unity of WORSHIP. This follows from unity of faith; for in worship we express our faith externally. We kneel in adoration of the Eucharist, for example, only because we believe in the Real Presence. It is the same for every other act of worship.

And this fourfold unity in the Catholic Church is clearly a SUPERNATURAL one. It does not come from any nation or state. Instead, it embraces human beings from every nation and state, and binds them into a miraculous unity, which is indeed God's signature to Christ's claim to be sent by Him.

(C). NON-CATHOLIC CHURCHES HAVE NOT THE MARK OF UNITY.

They have not unity of GOVERNMENT. Denying the supremacy of the Pope, they reject the one spiritual ruler Christ gave His Church. Most Protestant churches, for example, have only a temporal ruler. They are ruled by the state. They are state churches. Nothing else. And they have no unity of COMMUNION, either. How can they, since this depends on unity of Government. That is why each is separate and independent. Each is a church on its own. They are the very opposite of the "one fold and one shepherd" mentioned by Christ.

Nor have they unity of FAITH. They have no infallible teaching. Hence no proportionate cause of this unity. Moreover, their principle of PRIVATE INTERPRETATION of Scripture makes unity of faith forever impossible. If each man is to interpret the Bible according to his own private judgment, there must be as many different faiths as there are individuals. Hence, they have no unity of WORSHIP, either; for this is impossible without unity of faith.

Now you can see why, not unity but discord, has been the outstanding feature of Protestantism from its beginning; and why we are driven to say that Christ made chaos a mark of His Church, or that Protestantism is the very opposite of Christianity.

It is said that there are over 50,000 different Protestant sects in New York today. Imagine delegates from each of these, women included, trying to agree about the truths taught by Christ. What a

Babel of voices! What unending discord! What chaos! Can this welter of warring sects possibly be the church for which the Saviour begged a perfect unity? The question answers itself.

(2). THE MARK OF SANCTITY.

(A) . CHRIST MADE SANCTITY A MARK OF HIS CHURCH.

He did this when He gave His Church Her FINAL cause, which is supernatural UNION WITH GOD, through grace in this life and heaven in the next. SANCTITY flows from this cause as its ESSENTIAL PROPERTY; and, as it is VISIBLE, it is a mark of the Church.

Scripture shows that Christ gave His Church a twofold sanctity: sanctity of MEANS, and sanctity of MEMBERS.

SANCTITY OF MEANS.

Here are the MEANS OF SANCTIFICATION Christ gave to His Church: -

(i). Infallible Teaching.

Christ bade His Church teach ALL His truths INFALLIBLY, to the end of the world. These tell us what we must believe and do, in order to arrive at perfection. So, by the incomparable certitude She will give in matters of faith and morals, His Church will be able to lead men to great sanctity, even the heroic sanctity of the saints.

(ii). The Mass.

The main event in Christ's life was an act of ineffable love that showed itself in the Sacrifice of the Cross, by which He redeemed the world. But He perpetuated this Sacrifice when, at the Last Supper, He took bread and wine into His hands and said over each in turn: "This IS my Body", "This IS my Blood"; and then commanded His Apostles to do what He had done, to the end of time. "Do THIS in commemoration of Me." (Luke 22:19-20).

By the Mass, therefore, we are able to assist daily at Calvary's Sacrifice; and, by uniting ourselves to the Divine Victim on the altar, we can give God a fitting adoration, thanksgiving, reparation

and petition, and receive in return the graces and merits won for us by His Son.

(iii). The Sacraments.

Christ can and does give grace to souls directly. But the normal way is through the Sacraments. These are most powerful means of sanctification, since they give grace by their very USAGE, provided we do not hinder them from doing so, by our unworthy dispositions.

(iv). The Life of the Counsels.

Our Lord taught the counsels of perfection. He invited us to practise them fully. "Be ye perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect." From this springs the religious life of the three vows of POVERTY, CHASTITY and OBEDIENCE lived in the great orders and congregations of the Church. The vows remove the chief obstacles to perfection. And they enable us to imitate the poverty, purity and obedience of Christ, and so increase daily our supernatural friendship with God.

(v). Supernatural Contemplation.

By PRAYER we bring our INTELLECT and WILL into line with God's. We co-operate with His providence. We fulfil His plan. We unite ourselves to Him. That is why Christ insists on the necessity of prayer. And why, through the GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST, He guides us unerringly even to the sublime heights of supernatural contemplation, which is the highest form of prayer possible to man on earth.

These, and other means of grace, such as the Sacramentals and the many lovely devotions by which we honour the Trinity, Christ, and His Mother, He entrusted to His Church. And since He promised to be with Her all days in Her work of sanctifying souls, She cannot lose any of the great means of sanctification He committed to Her care. No church that has lost them can rightly claim to be His.

SANCTITY OF MEMBERS.

Since these means of sanctification must be able to produce their effect, it follows that the Church will produce in every age examples of eminent sanctity.

Millions of Her members will practise ordinary sanctity, by keeping free from mortal sin. Many others will go further, by living the life of the counsels. Some will practise the HEROIC sanctity proper to the saints. This will be VISIBLE to all, as it was for instance in the Curé of Ars; for it will be so far beyond the natural power of man as to be a MIRACLE in the moral order. Hence, a mark of the Church. The true Church will be recognisable in every country by the HEROIC sanctity of Her SAINTS.

(B). THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS THE MARK OF SANCTITY.

It is an obvious fact that She has SANCTITY OF MEANS. She has infallible teaching in faith and morals. She has the Mass and the seven Sacraments, because Her priests are validly ordained. She has religious orders and congregations of every kind, all capable of leading their members to the highest sanctity. She has prayer in all its forms in the Mass, the Office, and in the devotions practised by Her children. And She encourages all to increase their charity daily by fervent Communions, and thus increase also the influence of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, so that they may arrive before death at mystical contemplation, and enjoy even in this life a foretaste of the vision of God.

It is an equally obvious fact that She has SANCTITY OF MEMBERS. She has had in every century men, women and children who have practised HEROIC sanctity during life, and after death have worked the miracles required for canonisation. Take for instance the period 1440-1600 - eighty years before Luther's revolt, and eighty after it. A worldly age, if ever there was one. Yet from it came no fewer than 117 canonised saints. These include St. Thomas More, St. Francis Xavier, St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Teresa, St. Charles Borromeo, St. John of the Cross, St. Philip Neri, St. Peter Claver and St. Vincent de Paul - some of the greatest saints in the long history of the Church. A church that can produce so many heroes and heroines of sanctity in such a corrupt age must indeed be the Church of Christ.

"But what about bad Catholics?" people will ask. Well, Christ foretold that there would be bad as well as good in His Church - in the parable of the cockle and the wheat, for instance. Was not one of His own Apostles a traitor, in spite of Christ's teaching and example? Bad Catholics would indeed be an argument against the Church, if their evil life resulted from following Her teaching. But it does not. On the contrary, they are bad precisely because they do

NOT follow Her teaching. Hence they are bad inasmuch as they are NOT Catholics, in PRACTICE anyway. Hence it is unfair for historians to pick on bad Catholics, while ignoring the good ones. A painter cannot be blamed for painting a man, wart and all; but he can be blamed for painting just a wart and calling it a portrait.

Though the Catholic Church has had within Her fold some of the worst sinners on earth, She has ever preserved the sublime moral standards set by Christ; She has kept all the means of sanctity He gave Her; and She has manifested in every age those miracles of holiness we call the saints. They are God's seal to Her claim to be His.

(C). NON-CATHOLIC CHURCHES HAVE NOT THE MARK OF SANCTITY.

They have not SANCTITY OF MEANS. All of them have lost some of the means of sanctification Christ left to His Church. The churches round about us, for example, have no infallible teaching. They have no Mass, since their clergy are not validly ordained. They have lost all the Sacraments except two - baptism and marriage, which do not require ordination powers in those who administer them. They have no great religious orders. No devotions comparable to those of the Catholic Church. No mystics manifesting the highest form of prayer.

They have no SANCTITY OF MEMBERS, either. There are indeed very many excellent people in them - men, women and children who will doubtless gain a high place in heaven - but they have none whose HEROIC sanctity has been proved, and who have worked the miracles required for canonisation after death. They have no canonised saints.

(3). THE MARK OF UNIVERSALITY.

(A). CHRIST MADE UNIVERSALITY A MARK OF HIS CHURCH.

When Christ gave his Church her MATERIAL cause, by commanding Her to teach ALL nations, He gave Her the mark of UNIVERSALITY; for this is but a VISIBLE and ESSENTIAL PROPERTY of this cause.

And this universality was to be fourfold. She was to be universal in regard to TIME, PLACE, PERSONS and TRUTHS.

TIME: "I am with you ALL days, even to the consummation of the world." (Mat. 28:20). PLACE: "Teach ALL nations." (Mat. 28:19). "You shall be witnesses unto Me... even to the uttermost parts of the earth." (Acts 1:8). PERSONS: "Preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15). TRUTHS: "The Holy Ghost...will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you." (John 14:26).

However, we must bear in mind the fact that Christ said that His Church would grow gradually, as a mustard seed develops gradually into a tree. We must not expect it to spread over the world in a few months. Nor must we expect it to be flourishing in every country in every age. For Christ warns us that His Church will always have bitter enemies, and that She will be constantly persecuted. So, though She has from God the RIGHT to teach all peoples, She will be prevented from doing so, now in this country; now in that. But She will be universal by Her very nature as a supernatural society sent to teach and sanctify all men. Hence She will be easily distinguished from the purely national churches that will grow up about Her.

It is worth noting, too, that universality implies unity of government and unity of communion. It is obviously impossible without them. Universality is a certain diffusion of UNITY. Hence, no church can have the mark of universality, unless it has also the mark of unity.

(B). THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS THE MARK OF UNIVERSALITY.

Her very name shows this; for "Catholic" means universal. And it is a plain fact that She is universal in TIME, since She has existed as the one society from the days of the Apostles. She is universal in PLACE, for She has spread to all nations. She is universal in regard to PERSONS, for none are excluded from Her fold. Finally, She is universal in regard to TRUTHS, because, thanks to Her infallibility, She has kept intact all the truths Christ committed to Her care.

Robert Hugh Benson tells how an American convert once said: *"Before I became a Catholic, I attended a Christian Union Congress at which there were over seventy delegates, all Americans; but no*

two of them had the same beliefs." Benson replied: *"I attended a dinner recently at Propaganda College at which there were ninety-three different nationalities represented, and all had the same beliefs."* A man must be blind not to see the difference.

(C). NON-CATHOLIC CHURCHES HAVE NOT THE MARK OF UNIVERSALITY.

It is impossible for them ever to be universal in TIME. They all began long after the time of Christ. They cannot put the clock back. They cannot reverse time. Protestant churches, for instance, started more than one and a half thousand years too late to be the Church founded on the Apostles. Nor can they ever be universal in place, for they can never have unity of government and faith, without which universality in place is impossible. We need enquire no further. Facts are facts.

(4). THE MARK OF APOSTOLICITY.

(A). CHRIST MADE APOSTOLICITY A MARK OF HIS CHURCH.

Christ made Peter and the other Apostles the proximate EFFICIENT cause of His Church. In doing this, He gave Her the mark of APOSTOLICITY, since this flows from the Church's efficient cause as a VISIBLE and ESSENTIAL PROPERTY.

Founded on Peter, the Rock, His Church will derive Her UNITY and STABILITY from this foundation, and so retain Her IDENTITY to the end of the world. In other words, She will be APOSTOLIC in ORIGIN, DOCTRINE, and in the SUCCESSION OF HER RULERS.

In ORIGIN. Any church that claims to be the true one must be able to trace herself back as the one society to Peter and the other Apostles. Only thus can her members be united visibly to the Apostles, and through them to Christ. St. Paul reminds the Ephesians of this when he says: "You are fellow citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God, built upon the foundation of the Apostles, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building being framed together, groweth up into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are built together into a habitation of God in the Spirit." (Ephes. 2:19-22). A glorious text!

In DOCTRINE. Only that church can claim to be Christ's which can show that it has preserved intact all the truths which the Apostles taught. Hence also the forms of worship that they practised, and the structure of the Apostolic Church. But here we must not forget that the Church is a LIVING thing - the LIVING BODY of Christ. Hence, just as a child, while remaining the same person, must grow to maturity, so, too, the Church, while remaining ever the one Church, will DEVELOP Her doctrine, Her worship and Her structure. The rich content of Christ's revealed truths will be unfolded more and more as the centuries roll by. The dignity of Her worship will be enhanced by a splendid liturgy. Her structure will become more comprehensive to meet Her growing needs. There will be DEVELOPMENT, without SUBSTITUTION. And, instead of destroying Her identity, this will demand it, as does the growth of any living organism. Did not Christ Himself say that His Church would grow as a tiny seed grows into a majestic tree that constantly puts forth new branches, buds, and fruits?

In the SUCCESSION OF HER RULERS. These will not merely represent the Apostles. They will be their real successors in office. Linked by an unbroken succession to the Apostles, they will have the same powers of ruling as the Apostles received from Christ. Picture a long chain. If all the links are joined, a current of electricity can pass along it. In a similar way, the powers given by Christ to the Apostles will pass to their successors because the Popes will be all linked in unbroken succession to Peter. Hence that Church can alone claim to be the true one in which lawful succession to Peter is found, and in which the Bishops are the real successors of the Apostles through their union with the Pope. From this, you can see that APOSTOLICITY is the most fundamental of all the marks of the Church. And you can see, too, the deep truth that lies in the simple saying so often used in the early Church: UBI PETRUS, IBI ECCLESIA. Where Peter is, there is the Church.

(B). THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS THE MARK OF APOSTOLICITY.

She is apostolic in ORIGIN. She can trace Her Popes back in unbroken succession to Peter. This is a fact which anyone can investigate in history. She is apostolic also in DOCTRINE. Again, it can be shown that the truths She teaches today were all taught by the Apostles. She has lost none. She has added none. She has, of

course, DEVELOPED them magnificently, in the libraries of books that explain them and enable us to appreciate them. She has developed also the worship practised by the Apostles. Mighty cathedrals, for instance, have risen out of the lowly Supper Room; and the dignity of the Mass has been enhanced by glorious music and a majestic liturgy. But these are accidentals. The essence of the Mass is exactly the same today as it was when St. Peter offered it, or St. John. She has developed, too, Her structure to meet Her growing needs. Her cardinals are an instance. But She has preserved intact the constitution given Her by Christ. In all this there has been DEVELOPMENT, without SUBSTITUTION. Finally, She is apostolic in the SUCCESSION OF HER RULERS. Forming one body with the Pope, they are connected through him to Peter and the other Apostles. She is in very truth the Apostolic Church. And, if you read Her long history and the endless attempts made by Her enemies to destroy Her, you will realise that Her Apostolicity, like Her unity, universality and sanctity, can be due only to a special intervention on the part of God. You will see that it too is a MIRACLE in the moral order, and hence God's own testimony to the truth of Her claim to be His.

(C). NON-CATHOLIC CHURCHES HAVE NOT THE MARK OF APOSTOLICITY.

None of them are Apostolic in ORIGIN. Trace their history back, and you come to a founder who lives centuries after the Apostles - a Photius, for example, a Luther, a Calvin, a Henry VIII. Here again the verdict of history is final. Nothing can ever change it. So we need enquire no further into their claim to be Apostolic.

A modern non-Catholic puts the argument for Catholicism well when he writes: *"Her plea is that She has been there all through; that there has been no suspension in Her life; no break in Her history; no term of silence in Her teaching... If you would trace a Divine legacy from the age of the Caesars, would you set out to meet it on the Protestant tracks which soon lose themselves in the forests of Germany and on the Alps of Switzerland, or on the great Roman road of history, which runs through all the centuries and sets you down in Greece or Asia Minor at the very doors of the churches to which the Apostles wrote?"* The question answers itself.

We could learn much more about the marks of the Church; but our space is up. We have looked at the Church's FORMAL cause, and

seen Her to be the ONE Church. At Her FINAL cause, and seen Her to be the HOLY Church. At Her MATERIAL cause, and seen Her to be the CATHOLIC or UNIVERSAL Church. Finally, at Her EFFICIENT cause, and seen Her to be the Apostolic Church. That is why from the earliest ages She has been known as the ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC and APOSTOLIC Church. These four names were used officially in the Creed in the year 381; but they were used by Catholics much earlier than this - in fact from the times of the Apostles themselves. If you want a single word to name the Church, you can call Her Christ's Church; for She is, as we shall see, the living Body of Christ on earth, through which He will teach, govern and sanctify men to the end of the world. Or you can call Her what St. Paul calls Her - "The Church of God." (1 Cor. 10:32).

Conclusion.

Christ gave His Church the four marks of unity, sanctity, universality and apostolicity. The Catholic Church has them all. No other Church has them. Hence, the Catholic Church is the only true Church - the Church of Christ, the Church of God.

This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that She claims to be His, and, since Her unity, sanctity, universality and apostolicity are MIRACLES in the moral order, they are God's seal to Her claim. He cannot work a miracle in favour of a false one.

Consequences.

1. I should study my religion as deeply as I can so as to be able to explain it to others.
2. I should do my best to bring non-Catholics into the Church by my prayers, Holy Communion, and sufferings, and especially by my example.
3. I should never, through false shame, fail to profess my religion in public.
4. I should be careful never to give bad example to non-Catholics.
5. I should often thank God for the gift of Catholic faith.

SUMMARY

Christ gave His Church four MARKS by which men can easily recognise Her as His, and so fulfil their obligation of belonging to Her.

1. THE MARK OF UNITY.

(A). CHRIST MADE UNITY A MARK OF HIS CHURCH.

- (i). It flows from Her FORMAL cause, as a VISIBLE and ESSENTIAL property.
- (ii). It is a fourfold unity: in GOVERNMENT, COMMUNION, FAITH and WORSHIP.
- (iii). It is a VISIBLE unity - a MIRACULOUS one - a SIGN from God.

(B). THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS THE MARK OF UNITY.

She has unity of: -

- (i). Government - The Pope.
- (ii). Communion - One Church throughout the world.
- (iii). Faith - Infallible teaching - Power to excommunicate.
- (iv). Worship - Follows unity of faith. Her unity is a visible one - a miracle - a sign from God.

(C). NON-CATHOLIC CHURCHES HAVE NOT THE MARK OF UNITY.

They have no unity of: -

- (i). Government - All reject the Pope's supremacy.
- (ii). Communion - All are separate, independent churches.
- (iii). Faith - No infallibility - Private Interpretation.
- (iv). Worship - No unity of faith; hence no unity of worship.

2. THE MARK OF SANCTITY.

(A). CHRIST MADE SANCTITY A MARK OF HIS CHURCH.

- (i). It flows from Her FINAL cause, as a VISIBLE and ESSENTIAL property.
- (ii). It is twofold: Sanctity of MEANS and of MEMBERS.

LIVING THE TRUTH

MEANS: (a). Infallible teaching. (b). The Mass. (c). The Sacraments. (d). Life of the Counsels. (e). Supernatural Contemplation.

MEMBERS: The HEROIC sanctity of the saints - visible - a miracle.

(B). THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS THE MARK OF SANCTITY.

- (i). She has sanctity of MEANS - She has not lost one.
- (ii). She has sanctity of MEMBERS - Canonised saints in every age.

(C). NON-CATHOLIC CHURCHES HAVE NOT THE MARK OF SANCTITY.

- (i). They have all lost some of the MEANS Christ gave.
- (ii). E.g. Protestants have no infallible teaching, no Mass, only two Sacraments, no great religious orders, no mystics.
- (iii). They have no CANONISED saints.

3. THE MARK OF UNIVERSALITY.

(A). CHRIST MADE UNIVERSALITY A MARK OF HIS CHURCH.

- (i). It flows from Her MATERIAL cause, as a VISIBLE and ESSENTIAL property.
- (ii). She is universal in regard to: TIME, PLACE, PERSONS, and TRUTHS.
- (iii). Universality in place was to come gradually. Opposition of enemies.
- (iv). Universality in place is impossible without unity.

(B). THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS THE MARK OF UNIVERSALITY.

She is universal in regard to TIME, PLACE, PERSONS and TRUTHS.

(C). NON-CATHOLIC CHURCHES HAVE NOT THE MARK OF UNIVERSALITY.

All began centuries after Christ. They have no unity.

4. THE MARK OF APOSTOLICITY.

(A). CHRIST MADE APOSTOLICITY A MARK OF HIS CHURCH.

THE MARKS OF THE TRUE CHURCH

- (i). It flows from Her EFFICIENT cause, as a VISIBLE, ESSENTIAL property.
- (ii). She is Apostolic in ORIGIN, DOCTRINE, THE SUCCESSION OF HER RULERS.
- (iii). The most fundamental of the marks. UBI PETRUS, IBI ECCLESIA.

(B). THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS THE MARK OF APOSTOLICITY.

She is Apostolic in origin, doctrine, and the succession of her rulers.

(C). NON-CATHOLIC CHURCHES HAVE NOT THE MARK OF APOSTOLICITY.

Trace their history back, and you come to a Luther, etc. - not to Peter.

Conclusion : -

The Catholic Church alone has all the marks. She alone is His. They are miracles; hence God's seal to Her claim to be His.

Consequences : -

- 1. I should study my religion deeply, to be able to teach it to others.
- 2. I should make converts by my prayers, sufferings, Communions, example.
- 3. I should never through false shame fail to profess my faith publicly.
- 4. I should never give bad example to non-Catholics.
- 5. I should thank God for my faith.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out the wrong alternatives:-

1. Christ gave the Church Her marks when He gave Her Her four (...). 2. Unity flows from Her (...) cause, as a (...) and (...) property. 3. Christ said His Church would be "one (...) and one (...)." Hence it would have unity of (...) and of (...). 4. He prayed: "That all may be (...)." "That all may be one in (...)." "That all may be one even as (...) are one." "That all may be made (...) in one. "That the (...) may know that Thou has sent Me." 5. This unity was to be sign from God.

Hence it must be a (...) and a (...) unity. 6. The Catholic Church has a proportionate cause of unity of faith in Her (...) and in Her power to (...) those who deny her defined truths. 7. The Protestant principle of (...) makes unity of faith impossible. 8. Unity of worship depends on unity of (...). 9. There are about (...) Protestant sects in New York. 10. Sanctity flows from the Church's (...) cause, as a (...) and (...) property. 11. Calvary's Sacrifice is perpetuated for us in the (...). 12. The (...) give grace by their very usage. 13. Christ says: "Be ye perfect as your (...) is perfect." 14. The religious vows are those of (...) (...) and (...). 15. They remove the chief (...) to perfection. 16. By prayer, we bring our (...) and our (...) into line with God's. 17. Contemplation is given by the Gifts of the (...). 18. Saints practise (...) sanctity, which is a miracle in the (...) order. 19. It is (ordinary) (heroic) sanctity which is a mark of the Church. 20. Anglican clergy (are) (are not) validly ordained. 21. Anglicans have two sacraments: (...) and (...). 22. Universality flows from the Church's (...) cause, as a (...) (...) and (...) property. 23. A church cannot be universal in place unless it has the mark of (...). 24. "Teach all nations." This shows that the Church is universal in (...). 25: "Preach the Gospel to every creature." Hence, the Church is universal in (...). 26. "I am with you all days." She is universal in (...). 27. "The Holy Ghost will bring to your minds all things whatsoever I have taught you." She is universal in (...). 28. Apostolicity flows from the Church's (...) cause, as a (...) and (...) property. 29. The Catholic Church is Apostolic in (...) (...) and in (...). 30. In the Creed we sing the majestic words: Credo in unam, sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam ecclesiam," which means I believe in the (...), (...), (...) and (...) Church.

(B).

1. A friend says: "One church is as good as another." What is your answer?
2. Show that the Catholic Church has the mark of unity.
3. Show that the Catholic Church has the mark of sanctity.
4. Show that the Catholic Church has the mark of universality.
5. Show that the Catholic Church has the mark of apostolicity.
6. Staying with non-Catholics at the weekend, Berty is afraid to go to Mass, lest he offend them. Is he right?
7. Margaret wants to know why you are so sure your Church is the true one. Tell her.
8. James thinks Christ established only an invisible Church. Enlighten him.

Chapter 14

THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST

We might think that we have been looking at the Catholic Church pretty closely in the last two chapters. But really we still do not understand Her. We have to look at the Church even more closely. We have up till this been looking at Her more from a natural than from a supernatural point of view. We are like the surgeon who opens a man's body and sees its internal functioning, and yet always misses something – the soul. Yet the soul is the very reason why the whole body is alive. We have examined the Church with care but we have as yet not really got down to what makes the Church the Church. To use another metaphor, we are like the man who looks at a stained-glass window from the outside: he thinks it looks beautiful from the outside, and that he has seen all there is to be seen, and goes away. But to see the window properly he must go inside, and view it from within.

We have been having a good look at the Church – but from the outside. We can see easily enough that the Church is a society of men, women and children, ruled over by a single man, the Pope, and by a group of men, the Bishops. There is nothing very mysterious about that, we might say. But it has about it some very curious things that leave me rather puzzled: it has infallibility, it is a supernatural society, it has a miraculous unity, holiness, apostolicity, universality which seems to be part and parcel of its nature. I feel that there is a lot more that I am missing. I have a feeling that I am a bit like the man looking at the stained glass window from the outside, or the surgeon searching for a soul.

1. The Church is Christ's Mystical Body.

The Church is made up of men and women and children – is that all? No; we must add – AND CHRIST. What makes up the Church is US AND CHRIST. We are all joined together as members of the Church; but in being so joined we are joined on to Christ. “I am the vine; you, the branches... As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself,

unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me... Without Me you can do nothing. If you abide in Me... you shall ask whatsoever you will, and it shall be done to you." (Jn. 15.1-7).

Here is something more than a mere society. We are all joined together, and to Christ, not merely because we have the same goal in view, but because we are joined in a mysterious living way. We make with Him something that is mysteriously alive; the first Maori converts used to call the Church "THE LIVING TREE CHURCH."

St. Paul appreciated this mysterious union we have with Christ and each other. Read the ninth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and you will see why. It tells how Saul, as he was then called, was spurring his horse towards Damascus to persecute the Christians there, when a light suddenly shone about him. He was thrown from his horse. As he lay terrified, he heard Christ saying to him: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME?" (Acts 9:5). Notice that Christ did not say "My followers," but "Me." At the same time He enlightened Paul's mind to see that in persecuting the Christians, he was persecuting Christ Himself, because of the intimate union that exists between Him and them. Paul could never get this vision from his mind. It haunted him till his death. It changed him from a fanatic to a saint. It made him the incomparable Apostle of the Gentiles, ever burning with zeal for the salvation of souls.

Again and again in his epistles, St. Paul tries to bring home to his readers the ineffable intimacy of their union with Christ and with one another. He tries image after image. But the one he likes best is that of a LIVING BODY, of which CHRIST IS THE HEAD AND WE ARE THE MEMBERS.

He tells his Roman converts, for instance, that "As in one body we have many members, but all members have not the same office, so we, being many, are ONE BODY IN CHRIST, and MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER," (Rom. 12:4-5). He reminds the Ephesians that God "Hath subjected all things under His (Christ's) feet, and hath made Him HEAD over all the CHURCH, which is His BODY, and the FULLNESS of Him who is filled all in all." (Eph.1:22-23).

This idea of Paul's of a body is a great help. The members of a body are not strangers to one another; each is something of the others, and each one works for the good of all, and all work for the good of each one. St. Augustine pointed this out clearly enough when he

said: "In the eye the ear sees, in the ear the eye hears... thus when the ear says: the eye sees for me, the eye says: the ear hears for me; and eyes and ears say: the hands work for me." This is only echoing St. Paul again: "There was to be no want of unity in the body, all the different parts of it were to make each other's welfare their common care; and you are CHRIST'S BODY, ORGANS OF IT DEPENDING UPON EACH OTHER." (1 Cor. 12:25-27).

When we think of this close and intimate union that we have with each other and with Christ we find it staggering. If Christ could say to Paul: "You are persecuting Me," it is exactly as if the head of a body were to say to someone who treads on the foot: "You are treading on me." We are joined to Christ so closely that Our Lord Himself could say that! And when members of the Church are being persecuted in other countries we can say here in Australia: I am being persecuted" - because we make with them ONE BODY.

2. The Mystical Body's Head, Christ.

Our Lord is Head of the Church, not just as a king is head of a kingdom, or a president the head of a state. Our Lord is Head of the Church as your head is the head of your body. Of course, that does not mean that we have a physical union with Our Lord, but it means that we have a very close union, so close that it defies full understanding. That is why we speak of MYSTICAL body, and MYSTICAL head. In other words Christ is a member of this Body - indeed, the most important member. He belongs to it, is part of it: is just as much part of it as the hand and the eye are part of a physical body. Let us look at this more closely.

(a). The head has the same nature as the body. Our Lord has the same nature as you and I, because He has a human nature which is exactly like ours - He is able to suffer like us, able to die like us, able to get tired, to cry, to be happy, to laugh, to sing. But He is not merely a man, He is also God. Yet even as God He is still like us in nature, because through sanctifying Grace we are made to share in the divine nature in a mysterious way.

(b). The head of the body is the most important part of it for three main reasons: its dignity, its position, and its perfection. Christ has a pre-eminence over all the other members of the Mystical Body

because He has the dignity of the hypostatic union, He has the position that is the closest to God, He has the perfection of the abundance of grace and supernatural life.

(c). The head and the members of the body make one complete whole. So Christ together with the Church makes one complete whole. We cannot rightly think about the Church unless it is with Christ and in Christ. But at the same time we cannot think about Christ as complete, without the Church. The Church can do nothing without the Head, because it is in the Head that its life chiefly resides. "Without Me you can do nothing." Still, without the body, without that organism that completes it, the head cannot exercise its living operations. Christ does not need the Church: but He wants it to be like that. She is going to help Him to distribute all that He has gained in the redemption. He wants these goods to come in a certain way from Her own work. The salvation of many souls depends on the prayers and voluntary mortifications offered for that intention by the members of Christ's Mystical Body. Christ has decided to depend on the co-operating action of the Pastors and faithful, especially the parents in the Church. That is why St. Paul speaks of Christ "who is everywhere and in all things complete" through the Church, His Body.

(d). All activities and life flow into the members from the head of the body. From Christ flow life and activity to all the members of the Church. From Christ the Head come the supernatural gifts of grace and virtue: Christ as man, has been given the power to bestow grace, just as He was able to win it for us. All graces come from God by way of the sacred humanity of Our Lord, that is, through the body and soul of Christ. He chooses, determines, and distributes every grace which each person wants, just as He likes. He uses the Sacraments, He uses the priests, He uses His Holy Mother: but they are the channels of His Grace, the visible and invisible nerve and muscles of the Mystical Body. As a Head He has a direct influence on the minds and hearts of the men and women and children of His Body. But just as a Head does, so Christ looks after the good of the whole body as well. He enlightens and strengthens the Church's rulers so that they faithfully and fruitfully carry out their duties. In times of great difficulty He raises up heroic men and women, and even children, who give examples of holiness to other Christians. If He sees the Church in any dangerous situation He intervenes directly Himself to save Her, or

does so through an angel, the saints, or Our Lady, the Help of Christians.

The influence of the Head is seen especially in the way He rules the Church through His Vicar, the Pope. He entrusted the visible government of the whole society of His Church to Peter. The Pope is rather like the Governor, the representative of the Head of the State. The Pope is Christ's personal representative on earth, the visible centre, and visible foundation on which the Church rests. Christ reaches out also to individuals through the Bishops who are sent Him in their diocese, although they govern in dependence on the Pope.

(e). Christ, our Head, loves us, His Body. He has shown that in many ways. Look at the loving devotion and tenderness He extended on it when He laid its foundations. He lovingly prepared the Apostles to be the teachers, rulers and sanctifiers of His kingdom, selected His personal representative, gave the Church the Sacraments, especially Baptism, and the wonderful Eucharist. He gave them a New Law to live by, made a new pact between God and them by signing it with His own blood. He gained a treasure of graces that knows no limit. He poured out on His Church the Holy Ghost at Pentecost in an astounding abundance.

We know that our Lord enjoyed throughout His whole life the beatific vision; because of that He was able to have continuously before His mind's eye every single member of His Mystical Body, and to embrace each one with His personal love. That love is universal: for He intended all men to be members of His Mystical Body, that is what He made it for, that is why He died for all. His love embraces every member of the human race. It is a love that is ever-active: never a minute did He spare Himself as we see in every page of the Gospel account. It is a prayerful love: He was continually beseeching His Father for the Church. We recall how ardently He prayed for Peter and the Apostles before He died, and for all those who through their preaching would be joined to Him. It is a love of sacrifice: pain and suffering and death He willingly accepted for the sake of His Church. The purchase of the Church cost Him His life.

We have only to think of the three greatest gifts of love to the Church to realise just how great that love is. First of all He gave the Church His real presence in the Eucharist - we have all had

personal experience of what this gift means. He gave us the Priesthood for the continual renewal of the Eucharist, and its Sacrifice. He gave us Mary to be the spiritual mother of us all.

3. The Mystical Body's Soul - The Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost holds a vital place in the Church, a place given to Him by Our Lord Himself. On the eve of His death Our Lord spoke of many things which must have been hard for His Apostles to understand at the time. During three years they had lived in His company, absorbing His teaching, striving to mould themselves to His spirit. Christ had become all in all to them. And yet when the sad moment of departure was drawing near, the Lord does not try to console them by mere assurances that He will remember them in the paradise to which He is hastening. That is not the main theme of His discourse. He gives them startling news. He tells them that He will be REPLACED BY ANOTHER! "And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you forever. The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not; nor knoweth him: but you shall know him; because he shall abide with you, and shall be in you." (Jn. 14: 16-17).

He could read in their inmost souls their belief that no one could take His place; that no Comforter He could send would make up for the loss of Him. So He says to them: "But I tell you the truth: it is expedient to you that I go: for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you." And again: "But when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will teach you all truth." (Jn.16:7 and 13). The sending of the Holy Ghost was going to be to all those who through their teaching would be won to belief in Him. The Holy Ghost would never leave them, and His special task would be to utter the message that has been given to Him, and to make plain to them what is still to come, recalling to their minds everything Christ had said to them.

Our Lord looked upon the sending forth of the Holy Ghost by His Father and Himself as the grand event to which His whole life was directed. The redeeming Christ occupies the pages of the Gospel, and disappears after the Ascension. Then the Spirit of Christ becomes the chief actor in the event that opens at Pentecost and will unfold in long succession until the end of time.

The Holy Ghost is the SOURCE OF LIFE for the Church, as the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles make quite clear. The remarkable thing about His presence in the Church is that it is so much like the presence of the SOUL in our body. The Holy Ghost PERVADES THE CHURCH IN A SPIRITUAL WAY as does the human soul its body; He is the ONE, single Holy Spirit Who is in Christ the Head and in each of us, Christ's members, just as the human soul is one but gives life to each member of the body. The spiritual soul cannot be divided up into parts so is complete in every part of the body. It animates, gives life to each part, just as it is within the whole body, and gives life to the body as a whole. The soul is the principle of all the body's life: so is the Holy Ghost the PRINCIPLE OF SUPERNATURAL LIFE for the whole Body and for each member, as He is for the Head Himself. The soul ACTS more or less perfectly ACCORDING TO THE HEALTH OF THE MEMBER. It cannot be the principle of much activity in an unhealthy, paralysed limb. Likewise is the Holy Ghost's action hindered according as a member loses its health of sanctifying grace. Even important organs that are unhealthy and sluggish can prohibit the action of the Holy Ghost in the body. He must act through the members; the member must personally co-operate with the grace of the Holy Ghost that moves Him, otherwise the Spirit cannot act in him. The soul is the PRINCIPLE OF HEALTH AND HEALING for the human body; the Holy Ghost performs that task for the Mystical Body; our least action that has merit cannot be produced without the Holy Ghost. Finally, the soul RULES OVER THE MEMBERS OF THE BODY THROUGH THE HIGHER ORGANS; so too, does the Holy Ghost rule over the Church through the hierarchy.

All this does not mean that the influence of Christ as Head, and the influence of the Holy Ghost as soul, come into conflict, or clash. The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of Christ. He is not given to us except by Christ and in Christ. The Holy Ghost Himself proceeds from the Son, Who has assumed our human nature, just as He proceeds from the Father also. The Holy Spirit is sent by the Son from Whom He receives in order that He be able to give to us. The lights which the Spirit bestows, the truths which He reveals, are the lights and truths of the Son Who, with the Father, is the principle whence the Holy Spirit proceeds. If He makes us children of God, it is because He is the Spirit of the Son of God. If He makes us the adopted sons of God, it is by making us one with the Son of God by nature.

The special place of the Holy Ghost in the Church can be best likened to the place of the soul in a body. It is not exactly the same by any means; but if we say that the Holy Ghost is a sort of soul of the Mystical Body, we understand that He is united to the whole Church and to each member of it in the ways we have talked about. We become human by having a human soul. We do not become God by our union with the Spirit of Christ. Nor do we lose our identity as individuals and become utterly absorbed into another thing. The Holy Ghost is joined to the Church as the efficient cause of its holiness. The Church still remains a society. The members of any society are united precisely because they all seek the same goal. But there is a higher unity in the Church, the unity that makes it Christ's Mystical Body, and that unity is brought about by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is an internal principle really existing in and really operating in the whole structure of the Church and in each member of it. It is this presence of the Holy Ghost that makes of the Church a society which surpasses all other societies, which puts it on a supernatural level, just as grace transcends our nature and puts us on to a supernatural plane.

4. The Members of the Mystical Body.

The members of the Church are those who have been baptised who profess the true Faith, and have not cut themselves off, or have been cut off from the Church by lawful authority. Thus the means by which a person is made a member of the Mystical Body is Baptism, together with belief in the teaching of the Church, and by officially joining himself to the Pope who is Christ's visible representative. This is the divinely appointed way of being grafted on to the Mystical Body of Christ. Although it is Christ's Mystical Body the Church is a social thing – a society of men, women and children and Christ. A man must enter Christ's society officially and publicly through the door given it by its Founder. He must officially cleave to Christ and Christ's doctrine. He does this officially, first of all by the public initiation ceremony of Baptism, in which he expresses his faith, and then by officially acknowledging the supreme authority of Christ's representative, the Pope. But because of the tragic tangle that has resulted from men cutting themselves off from the Pope and so from the Head of the Mystical Body, Christ, while still being baptised, an adult must publicly profess that he is united with the Head's visible representative.

Therefore a person who was baptised an Anglican would not be a member of the Mystical Body. For although he is baptised, validly we presume, he has neither the true faith, nor has he linked himself with the successor of Peter. He is not a member of the true Church, and he is not a member of the Mystical Body.

If a person is cut off from being a member, he is of course, no longer a member of the Mystical Body. We speak of this generically as excommunication. Such a person is one who has been cut off from communication with the faithful and the effects of that union. However, some are only excommunicated partly, by being forbidden to say Mass, or receive the Sacraments: they still belong to the Church, and thus to the Mystical Body. But if they are excommunicated completely through a sentence passed by a legitimate authority they are cut off from the Mystical Body.

What about Catechumens? A catechumen is a person who is preparing to become a Catholic, but who is not yet baptised. Does he belong to the body of the Church? No. He must first be baptised. What about Schismatics, Heretics and Apostates? A schismatic is a baptised person who refuses to acknowledge the authority of the Bishops or the Pope. A heretic is a baptised person who denies one or some of the truths taught by the Church. An apostate is a baptised person who rejects all Catholic teaching and becomes for instance a materialist or an atheist. Do these belong to the Mystical Body? It depends. They do, provided their schism, heresy or apostasy is hidden; but not if it is public.

We might sum this up by saying only those who are members of the Catholic Church are members of the Mystical Body of Christ.

Do ALL who will eventually be saved belong to the Church in reality? No. Millions will doubtless be saved who have not had a chance to receive the Sacrament of Baptism. They receive baptism of desire or martyrdom and will gain heaven. Moreover, millions of heretics, schismatics and apostates will also be saved because they are in GOOD FAITH. They sincerely think that they are right. They sincerely think that they belong to the true Church. If they die in grace, their salvation is assured. Baptism of blood, or baptism of desire do not make us members of the Church in reality.

Anyone who wilfully stays outside the Church, and dies outside of it, cannot be saved. But if a person is inculpably ignorant of the

Catholic Church and is not able to distinguish it from the sects, then he is said to belong to the Catholic Church in heart or in desire. If he knew it was the true Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, he would certainly join it, because he wants to do anything that is required of him by God. Such people are actually saved only because of this implicit desire that links them to the Mystical Body without making them actual members of it. A person can only be saved through the Church, and they are in the Church, at least in their hearts. After all the basis of any man's allegiance is an act of the will, whereby he desires to do all that is required of him. It is the intervening circumstance alone that keeps him from actually fulfilling that desire. Because of that vital connection of the heart that the soul has with the Mystical Body he receives grace from the Holy Ghost. Unfortunately, he can receive little else from Him: because almost everything else belongs only to members of the Mystical Body: e.g. the reception of the Sacrament of Penance, of Our Lord in Holy Communion, being able to participate actively in the Mass, being governed and directed towards salvation by the teaching of the hierarchy. All these things and many more come to a man only because he is in fact and not merely in desire a member of the Mystical Body of Christ. In a word we can say: OUTSIDE THE CHURCH THERE IS NO SALVATION.

5. The Marks of the Church.

The marks of the Church are the external signs which always and everywhere are seen in the Church alone. But when we say that they are external signs we are only saying half of what they are. That is only what we can see. But their invisible roots go deep into the very essence of the Church. Like the iceberg much more of them is invisible than is visible. They are found always and everywhere in the Church because they are intimately connected with the Mystical Body. They are really manifold aspects of the same reality which is the Mystical Body of Christ. That is why where you find only one of them, there you must have the Mystical Body, and all the others.

The powers of priest, prophet and king which belonged to Our Lord are transmitted by visible rites which leave their historical traces in the world. Then men who rule, and teach and sanctify are visible, but invisible is that divine energy which passes from the Blessed Trinity, through the soul of Christ, and thence through these hierarchical powers, to bring supernatural salvation to the world

and to gather into one the people of God. Here we are confronted again with the life-giving principle of the Church, the soul of the Mystical Body, the Holy Ghost. Yet this is the **mark of Apostolicity**.

The **unity** of government, faith and worship merely reflects the invisible unity whereby all the members of the Church are mysteriously united with Christ and with one another and are made alive by the presence of the Holy Ghost.

The **Holiness** of the Mystical Body that is seen outwardly in the holiness of the means She offers for salvation and the holiness of Her members, is essentially the holiness of intimate union with God. For so close is the Mystical Body to God that the Son and the Holy Ghost are part of it: the Son in His human nature is its Head, the Holy Ghost in His capacity as Sanctifier is its life-giving Soul.

The **Universality** of the Mystical Body refers to the material cause of the Church, Her members, who need only this qualification that they be men and redeemed by Christ. The Mystical Body was made for all mankind, not for just a few: and it has the capability of embracing all.

6. The Duties of the Members of the Church.

"ALL CHRISTIANS ARE STANDARD-BEARERS, AND EACH MUST BEAR THE NAME OF CHRIST IN THE SIGHT OF NATIONS AND KINGS." These were the words of the great Doctor of the Church, St. John Chrysostom. One of the most important duties of a Member of the Mystical Body is to do all he can to make sure that other men and women and children get their chance to become Members also. This is an obligation placed on all of us by God, on each according to his capacity. Layfolk have both a right and a duty to co-operate in some way with the apostolic activity of the Pope, the Bishops and the Priests. Their right and obligation comes from Baptism and Confirmation, from their Christian vocation itself.

(a). **Apostolic prayer** is their first duty because it is so necessary and useful, and yet so easy. Christ Himself taught us all to pray "thy kingdom come." We must pray for others "for all men, for kings, and for all that are in high stations: that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all piety and chastity. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to

be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. 2: 1-4).

(b). With the apostolate of prayer is closely connected the **Apostolate of Sacrifice**. By our meritorious acts of sacrifice we gain the graces from God that are necessary for the conversion of non-Catholics. These same acts do something to make up for the sins of others. But besides such sacrifices of daily life, there is the Sacrifice of Liturgical life, the Mass. In a restricted sense all the faithful share in the offering of this Sacrifice, because they offer it through the priest and with him. It is Christ the Head of the Church who acts through the priest, and the whole Church offers through Christ. If the Head offers the Victim the whole Body offers. They offer the Sacrifice with the priest in the sense that they unite their sentiments to his, so that the sacrifice is but an outward sign of their internal feelings towards God.

(c). **The Apostolate of Example**. This is by obeying Christ's command: "So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." (Mt. 5:16). As St. Peter says, following his Master: "Having your conversation good among the Gentiles: that whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by the good works, which they shall behold in you, glorify God in the day of visitation." (1 Pet. 2:12).

(d). To lay folk belongs also **the Apostolate of Speech**, for not only must parents give the first rudiments of religion to their children; but all, without exception, are obliged when the cause of Christ demands it to profess their religion without shyness - "Everyone therefore that shall confess me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven. But he that shall deny me before men, I will also deny him before my Father who is in heaven." (Mt. 10:32). There is also a duty of fraternal correction when the occasion warrants it: they cannot just leave their neighbour to go to perdition.

(e). Lastly, there is **the Apostolate of Kindness**. We are all obliged to perform both temporal and spiritual works of mercy. Providing for the poor, comforting for the sad and lonely, rejoicing with those that rejoice, not repaying injury for injury, not avenging ourselves but positively being kind to our enemies. This apostolate includes the proper performance of our duties of state: lawyers,

politicians, judges, doctors, generals, busdrivers, merchants – each must carry out his task well – above all, father and mother, whose task is to make of their family a little Mystical Body, or a living growing cell of the great Mystical Body of Christ, in which the new members are nurtured and brought up in the Faith.

These are the elements which go to make up the lay apostolate of the Mystical Body. By it we become the salt of the earth, the light of the world, and in our own way we share the vocation of apostles – that most divine calling in which we co-operate with God in the salvation of souls.

The Mystical Body of Christ is like a living, acting, growing organism. Each member in it has a definite work to perform for the good of the whole Body. Says St. Paul: “God has divided to everyone the measure of faith. For as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office, so we being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members of one another. And having different gifts, according to the grace that is given us.” (Rom. 12:4). Just as the eye, the ear, the tongue function for the good of the whole body, so there are organs in the Mystical Body of Christ which each have their function to serve the whole Body. The Sacred Hierarchy holds the first place, carrying out for Christ and in Christ the works of preaching, sanctifying and ruling, under the influence of the Holy Ghost bringing new members to the Mystical Body. In every age there are the saints, founders of religious orders, models to us in every walk of life, endowed often with miraculous gifts, doing the work of providing for the Body a constant source of edification, and a proof that the Holy Ghost lives in It. Religious men and women can be regarded as another organ of the Mystical Body, carrying on historically Christ's own life of poverty, chastity and obedience and His constant prayer. Of great importance for the Mystical Body are parents, who constitute another organ, whereby Members are added to the Body. The laity in the Church because of their Characters of Baptism and Confirmation are organs of the Apostolate as we have seen, often being called to the special apostolate of Catholic Action, in which they are organised to carry out the directives of the hierarchy.

7. Our Lady's Place in the Mystical Body.

What is Our Lady's place in the Mystical Body? There is no doubt about her vitally close connection with the Mystical Body, with its

Head and its Members and with its Soul. Her own soul was filled with the Holy Ghost far more abundantly than has been any other, apart from the soul of Christ. She represented the whole of humanity when she gave her consent to the spiritual marriage of the Son of God with human nature. She gave miraculous birth to Christ our Head. She presented Him, the newborn Prophet, King and Priest, to the Jewish shepherds and the Gentile wise men who first came to adore Him. She asked from Him the first miracle at the Wedding Feast of Cana, so that His apostles learned to believe in Him. Closely united with Him, she offered Him on Calvary to the Eternal Father, showing by this new action that She was Mother of the Head and of the Body bought with such a price. Her powerful intercession among the Apostles brought down the abundant outpouring of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. Upon the Mystical Body of Christ, born of the broken Heart of her Son, she bestowed the same motherly care and fervent love with which she nurtured Him in His infancy.

So if the members of Christ's Body compose with Him an organic whole, the human being who is indispensable and personally necessary for the existence and career of the Word Incarnate must take her place next to the Head, in the first place which she can share with no other. Her motherhood of grace towards us is not exercised first on individuals and then only by way of afterthought on the Body. It is rather exercised on the Body and its Members simultaneously. Whatever comes to us in God's great plan of salvation comes to us socially; grace is given to us not as isolated individuals, but as Members of Christ's Body; the grace we receive is actually the grace of the Head, Christ, overflowing upon us.

If we speak of Christ as the Body's Head, the Holy Ghost as the Body's Soul, the various Members as organs of the Body, then we can rightly speak of Our Lady as that organ next in importance to the Head. She is the Heart of the Mystical Body, the Church. No organ in the human body seems to symbolise the Blessed Virgin's position and function in the Mystical Body so aptly as the heart. As the heart is animated by the soul, Mary's person and activity are completely sustained and animated by the Holy Ghost. She conceived Christ our Head, nourished Him, gave Him of her maternal blood and drew Him into blood relationship with the human race. But the heart, which nourishes the head by the blood it sends throughout the whole organism, is also dependent on the head, which regulates all movement. Even in its emotional life the

heart contracts or expands according as objects are presented to it by the mind. This is an apt figure of Mary's subordination and dependence on Christ. The heart is regarded as the second noblest part of the body after the head; it transmits life and vigour and sustenance to all the members of the organism without exception through the blood; it does its work whether we think about it or not. There is a parallel here with Mary's activity as second noblest member of the Church and Mediatrix of all grace to each member, whether he begs her intercession or not. If the heart of a sick person still functions healthily there is much hope of recovery: Mary's intercession is an object of the sinner's boundless trust. Like the heart in the body Mary has a central but HIDDEN place in the Church. She holds no office in the hierarchical, social organisation of the Church. Her co-operation is silent, hidden.

The Church is like the Eucharist, the Incarnation, the Trinity. It is a Mystery. We would never have known all this about it unless God had revealed it; and even when we know it we cannot fully understand it. Many people do not appreciate this. They think that the Church is only a society of men after all. And from that they get the idea that one Church, or one society or group of men can help each other to heaven just as well as any other, especially if they keep to the main doctrines taught by Christ. How foolish that is! There could be many societies of men banded together with the common purpose of carrying out Christ's teachings, but that would not make them the Church. For the Church is Christ's own Mystical Body, something sublime and mysterious, a supernatural reality directly created by the Blessed Trinity Itself.

SUMMARY

1. The Church is Christ's Mystical Body.

- (i). It is CHRIST AND US.
- (ii). More than a human society.
- (iii). WE are united with CHRIST to make a BODY, He being the HEAD and we the MEMBERS of the BODY.
- (iv). The members depend on each other.

2. Christ is the Head of the Mystical Body.

- (i). Has the same nature as the body - human through Mary, we are divine through grace.

- (ii). He is the most important part because of dignity, position and perfection – so a Head.
- (iii). The Head completes the members and the members complete the Head, to make one complete Body.
- (iv). All life and activity flow into members from the Head. Life through grace is from Christ; activity through grace and through the direction of the hierarchy and especially the POPE.
- (v). Christ the Head loves us His Body.

3. The Holy Ghost, is the soul of the Mystical Body.

- (i). He replaces Christ, according to Christ's own will.
- (ii). He is source of life pervading the Church in a spiritual way.
- (iii). He is the principle of supernatural life.
- (iv). He acts according to the health of the Member.
- (v). He is the principle of health and healing.
- (vi). He rules over the members through the higher organs, the hierarchy.
- (vii). Christ's influence remains; the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of Christ.
- (viii). Holy Ghost is origin of higher unity and holiness of the Church.

4. The Members of the Mystical Body.

- (i). Conditions: Faith; Baptism; Allegiance to Pope and Bishops.
- (ii). Hence only a Catholic is a Member of the Mystical Body.
- (iii). Heretics, schismatics, apostates are excluded from the Body if their denial is public.
- (iv). Those excommunicated are excluded if they have full excommunication, sentenced by authority.
- (v). Catechumens are not members of the Mystical Body.
- (vi). All the saved are not actually Members of the Mystical Body.
- (vii). To be saved you must at least have the implicit desire of being a Member of the Mystical Body, because outside the Mystical Body there is no salvation.

5. The Marks of the Church.

- (i). External marks have internal roots in the essence of the Church: i.e. in the Mystical Body.
- (ii). Apostolicity from Christ the Body's efficient cause.
- (iii). Unity from the Soul, the Holy Ghost, Who is like a formal cause.
- (iv). Holiness from the final cause which is union with God.
- (v). Universality from the members, the material cause of the Mystical Body.

6. The Duties of Members of the Church.

- (i). ALL Christian are standard-bearers.
- (ii). Through
 - (a). Apostolic Prayer.
 - (b). Apostolic Sacrifice.
 - (c). Apostolic Example.
 - (d). Apostolic Speech.
 - (e). Apostolic Kindness.
- (iii) The members each have a function to perform like the organs of a body.
 - (a). The Hierarchy.
 - (b). The Saints.
 - (c). The Religious.
 - (d). Parents.
 - (e). The Lay Apostolate, organised into Catholic Action.

7. Our Lady's Place in the Church.

- (i). She is vitally connected with the Mystical Body.
- (ii). She takes the place next to the Head: it belongs solely to her.
- (iii). Through her Motherhood of Grace she is like a Heart in the Mystical Body.

Conclusion : The Church is a Mystery.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. There are two ways of looking at the Church, natural and (...). 2. The Church is made up of men and women and children and (...). 3. The Church (is) (is not) something more than a mere society. 4. We are joined together and to Christ in a mysterious (...) way. 5. St. (...) tells us a lot about this union. 6. In the Mystical Body each member works for the good of (himself) (all). 7. Our Lord is Head of the Church (just as) (not just as) a king is head of a kingdom. 8. The head is of the same (...) as the body. 9. Christ's human nature is (exactly) (not exactly) like ours. 10. Christ is not merely a man, He is also (...). 11. We are like Christ both in our human nature and in (...). 12. The head of the body is the most important part of it for three reasons: its dignity, its (...), and its perfection. 13. The Head and the Body make one complete (...). 14. We (cannot) (can) think about Christ as complete without the Church. 15. The Church (can) (cannot) do anything without Christ. 16. Christ has decided to depend on the co-operation of the Bishops, priests, layfolk and especially (...). 17. All activities and life flow into the members from the (...) of the body. 18. Christ (as man) (as God) has been given the power of bestowing grace on us. 19. He bestows these graces (directly Himself) (through the Church). 20. The influence of the Head is seen especially in the way He rules through His Vicar (...). 21. The Bishop of a diocese governs (dependently) (independently) on the Pope. 22. The three greatest gifts of Christ to the Church are the Eucharist, the Priesthood and (...). 23. The Holy Ghost is called the (...) of the Mystical Body. 24. The Holy Ghost (is) (is not) the source of life in the Church. 25. The Holy Ghost pervades the Church in a (material) (spiritual) way. 26. The Holy Ghost Who is in Christ is (the same) (not the same) as the Holy Ghost in us. 27. The influence of Christ and of the Holy Ghost in the Church (clash) (do not clash). 28. We (become) (do not become) God by our union with the Spirit of Christ. 29. The members of any society are united because they all seek the same (...). 30. It is the presence of the (...) in the Church that makes it a society which surpasses all other societies. 31. A person is made a member of the Mystical Body by Baptism and by joining himself to (...). 32. A Catechumen (belongs) (does not belong) to the body of the Church. 33. A Baptised person who denies some of the Church's teachings is called a (...). 34. Every excommunicated person (necessarily ceases) (does not necessarily cease) to belong to the Mystical Body. 35. A heretic ceases to belong to the body of the Church if his heresy is (...).

(B).

1. Peter asks: "What place does Our Lady hold in the Mystical Body?" Tell him.
2. A non-Catholic objects that there are two heads in the Church, the Pope and Christ. Explain how this is not so.
3. Explain the saying: "Outside the Church there is no salvation."
4. If you're in mortal sin you hinder the work of the Holy Ghost in the Church. Why?
5. While Our Lord was on earth He knew and loved each one of us. Show that this is not a pious exaggeration.
6. How does Catholic Action fit into the Mystical Body?
7. At the instant of death, which would you rather be: Catholic in mortal sin, or an Anglican in a state of grace? Give your reason.
8. Why does the Church regard Parenthood as a Vocation?

Chapter 15

TRADITION

1. Introduction.

We have seen that Christ claimed that God sent Him to teach us religious truths; and that He worked miracles to prove it. These were God's seal to His claim, since God cannot work a miracle in favour of a false one.

We have seen also that Christ intended His teaching to remain to the end of the world. To make sure that it would do so, He established a society called His Church. Why a society? Because a society can endure forever, and it can teach with a living voice. He gave His Church, consequently, the twofold power of lasting to the end of time, and of teaching His truths without even the possibility of error. In other words, He made it an INDEFECTIBLE and INFALLIBLE Church. It was to guard His truths forever, and give us their exact meaning with its own living infallible voice, just as He Himself would if He still lived on earth.

He did not bid His Church write a Bible and hand it to each of its members to interpret for himself. Instead, He commanded His Church to TEACH with a living voice. "Going, therefore, TEACH all nations." (Mat. 28:19). He as much as told His Apostles that there was no need for them to write anything in order to preserve His teaching, since the Holy Ghost would abide with the Church forever, and bring to the minds of its teachers all that He had taught. It would thus guide them into all truth. Moreover, He Himself promised to be with it in its teaching all days, "even to the consummation of the world." (Mat. 28:19).

Christianity, then, is a TEACHING of men, by GOD, through Christ, by means of the infallible and indefectible CHURCH. Nothing else is Christianity.

2. Tradition.

The word "tradition" comes from the Latin verb "tradere" which means "to hand on," "to transmit." Having entrusted all His truths to the teaching of the Church, Christ bade it HAND ON these truths to all men, to the end of the world. How? By ORAL TEACHING. That is why the Apostles, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, went out and SPOKE to the people. They did not sit down and write a New Testament, and then hand this to men to study and interpret for themselves. They PREACHED instead. They did what Christ told them to do. They TAUGHT His religion with a living voice. And their successors have done the same ever since; so that today the Spirit-enlightened Church hands on Christ's truths to you and to me, with the same divine authority as that with which the Apostles taught in the beginning.

Tradition, therefore, in the Christian sense of the term, is simply the handing on of all Christ's truths, by the living, infallible voice of the Church. The word is used also, of course, for the truths thus handed on. And by Christ's truths we mean not merely those which He taught with His own lips before the Ascension, but also those which He promised the Holy Ghost would reveal to His Apostles, after He had gone to heaven. In His last discourse to His Apostles, Christ said: "I have many things to say to you, but you cannot hear them now. But when He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will teach you all truth. For He shall not speak of Himself, but what things soever He shall hear, He shall speak; and the things that are to come He will show you." (John 16:12-13).

PUBLIC revelation ended, consequently, with the death of the last of the Apostles. There have been many PRIVATE revelations made since then - those made to St. Margaret Mary concerning devotion to the Sacred Heart, for instance - but we are at present not concerned with these. We are concerned with the truths made known by Christ, either by His own lips, or through the Holy Ghost.

In time, of course, this ORAL teaching given by the Apostles came to be RECORDED. How? Well, some of it was written in the INSPIRED BOOKS of the New Testament. Some of it was written in UNINSPIRED writings such as the sermons, instruction and books left us by the FATHERS of the Church, inscriptions on monuments or in the catacombs, creeds, decisions of councils and Popes, and the like. Some of it was recorded, finally, by the PRACTICES and CEREMONIES of the Church.

Hence these things help us today to determine what the early Church taught. They are records of its teaching. They enable us to prove that She teaches today exactly the same truths as She taught in the early centuries. They prove that tradition is consistent. In this, they are valuable. But what really matters is the LIVING, INFALLIBLE TEACHING of the Church, that was responsible for them all.

3. The Rule Of Faith.

For us, therefore, there is but one rule of faith. It is TRADITION in the sense in which we have used the word: the INFALLIBLE TEACHING POWER OF THE CHURCH.

To be a true guide to us in religion, a rule of faith must have three qualifications:

- (i). It must be within reach of all.
- (ii). It must be clear to all.
- (iii). It must present all the truths taught by the Christian religion.

Now, it is obvious that TRADITION has these three qualifications. It is within reach of all; for, even those who have never been able to read, have been able to listen to the oral teaching of the Church. It is clear to all; for the Church teaches with a living voice that can explain things to everyone, and answer all their questions. It is not like a dead book that must remain silent. Lastly, it contains all the truths of the Christian religion, since Christ committed all these to the keeping of His Church. No matter how poor or how illiterate a person may be, he can still learn Christ's truths from the lips of His Church, just as he could learn them from the lips of Christ Himself; and, living them in their fullness by the help of the grace that She gives, he can become a saint. Millions of poor people who have not been able to read a line, have thus been able to sanctify themselves and save their souls through the ORAL teaching of the Church. Tradition is obviously the only complete rule of faith.

4. The Protestant Rule Of Faith.

Protestants do not believe in an infallible Church. Hence, they cannot make tradition (in the sense in which we have used the word) the supreme rule of faith. What do they put in its place? They

say that the BIBLE is the sole rule of faith, and that it is to be interpreted PRIVATELY by each of its readers. Each person is to take the Bible, read it, and make his own religion out of it. For Protestants, consequently, PRIVATE INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE takes the place of the infallible teaching of the Church. The Bible and the Bible only - this is their slogan. What have we to say about it?

5. Why We Reject The Protestant Rule Of Faith.

There are many reasons why we reject the Protestant rule of faith. Here are some of them.

(i). If Christ had intended His truths to be written down and interpreted privately, He would surely have written them Himself, or at least commanded His Apostles to write them. But he did neither. When defending the poor woman whom the Pharisees wanted to stone to death, He bent down and wrote something on the sand. Apart from this, there is no record of His ever having written anything, though He obviously knew how to write. Nor is there any record of His having ordered His Apostles to write.

(ii). He ordered His Apostles, not to write, but to PREACH. He bade them TEACH in the way He Himself had taught by means of the living voice, not by means of a dead book. Christ was a TEACHER, not a WRITER. Even at the age of twelve, He sat amongst the doctors in the Temple, listening to them and asking them questions. And they were "ASTONISHED," Scripture says, at the wisdom of His answers. And when His mother asked Him why He had caused St. Joseph and herself anxiety by letting Himself be separated from them, He told them that they need not have been anxious about Him. They should have known where He would be, and what He would be doing. "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2:46-49). A Child of twelve! Yet how perfectly aware He is of the mission He has received from His Father - a mission to TEACH.

When He began to teach in public, He astonished His hearers in the same way. "The people were in admiration at His doctrine, for He was teaching as one having power, and not as the scribes and the Pharisees." (Mat. 7:28-29). The messengers sent by the chief priests to report on His preaching, came back exclaiming: "Never did man speak as this Man." (John 7:46). Indeed, no man ever did. For Christ

taught the most sublime truths in the most sublime manner, with absolute humility and simplicity, and with incomparable certitude. He taught with the AUTHORITY of GOD. And He gave His Church the same mission of TEACHING with God's AUTHORITY, that He Himself had received from His Father. "As the Father hath sent Me, so also I send you." "Going, therefore, teach all nations." He sent to teach, not to write. And He promised that He and the Holy Ghost would be with Her in Her teaching to the very end of time.

(iii). He as much as told His Apostles that it would not be necessary for them to write anything in order to remember what He had taught. The Holy Ghost would abide with the Church, not just for a few years or a few centuries, but for ever; and bring to the minds of its official teachers all His teaching, guiding them in all truth.

"I will ask the Father, and He will send you another Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, that He may ABIDE with you FOREVER." (John 14:16-17).

"But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you ALL things, and BRING TO YOUR MINDS all things whatsoever I shall have said to you." (John 14:26).

"He (the Holy Ghost) will GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH." (John 16:13).

From these texts it is clear that the supreme rule of faith is the infallible teaching power of the Church. That is why Christ can say of His Church: "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and He that despiseth you despiseth Me; and He that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me." (Luke 10:16). That is why He can threaten with eternal punishment those who culpably reject the teaching of the Church. "He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be condemned." (Mark 16:16). That is why St. Paul can call the Church "The pillar and the foundation of truth." (1 Tim. 3:15). And why he could write to the Galatians: "Though an angel from heaven preach to you a Gospel besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema." (Gal. 1:8). Private interpretation? Not a trace of it: Instead, the very opposite: the living AUTHORITATIVE teaching of the Church.

(iv). When St. Peter converted hundreds to Christ by his first sermons, he did not hand each of his converts a New Testament,

and tell him to interpret it for himself. Why not? In the first place, the notion of private interpretation was wholly foreign to him; and, in second place, there was as yet no New Testament for him to give. Christ gave His Church Her mission to teach before His Ascension; but the first book of the New Testament was not published for about twenty years after this event. The last book was not written till about the year 100. Moreover, the books of the New Testament were not bound together into one volume till the COUNCIL OF HIPPO, in the year 393. Hence, it is impossible for the early Christians to put into practice the Protestant rule of faith. This, on its own, is enough to condemn it.

(v). The New Testament tells us that ALL Christ's truths were given to His Church. The Holy Ghost would guide it into ALL truth; and bring to its mind ALL Christ had taught. But the New Testament nowhere tells us that ALL Christ's truths were written in its inspired books. On the contrary, at the end of his Gospel, St. John tells us that he has not given all the things Christ did; and he hints that no other writer has done this either, for "if they were written everyone, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written." (John 21:25).

(vi). We can know which books were inspired and which were not only by accepting the infallible teaching of the Church on this matter. If, consequently, a person denies the Catholic rule of faith and accepts the Protestant one instead, he has no proof at all that the books in the Bible were really inspired or written by God as well as by a man. He is like a person who sits on the branch of a tree, and then saws it off between himself and the tree. A fall is inevitable.

(vii). The infallible voice of the Church is needed also to interpret the difficult passages in sacred Scripture. It is of little value for us to know that God wrote a certain sentence, if we cannot give it the meaning He intended to have. Some texts in Scripture are quite simple and straightforward, such as those we have used to prove the establishment and nature of the Church. But there are others that can easily be given a wrong interpretation. St. Peter finds it necessary to warn us of this, when he tells us that in Scripture there are "certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and the unstable twist to their own DESTRUCTION." (2 Peter 3:16). A rule of faith, as we have said, must be clear to all,

unlearned as well as learned. On this score, therefore, the Protestant rule of faith fails lamentably.

(viii). The New Testament does not give the slightest evidence to support the fundamental PRINCIPLES of Protestantism:

- (a). That Scripture is the only rule of faith.
- (b). Private interpretation of Scripture.
- (c). The canon of sacred Scripture – the list of inspired books.
- (d). Justification by faith alone – a trust that God will not impute our sins to us.
- (e). The distinction between fundamental truths which all must accept, and non-fundamental ones.

Read the New Testament or the Old, you will not find a single text that supports these principles. How, then, can Protestants reasonably say that they base all their teaching on the Bible and on it alone? Moreover they do things which are not prescribed in the Bible, as when they worship God on Sunday, instead of on Saturday as the Bible enjoins, or when they baptise infants. At the same time, they fail to do many things which Scripture commands or favours, as when they fail to anoint the sick, or to honour Our Lady, or to recognise the authority of the Pope.

(ix). In the long history of the Church there have been millions of poor people who have never learnt to read. How could these follow the Protestant rule of faith by reading the Bible and interpreting it themselves? It was simply impossible for them to do this. These people, on the other hand, had no difficulty at all in listening to the moral teaching of the Church; and by taking the means of grace She offers to all, they could progress in sanctity and end by being saints.

(x). History shows that private interpretation of Scripture has led to great abuses, and has given rise to thousands of warring sects. Compare this chaos with the unity found in the Catholic Church. There you have over one billion persons from every nation and every rank in society all believing the same infallibly taught truths. They have the unity of faith for which Christ prayed the night before He suffered. It is sufficient on its own to prove that the rule of faith responsible for it is the one-given us by God.

From these few ideas and facts, you can see that the Catholic rule of faith fulfils perfectly the qualifications required: it is within reach of all, it is clear to all, and it presents all the truths taught by Christ. The Protestant rule of faith, on the contrary, fulfils none of them.

Moreover, it was unheard of in the early Church. There is not the slightest sign of it in the writings of the early Fathers - those illustrious champions of Christianity who defended Christ's teaching with outstanding learning and ability, up to the eleventh century. Take Irenaus, for instance. He writes: *"We need not spend much time in looking elsewhere for the truth. We can find it without difficulty in the Church. In Her, as in a rich treasure room, the Apostles have placed in the most perfect manner everything that appertains to the truth, so that everyone who desires may draw from Her the draught of life."* And he goes on to show how countless Christians who have not been able to read or write have lived Christ's truths heroically and died in great sanctity through merely following the living voice of the Church. Or take Tertullian. Writing in the year 200, he says: *"To decide whether something is true doctrine or heresy, some appeal to Scripture... But the first question that should be raised is: who is the rightful possessor of the faith? To whom do the Scriptures belong? By whom, through whom, when, and to whom has been entrusted the teaching whereby a person becomes a Christian?"* And he shows that Christ's truths were given by Him to the Church, to be guarded and interpreted with a living voice to the end of the world. Or take the Athanasian Creed. This is how it begins: *"Whoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith. Which faith, except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly."* Then the Creed goes into minute details about what the Church teaches concerning the Trinity and Christ. And it ends with the words: *"This is the Catholic faith which, except a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved."* There is no trace of private interpretation here, is there? Instead, there is the very opposite: the teaching of a Church perfectly conscious of its mission to teach in the name, and with the authority of God. It is the same for all other records of the early Church. That is why John Henry Cardinal Newman who was doubtless England's most reliable authority on the early Church could write in his *Development of Doctrine*: *"To be deep in history is to cease to be a Protestant."*

Let us end with a quotation from a living writer, Middleton Murray, husband of Catherine Mansfield. He is not a Catholic. In fact he has had strong leanings towards Communism. Here is what he says about the Catholic Church: *“Christianity is the great Church, and nothing else is Christianity. To call anything else Christianity is to plunge into confusion and chaos; and it is an insult to Christianity. Christianity is a great thing, not a little one; one thing, not many things; a rich thing, not a poor thing; a majestic thing, not a thing of shreds and patches. Christianity is Christianity at its noblest, truest and most comprehensive; and that is the Catholic Church. If you desire to be a Christian, join it. It will make no demands on you that are more fearful than the demands made upon you by any peddling form of Christianity. It asks no greater sacrifice than Little Bethel or the Church of England; and it does not insult your intelligence by inviting you to become a member of a contradiction in terms.”*

SUMMARY

1. Introduction.

History proves that Christ established an INFALLIBLE and INDEFECTIBLE Church, to guard His teaching and give us its exact meaning, to the end of the world.

2. Tradition.

- (i). The HANDING ON of all Christ's truths by the INFALLIBLE, LIVING VOICE of the Church.
- (ii). The truths thus handed on.

In time, these came to be RECORDED in: -

- (a). Inspired writings. New Testament Books.
- (b). Uninspired writings. Books by the FATHERS, creeds, decisions of Church councils and Popes, inscriptions, etc.
- (c). Ceremonies and practice of the Church. Its liturgy.

3. The Catholic Rule Of Faith.

TRADITION: the infallible teaching power of the Church.

- (a). It is within reach of all.
- (b). It is clear to all.
- (c). It presents all the truths taught by Christ.

4. The Protestant Rule Of Faith.

The BIBLE ONLY, interpreted by PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

5. Why We Reject The Protestant Rule Of Faith.

- (i). Christ did not write any book.
- (ii). He did not order His Apostles to write any. He bade them PREACH.
- (iii). He as much as told them there was no need to write. The Holy Ghost would abide with them forever, and bring to their minds all He had taught.
- (iv). The first New Testament book was not written for twenty years after the Ascension. The last, was written about the year 100. They were not bound into one volume till the Council of HIPPO, 393. Impossible for first Christians to apply Protestant rule of faith.
- (v). The New Testament says that ALL Christ's truths were given to the CHURCH. It does not say that they are all in Scripture.
- (vi). We can know which books are inspired only by the infallible teaching of the Church.
- (vii). The infallible voice of the Church is necessary to interpret difficult texts, which men may otherwise "twist to their own destruction."
- (viii). There is no evidence in the New Testament for the fundamental principles of Protestantism; or for many of its practices.
- (ix). In the history of the Church, millions have not been able to read.
- (x). Private interpretation has led to chaos, not to the miraculous unity which is a note of the true Church.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. Christ claimed that He was sent by (...). 2. He proved this by working (...) for that purpose. 3. God (can) (cannot) work a miracle in favour of a false claim. 4. To make sure that His teaching would last to the end of the world, Christ (wrote it in a book) (told His Apostles to write it in a book) (established a society). 5. A society is different from an individual in that it can go on existing (...). 6. It is

superior to a book in that it can teach with a (...) voice. 7. Christ made His Church an (...) and (...) society. 8. The handing on of Christ's truths by the infallible voice of the Church is called (...). 9. Some of His truths came to be written in inspired writings called the (...). 10. A book is inspired if it has (...) as well as a man for its author. 11. Illustrious writers who fought for Christianity from the beginning to the eleventh century are called the (...) of the Church. 12. There are many inscriptions in the (...) in Rome. 13. The Church's teaching is seen also in the (...) which the faithful recited. 14. The Protestant rule of faith is the (...) only, interpreted (...). 15. Public revelation ceased at the death of the last (...). 16. The first book of the New Testament was not written for about (...) years after the Ascension. 17. The last was written about the year (...). 18. It was at the Council of (...) in the year (...) that the New Testament books were first bound into one. 19. From Scripture we know that Christ wrote once, on the (...). 20. Christ (did) (did not) order His Apostles to write. 21. He bade them go and ("...") all nations. 22. He promised to be with them in their teaching "all days even to the (...) of the world." 23. He said that the (...) would abide with them for ever, and bring to their minds all He had taught them. 24. He said that the (...) would guide them into all truth. 25. We can know which books were inspired only from the infallible teaching of the (...). 26. St. Peter, warns us that there are difficult texts in Scripture which some people "twist to their own (...)." 27. There is (some) (no) evidence in the New Testament for the fundamental principles of Protestantism. 28. Private judgment in Scripture has lead to chaos, whereas the infallible teaching of the Church unites more than (...) Catholics in oneness of belief. 29. It was (...) who wrote: "To be deep in history is to cease to be a Protestant." 30. Middleton Murray admits that the only complete form of Christianity is the (...).

(B).

1. Your non-Catholic friend asks you what you mean by Tradition. Explain it to him.
2. What would you say to a man who declares: "The only infallibility I need is that in the inspired word of God"? Did Christ speak of another infallibility? Is the man's interpretation of the Bible infallible?
3. Name many things that Protestants believe or do that have no warrant in Scripture.
4. A rule of faith should be within reach of all. Has the Protestant rule of faith this qualification?

TRADITION

5. A rule of faith should be clear to all. Is the Bible such?
6. A rule of faith should give all Christ's truths. Are they all in the New Testament?
7. "The Holy Ghost will guide you into all truth." Some Protestants say that this text applies to every individual Protestant. How can you prove that it cannot? Can the Holy Ghost contradict Himself?
8. Name as many illustrious converts as you can, who have come into the Catholic Church since the days of Newman.

Chapter 16

THE BIBLE AS INSPIRED

1. An Inspired Book.

In a previous chapter, we spoke of the Bible as a record of HISTORY. Now, we have to consider it as INSPIRED.

What do we mean when we say that a book is inspired? Simply this: it has two authors, God and a man.

When you write an essay, does God co-operate with you? Of course. He co-operates in all that is real and positive in everything you do. But can He therefore be said to be the AUTHOR of your essay? No. He co-operates here only as First Cause, as He does whenever you smile or digest your food or wiggle your toe. When, however, St. John wrote his Gospel, God co-operated with him in a much more intimate way - a way, in fact, which made God as well as St. John the real AUTHOR of the book. In other words, St. John's Gospel is an INSPIRED book.

Does this mean that God wrote some of it, and that St. John wrote the rest of it, as one person might write the first half of a dictionary, and another the second? No. God wrote ALL of it. St. John wrote ALL of it, too. It came WHOLLY from each.

How? Think of what happens when you write. Take your pencil and write a sentence. Look at the writing. Did all of it come from the pencil? Of course. Did all of it come also from you? Yes. The pencil could not write it on its own. Neither could you write it without the pencil. The writing came wholly from you, and wholly from the pencil, as used by you.

You are said to be the PRINCIPAL cause of the writing. The pencil is its INSTRUMENTAL cause.

Let us see what happens when you write a sentence with a pencil. First, why do you use a pencil instead of, say, a toothbrush or a

washing machine? Because it has a natural power of making the sort of marks required in writing. They have not.

And what do you do to it? Three things. You MOVE, ELEVATE and DIRECT its natural power. In other words, you use it as an INSTRUMENT.

You MOVE it. The pencil will not start to write on its own. You have to pick it up and apply it to the paper. You ELEVATE its natural power. How? By enabling it to make INTELLIGIBLE marks - ones that mean something, because they convey ideas. You DIRECT it. How? By making it write the particular words needed to express your ideas. If you just wrote any words that came into your head, such as boots, bottles, bushrangers and bats, each word would have a meaning, but they would not form an intelligible sentence. To get this, it is not enough for you to elevate the pencil's natural power so that it makes intelligible marks. You must also direct it so that it writes the particular words needed to express your ideas in a sentence that makes sense.

In thus MOVING, ELEVATING and DIRECTING the natural power in the pencil, you are acting as the PRINCIPAL cause of the writing, and the pencil is its INSTRUMENTAL cause. The writing is WHOLLY from each.

A baby pushes a pencil about on a piece of paper, making marks. Is he a principal cause here, and is the pencil an instrumental cause? No. He does not ELEVATE the natural power in the pencil. The marks are not intelligible ones. A kitten runs along the keys of a piano, making it sound. Is this a case of principal and instrumental causality? No. Same reason as before. An expert pianist who uses the piano is, on the contrary, a true principal cause of the exquisite music he produces, and the piano is its instrumental cause. He does elevate its natural power, enabling it to produce an effect above itself.

Apply this now to INSPIRATION; When God wants to write a book, He does not take a pen Himself and write with it. Instead of a pen, He uses a human being as His instrument. He MOVES, ELEVATES and DIRECTS a man's natural ability to write, so that God is the PRINCIPAL Author of the book that is written, and the man is its INSTRUMENTAL author. The book itself is WHOLLY from each.

In inspiring a man, God uses his natural ability to write intelligible sentences, just as you use the pencil's natural power of making marks. And God first MOVES the man to write. A human being can no more start to write an inspired book without this special help from God, than a pencil can start writing an essay on its own. Every instrumental cause must be first moved by the principal cause, before it can begin to act. That is obvious. How does God thus move a man to write? God moves everything according to its nature. Man is by nature a rational being. So God moves him to write by working on his INTELLECT and WILL. We can influence another person's intellect and will only indirectly through words, gestures and the like. But God can influence these two faculties directly. And He does this when He inspires a man to write a book.

At the same time, God must ELEVATE the man's natural power of writing, just as you have to elevate the natural power in the pencil. How? By enabling him to write INFALLIBLY. St. John, for example, could record faithfully, without any special aid from God, the multiplication of the loaves, for he was present at this miracle. But he could not record it INFALLIBLY; for no man, as man, is infallible. Infallibility is natural only to God, who is Knowledge and Truth Itself. Recording this miracle under inspiration, however, St. John does give us an infallible account of it - one that cannot possibly be wrong, since it has God as well as St. John as its author.

God must also DIRECT the human writer, so that he writes ALL that God wants, and ONLY what God wants, just as you have to direct your pencil to write what you want when you are doing an essay.

It is all right for you to compare God's use of a man to write an inspired book, with your use of a pencil to write an essay. But you must keep in mind the fact that a human being is very different from a pencil. He has an intellect and a free will, a language and style of his own, his own ways of putting things, his own expressions and idioms, his own popular notions about scientific facts, and so on. And when God moves him to write, He respects his freedom, and lets him write with his own style and other peculiarities. That is why there are as many different styles in the Bible as there are different authors. A pencil, on the contrary, is just a dead thing. It has no ideas, no feelings, no emotions, no idioms, no style of its own. It is a purely passive instrument in writing. It has no personality, as man has. So you must remember this great difference, if you want to have a correct idea of inspiration.

2. Inspiration.

You can now see what inspiration is. It is an **IMPULSE** given by God to a man's **INTELLECT** and **WILL**, and it **MOVES**, **ELEVATES** and **DIRECTS** him to write **ALL** that God wants and **ONLY** what God wants, so that God is the **PRINCIPAL** Author of the book produced, and the man is its **INSTRUMENTAL** author. The book itself is **WHOLLY** from each.

It differs, consequently, from **REVELATION**. In revelation, God makes known a truth to man, as when He told Our Lady that she was to be the Mother of God. True, the inspired writers often do write truths made known by God. But inspiration is quite distinct from revelation. Revelation is concerned with the way in which a truth is **KNOWN**. Inspiration, with the way in which it comes to be **WRITTEN**.

It differs also from the **INFALLIBILITY** given to the Pope. When the Pope issues an infallible decree, God **PROTECTS** him from error. But God can in no way be said to be the **AUTHOR** of the decree. He does not **WRITE** it, in the way He writes an inspired book. Inspiration is far more positive than infallibility, though, of course, it implies infallibility, since God is infallible in everything He does.

It differs, finally, from **DICTATION**. If your teacher reads something from a book and asks you to write it word for word, he is dictating to you. You have merely to listen, and put down what he says. You do not have to choose your own words or use your own style as you do when writing an essay. Now, since God leaves a man free to choose his own words and style when He is inspiring him, it is obvious that inspiration is not a dictation in the strict sense of the word. If it were, the books of Scripture would all have the same style; whereas, as we have said, there are as many styles as there are authors.

In inspiring a man, God uses him as His instrument to write a book. This does not necessarily mean that the inspired author does the actual writing himself. He may dictate to a scribe what he wants written, He may even give material to others to write for him, provided that he reads it later and approves of it, as Moses may have done for some of the books of the Old Testament. As a matter of fact, however, for almost all the books of Scripture, the inspired author was also the person who did the actual writing itself.

Because an inspired book has God as its author, certain consequences follow of necessity. Let us look now at some of them.

3. Consequences of Inspiration.

(a). The Whole Book is Inspired.

We can readily understand that important truths in Scripture such as those that concern faith and morals are inspired and so have God for their Author. But what about trifling details such as the fact that when Tobias returned from his journey his little dog wagged its tail, or that St. Paul happened to leave his cloak at Troas? Are these also inspired? Have they God as their Author? Yes. It follows from the very nature of principal and instrumental causality. God cannot be the Principal Cause of the inspired books without writing everything that is in them, any more than you can be the principal cause of an essay without writing every bit of it. An inspired book comes wholly from God, as well as wholly from its human author. Hence, the WHOLE book, and not just certain parts of it, must be inspired.

(b). There are no Formal Errors in the Bible.

Since God is the Author of Scripture, and since He is incapable of making a mistake, it follows that there can be no formal errors in the Bible. By formal errors we mean ones that could be attributed to God.

To understand this rightly, however, you must make allowance for several things. You have to remember that:-

(i). This refers to the ORIGINAL writings, as they came from the inspired writers. These, as you know, have been copied and re-copied down through the centuries. Those who copied them were not themselves inspired. Inevitably, therefore, they made many minor errors in spelling, punctuation, numbers and the like. These do not affect in any way the historical worth of the Scriptures, or their teaching in faith and morals. But they are errors all the same. However, they are not FORMAL errors. They cannot be attributed to God, since they did not exist in the original texts that came from Him. Hence, it is to these original texts that we refer when we say that there are no errors in the Bible.

(ii). There are many different types of literature in the Bible. The Bible, remember, is not one book. Nor was it written by one man. It contains seventy-three books in all, forty-six in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New. They were written by many different authors, in different countries, over a space of about sixteen hundred years - from about 1500 B.C. to about 100 A.D. And they contain almost every kind of literature: history, allegory, parable, drama, letters, poetry and prophecy.

It is unreasonable to take, say, a parable and criticise it as history. It is not meant to be history. It is a short story told for the purpose of making some moral truth clear to us. The parable of the Good Shepherd, for instance, is meant to teach God's infinite kindness to a sinner. Similarly, it is unfair to apply the same standards of criticism to the psalms of David, as we apply to prose. They must be taken as poetry, and criticised as such. If each form of literature in Scripture is thus taken for what it is, due allowance being made for its special form, no formal errors will be found in it.

(iii). Figures of Speech and Idioms are often used.

There are of course many figures of speech, idioms and other literary devices in the Bible. These must be recognised as such. It is childish to accuse the Old Testament of error, because it says that "The morning stars sang together." True, stars cannot sing in the literal sense of the term. But the inspired writer has just as much right to use the word figuratively as you or I have.

St. John says: "But there are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written." (John 21:25). He is here using a figure of speech called hyperbole; It is not fair to interpret his word literally and say that he is exaggerating, and is therefore guilty of error. Think of the gorgeous hyperboles you get in Shakespeare's plays. Does anyone accuse him of error on account of these?

In the Old Testament we read: "Jacob I have loved; Esau I have hated." This is an idiom. It is a way of expressing a truth, proper to the Hebrew language. To the Jews, it does not mean that God hates Esau. It means that He loves Esau; but that his love of Jacob is so much greater than his love of Esau that the latter seems to be a hatred in comparison with it. When estimating the truth of the

Bible, it is obvious that we must make due allowance for such idioms, just as we do for figures of speech and other literary devices proper to the language in which it was written. If this is done, it will be found to contain no moral errors.

(iv). There are Quotations in the Bible.

In the Old Testament, for example, we read: "The fool hath said in his heart: 'There is no God.'" The inspired writer is here quoting what the fool said. Did God write the sentence, "There is no God?" Yes. Does He TEACH that there is no God? No. That would be the absurdity of absurdities. Like the human author, God is here merely giving what the fool said. He does not approve of it. Nor does He disapprove of it, He does not say that the man was a fool BECAUSE he denied the existence of God. Hence, what is inspired here is simply the FACT that the fool said what is attributed to him.

For quotations, therefore, the rule is this: If Scripture approves of them, we know on God's authority that what they say is true. If it disapproves of them, we know on God's authority that they are false. If it neither approves nor disapproves, we have God's authority only for the FACT that the person said what is attributed to him. This rule must be taken into account when we say that there are no errors in the Bible.

(v). The Bible is not intended to teach the lower Sciences.

The purpose of the Bible is to teach us how to know, love and obey God, and so save our souls. It was never intended by God to be a text book in any of the lower sciences. In inspiring a man, God makes use of his primitive or popular notions concerning the physical sciences, just as He makes use of the particular language that the man speaks. It is hard to see how He can do otherwise. He must use words that have some meaning for the people to whom they are first addressed. Otherwise, Scripture would be meaningless to them - mere gibberish. Instead of enlightening them, it would be a scandal to them.

God could, for example, have foretold in the Apocalypse our next great war - one that will begin, say, in five years time - just as He foretold the end of the world. He would know, of course, the words now used for jet-propelled planes, hydrogen bombs, and so on. But what would be the use of His couching His prophecy in these words,

speaking, as He would have been, to people who lived nearly two thousand years ago? They would have had no meaning whatever to His readers. He would have had to speak of planes as something like locusts, and of bombs as something like thunderbolts. His readers would at least know that locusts could fly and that thunderbolts fell from heaven; and that both could do harm to men. Then, of course, the modern critics would accuse Him of ignorance and error. But their accusation is obviously unreasonable – just as unreasonable as it is for them to accuse you and me of ignorance and error when we speak popularly of the rising and the setting of the sun.

If, on a lovely evening, your father said to you: “What about coming with me to the top of the hill to watch the sun set?” you would never dream of replying: “O Dad, you are talking rubbish. You are trying the impossible. You will see nothing. For modern science has proved that the sun does not set.” He would be merely referring to a scientific FACT popularly known as sunset; and he would be perfectly justified. Since he is not giving you a scientific lecture, he can rightly use the popular way of putting things. It is sheer pedantry to accuse him of error. The same applies to Sacred Scripture.

The PURPOSE for which it is written must be taken into account. The first few chapters of Genesis, for example, are not meant by God to be a SCIENTIFIC treatise on the origin of things. They are not part of a text-book on astronomy. In them God is merely teaching the primitive-minded Jews for whom He wrote that all they could see – the distant stars, the sun, the moon, the earth and all things on it – owe their existence to Him. They are but creatures. Hence it is idolatry to give them divine worship, as the pagans did. He is teaching His Chosen People a momentous truth, which even a genius like Aristotle missed – the CREATION and CONSERVATION of the universe. To make it homely and simple for them, He likens Himself creating to a workman who does so much work on Sunday, so much on Monday, and so on, till he comes to Saturday, the day of rest, when his week's work is complete. By putting it this way, God brings within the grasp of His people a profound truth, and at the same time He warns them against a fundamental sin. It is unreasonable, therefore, for modern scientists to take His account as if it were meant to be a scientific treatise; and accuse Him of ignorance and error. If, instead, they received humbly and gratefully the mighty truth God here insists on – the Creation of the

universe – this would save them from falling into the ghastly error of making matter self-existing, and, as such, a rank absurdity, a contradiction in terms.

4. How We Know Which Books are Inspired.

God is the Author of the inspired books. Their human author was not necessarily aware of the fact that he was being inspired. Hence, God alone can tell us which they are. He must have revealed this to His Church in the beginning; for She has always claimed the power to decide which books are to be included in the official list of sacred books, called the CANON of Scripture. This power follows, of course, from the fact that Christ committed ALL His revealed truths to the keeping of His Church, to be kept and interpreted by Her infallibly to the end of the world.

Her list of inspired books has never varied. It is the same today as it was in the first official declaration we possess – that of the Synod of Rome, in the year 382. This was given again at the Council of Hippo in 393; and later in the General Councils of Carthage held in 397 and 419. It was finally defined as a matter of faith at the Council of Trent in the middle of the sixteenth century.

“But this is not logical,” someone may say, “You prove the Church from the Bible and the Bible from the Church. It is a vicious circle,” Such a person forgets that we first prove that Christ established an everlasting and infallible Church, by taking the New Testament, not as an INSPIRED book, but merely as a record of HISTORY. Having done this, we then accept the teaching of this Church concerning the canon of Scripture, for this is a matter of faith and morals in which She is infallible. There is not even a sign of a vicious circle here. Instead, it is perfectly logical.

5. The Church and the Bible.

Some think that the Catholic Church hates the Bible. History, however, shows that the very opposite is the truth. From the beginning, She has treasured the Bible because it has God for its Author. She has defended it in every age, from the attacks of the Gnostics, Montanists and Marcionites in the second century, to those of the Higher Critics of our own day. She has always given it a prominent place in Her public worship. In the early Church, it was read and explained to the people at least every Sunday, just as it is

today at Mass. The sermons of the early Fathers are full of it. Tatian tells us that, in the second century, the Christians knew the psalms so well that they sang them in their homes as they went about their work. How thoroughly acquainted they were with the Bible is seen in the fact that there are over forty different Biblical scenes portrayed in the catacombs.

When Diocletian ordered the Scriptures to be burnt, in 303, the Christians preferred to die a martyr's death rather than give up the sacred books which they treasured more than life. It is sheer nonsense to say that these heroes and heroines hated the Bible.

In 380, Catholicism was recognised as the official religion of the Empire. So the Bible could again be freely used; and it became a powerful influence in the education of the people. The Emperor Theodosius, for instance, ordered it to be displayed in every court of justice in his vast domain. And at the Council of Constantinople held in 381, it was placed on the throne to indicate that the word of God which it contains was presiding over the Assembly. Paulinus tells us that, in the fourth century, every Tabernacle had two compartments - one for the Eucharist, and another for the Bible, since each is, in its own way, the supernatural food of our souls. We are reminded of this today at a High Mass, when both the Eucharist and the Gospels are honoured with lighted candles and incense.

In the Dark Ages, when European culture was threatened by invading barbarians, the Bible was preserved for us by the MONKS, who copied it with the greatest care and with a rich display of artistry and costly materials - gold and silver lettering, on purple-tinted parchment. No sign of hatred of the Bible here, surely.

You will hear it said that the Bible was unknown to the ordinary people in the Dark Ages. Well, here is what Dr. Maitland, a non-Catholic, has to say about this in his book, "The Dark Ages."

"The writings of the Dark Ages are, if I may use the expression, made of the Scriptures. I do not merely mean that the writers constantly quoted the Scriptures, and appealed to them as authorities on all occasions, as other writers have done since their day; but I mean that they thought and spoke and wrote the thoughts and words and phrases of the Bible; and that they did this constantly and habitually as the natural mode of expressing themselves.

They did it, too, not exclusively in theological or ecclesiastical matters, but in histories, biographies, familiar letters, legal instruments, and documents of every description."

In this passage, Dr. Maitland refers not just to monks or clergy, but especially to the ordinary people. The passage speaks for itself.

For those who could read, but who had not enough money to buy a Bible for themselves, one was chained in the church for all to study. And even those who could not read became thoroughly acquainted with Scripture, by having it read and explained at Mass, by hymns, by paintings, stained glass windows and frescoes, and by sacred plays and dramas which represented visibly the main facts of Scripture just as the Play at Oberammergau represents the Passion today.

From the beginning, too, the Church has had the Bible translated, into different languages. Before the year 600, it could be read not only in Hebrew, Latin and Greek, but also in Coptic, Gothic, Armenian, Georgian, Sogdian, Nubian and Ethiopian. There was indeed no great necessity for such translations in the Middle Ages; for most of the people who could read, could read Latin; and many preferred the Latin version to all others. Before the invention of printing in 1456, the Bible had been translated into twenty-four languages, including Spanish, Italian, Danish, German, French, Norwegian, Polish, Bohemian and Hungarian. This hardly indicates a hatred of the Bible, does it?

You sometimes hear that Luther was the first to put the Bible into German. He wasn't. There were nine editions of the Bible in German before Luther was born; and twenty-seven before he published his distorted edition in 1520. It is said, too, that Wycliff was the first to put the Bible into English. Again, he wasn't. Here is what St. Thomas More has to say about this in his Dialogues: -

"The whole Bible long before Wycliff's day was by virtuous and well-learned men translated into the English tongue, and by good and godly people with devotion and soberness well and reverently read." Cranmer's Preface to the Bible of 1540 admits the same fact. So does the Preface to the Authorised Version. Even a writer as prejudiced against Catholicism as Foxe, is forced to say: "If histories be well examined, we shall find both before the Conquest

and after, as well as before John Wycliff was born as since, the whole body of Scripture by sundry men translated into our country tongue." So we need stress the point no further.

Today, the Catholic Bible can be read in as many as nine hundred different languages; and the Church grants a PARTIAL INDULGENCE to those who read the Gospels for at least a quarter of an hour, and a PLENARY INDULGENCE to those who read them daily. This is enough on its own to prove that She does not hate the Scriptures, or try to keep them from the people.

Or, think of the Mass. In addition to the Epistles and Gospels, many parts of the Ordinary are taken from the Bible. The prayers at the foot of the altar, the responses after the Confiteor, the prayer after the offering of the Chalice, the prayer at the washing of the hands, the words of Consecration, the Pater Noster and the Agnus Dei, the thanksgiving made by the priest after consuming the Precious Blood – these are all from sacred Scripture.

In 1902, Leo XIII established the BIBLICAL COMMISSION to promote the study and defence of the Bible. And in 1909, Pius X created the BIBLICAL INSTITUTE for the training of Biblical experts, and the publication of Biblical literature. These two institutions have been largely responsible for the great number of excellent books and periodicals now available for Catholic readers interested in Scripture. And they have provided the Church with Biblical scholars whose achievements are unrivalled by any others in the world.

From what has been said it is surely clear that the Catholic Church is not opposed to the Bible, but reveres and cherishes it instead, because it has God Himself as its Author; that She defends it today as vigorously as She did in the second century; and that She will continue to treasure it and defend it as its divinely appointed guardian, to the very end of the world.

SUMMARY

1. An Inspired Book.

- (a). Has two authors: God and a man.
- (b). God is its principal cause; a man, its instrumental cause.

- (c). A principal cause moves, elevates and directs the natural power in the instrumental cause.
- (d). The effect produced is wholly from each.

2. Inspiration.

i. Inspiration: -

- (a). Is an impulse given by God to a man's intellect and will.
- (b). It moves, elevates and directs man's natural power of writing.
- (c). He writes all that God wants and only what He wants.
- (d). The book produced comes wholly from each.

ii. Differs from: -

- (a). Revelation. Revelation: how truth is known.
 Inspiration: how truth is written.
- (b). Infallibility of the Pope.
- (c). Dictation.

Consequences.

- (A). The whole book is inspired – not just parts of it.
- (B). There are no Formal errors in the Bible. But remember that:
 - (a). This refers to the original texts.
 - (b). There are different types of literature in the Bible.
 - (c). Figures of speech and idioms are often used.
 - (d). There are quotations in the Bible.
 - (e). The Bible is not intended to teach the lower sciences.

4. How We Know Which Books Are Inspired.

- (i). By the infallible teaching of the Catholic Church.
- (ii). The Canon was defined at the Council of Trent (Old Testament) and at the Councils of Hippo and Carthage (New Testament).

5. The Church And The Bible.

- (a). She has always defended it.
- (b). She has always given it an important place in public worship.
- (c). She has translated it into different languages.

- (d). She has always taught it to the people.
- (e). She grants indulgences to those who read it.
- (f). She has established the Biblical Commission and the Biblical Institute to promote Biblical studies.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. God is the (...) Author of an inspired book; a man is its (...) author. 2. The book comes (partly from God, partly from the man) (wholly from each). 3. A man chops down a tree with an axe. This (is) (is not) an example of principal and instrumental causality. 4. A principal cause moves, (...) and (...) the natural power in the instrument it uses. 5. A man (can) (cannot) begin to write an inspired book, without a special help from God. 6. A man writing an inspired book (does) (does not) necessarily know that he is being inspired. 7. In inspiring a man, God elevates his natural ability to write by enabling him to write (...). 8. Inspiration is an (...) given by (...) to a man's (...) and (...), and it moves, (...) and (...) him to write infallibly (...) that God wants and (...) what God wants, so that (...) is the principal cause of the book, and the man is its (...) cause, and the book itself comes (...) from each. 9. Revelation is concerned with the way a thing is (...); inspiration, with the way it is (...). 10. Inspiration is a (less) (more) positive help than the infallibility granted to the Pope. 11. Inspiration (is) (is not) a dictation. 12. All the books in the Bible (have) (have not) the same style. 13. Unimportant details in Scripture (are) (are not) inspired. 14. When we say there are no errors in the Bible, we refer to (our present) (the original) texts. 15. The Old Testament contains (...) different books; the New, (...). 16. The first book in the Bible was written about the year (...) B.C.; the last, in about (...) A.D. 17. "Jacob I have loved; Esau I have hate." This is an example of a Hebrew (...). 18. The Bible (is) (is not) meant to be a scientific text-book. 19. We know which books are inspired, from the (...) teaching of the Catholic Church (20). The official list of the inspired books is called the (...) of sacred Scripture 21. This list was defined at the Council of (...). 22. In the fourth century tabernacles had two compartments, one for the (...) and the other for (...). 23. Luther (was) (was not) the first to put the Bible into German. Wycliff (was) (was not) the first to put it into English. 24. The Church grants a (Plenary) (Partial)

indulgence to those who read the Scriptures for a quarter of an hour, and a (...) indulgence to those who read it daily. 25. Leo XIII established the Biblical (...) in 1902, and Pius X, the Biblical (...) in 1909.

(B).

1. Peter asks how a book can have God and a man for its authors. Tell him.
2. Peter wants you to explain inspiration. How would you go about it?
3. Tell your non-Catholic friend how we can be sure which books are inspired.
4. What would you say to a man who declares that the Catholic Church hates the Bible, and has always tried to keep it from the people?
5. What parts of the Ordinary of the Mass are taken from the Scriptures?
6. What have the Popes of this century done to promote the study of the Bible?
7. How did the Church teach the Bible to those who could not read?
8. What indulgences can you gain by reading the Scriptures? What must you do to gain them?

Chapter 17

THE BLESSED TRINITY

1. How Known.

Our reason tells us that there is a God, and that He is a self-existing, infinitely perfect, spiritual Being. Now, because there is only one God, and because He is spiritual, we naturally expect to find one PERSONALITY in Him, just as there is in each of us.

As a matter of fact, however, He tells us that there are three. He tells us that His one Divine NATURE is owned in its entirety by three PERSONS: Father, Son and Holy Ghost. This is the mystery of the TRINITY.

A mystery is a truth which is ABOVE reason, but not AGAINST it.

The Trinity is above, not merely man's reason, but the highest intellect that God could create. Hence it can be known by us only if God REVEALS it. And even then, we cannot fully understand it in this life. It is an essentially SUPERNATURAL mystery.

Yet, it is not against reason it is not a contradiction, not an absurdity, like a square circle. God does not say that He is one in nature yet three in nature; or one in person, yet three in person. That would be a contradiction. He says He is one in NATURE, and three in PERSON - one from one point of view, and three from a wholly different point of view. No contradiction in that, is there? any more than saying that a man is good at football but poor at French, or sick in body and sane in mind.

We cannot understand a square circle, for the simple reason that there is no reality to understand. It cancels itself out to nothing, like plus one and minus one. We cannot fully understand the Trinity, either, but for the very opposite reason. It contains too much reality. But we can keep on understanding it better and better, without ever exhausting the infinite riches of knowledge it contains. And God has revealed it for that. So let us try to understand it as far as we can: and let us ask God for the grace to appreciate it ever

more and more deeply as we journey through life, so that death may usher us into the presence of the three Divine Persons, seen and enjoyed in the vision of heaven.

Let us try to realise, too, that the revelation of the Trinity is a striking proof of God's love for us. Why? Because in it He reveals the secret of His inner life - the life He leads, not as Creator and Conserver of creatures, but precisely inasmuch as He is God. And to whom do we thus reveal the secrets of our life, if not to, our most intimate, most beloved friends? There are few, if any, secrets between friends. And the greater the friendship, the fewer they are. That is why the revelation of the Trinity is such an outstanding proof of God's friendship. It is a mystery which we ought to study on our knees, our hearts brimming over with gratitude and love.

2. Nature and Person

In studying the Trinity, we must not rely on our imagination. The Trinity is a spiritual reality. It can never be imagined. Nor must we fix our thoughts only on the numbers, one and three. Otherwise we shall think that the number one is somehow the number three, which is absurd. We must think instead mainly of these two distinct realities: NATURE and PERSON.

You can rightly ask: WHAT is electricity? WHAT is a cabbage? WHAT is a mouse? for each of these has a NATURE of its own. But it is senseless to ask: WHO is this electricity? WHO is this cabbage? WHO is this mouse? for none has a PERSONALITY. They are just things, not persons. In the case of man, however, you can rightly ask not merely WHAT man is, but also WHO this or that man is; for man has a PERSONALITY as well as a NATURE. Now, from the fact that all creatures have a nature, but all are not persons, it follows that nature and person are distinct realities in creatures. Even in man where they are found together, they are still distinct, because man's personality OWNS his nature, its faculties and its actions. Moreover, man acts in accordance with his nature, but his actions are attributed to his personality, which is ultimately responsible for them.

Now, since nature and person do not mean the same thing, it is not absurd to say that God is one NATURE, yet three in PERSON. There is no violation of the principle of non-contradiction here. We can

accept the Trinity, and still accept the fact that is is, that is not is is not, and that is not is not is. But let us go a little deeper.

What exactly do we mean by a PERSON? Well, amongst creatures, a person is always a SUBSTANCE – never a mere accident, like colour, shape or smell. It is also always RATIONAL or spiritual – nothing lower than man is a person. Finally, it is always INCOMMUNICABLE – it can never be just part of another, as your hand is part of your body.

In GOD, a Person must be all this. Otherwise, we could not use the term of Him. But in Him it takes the form of a RELATION. This is seen from the words used by God in revealing the Trinity: FATHER and SON. A father is a father only insofar as he generates a son. A son is a son only insofar as he is generated by a father. FATHERHOOD. SONSHIP. These are not ABSOLUTE beings, like microbes, monkeys and men. They are RELATIVE, instead. Their whole essence is to REFER or RELATE one being to another. That is why you cannot think of a father as father, without thinking of a son. Nor can you think of a son as son, without thinking of a father. Fatherhood and sonship are RELATIVE terms. They refer of necessity to ANOTHER.

In God, then a PERSON is an INFINITELY PERFECT, INCOMMUNICABLE RELATION.

A person is by his very nature INCOMMUNICABLE, inasmuch as he can never be just part of something else. But a relation is not necessarily so. That is why we add the word “incommunicable” when describing a Person in God. After all, there are FOUR RELATIONS in God, not three: that of the Father to the Son, and vice versa; and that of the Father and Son to the Holy Ghost, and vice versa. But that of Father and Son to the Holy Ghost who proceeds from them, is SHARED, obviously, by the Father and the Son. Hence it does not constitute a Divine Person. It is not an INCOMMUNICABLE RELATION.

We can express the mystery of the Trinity, therefore, by saying that in the one ABSOLUTE Being which is GOD, there are three INFINITELY PERFECT, INCOMMUNICABLE RELATIONS. This is exactly the same as saying that the one Divine NATURE is owned in its entirety by three Divine PERSONS. Absolute Being. Relations. Nature. Persons. No contradiction, is there?

But can there be such a thing as an infinitely perfect, incommunicable relation? Apart from God's revelation, we can only say: "I do not know." True, we never meet with one in creatures. But that does not prove that there cannot be any in God. If God tells us that there are three such relations in His own Divine Nature, we can only thank Him for His revelation, and believe Him with all our Heart; for He is Knowledge and Truth Itself. So, let us look now at what He tells us.

3. What God Tells Us.

(a). THERE ARE THREE PERSONS.

Scripture mentions them scores and scores of times: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. No others. Always three. No more. No fewer. Usually they are mentioned separately or in pairs; but sometimes all together.

St. John, for instance, says: "There are three who give testimony in heaven; the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost. And these three are one." (1 John, 5:7). Nothing clearer. Three Persons, yet one God, since each owns the one Divine Nature in its entirety.

Or take the Annunciation. There, God the Father, through the angel Gabriel, announces to Our Lady that His own Divine Son will be born from her, by the power of the Holy Ghost. All three Persons are mentioned. (Luke 1:30-35).

At the Baptism of Christ, again, the Father proclaims from heaven that Jesus is His "well-beloved Son"; and the Holy Ghost descends on the baptised in the form of a dove. (Mat. 3:16-17).

Finally, when Christ sends His Apostles on their mission, He says: "Going therefore, teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." (Mat. 28:19). He names all three Persons, and puts them on an equal footing. Clearly, then, God has told us that there are three.

(b). THESE THREE ARE DISTINCT.

God is a SPIRITUAL Being. Hence, He KNOWS and LOVES. Whom? Himself. How? Eternally, infinitely. Through this act of KNOWING, the WORD or SON proceeds eternally from the Father, as the

infinite expression of God's knowledge. And through the act of LOVE, the HOLY GHOST proceeds eternally from the Father and Son, as the infinite expression of the friendship that exists between them.

In telling us this, God tells us that these Persons are DISTINCT from one another, as originator is from originated, and vice versa. The Father, as Father, cannot possibly be His own Son. Nor can the Son, as Son, be His own Father. That would be absurd. Similarly, the Holy Ghost cannot be the Father or Son, since He proceeds from them. Nor can they be He. The Divine Persons have everything in common, except this OPPOSITION of relationship. It is this which makes each to be what He is.

Moreover, each Person has the Divine nature IN HIS OWN WAY. The Father has it TO HAND ON to the Son by an act of knowledge, and to the Holy Ghost by an act of love. The Son has it as HANDED ON from the Father by an act of knowledge, and also TO HAND ON to the Holy Ghost, by an act of love. The Holy Ghost has it as HANDED ON from the Father and Son, by an act of love. This, again, shows that the Persons are distinct.

(c). EACH PERSON IS TRULY GOD.

THE FATHER IS GOD.

When Christ justified Himself for curing on the Sabbath, by saying: "My FATHER worketh unto now, and I work," the Jews wanted to put Him to death for blasphemy, because He had "declared that God was His Father, thus making Himself equal to God." (John 5:17-18). It is clear that the Father is here taken to be God.

He also said to the Jews: "It is My FATHER who glorifieth Me, of whom you say that He is your GOD." (John 8:54). Again, speaking this time to His Heavenly Father, Christ said: "This is eternal life, that they may know THEE, the only true GOD, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." (John 17:5). He drove the money-changers from the Temple, because they were defiling His FATHER'S house. And the Temple was obviously built as a place for worshipping GOD.

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Pages of texts could be given in which Christ refers to His Father as God. But, since all who admit the existence of God, admit that the Father is God, there is no need for us to stress the matter further.

THE SON IS GOD.

(i). HE IS CALLED GOD IN SCRIPTURE.

St. John, for instance, says: "In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, and the WORD was GOD." (John 1:1). A glorious text! It tells us that, in the beginning - when the first creatures were created - the WORD or SON already was. Hence, that He is ETERNAL. It says, too, that He was "with" God. Hence, distinct as a Person from the Father. Lastly, it says explicitly that He was GOD. What could be clearer? What more profound?

Referring to the Second Person, St. John also says: "And this (i.e. the SON) IS the true GOD, and Life Eternal." (1 John, 5:20).

St. Paul, too, speaks of the Son of God made Man as being over all things, "GOD, blessed forever." (Roms. 9:5).

Now, as you know, God is the principal Author of Scripture. So it is really GOD HIMSELF who tells us in these texts that the Son is truly God. What greater testimony could we possibly desire?

(ii). HE IS CALLED THE SON OF GOD IN THE STRICT SENSE OF THE TERM.

St. John writes: "God so loved the world as to give His ONLY-BEGOTTEN Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting." (John 3:16).

Again: "And the WORD was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, and we saw His glory, that of the ONLY-BEGOTTEN of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14).

Again: "By this hath the charity of God appeared towards us, because God hath sent His ONLY-BEGOTTEN Son into the world, that we may live by Him." (1 John, 4:9).

Notice well the word "only-begotten" in these texts. It is all-important. It shows that the Son of God is not just an ADOPTED

son, as we are by grace; but the Son of God in the strict sense of the term, eternally GENERATED by His Father. And as true SON, He must have the same NATURE as His Father. In other words, He must be truly GOD.

(iii). HE IS SAID TO DO WHAT GOD ALONE CAN DO.

(a). He exists with the eternal existence proper to God.

Consider St. John's text: "In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, and the WORD was God." (John 1:1). We have seen what it means. Or take Christ's astounding reply to the Jews' sneer: "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" "Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham was made, I AM." (John 8:57-58). "Was made." "I am." Could any contrast be greater? It is the infinite contrast that exists between a mere creature, and God. No wonder the Jews took up stones to cast at Him, since they were determined not to believe in His Divinity.

(b). He owns the same nature as the Father.

"The Father and I are ONE." (John 10:30). One in NATURE, of course, though distinct as PERSONS. He OWNS the Divine Nature in its entirety.

(c). He is the Creator of all things.

"All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made." (John 1:3). But God alone can create.

(d). He worked miracles by His own power and in His own right.

The Apostles worked miracles only as instrumental causes used by God; but Christ worked them as Principal Cause, by His own power, and in His own right. Hence as God.

(e). He forgave sin by His own power and in His own right.

How often He said to some repentant sinner: "Thy sins are forgiven thee!" He even worked a miracle to prove that He could forgive sin. (Mat. 9:2-7). He went further. He gave this power to His Apostles

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and their successors, to be exercised by them in the name of the Trinity, to the end of the world. Since sin is an offence against God, God alone can forgive it. By forgiving it by His own power, Christ showed that He is God.

Many other examples could be given; but these will suffice. Any one of them on its own bears witness to the fact that the Son is truly God.

THE HOLY GHOST IS GOD.

(i). HE IS CALLED GOD IN SCRIPTURE.

St. Paul, for instance, says: "Know you not that your members are the temples of the HOLY GHOST who is in you?... Glorify and bear GOD in your body." (1 Cor. 6:19-20). He identifies the Holy Ghost and God.

Or take the lie Ananias told. Scripture says he told it to the Holy Ghost. Hence, to GOD. "Why hath Satan tempted thy heart that thou shouldst lie to the HOLY GHOST?... Thou hast not lied to men, but to GOD." (Acts 5:3-4). Again, you see, the Holy Ghost is identified with God. So, it is GOD Himself who, as Author of Scripture, here assures us that the Third Person of the Trinity is truly God.

(ii). HE IS SAID TO DO WHAT GOD ALONE CAN DO.

(a). He knows all things, with God's infinite Knowledge.

"The SPIRIT searcheth ALL things, yea, the deep things of GOD." (1 Cor. 2:11). Equal with God in knowledge, He must Himself be truly God.

(b). He inspired the Prophets of the Old Law.

"Prophecy came not by the will of men at any time; but the holy men of God spoke, INSPIRED by the HOLY GHOST." (2 Pet. 1:21). Only God can inspire men concerning future free events. So the Holy Ghost is God.

(c). He is to abide with the Church forever, and guide Her into all truth.

"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Paraclete, that He may ABIDE WITH YOU FOREVER – the SPIRIT OF TRUTH, He will teach you ALL things, and bring to your minds all whatsoever I hall have said to you... He will GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH." (John 14:16-17; 26). But God alone, who is Truth Itself can do this. Hence, the Third Person is truly God.

(d). He confers the Supernatural Life on us at Baptism.

"Unless a man be born again of water and the HOLY GHOST, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." (John 3:3). And who can thus give us a sharing in God's own life, except God?

(e). He stands on an absolutely equal footing with the Father and the Son.

"Going therefore, teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." (Mat. 28:19). Absolutely equal with the other two Persons, the Holy Ghost must own, like each of them, the Divine Nature in its entirety. He must be truly God.

Many other examples could be given; but these suffice. Any one of them on its own is enough to testify that the Third Person of the Trinity is truly God.

(d). YET THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD.

Scripture is perfectly clear on this fact, too. When, for instance, Christ was asked which of the Commandments is the first, He replied: "The first Commandment is this: Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is ONE God. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind and with thy whole strength." (Mark 12:29-30). The Bible, in fact, always uses the singular when it refers to God's nature. So, every text in it that refers to Him bears witness to His unity.

Though there are three Persons, then, there are not three Gods. Each Person owns the one Divine nature in its entirety. How could it be otherwise, since this nature is infinitely indivisible? And since there is but one nature, there is but one God.

4. The Names of The Persons.

The FIRST PERSON is called the FATHER. This is His proper name, since it gives exactly what He is, and what distinguishes Him as a Person from the others. He is, after all, only because He is the Father - only because He GENERATES eternally a SON, who is a perfect likeness of Himself, identical in nature, and distinct only as a Person. The First Person is, in other words, only because He is the infinitely perfect RELATION of PATERNITY. That is why St. Paul can say: "I bow my knees to the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom all paternity in heaven and earth is named." (Ephes. 3:14). Fatherhood in a man who generates a child, and fatherhood in a priest who re-generates this child by baptism, causing him to be born again into the supernatural life of grace - these are only faint, created images of the infinite Fatherhood which is the First Person of the Trinity, in God.

The SECOND PERSON is called the WORD, and also the SON. Why the WORD? It is question here, not of a PHYSICAL word such as the one you utter in speech, but of a MENTAL word, like the IDEA that your physical word stands for - only, of course, the WORD in God is infinitely perfect. When we try to know God, we have to form hundreds of different mental words or ideas concerning Him, because our ideas are so limited and imperfect. But when God knows Himself, He does so by ONE Idea. This expresses His Knowledge perfectly, because infinitely. It is the Second Person of the Trinity - the MENTAL WORD of God. And, just as Father is the proper name of the First Person, the WORD is the proper name of the Second. It tells us exactly what He is. For He is, only inasmuch as He is eternally GENERATED by the Father, in an act of knowledge. He is, in other words, only because He is the infinite expression of the knowledge and wisdom of God. That is why St. John begins his Gospel with the majestic, soul-stirring sentence: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Nothing could be more sublime.

Why also the SON? The answer is obvious. As WORD, He must be GENERATED by His Father, in a true, if spiritual, generation - one infinitely more perfect than that by which we generate our poor ideas inside our little minds. And, as thus generated, He must be also SON. Recall His reply to His Mother, when she found Him in the Temple: "Did you not know that I must be about My FATHER'S business?" (Luke 2:49). This reminded her that He is the eternal

RELATION of SONSHIP that links Him to the Father, and that urges Him, consequently, to devote His Human Nature wholly and solely to His Father's honour and glory. Can we wonder that Scripture adds that His Mother and St. Joseph "understood not the word He spoke unto them?" How could they? In trying to fathom its limitless depths, they were trying to understand an infinitely perfect RELATION. They were trying to understand the impenetrable mystery of the Trinity.

The THIRD PERSON is called the HOLY GHOST, or the HOLY SPIRIT, and the GIFT OF GOD. Since holiness and spirituality are common to all three Persons, the name Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost is not so perfect a term as is Father or Son. But it is the best we have. Even Our Lord could find no better. And, after all, it does fittingly express what is proper to the Third Person. It shows that He proceeds from the mutual LOVE of the Father and Son, and is, consequently, the infinitely perfect expression of this love. "Spirit," remember, means "breath." And we often speak of a sigh of love. We also speak of the grand "spirit" in a family in which all the members have the same noble desires, the same elevated sentiments, because all are bound into one by LOVE. The Third Person is, as it were, the infinitely perfect "spirit" of the Eternal Family, since He completes the circuit in the Trinity, and binds its members into one.

He is also called the GIFT OF GOD. This, again, is a fitting term. A gift is something valuable which we give gratuitously to another, through LOVE. It presupposes love. Since, then, the Third Person proceeds from the mutual love of Father and Son, He is rightly called the GIFT of God. As such, He is specially givable to us. That is why He comes to install Himself in our souls, with grace, as God's first supernatural Gift. He is, as it were, the pledge and guarantee of the presence of the other two Persons as well. That is why the indwelling of the Trinity in the soul is often spoken of in Scripture as the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. "Know you not that your members are the temples of the Holy Ghost who is in you?" (1 Cor. 6:19). How we should treasure His sweet presence in our soul!

5. The Trinity In Our Daily Life.

Do not think that the mystery of the Trinity is an abstruse doctrine that has no practical bearing on our daily life. It is, on the contrary, the central doctrine of Christianity. It marks Christianity off from

every other religion. Moreover, it is absolutely fundamental. Almost every other Christian truth presupposes the Trinity. That is why the Church gives it such a prominent part in our daily worship.

Consider the MASS, for example. The priest begins with the Sign of the Cross, saying: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." He ends the first psalm with the "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." He repeats this lovely expression of adoration, in the middle of the Introit. At the Kyrie, he invokes God's mercy three times in honour of the Trinity. In the Gloria, he gives honours to "The Father Almighty," to "Jesus Christ, His only Son," and to "The Holy Ghost." In the Creed, he expresses his belief in the three Divine Persons, as well as in the unity of God. He utters another "glory be to the Father..." when he has washed his hands. And after he has offered the bread and the wine which are to be changed into the Body and the Blood of Christ, he says the solemn prayer: "Receive, O Holy Trinity, this oblation..."

At the end of the Preface, he says the Sanctus three times in honour of the Three Divine Persons, but always in the singular, since they are but one God. At the Consecration, Christ becomes present not just in His sacred Humanity but also in His Divine Personality, "a pure Victim, a holy Victim, an immaculate Victim." The priest offers this Divine Victim to the Father, for the living and the dead, and then breathes this touching petition: "By Him, and with Him, and in Him, is to Thee, O God the Father Almighty, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory." After this, he dares to say the "Our Father."

When about to receive Christ into his heart, the priest says this beautiful prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who, according to the will of the Father, through the co-operation of the Holy Ghost, hast by Thy death given life to the world, deliver me by this Thy most sacred Body and Blood from all my iniquities and from every evil. Make me always cleave to Thy commandments, and never suffer me to be separated from Thee, who, with the same God the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reigneth, world without end."

Towards the end of the Mass, he utters yet another plea to the Trinity: "May the lowly homage of my service be pleasing to Thee, O most Holy Trinity; and do Thou grant that the Sacrifice which I, all unworthy, have offered in the sight of Thy Majesty may be

acceptable to Thee; and because of Thy loving kindness may avail to atone to Thee for myself and for all those for whom I have offered it. Through Christ Our Lord." Then, there remains for him only to make a Sign of the Cross over the faithful, while saying again in the name of the three Divine Persons: "May Almighty God bless you - Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

It is the same with the Sacraments. When you were baptised, the priest said, as he poured the water: "I baptise thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." It was in the name of the Trinity that you were made a member of the Mystical Body of Christ. At your Confirmation, the Bishop said: "I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." We have already seen how often the Trinity is invoked in the Mass, with which the Eucharist is so intimately connected. In every confession, the priest says over you the consoling words: "I absolve thee from thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Later in life, if you choose to enter the married state, the priest will bless you and your companion with a threefold Sign of the Cross, and say: "I unite you in marriage, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And if you are given a vocation to the priesthood by God, your ordination will contain several references to the Trinity, whose honour you will be expected to promote on earth, as another Christ.

And, at the end of life, when death will approach to call you from time into eternity, please God you will have a priest at your bedside to strengthen and console you in this your last act on earth. Invoking the Three Persons of the Trinity, he will pray that every power of the evil spirit may be destroyed in you. Then he will anoint your eyes, ears, nose, lips, hands and feet, and ask God to forgive sins committed by these. He will offer you a plenary indulgence. He will give you Holy Viaticum. Then, kneeling near your bed of pain, he will say: "Go forth, Christian soul, out of this world, in the name of God the Father Almighty, who created thee, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, who suffered for thee, in the name of the Holy Ghost who sanctified thee." And at the dread moment when you breathe your last breath, he will make, in the name of the Church, one last appeal for the salvation of your soul: "Acknowledge, O Lord, thy creature. Give joy to his soul in Thy presence, and remember not his former sins... For, though he has

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sinned, he has believed and never abandoned his belief, in the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost." Think of it! The last appeal for your eternal salvation that the Church will make, will be put forth on just one ground: YOUR BELIEF IN THE TRINITY.

6. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should make the Sign of the Cross slowly, thoughtfully and reverently.
2. I should say the "Glory be to the Father" fervently, and devoutly.
3. I should often think of the love shown in the revelation of the Trinity.
4. I should remember always that the Father is also my Father; the Son, my Brother, and the Holy Ghost, my Comforter.
5. I should increase my love of God daily, so that, through the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, I may be able to enjoy the presence of the Trinity in my soul.

SUMMARY

1. How Known.

- (i) A supernatural mystery. Above reason, not against it. Cf. A square circle.
- (ii). Known only by revelation.
- (iii). Reveals the secret of God's inner life. Hence a proof of His love.

2. Nature and Person.

- (i). Nature and person are distinct realities.
- (ii). Hence, no contradiction in saying that there is one nature in God, yet three persons.
- (iii). A person: (a). In creatures: a substance, rational, incommunicable.
(b). In God: an infinitely perfect, incommunicable RELATION. e.g. Father and Son.

(iv). Ways of expressing the Trinity: -

- (a). The one Divine NATURE is owned in its entirety by three Divine PERSONS.
- (b). In the one ABSOLUTE Being, there are four infinitely perfect, incommunicable RELATIONS.

3. What God Tells Us.

- (A). THERE ARE THREE PERSONS - Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
- (B). THESE ARE DISTINCT - as originator from originated, and vice versa. Each has the Divine nature in its own way.
- (C). EACH IS TRULY GOD.

The Father is God - All who believe in God admit this.

The Son is God.

- (i). He is called God in Scripture.
- (ii). He is called the ONLY-BEGOTTEN Son of God. Hence, is Son in the strict sense. Hence, has the same Divine NATURE as His Father.
- (iii). He is said to do what God alone can do. e.g.
 - (a). He exists with the eternal existence proper to God.
 - (b). He owns the same Nature as the Father.
 - (c). He is the Creator of all things.
 - (d). He works miracles by His own power and in His own right.
 - (e). He forgives sin by His own power and in His own right.

The Holy Ghost is God.

- (i). He is called God in Scripture.
- (ii). He is said to do what God alone can do. e.g.
 - (a). He knows all things, with God's infinite knowledge.
 - (b). He inspired the Prophets of the Old Law.
 - (c). He is to abide with the Church forever, and guide her into all truth.
 - (d). He confers the supernatural life on us at baptism.

(e). He stands on an absolutely equal footing with the Father and the Son.

(D). YET THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD. The one Divine nature is owned in its entirety by all three Persons.

4. The Names Of The Persons.

1st Person: The FATHER – as generating the Son eternally through an act of knowledge.

2nd Person: The WORD and the SON – as thus generated.

3rd Person: The HOLY SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST and the GIFT OF GOD – as proceeding eternally from Father and Son, through an act of love.

5. The Trinity In Our Daily Life. e.g.

(a). In the Mass.

(b). In the Sacraments.

6. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. The Trinity (can) (cannot) be discovered by our unaided reason. 2. A supernatural mystery is a truth which is (...) reason, but not (...) it. 3. Everything has a (nature) (personality). 4. (Nothing) (everything) inferior to man is a person. 5. When we ask what a thing is, we are enquiring about its (nature) (personality). 6. Our imagination (can) (cannot) picture the Trinity faithfully. 7. In me, my nature is owned by my (...). 8. God tells us that He is (one in nature and one in person) (three in nature and one in person) (three in nature and three in person) (one in nature and three in person). 9. Since a person can never be just part of something else, it is said to be (...). 10. In God, a Person takes the form of an infinitely perfect, incommunicable (...). 11. There are (three) (four) relations in God. 12. There are (three) (four) incommunicable relations in God. 13. The relation of Father and Son to the Holy Ghost (is) (is not) a Person. 14. We can express the mystery of the Trinity by saying that in the one (...) Being, there are three infinitely perfect, incommunicable (...). 15. All three Persons are mentioned together in the Scriptural account of the (...) and of the (...). 16. St. John says: "There are three who give testimony in heaven: the Father, the (...), and the Holy Ghost." 17. As a spiritual Being, God does two things: He knows and He (...). 18. It is the (First) (Second) (Third) Person who proceeds through an act of knowledge. 19. Which Person

proceeds from no other Person? (Father) (Son) (Holy Ghost). 20. From which Person does no other proceed? (Father) (Son) (Holy Ghost). 21. Our Lord says: "This is eternal life that they may know Thee, the only true (...), and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." 22. St. John writes: "In the beginning was the (...), and the (...) was with God, and the (...) was God." 23. St. Paul speaks of the Second Person as being over all things, "...), blessed forever." 24. The Second Person is called the (...) and the (...). 25. As Son, He must have the same (...) as His Father. 26. Christ said to the Jews: "Before Abraham was made, I (...)." 27. St. Paul reminds us that our bodies are "temples of the (...)." 28. When Christ says: "The Father and I are one," He is referring to His (nature) (personality). 29. Christ worked (...) by His own power. 30. He forgave (...) by His own power. 31. He said: "Unless a man be born again of water and the (...) he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." 32. The Third Person is called the (...) and the (...). 33. Although there are three Persons, there is only one (...). 34. I should make the (...) with the greatest reverence, since it reminds me not only of the death of Christ, but also of the (...). 35. At my death, the Church will make a last appeal for the salvation of my soul, on just one ground: my belief in (...).

(B).

1. How would you answer a person who says: "Since the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, there must be three Gods?"
2. What evidence have we in Scripture that God has revealed the fact that the Son is truly God?
3. What evidence have we in Scripture that God has revealed the fact that the Holy Ghost is truly God?
4. Explain the fittingness of the names given in Scripture to each of the three Persons.
5. Show that there are many references to the Trinity in the Mass. Do the same for the Sacraments.

Chapter 18

MAN'S SUPERNATURAL LAST END

1. Introduction.

God does not have to create man or any other creature. True, He is infinite Goodness, and goodness tends to give to others. But there is the Trinity. In it the one Divine Nature is given in its entirety by the Father to the Son, and by the Father and Son to the Holy Ghost. This satisfies fully God's infinite yearnings to give. So it leaves Him free to create or not, as He pleases.

Once, however, God decides to make man, He must do two things. First, He must give man what is demanded by man's nature. Secondly, He must make man for a purpose, an end.

You are free to make a square or not, as you please. But, once you decide to make it, you have to give it four equal sides and four right angles, since these are demanded by its nature. Otherwise, you make it impossible for yourself to do what you intended to do. And you owe it to your nature as a rational being not to attempt silly things like that. It is the same with God. Once He freely decides to create man, He owes it to Himself to give man what is demanded by his nature: a human body, a human soul and the faculties that go with each. Otherwise, He makes it impossible for himself to do what He intended to do. And God can never do that. He is Wisdom Itself.

When you act deliberately, you always have an end in view. You act for a purpose known as such. You realise what you intend to achieve, and why you want to achieve it. You go to the Chapel during recreation. Why? To pay Our Lord a visit. You put on your whites on Saturday. Why? To play cricket or tennis. You go to class. Why? To learn something. If you suddenly found yourself doing things without having the least idea why you were doing them, you would rightly become alarmed. You would think it high time you consulted a doctor, or took a holiday, or gave up strong drink. As an

intellectual being, you must have an end or purpose in everything you do. To act otherwise is to act as a mere animal, not as a man.

But God is infinitely intellectual. So He, too, must have a purpose in everything He does. He cannot create man without creating him for an end. He makes man's faculty of sight for the purpose of seeing things. He makes man's intellect for the purpose of understanding things. He makes man's will for the purpose of loving things. So, too, He makes MAN himself for a purpose. This is called man's LAST END.

We have said that God must give man what is demanded by man's nature. But, remember, God is not limited to this. He can give man MORE, if He likes. He can give man things which are not in any way DUE to man's nature – SUPERNATURAL GIFTS such as sanctifying grace, the infused virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

In other words, God can make man for a NATURAL last end, or for a SUPERNATURAL last end, as He pleases. If He gives man only what is due to his nature, man's end will correspond to this. It will be a merely natural one. If He gives man also supernatural gifts not due to any creature, man's end will be proportionate to them. It will be a supernatural one.

Which of these last ends has God actually chosen for man? He has chosen the second. From the beginning, He has destined man for a supernatural last end, as we shall prove. But before we study it, let us look for a few minutes at the last end which is NATURAL to man. You have heard of it before. It is called LIMBO.

2. The Last End Natural To Man.

What is it? It is GOD, of course; but under what aspect? It is God KNOWN by man. Where? In this world? No. In the next, in Limbo. How? By a VISION in which God is seen in some way. In what way? By means of Himself? No. By means of IDEAS. How does the soul get them? Does it form them itself from raw material offered by the senses? No. They are put into man's intellect by GOD Himself. How do they show Him to the soul? Do they give it insight into His inner life in the Trinity? No. They show God only as the First Cause of all creatures. And since God is a Cause of things outside Himself by His NATURE, and since this nature is common to the three Persons of the Trinity, this vision does not show anything of His intimate life

as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Still, it gives the soul a knowledge of God far superior to any it can have of Him by its natural powers on earth; and this produces in the soul a corresponding love and joy which satisfy all man's NATURAL desires completely and forever. In other words the vision of God given to a soul in Limbo makes it perfectly HAPPY with the happiness proper to MAN, in eternity; for man is happy when he has no desires unsatisfied, and he is perfectly happy when he has no desires unsatisfied forever.

Such is the magnificent reward God gives to the souls of all who die without BAPTISM, before they have come to the use of reason in moral matters. Such is the everlasting reward of all who go to LIMBO.

3. Man's Supernatural Last End.

From the beginning, God raised man to the SUPERNATURAL order by giving him GIFTS not due to any creature, and so destined him for a SUPERNATURAL end. What is it?

It is, of course, GOD as KNOWN. Where? In the next life, in heaven. How? By a VISION in which God is seen in some way. In what way? By means of IDEAS as He is known in LIMBO? No. By means of HIMSELF. In heaven God is at once THAT WHICH is known, and THAT BY WHICH He is known. Heaven is an IMMEDIATE vision of the divine essence. Why is God not known by means of ideas? Because these could never express Him AS HE REALLY IS. They are created things, after all; and He is infinite. Only the Infinite can show the Infinite as it actually is. And how is our poor human intellect strengthened to be able to bear this direct vision of God? By means of the LIGHT OF GLORY into which sanctifying grace develops the moment the soul enters heaven.

Through the LIGHT OF GLORY which is a sharing in God's own intellectual light, the soul sees God not just as First Cause of creatures as does a soul in Limbo, but also in His own inner life – the life He leads in the Trinity. What effect has this vision on the soul? It satisfies perfectly all man's NATURAL desires, of course; but it does immeasurably more. It gives man a real share in the HAPPINESS OF GOD Himself. It makes man happy not just with man's happiness, but with God's, eternally. Now you can see why heaven is called the BEATIFIC vision – the vision that makes us happy; and why Sacred Scripture says of it: “Eye hath not seen no

ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what things God has prepared for those that love Him." (1 Cor. 2:9).

To know God in the way He knows Himself, to love Him in the way He loves Himself, and to be happy, consequently, with His infinite happiness forever – this is the vision of incomparable splendour which God gives us as our last end in His "home of many mansions," His home of surpassing light and love and happiness in heaven. In it He gives us HIMSELF; and, infinite though He be, He has nothing more to give. In thus giving us Himself, He gives us all.

4. How We Know That Heaven Exists.

We are absolutely certain that there is a heaven, because GOD has told that there is. He is Knowledge and Truth Itself. It is infinitely impossible for Him to be wrong or to tell us a lie. He knows with infinite certitude that heaven exists. He tells us that it does. He gives us the gift of divine FAITH which enables us to accept His teaching in a supernatural way. And in thus accepting it, we have the greatest possible certitude – a certitude proportionate to God's infinite AUTHORITY, upon which it is based. We have SUPERNATURAL certitude of the existence of heaven.

But are we sure that God has revealed the existence of heaven? Yes, absolutely sure. Why? Because the CHURCH, which is His living voice on earth, tells us INFALLIBLY that He has.

We cannot go into the Church's teaching in this matter just now; for we shall have to do this in a later chapter when we come to The Four Last Things – Death, Judgment, Hell and Heaven. For the present we must be content with but two texts from Scripture. They are glorious texts. You should learn them by heart, and often recall them during life, especially in times of darkness and suffering, that they may give courage and peace to your soul.

The first is from St. John. "Dearly beloved," he says to each of us, "we are now the SONS OF GOD; but it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that WHEN HE SHALL APPEAR, we shall be like to Him, because WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS." (1 John 3:2).

Here St. John reminds us that we are God's adopted sons by grace; and hence His heirs also; and that, consequently, when He shall APPEAR to us after death, we shall SEE HIM AS HE IS. But, to be

thus seen, God must be known IMMEDIATELY - not through the medium of any ideas, since these can never express Him adequately, never as He is. He must be not merely THAT WHICH is seen, but also THAT BY WHICH HE is seen. And what can such an immediate vision of God's essence be, but the beatific vision which is heaven?

The second text is from St. Paul. He says: "We see now in a glass, in a dark manner; but then, FACE TO FACE. Now, I know in part; but then I SHALL KNOW EVEN AS I AM KNOWN." (1 Cor. 13:12).

St. Paul here contrasts the knowledge we can have of God in the present life with that which we shall have in heaven. In this life, we can know God through reasoning to His existence and nature from the creatures He has made. Through them, St. Paul says, we know God "in a glass," in a mirror; for they are, as it were so many mirrors which reflect as well as they can, the infinite perfections of God, especially His power and wisdom, His goodness and love. This is a purely NATURAL knowledge of God. But we can also have a SUPERNATURAL knowledge of Him in this life - the knowledge given us by our Divine FAITH. It is immeasurably superior to our natural knowledge of God; but it is still not a perfect way of knowing Him. It expresses God's revealed truths in human ideas, which can never express them adequately. Moreover, it does not give us insight into the great realities for which they stand. Hence, even by divine faith, we have only an imperfect knowledge of God. We see him, as St. Paul puts it, only "in a dark manner," not "face to face."

How different will be our knowledge of Him in heaven! There, we shall have a face to face vision of God. We shall know Him IN THE SAME WAY as He knows us. "I SHALL KNOW (Him) EVEN AS I AM KNOWN" by Him, St. Paul says. But God knows us by knowing HIMSELF. And He knows Himself, not by means of created ideas, but by means of HIMSELF. Knowing God in the way He knows Himself, we shall also love Him in the way He loves Himself, and be happy, consequently, with His happiness in eternity. Again, what can this immediate vision of God be, but the beatific vision which is heaven?

From these two texts alone, it is evident that God has told us that heaven exists. It is equally evident that it is our last end. Why? Because our last end is HAPPINESS; and what happiness can

compare even remotely with that of the beatific vision, since it is a sharing in the happiness proper, not to man, nor even to the highest angel, but to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the infinite happiness of God?

5. What We Must Do To Gain Heaven.

First, let us distinguish what are called INFANTS from what are called ADULTS, as far as MORALITY is concerned. By an infant we mean a human being who has not yet come to the USE OF REASON in MORAL matters. He may be a wee child, or he may be a grown man. What matters is the fact that he is unable to judge the MORAL value of his acts. He does not know when they are against God's law, and hence sinful; or in accordance with God's law, and hence virtuous. He cannot distinguish MORAL good and evil. An ADULT, on the other hand, is a person who can.

Can the souls of infants go to heaven? Yes, of course; but only if they have received BAPTISM. This is usually baptism of WATER, but it may also be baptism of BLOOD, which is MARTYRDOM. From this, you can see how necessary it is that you should know how to baptise so that you may be able to administer this great sacrament validly in case of necessity, and thus change the eternal destiny of a dying child from Limbo into heaven.

The death of a little child may be no less heart-rending to Catholic parents than to parents who are unbelievers. But the former have the wonderful consolation of knowing that, through baptism, their little one is enjoying the beatific vision, and that he will continue to enjoy it forever. To the death of such a child, we may surely sometimes at least be able to apply the words of Scripture: "He was taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul." (Wisdom 4:11). In the mysterious designs of God's loving Providence there may be amongst the elect in heaven many who, had they grown to manhood, would have used their free will to reject God's graces and so lose their immortal souls. Catholic parents and relatives should remember this in times of tribulation.

Now, what about ADULTS? Unlike infants, they have to MERIT heaven. They have to EARN it as a reward in JUSTICE, for the good deeds they do. Sacred Scripture insists on this.

Recall, for instance, Our Lord's words to the lawyer. The latter put this all-important question to Him: "Master, what must I do to possess ETERNAL LIFE?" Our Saviour asked him what the Law demanded. He replied: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul, with all thy strength and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself." Christ assured him that he had answered right, and added: "This do, and thou shalt LIVE." (Luke 10:25-28). This shows that we have to MERIT heaven or "eternal life" by the good things we do for God, and for our neighbour for the sake of God.

When we come later on to deal with grace, we shall have a lot to say about MERIT. For the present, we shall merely give the six conditions that an act must have, in order that it may merit a reward in heaven. Here they are:-

(i). It must be a morally GOOD act.

In other words, it must not be a sin. We can hardly expect a reward in heaven for an act which is sinful and therefore an insult to God. We can expect only punishment instead.

(ii). It must be FREELY done.

Just as we do not expect punishment for an act done without freedom - walking in our sleep for example - so neither do we expect a reward. None of us thinks that he has a right to a martyr's crown in heaven just because he happens to have dreamt that he was martyred. To merit, an act must be free. It must flow from our free will. We must be responsible for it.

(iii). It must be done DURING THIS LIFE.

It is no use waiting till after death to be converted and do good things for God. He has set a limit to the time during which we can merit. This limit is death. That is why death is such a momentous event. It ends forever our period of merit, and plunges us into the dread alternative of heaven or hell for all eternity.

(iv). It must proceed from SANCTIFYING GRACE AND CHARITY.

Heaven is a SUPERNATURAL reward. To merit it, our acts must be PROPORTIONATE to it. They must be SUPERNATURAL. Now, as you know, acts flow ultimately from a NATURE, and proximately from FACULTIES. To merit heaven, therefore, our acts must flow ultimately from SANCTIFYING GRACE which acts as a supernatural nature in us, and proximately from the SUPERNATURAL VIRTUES which act as faculties - especially from CHARITY, since it is this which ordains the acts of the other virtues to God and enables them to merit. From this you can see why even the best acts done by a person in mortal sin cannot merit eternal life: they belong to the natural order, and hence have no proportion whatever with heaven. Grace and charity are indispensable conditions of merit.

(v). It must be done for GOD.

If you did a good turn for Peter, it would be from him, not from Paul, that you would expect a reward. It is the same with God. If we are to expect a reward from Him for our good works, they must be done for Him. They must be ordained to Him in some way.

Does this mean that we have to stop before every act, and say: "Dear God, I wish to do this for love of you?" No. That would be impossible in this life where we have so many things to distract us. It is sufficient if we have the habit of doing everything for God. However, it is well to remember that the more our good INTENTION influences our act, the more reward it will merit. That is why it is not wise to be content with a morning offering made years ago and not repeated since. We should make our MORNING OFFERING every day. Immediately we get out of bed, we should kneel down and say: "Dear God I wish to do everything today and to bear all sufferings through love of you." And, during the day, we should reject instantly any temptation to do things for an unworthy motive such as that of pride or vainglory. We should see, too, that everything we think, say, do or suffer is worthy of being offered to God. If we do this, our whole day will become an act of homage to God; and even the most trivial of our good acts will be very meritorious in His sight.

(vi). It must be PROMISED A REWARD BY GOD.

Otherwise, our good deeds would not give us a RIGHT to a reward, since they are already DUE to God on other titles, inasmuch as He is our Creator, Conserver and Last End. An earthly father can ask

his little son to do a message, without being obliged to give the child a reward. But if the father PROMISES a reward, it is different. The act done by the child then becomes meritorious. It has a right to a reward. It is the same with God and us. Our acts merit heaven only because He has promised it as a reward for them. Good things done, for example, by the souls in purgatory or in heaven are not meritorious, because God has not attached any reward to them.

Of these six conditions there are three which we need to watch particularly: that we are in a state of grace, that our act is not sinful, and that we are doing it for the love of God. The other conditions will, as it were, look after themselves.

How consoling it is to think that, if these conditions are present, any act, no matter how trivial or commonplace it may be, must merit a reward in heaven. A simple little thing like washing our face, or cleaning our teeth, or polishing our shoes, or eating an ice-cream can give us a deeper sharing of God's own knowledge, love and happiness for all eternity, provided we do these things from a motive of charity, and are in a state of grace when we do them. This surely makes life infinitely worth while.

But here, now, is an important question. HOW MUCH merit can we get from an act? On what does the AMOUNT of merit depend?

Recall what has been said, and you will see the answer. Our acts flow from our faculties, our supernatural acts from our supernatural faculties which are the supernatural virtues. But it is CHARITY which makes the acts of the other virtues meritorious. From this it follows that the amount of merit gained by any act is proportionate to the INTENSITY OF THE CHARITY with which this act is done. Thus a simple little act like sweeping the floor can be far more meritorious than even martyrdom itself. That is why Our Lady's homely duties at Nazareth merited more than did the death of St. Stephen or that of any other martyrs in the Church.

What matters, then, is not so much WHAT we do, provided of course, that it is not sinful, as the INTENSITY OF THE LOVE with which we do it. A little bootblack in a big city who offers his lowly work to God with intense charity may gain far more merit for heaven than the greatest scientist, or the greatest statesman, or even the Pope himself. This is why we should increase our supernatural CHARITY every day, especially by fervent Holy

Communions, so that even the least of our acts may be very meritorious in God's sight, like those of Our Lady at Nazareth.

6. The One Thing Necessary.

The one thing absolutely necessary for me is to die in a state of sanctifying grace. If I do this, I shall be saved in eternity. If, on the contrary, I die in mortal sin, I shall be lost forever. "COME, YE BLESSED OF MY FATHER, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "DEPART FROM ME, YOU CURSED, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels." (Mat. 25:28; 36). On the Last Day I shall hear from the lips of Christ, my Judge, one or other of these two momentous utterances. Which will it be? That depends on the condition of my soul at death. If it is at that moment supernaturalised by grace, Christ will recognise in me an adopted son of His Heavenly Father, and invite me to share with Himself the bliss of the Trinity forever. If, on the contrary, my soul is turned away from God by mortal sin, He will sentence me instead to the everlasting misery and loneliness of hell.

The grace of dying in a state of grace is called the grace of a happy death. It is also called the grace of final perseverance. True, I cannot merit it in justice; but I can obtain it by humble, fervent, confident, life-long prayer. Moreover, Our Blessed Lady can gain this great grace for me from her Divine Son on account of her intimate union with Him on Calvary. I should pray every day for the gift of final perseverance. I can do this by simply saying the Hail Mary: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners NOW and AT THE HOUR OF OUR DEATH. Amen." And all through life I should be deeply devoted to my Immaculate Mother in heaven, mindful always of this age-old saying in the Church: "A DEVOTED SERVANT OF MARY SHALL NEVER PERISH."

But I should aim much higher than at merely snatching my soul from the devil at death. I should aim at building up as big a reward as I possibly can for heaven, by getting as much merit as I can from even my most trivial acts, through purity of motive and an ever-growing charity.

If I thus supernaturalise and sanctify everything in my daily life, I shall become not merely a good doctor, a good lawyer, a good farmer or a good engineer, but a good MAN; nay, a good ADOPTED

SON OF GOD, a good citizen not only of this world but of the next. Instead of being a fool in God's sight, as is anyone who lives in mortal sin, I shall be wise with His own wisdom; for I shall be doing what He who is Wisdom Itself told me to do when He said: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth where the rust and the moth consume and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither the rust nor the moth doth consume and where thieves do not break through or steal." (Mat. 6:19-20). I shall be a real success in life; and I shall be always happy with a deep supernatural happiness far superior to anything the world can ever give – a happiness which is a genuine foretaste of the peace and the joy of heaven. And when death comes, I shall not have to look back in horror at a life wasted and barren in the sight of God; I shall be able to look forward instead with humble gratitude and love to the immense reward that His grace will have enabled me to merit, in His everlasting home of light and joy and love.

7. Practical Conclusions.

1. I must keep my soul always in a state of grace so that my acts can merit heaven.
2. I must make my morning offering every day, and see that it influences all my acts by directing them to God through love.
3. I must increase the intensity of my charity daily, so that even the least important of my acts may have great merit for heaven.
4. I must pray daily for the grace of final perseverance – by saying the Hail Mary, for example.
5. I must be devoted to Our Lady all through my life, since she can gain for me by her all-powerful intercession the grace of a happy death.

SUMMARY

1. Introduction.

- (i). God is free to make man for a NATURAL or for a SUPERNATURAL last end, as He pleases.

- (ii). He has, in fact, made us for a SUPERNATURAL one.

2. The End Which Is Natural To Man.

- (i). It is GOD known in LIMBO through a VISION given by infused IDEAS which show Him as the FIRST CAUSE of creatures.
- (ii). It makes the soul perfectly happy forever with the happiness proper to man by satisfying every natural desire man can have in eternity.
- (iii). Souls of persons who are unbaptised and who die before coming to the use of reason in moral matters enjoy this vision.

3. Man's Supernatural Last End.

- (i). It is GOD known in HEAVEN in a VISION in which He is not only THAT WHICH is known but also THAT BY WHICH He is known, and which shows Him in the inner life He leads in the Trinity.
- (ii). It makes the soul happy forever, with a sharing in the infinite happiness proper to God.
- (iii). Souls of persons who die in a state of sanctifying grace enjoy this vision in eternity.

4. How We Know That Heaven Exists.

- (i). We accept it by an act of divine faith based on the infinitely reliable authority of God. Our certitude is proportionate to this authority, hence the greatest possible in this life.
- (ii). We are absolutely certain that God has revealed the existence of heaven, for the Church assures us infallibly that He has.

“We shall see Him as He is.”

“I shall know even as I am known.”

5. What We Must Do To Gain Heaven.

- A. INFANTS must have received either baptism of water or baptism of blood (martyrdom).
- B. ADULTS must MERIT heaven by their acts.

CONDITIONS that an act must have to merit heaven: -

- (i). It must be a MORALLY GOOD act.
- (ii). It must be FREELY DONE.
- (iii). It must be done DURING THIS LIFE.

(iv). It must proceed from SANCTIFYING GRACE and CHARITY.

(v). It must be DONE FOR GOD.

(vi). It must be PROMISED A REWARD by God.

The AMOUNT of merit depends on the INTENSITY OF THE SUPERNATURAL CHARITY with which an act is done.

6. The One Thing Necessary.

(i). This is to die in a state of sanctifying grace.

(ii). The grace of final perseverance cannot be MERITED in justice.

(iii). It can be gained, however, by: -

(a). Humble, fervent, confident life-long prayer; and

(b). From Our Lady's intercession as Co-redemptrix of the world.

(iv). Hence the great value of the Hail Mary.

7. Practical Conclusions.

1. State of grace.
2. Morning offering. Purity of intention.
3. Intensity of charity.
4. Prayer for final perseverance.
5. Devotion to Our Lady.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. Once God freely decides to make man, He must give him what is due to his (...); and He must make man for a (...). 2. The ultimate purpose for which we exist is called our last (...). 3. God is free to make man for a natural or for a (...) end. 4. A soul in Limbo (does) (does not) enjoy a vision of God. 5. A soul in Limbo sees God by means of infused (...). 6. These show God to the soul only inasmuch as He is the First (...) of creatures. 7. A soul in Limbo (has) (has not) a vision of the inner life that God leads in the Trinity. 8. A soul in Limbo is happy with the happiness proper to (God) (man) in eternity. 9. A man is said to be happy when he has no (...) unsatisfied. 10. The happiness in Limbo is a (natural) (supernatural) one. 11. The souls in Limbo are those of persons who have died

without (...) and who have never come to the use of reason in (...) matters in this life. 12. By baptism of blood we mean (...). 13. The souls of the Holy Innocents went to (Limbo) (heaven). 14. Another name for heaven is the (...) vision. 15. In it God is seen by means of (ideas) (Himself). 16. In it He is not only that which is seen, but also that (...) He is seen. 17. It (is) (is not) an immediate vision of God's essence. 18. In it the soul sees God (merely as Creator) (also as the Trinity). 19. St. John says that in heaven we shall see God "as He (...)." 20. St. Paul says that in heaven I shall know God "even as I am (...)." 21. The happiness of heaven is a real sharing in the happiness proper to (man) (God). 22. Our intellect is strengthened to bear the beatific vision by what is called the (...). 23. We are absolutely certain that there is a heaven, because (...) has told us that there is. 24. We are equally certain that He did tell us, because the (...) assures us infallibly that He did. 25. The light of glory is a sharing in God's own intellectual (...). 26. Billy, who has made his morning offering and who is in a state of grace enjoys an ice-cream. Does he merit by this act? (yes) (no). 27. Jimmy thinks he will pile up lots of merit in purgatory, since he is sure to be there a very long time. Is he right? (yes) (no). 28. A soldier in mortal sin does a gallant deed by rescuing his wounded companion. Is there any supernatural merit here? (yes) (no). 29. The amount of merit in any act depends on the intensity of the (...) with which it is done. 30. In the Hail Mary we pray for the grace of (...).

(B).

1. Compare Limbo and Heaven.
2. What conditions must an act have to merit heaven?
3. Why did Our Lady's acts at Nazareth merit so much?
4. Why is death such an important event?
5. Why should we be deeply devoted to Our Lady?
6. Peter offers every beat of his heart to God. Does his merit increase every time his heart beats?
7. Jimmy tells a lie to shield his friend. He thinks he will get a lot of merit for this since his motive is such a charitable one. Will he?
8. Peter thinks that to be a saint you have to do most abnormal and fantastic things. Is he right?

Chapter 19

LAW AND MORALITY

1. Introduction.

Non-Catholics sometimes say: "I would hate to be a Catholic. Too many restrictions, from the cradle to the grave. Even before a Catholic child has come to the use of reason, he is baptised and made to incur obligations of which he is totally ignorant. Later, he is forced to learn by heart a catechism which contains many notions quite beyond his grasp. Even as a man, a Catholic has to submit to a ceaseless round of sermons, instructions, retreats and encyclicals which necessarily give him a one-track mind. His intellect is shackled by truths and his will by commandments that cannot change to keep abreast of the times. His most intimate conversations and motives and the inmost secrets of his heart must all be ordered by laws. No scope for initiative, self-expression, or development of personality! No liberty whatever! Too many laws. Thank God, I'm not a Catholic!"

A man who talks this way has never bothered to ask himself the simple question: "What is a law?"; for, if he had, he would not accuse law of doing away with liberty. He would realise instead that law is the foundation of liberty, and that liberty is impossible without it. Just think what a law is, and you will see that this is so.

2. What Is Meant By Law.

A LAW is a RULING OF REASON, made by a proper AUTHORITY, for the COMMON GOOD.

First, a law is a ruling of REASON. It is made by REASON. There can be no such thing, then, as an UNREASONABLE law. That would be a contradiction, an absurdity. It could no more exist than could a square with a million sides. To be a law, a ruling must be REASONABLE.

In obeying a law, therefore, we must be acting REASONABLY. We cannot do anything else, since a law is by definition a reasonable

regulation. And who can object to being obliged to act reasonably? To object to this is to ask to be allowed to act UNREASONABLY, like a being deprived of reason - a turnip, a carrot or a madman. What normal person wants to do that?

Secondly, a law is made by a proper AUTHORITY. And the ultimate authority from which all laws derive their power is GOD. All laws are expressions of His WISDOM, which guides every creature to its end. Hence, to obey them is to make our acts agree with Infinite Wisdom. It is to be wise with the wisdom of God. Only a fool can object to that.

Thirdly, a law is a ruling made for the COMMON GOOD. But we must all promote the common good, if we are to promote our own private good. For we are SOCIAL beings by nature. We have to live with our fellow-men, and co-operate with them for the good of the whole community.

Think what it would be like to live completely on your own. No-one to talk to. No-one to play with. No-one to teach you anything. You'd have to make your own clothes, find your own food, build your own house. You'd have no books to read, no pictures to go to, no football matches, no sports of any kind. And what about a husband or wife, when you grew up? There could be none. In fact, if every human being gave up living in society, the race would die out in a single generation. As a SOCIAL being, man must live in society, or perish.

True, society or the state is not man's last end, as many foolishly claim (ie. Communism). As a person whose soul is spiritual, man is far superior to the state. At the same time, however, he has obligations towards society. He must pay back to it something for the benefits he derives from it. He must promote the common good to a reasonable extent. And this is just what law obliges him to do. Who, then, can rightly object? To object is to deny man's social nature. It is to ask to be wholly self-sufficient. It is to demand the destruction of the race.

It is sheer folly, then, for anyone to object to laws, provided of course that they are really laws - rulings of reason, made by a proper authority, for the common good.

3. Kinds Of Laws.

Honour thy father and thy mother. Thou shalt not steal. These laws are, obviously, not wholly the same as, say, the law that fire burns, or that oxygen and hydrogen unite to form water. They show us that there are different sorts of law. In fact, there are five. Here they are:

- i. THE ETERNAL LAW
- ii. THE NATURAL LAW
- iii. THE CIVIL LAW
- iv. THE SUPERNATURAL LAW
- v. THE CHURCH LAW

(i). THE ETERNAL LAW.

God, as we have seen, is free to make creatures or not, as He pleases. But, once He decides to create them, He must make them for an END. And He must DIRECT them to this end, which is to manifest His GLORY, by imitating Him as far as they can.

Now, God's REASON and WILL, by which He directs all creatures to their last end, is called the ETERNAL law. It is, of course, one with God Himself; for He is His reason and His will just as He is His goodness and His love. It is as eternal as He is. Hence its name. It is the source of every other law. Without it, there could be no law, just as without God there could be no creatures. Every other law is a law only because it shares in or imitates the Eternal Law, the infinite wisdom of God.

(ii). THE NATURAL LAW.

God does not direct creatures from OUTSIDE themselves, in the way in which a man directs a bullet at a target, or a car along the road. He directs them from WITHIN. He gives each kind of creature a NATURE of its own, a tendency to act in line with it, faculties by which it can act, and activities that correspond to these. And it is through its NATURE that He directs it to its end. That is why the law by which He does this is called the NATURAL law. It is that part of the Eternal Law which applies to the NATURE particular to this or that creature - to an atom of hydrogen, for instance, or to a cabbage, or to a man.

But there is a big difference between man's nature, and the nature of any creature lower than man. Man's nature is endowed with an intelligence and a free will. No creature lower than man has either of these.

So, try to grasp this: God directs every creature to its last end by means of the NATURAL law which corresponds to its particular nature. Some natures have free will; others have not. Hence, there must be two forms of the natural law: one governing things that have no free will; the other, things that have. The former includes the PHYSICAL laws of nature; the latter, the MORAL laws.

The PHYSICAL laws of nature determine how creatures MUST of necessity act, in attaining their end, inasmuch as they have no free will, hence no say in the matter. The MORAL laws of nature determine how creatures OUGHT act, in attaining their end, inasmuch as they have free will, and hence some say in the matter.

It is by the PHYSICAL laws of nature, then, that God directs all creatures lower than man to their last end, which they attain without any freedom on their part. Since they derive their existence and their perfections unceasingly from God, they enable us to know that He exists and so fulfil our debt of praise and worship to Him as the Creator. They thus manifest His attributes, especially His power and majesty, His goodness and love, through sheer necessity, in much the same way as a master painting shows the genius of its human author. They give God glory by simply being what they are. They have no CHOICE in the WAY in which they glorify God, for they have no free will at all.

Inasmuch as man has a material BODY, he is subject to the PHYSICAL laws of nature, like any other material thing. At the same time, however, man has a spiritual SOUL, with an intellect and a free will. His nature is endowed with freedom. And God must respect the nature and the freedom He has given him. So it is by means of nature's MORAL laws that God directs him to his end.

At first sight, God seems to be in a fix in the case of man. Why? On the one hand, God cannot do anything in VAIN. But He makes man to promote His own glory. To do this is man's last end, just as it is the last end of every other creature. Therefore, man will inevitably do this. Otherwise, God will have made him in vain - which is impossible. On the other hand, God gives man a free will, and He

has to respect man's freedom. Hence, He must give him some say in regard to his last end. How can God do both? One seems to contradict the other.

In reality, however, there is no contradiction. True, God makes man to promote His glory, and man will inevitably do this in eternity. At the same time, however, God respects man's free will by giving him a CHOICE as the WAY in which he will glorify His Creator in eternity. Man can do this EITHER by using his free will to co-operate with God's grace and so win HEAVEN for himself, OR by using his free will to refuse to co-operate with grace and so plunge himself into HELL. And hell, remember, witnesses to God's goodness just as heaven does, for it shows His absolute RIGHT to be loved above all creatures - a right which He has only because He is Infinite Goodness Itself.

In somewhat the same way as a growing child acquires habits INEVITABLY yet FREELY, man will inevitably give God glory in eternity, yet at the same time he will do this freely inasmuch as he is free in this life to choose the WAY in which he will do it, by choosing as his everlasting abode either Heaven or Hell. Directing man to his last end, God respects the NATURE He has given him.

True, heaven is a supernatural, not a natural end. But the supernatural does not destroy the natural. It presupposes it instead. When we are made God's adopted children by grace, we do not cease to be human beings. So we have to obey the NATURAL law as well as the SUPERNATURAL, if we are to gain heaven.

We have seen that the NATURAL LAW includes both PHYSICAL and MORAL laws. Do not forget that they BOTH apply to you, because you are made up of a BODY which is material, and a SOUL which is spiritual. Learn to distinguish clearly between these two types of law. To confuse them is a fatal error.

Consider, for instance, these two cases. Through no fault of his own, a man is stricken with a fatal disease such as cancer, which soon kills him. Another man, knowing clearly that he is obliged to obey the moral law "Thou shalt not kill" still deliberately decides to kill himself by taking strychnine. What a difference there is between these two deaths! The former can be offered to God in loving resignation to His all-wise providence, and so win the offerer a high place in heaven. The latter is a horrible mortal sin of suicide, which

can only plunge its victim into hell. In a very real sense it is as different from the first as hell is from heaven. Why? Because, in the first instance, it is question of the PHYSICAL laws of nature alone, over which our free will has no direct control. In the second, it is question of violating a MORAL law of nature, which OBLIGES us to act in a certain way, yet leaves us FREE to obey or disobey it. It is obviously fatal to morality to confuse these two types of law.

Another capital error is to think that the MORAL laws do not matter, that they are not real laws at all but useless man-made taboos which we can ignore or violate without doing any harm to ourselves. Yet many today make this fatal mistake. Ask a man to swallow bits of broken glass or a spoonful of strong sulphuric acid. He will think you are mad. He realises instantly the damage this would do to his body. He has far too much respect for the PHYSICAL laws of nature to comply with your request. But ask him to have a similar respect for nature's MORAL laws - the Ten Commandments, for instance, and what will he do? Only too often he will sneer at your suggestion, or greet you with a pitying smile as if you were a sort of medieval simpleton. Why? Because he fails to realise that the MORAL laws are just as much laws of his nature as are the PHYSICAL, so that it is just as impossible for him to neglect the former as it is for him to neglect the latter without doing serious, if not irreparable damage to himself.

As a matter of fact, we should have a far greater respect for the MORAL laws of nature than for her physical laws, since it is a much more serious thing to damage our souls than it is to damage our bodies. For the moral harm we do our souls by sin and vice can cause us great misery and suffering not only in this life, but also in the next. It is a terrible thing to suffer for years on earth; but it is immeasurably more terrible to suffer forever in eternity.

(iii). THE CIVIL LAW.

The CIVIL law is made by man. Its purpose is to determine the NATURAL law. The natural law, for instance, forbids us to kill or injure others by driving on the wrong side of the road. But it does not tell us which is the wrong side. Here the CIVIL law steps in, and decides. It orders us to keep to the left. The purpose of the CIVIL law is thus to make clear and precise what is vague and indefinite in the NATURAL law. And, like the natural law, it gets its binding

force ultimately, not from the state or government that makes it, but from GOD.

(iv). THE SUPERNATURAL LAW.

We can know the NATURAL law by our unaided REASON, since this law flows from our very nature as man. But God can also REVEAL part of it to us, as He does in the Ten Commandments, in order that we may know it with the greatest ease and certitude. It is then SUPERNATURAL, not in itself, but in the MANNER in which it is made known to us. Moreover, God can reveal other supernatural laws such as those that govern the functioning of grace, the supernatural virtues or the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. In either case, the SUPERNATURAL law is that which is made known to us in a SUPERNATURAL manner by God.

(v). THE CHURCH LAW.

This does for the SUPERNATURAL law what the CIVIL law does for the NATURAL. It determines it. The SUPERNATURAL law, for instance, reminds us that, as followers of a crucified Saviour and heirs with Him to a supernatural reward in heaven, we ought practise self-denial to a greater extent than that demanded by our unaided reason. But the SUPERNATURAL law does not tell us precisely how we are to do this. So the CHURCH law steps in, and orders us to deny ourselves and do penance as well as observe the fast during Lent. It thus makes precise and definite what is vague and indefinite in the SUPERNATURAL law; and in doing this, of course, it gets its binding power from God.

These, then, are the five divisions of law. You can see that the Eternal Law is the source of all the others, just as God is the Source of all creatures; and that, without it, there could be no other laws, just as without God there could be no creatures. All other laws derive their power from it.

4. The Morality Of Our Acts.

By the MORALITY of an act we mean its AGREEMENT or DISAGREEMENT with the LAW OF GOD. If it agrees with His law it is a VIRTUOUS or MORALLY GOOD act; if it is against God's law, it is a SINFUL or MORALLY EVIL act.

Notice that we say: "If it agrees" and "If it disagrees" with God's law. This supposes that it can do one or the other; hence that it is a FREE act. Only those acts that come ultimately from our FREE WILL can have any morality. They ALONE can have a MORAL value. They ALONE can be virtuous or sinful.

Whatever happens in us through PHYSICAL laws ALONE, has no morality. It can be neither sinful nor virtuous. We must be in some way RESPONSIBLE for what occurs, if it is to be morally good or morally evil. Thus, the falling of a man from a plane has no morality in itself, inasmuch as it is due to a PHYSICAL law over which his will has no direct control. However, such a fall has morality, if the man DELIBERATELY chooses to jump from the plane. His fall is then free, not in itself, but in its CAUSE - his decision to jump. Hence, he is RESPONSIBLE for it and its consequences in this world and in the next.

You must learn to distinguish between acts over which your WILL has some control, and acts over which it has none. The former have moral value. The latter have not.

You may dream, for example, that you have been guilty of a horrible sin. Should this worry you? Should you regard yourself guilty of sin? Of course not. A dream as such has no morality. It is due to our IMAGINATION, not to our free WILL. And sin is in the WILL alone. Unless an evil dream has been DELIBERATELY caused and willed beforehand, it is as impossible for it to have any moral value as it is for a flash of lightning or a thunderclap. It is right outside the sphere of morality. And the same applies to anything that happens during sleep.

Images which are a source of temptation against purity may arise of their own accord in your imagination, without being deliberately caused by you in any way. So far, they have no morality at all. But, once you realise that they are there, and that they are occasions of sin, and that you have not a sufficient excuse for keeping them, they begin to come under the rule of morality. You will either FREELY accept them by an act of your will, and thus commit a sin; or you will freely reject them by putting other harmless images in their place, and your rejection of them will be a virtuous act. It is the free choice of the will that matters. This alone has morality.

As we have said before, it is most important that you realise in practice which acts have moral value and which have not. Otherwise, you will develop a wrong judgment in moral matters, which will be a source of unnecessary suffering all through your life.

5. Conscience.

By our CONSCIENCE we do not mean a faculty distinct from our intelligence. It is simply our INTELLIGENCE judging about the MORALITY of an act, by telling us whether it is AGAINST God's law, and therefore a sin; or in AGREEMENT with God's law, and therefore a virtuous act.

A person is said to have a RIGHT conscience when he judges rightly the moral value of his acts, by judging them as they actually are in the sight of God. If you judge, for example, that it is not a sin for a farmer to miss Mass on a week day which is not a day of obligation you have a right conscience in this matter, since this is not a sin in the sight of God. If you judge that it is a venial sin to give way to a temptation to vainglory, you have a right conscience here, since God judges it the same way. If you judge that it is a mortal sin to kill an innocent man, you have a right conscience again because your judgment agrees with God's. And so on.

If, on the other hand, a person judges wrongly the moral value of his acts, he is said to have a WRONG conscience.

He may do this by habitually judging acts to be LESS sinful than they really are in God's sight. He is then said to have a LAX conscience. Thus, he may judge that an act is not sinful at all, when it is a venial sin; or that it is only venially sinful, when it is really a mortal sin. He is, of course, obliged to correct his judgment by following the ruling of someone who has a right conscience in these matters.

He may do this also by habitually judging acts to be MORE sinful than they really are. He is then said to have a SCRUPULOUS conscience. Thus, he will judge that an act is a venial sin when it is not a sin at all; or that it is a mortal sin when it is really only venial. He too, of course, is obliged to correct his conscience. How? There is only one way. It is to follow the ruling of his confessor absolutely BLINDLY. No matter how much his wrong conscience may protest

against this, he must take no notice whatever of its protests. He must have enough humility and courage to give up his own wrong judgment, as he does so often in other matters, as when he consults a doctor or a lawyer, and follow the judgment of the priest. If he does this, he will soon be cured. And it is most necessary to cure scruples in their early stages; for, if they are left to develop, they make a man's life a sort of hell on earth. They can even send him to an asylum.

Train yourself, then, to judge reasonably and prudently the moral value of your acts. Do not be too shy to ask advice in the confessional or out of it; and try to cultivate a sane, balanced judgment, which avoids the extremes of a lax conscience on the one hand, and of a scrupulous conscience on the other. It will save you from endless worries all through life.

6. True Freedom.

You will often hear people say: "I am free only when I can think, say and do what I LIKE." What rubbish!

You can think, if you like, that a deadly dose of strychnine will do you no harm but if you take it, you will lose your freedom to do any more thinking, in this world at least.

You can say, if you like, that there is no external world; but if you do, you will make it impossible for yourself to say anything further, since there will be no-one to say it to. You will be the only being that exists.

You can jump from the top of a high building to the street below, if you like; but, if you do, it will be your last jump. In using your liberty to do what you like, you will inevitably destroy it.

Yes, in thinking, saying and doing what we LIKE, we destroy our liberty as inevitably as a person who takes strong drink or drugs to excess destroys his freedom by becoming a slave to these degrading vices. True liberty does not consist in thinking, saying and doing what we LIKE. It consists instead in thinking, saying and doing what we OUGHT. And what we OUGHT do is set out for us in the LAW OF GOD. The NATURAL law tells us what we OUGHT do in order to live in a manner befitting our dignity as REASONABLE beings made in God's image; and the SUPERNATURAL law tells us

what we OUGHT do if we are to act in a manner befitting our infinitely higher calling as God's adopted children and joint-heirs with Christ to heaven. True freedom consists in submission to law.

The most free man in the world is the man who deliberately submits to all the laws that govern him: the laws of health that governs him inasmuch as he is an animal; the laws of right thinking that govern him inasmuch as he has an intelligence; the laws of morality that govern him inasmuch as he has a free will and obligations to God Who made him; the laws of society that govern him inasmuch as he is a member of a family, a state and a Church; and, finally, the revealed law that governs him inasmuch as he is a candidate for heaven.

Ruling over all that is lower than himself, while freely submitting to all that is higher, such a man will enrich his being and develop his personality beyond imagination's wildest dreams; and he will share in the liberty of the saints, the glorious Christian liberty by which Christ Himself has set us free.

SUMMARY

1. Introduction.

The folly of thinking that laws destroy freedom.

2. What Is Meant By Law.

A ruling of REASON, made by a proper AUTHORITY, for the COMMON GOOD.

3. Kinds Of Law.

- (i). The ETERNAL Law - GOD'S REASON and WILL, directing all creatures to their last end.

- (ii). The NATURAL Law - Corresponds to the NATURE in each thing.

The PHYSICAL laws, governing bodies as such.

The MORAL laws, governing FREE beings as such.

- (iii). The CIVIL Law - Makes definite what is indefinite in the NATURAL law. e.g. Drive to the left.
- (iv). The SUPERNATURAL Law - Revealed by God. Rules us as heirs to a supernatural reward in heaven.
- (v). The CHURCH Law - Makes definite what is indefinite in the SUPERNATURAL law. e.g. Receive Holy Communion once a year, at Easter time (ie. between Ash Wednesday and Trinity Sunday).

4. The Morality Of Our Acts.

Their AGREEMENT or DISAGREEMENT with GOD'S LAW. Only FREE acts have morality. i.e. can be sinful or virtuous.

Need to distinguish between PHYSICAL and MORAL laws that govern us.

5. Conscience.

- (i). Our INTELLIGENCE judging the MORALITY of our acts.
- (ii). Kinds: (a). RIGHT.
 (b). WRONG. e.g. LAX and SCRUPULOUS.

6. True Freedom.

Consists in thinking, saying and doing not what we LIKE, but what we OUGHT, by obeying the laws of God.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. A law is a ruling of (...), made by a proper (...), for the (...) . 2. There (can) (cannot) be such a thing as an unreasonable law. 3. The ultimate authority behind every law is that of (...). 4. Since we are (...) beings by nature, we have to promote the common good. 5. The Eternal Law is God's (...) and (...), directing everything to its last end. 6. God directs everything according to the (...) He gives it; and the law by which He does this is called the (...) law. 7. Fire burns. This is a (physical) (moral) law of nature. 8. Thou shalt not kill. This is a (physical) (moral) law of nature. 9. A dream as such (has) (has

no) morality. 10. Sin is committed by our (intellect) (will) (imagination). 11. Our free acts flow ultimately from our (...). 12. The law revealed by God is called the (...) law. 13. It is the (...) law which makes definite what is indefinite in the natural law. 14. Inasmuch as our intelligence judges whether an act is sinful or not, it is called our (...). 15. A man who habitually thinks acts are less sinful than they really are has a (...) conscience. 16. One who habitually thinks acts are more sinful than they really are has a (...) conscience. 17. The only cure for scruples is blind (...) to the ruling of one's confessor. 18. True liberty consists in thinking, saying and doing what we (...). 19. I can develop my personality only by obeying God's (...). 20. The most free man in the world is the greatest (sinner) (saint).

(B).

1. Explain the following: the Eternal Law; the Natural Law; the Civil Law; the Supernatural Law; the Church Law.
2. What is the difference between the physical and the moral laws of nature? Why do we have to distinguish between them in daily life?
3. Why ought we have a far greater respect for the moral laws than we have for the physical laws?
4. Billy, who has a scrupulous conscience, thinks that the priest did not understand him properly; hence, that he ought not obey the priest. Is he right?
5. Pat wants to know in what true liberty consists. Tell him.
6. Jimmy asks how he can develop his personality. Tell him.
7. John regards all school rules as useless and unnecessary restrictions on his liberty. Is he right?
8. Algy wrongly imagines that he commits thousands of deliberate sins every day. What sort of conscience has he? How can he cure it?

Chapter 20

THE COMMANDMENTS

1. What They Are.

If you saw your father going to start your car just after you had emptied the water from the radiator and the oil from the crank-case, you would stop him instantly. "Don't start yet, Dad!" you would yell. "Wait till I have put fresh oil and water into it." Why? Because to run the car without these is to ignore its natural laws. It is to ruin the engine.

Or, suppose that you had some deadly rat poison spread on bread which your little brother was going to eat, mistaking the poison for peanut butter. Would you not immediately stop him? Of course. You would have far too much respect for the physical laws of nature to allow him to test the killing power of the deadly stuff. You would know the result beforehand.

But, as we have seen, the MORAL laws of nature are just as much laws as the PHYSICAL are. It is just as impossible for us to ignore them without damaging ourselves, as it is for us to ignore the physical laws and get away with it.

That is why, if you noticed your friend taking harmful drugs, you would feel obliged to warn him of the damage he must do himself by becoming a slave to a revolting vice. "Don't take them!" you would say to him. "You will only become a drug fiend."

Now, God is our infinitely good and wise Father and Friend. He loves us as only He can love. He has our welfare at heart and more than we can ever have it ourselves. He wants us to be happy in this world and in the next. At the same time, He knows with absolute certitude what can make us happy, and what can wreck our happiness, here and in eternity.

He knows that it is just as impossible for us to ignore the MORAL laws of our nature without ruining our happiness, as it is for us to

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run a car in which there is neither oil nor water without ruining the engine, or to take deadly rat poison without killing ourselves.

Of course God is aware of the fact that we can know nature's moral laws by our REASON alone; but His love urges Him to REVEAL them to us, so that we may know them also on His AUTHORITY; hence with the greatest ease and certainty. So, breaking the silence that normally surrounds Him, He says to each of us: -

1. Don't doubt or deny My existence; and don't worship idols in place of Me; for I alone am self-existing.
2. Don't associate Me with lies in any way; for I am Infinite Truth.
3. Be honest with Me by paying the debt of worship you owe Me; for I am Goodness Itself.

Why does God speak thus to me? Because He knows that I cannot be happy unless my life is rightly ordered in regard to my LAST END, which is Himself, known as the First Truth and loved as Infinite Goodness in eternity. But He knows also that I cannot be happy, either, unless my life is rightly ordered towards my fellowmen. So He continues: -

4. Honour your father and mother.
5. Don't kill.
6. Don't be impure.
7. Don't steal.
8. Don't be a liar.
9. Don't covet another's wife.
10. Don't covet another's goods.

These, as you know, are the TEN COMMANDMENTS. They are also called the DECALOGUE, since "deca" means "ten," and "logos" means a saying, or here, a command. They were revealed by God to MOSES on Mt. Sinai about the year 1440 B.C.; but they bind you and me today just as much as they bound Moses and his people, for they are an expression of the NATURAL law which obliges all men inasmuch as they are human beings, made in the image of God. They are the natural law in a nutshell.

2. The Order In The Commandments.

If human beings are to be rightly ordered in any community, two things are required. First, they must be rightly ordered in regard to their leader or head. Then, in regard to one another. That is why the first three Commandments secure the right ordering of our life in relation to God; and the other seven, in relation to our fellowmen.

To God, as to a human leader, we have a threefold debt. We owe Him:

- (a). FIDELITY, by which He is acknowledged to be our Leader and our only one. This is commanded by the FIRST Commandment, by which we are obliged to acknowledge the UNITY of God. "I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before Me."
- (b). REVERENCE, especially in speech, so that nothing disloyal is ever uttered against our Leader. This is commanded in the SECOND Commandment which forbids us to make God a witness to a lie, and thus obliges us to acknowledge Him as the First TRUTH. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."
- (c). SERVICE, even in our heart, in order to pay back something of what we owe to Him. This is commanded in the THIRD Commandment, which obliges us to acknowledge God as GOODNESS Itself. "Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day."

By acknowledging God's UNITY, TRUTH and GOODNESS in practice in our daily life, we establish right order between ourselves and our last end. For the limitless yearning of our intellect for truth, and of our will for goodness, can be satisfied fully and forever by GOD alone, since He alone is Truth and Goodness Itself. In giving us the Commandments, then, God puts first things first.

In ordering our lives rightly towards our fellow men, God also puts first things first. He begins with our duties towards our PARENTS. Why? Because, after Him, we owe most to them. We owe them, in fact, as we owe God Himself, a debt that we can never fully pay. To pay a debt fully, we have to give to another something that is strictly equal to what he has given us, as when we pay back ten dollars which someone has lent to us. But, like God, our parents

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give us our EXISTENCE. We can never give them existence in return, any more than we can give God His existence. In this sense, our debt to them is an unpayable one. But we can pay it as far as possible. And God obliges us to do this in the FOURTH Commandment: "Honour thy father and thy mother."

Having spoken of our duties towards our parents, the Commandments speak next of our duties toward all and sundry. Here, again, God puts first things first. Man's most cherished natural right is his right to life. All his other rights presuppose it. It is absolutely fundamental. So it is mentioned next. The FIFTH Commandment says: "Thou shalt not kill."

After the right to life possessed by persons who actually exist, the most important right is that of children yet unborn. This is imperilled by impurity on the part of the man and the woman responsible for bringing them into the world, especially by infidelity in marriage. Hence, God next protects the life of the unborn child by the SIXTH Commandment: "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

Next in importance to human life comes property - the various external goods which we can lawfully own as safeguards of our liberty and independence. Hence all sins against the legitimate ownership of goods are forbidden by the SEVENTH Commandment: "Thou shalt not steal."

So far, God has dealt with sins of DEED or ACTION, against the rights of others. Now He turns to sins of SPEECH. These He forbids in the EIGHTH Commandment: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

Lastly, He deals with sins that people commit, not by external actions, nor yet by speech, but in their HEARTS. And here again, He puts first things first; for in the NINTH Commandment He says: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife," and in the TENTH: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods."

The wise order that prevails amongst the Commandments can be seen also if you consider the GRAVITY of each.

Notice that God first forbids such things as ATHEISM, which denies His existence, AGNOSTICISM, which doubts it, and IDOLATRY, which worships false gods in place of the true one. Why? Because

they are the most UNREASONABLE things a man can do. They are most opposed to his nature as a RATIONAL being.

INFIDELITY to God by atheism, agnosticism and idolatry is more unreasonable in itself, and hence a more serious sin than is IRREVERENCE towards His name; for the latter at least presupposes His existence. And it, in turn, is more unreasonable than is the FAILURE TO WORSHIP God in daily life.

Thus sins forbidden by the First Commandment are more serious in themselves than sins forbidden by the Second; and these in their turn are more serious in themselves than sins forbidden by the Third. All of them, however, are more serious in themselves than are sins committed against our neighbour; for the sins mentioned in the first three Commandments are all aimed directly at God.

Amongst our fellow men, our parents have first claim upon us. That is why sins against the FOURTH Commandment are more serious in themselves than sins against any of the remaining Commandments, because they are more opposed to nature.

Sins by DEED are, according to their nature, more serious than sins by SPEECH; and amongst the former, murder is clearly more serious than adultery, and adultery than theft. Hence the FIFTH, SIXTH and SEVENTH Commandments respectively.

Sins of SPEECH are, in their turn, more serious in themselves than are sins in the HEART. So the EIGHTH Commandment forbids us to destroy unjustly another's good name, by sins of the tongue.

Finally, of the sins committed in the HEART, those that lead to adultery are more serious than those that lead to theft. Hence the NINTH and TENTH Commandments.

All the Commandments bind under pain of MORTAL sin; but some mortal sins are more serious than others. And God forbids the most serious ones first. The admirable order visible in the Commandments is at once a witness to God's genius, and a sign of their divine origin.

3. The Commandments Are All-Embracing.

THE COMMANDMENTS

Though only ten in number, the Commandments embrace the whole of the natural moral law. All the other precepts in it are either PRE-SUPPOSED by them, or follow from them as CONCLUSIONS.

Thus, the precept ordering us to acknowledge God as our SUPERNATURAL last end and to tend to Him by FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY is pre-supposed by the first three Commandments. And the precept to love our neighbour as ourself is pre-supposed by the other seven.

Again, the First Commandment forbids not only atheism, agnosticism and idolatry, but also all kinds of other sins connected with these, such as black magic, devil-worship, sacrilege, simony and so on.

The Second Commandment includes sins such as blasphemy, the teaching of errors concerning God, the taking of unlawful oaths, the making of unlawful vows, the violation of oaths and vows, and the like.

The Third Commandment embraces a multitude of things that pertain to the worship of God, commanding what is fitting and forbidding what is opposed to His infinite dignity as our Creator and Last End.

The Fourth Commandment orders our life rightly not only towards our parents, but also towards other superiors, towards equals and even towards inferiors.

The Fifth Commandment forbids not only murder, but also an unwarranted mutilation or injury done to another's body; and things such as hatred and anger which may lead to these.

The Sixth and the Ninth Commandments include all kinds of sins against purity, as well as occasions of sin that may give rise to them.

The Seventh and the Tenth Commandments embrace not only stealing but also a vast number of sins connected with the violation of another's right to property.

The Eighth Commandment includes such sins as calumny, detraction, false judgment, and the many other ways in which we can injure another's reputation or good name.

We cannot explain all these sins just now; but they will be treated in later chapters, especially those dealing with the virtues. For the present, it is enough to realise that the Commandments are all-embracing in their scope. They are indeed the moral law in a nutshell.

4. Some Objections.

(a). "The Commandments are too hard to keep."

It may be too hard for you to pull a heavy roller up and down a cricket pitch, on your own. But not if someone helps you. So, we cannot keep all the Commandments all our life, if we rely solely on our own natural powers. But we can keep all till death if we make a good use of the GRACE that God offers us. He cannot command us to do what is impossible. His grace is ever at our disposal, like the air we breathe. It is all-powerful, just as God Himself is. So, with St. Paul each of us can say: "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me." (Philip. 4:13). The effort this demands is worth while. It is a sure proof of my love. "If you love Me, keep My Commandments," Our Lord says (John 14:15); and again: "He that doth the will of my Father Who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Mat. 7:21). Obedience to the Commandments is the price I must pay for heaven.

(b). "The Commandments are out of date."

This is as silly as to say that a square is out of date in Euclid's geometry, or that the multiplication table is out of date in arithmetic. The natural law can no more get out of date than man's nature can. Our human nature cannot change essentially without ceasing to exist. It is the same today as it was in the days of Adam. So the moral laws that govern it are just as valid now as they were when man was first created; and they will remain so to the end of the world. They cannot change as do fashions in hats and hair-cuts, for they are not man-made things. They depend on man's nature, which itself depends on God.

(c). "Too many don't's."

True, all the Commandments except two are negative ones. Why? In the first place it is usually much easier to express commands negatively than positively. "Don't pull pussy's tail!" "Don't tease your little sister!" "Don't sneeze without using a handkerchief!" If you try to express these in a positive way, you will see how difficult it is. In the second place, negative commands bind everybody, all the time, everywhere. Positive commands do not. We cannot keep worshipping God on Sunday all the week, for the simple reason that Sunday comes only once a week. Nor can we keep honouring our parents in a formal manner all day long. We have to leave them to go to school instead, or to go to work. But all of us, at every moment, everywhere, can avoid denying God's existence, dishonouring His name, stealing, lying, coveting, and so on.

Moreover, we must remember that though the Commandments are mainly negative, they do not condemn us to a life of inactivity. They forbid us to do certain things; but at the same time command us to do countless good things which are the opposite of the evil things forbidden us. A man cannot obey the command "Don't tell lies," without telling the truth. We cannot avoid sins, in a reasonable way, without practising the virtues that are opposed to them. So when God orders us to avoid sin, He at the same time commands us to practise the virtue that is the opposite of the sin.

God does not ask us to spend our life doing nothing. On the contrary, He wants us to lead a very positive life, rich in good deeds of every kind. True, He asks us to die to sin, but this is only that we may thus rise from sin which is itself a sort of death, to a new life full of vigour and energy - even a supernatural life, which is a sharing in His own. Does not His Incarnate Son assure us that He came to us from heaven in order that we "may have life, and have it more abundantly?" And what life could possibly be more abundant, more dynamic, more rich in good deeds than the life led by Our Saviour, the model of our own? Let us imitate Him. Let us practise all the virtues, natural and supernatural. Let us fill our life with good deeds done for God's glory and the salvation of souls, thus amassing daily priceless treasures of supernatural merit which we can take with us at death and enjoy forever in eternity.

(d). "I believe in only one commandment: 'Thou shalt not be found out!'"

A person who says this thinks that it is all right to break the moral laws provided you are not caught, not found out. He forgets that it is impossible to break these laws and not be found out. He might as well try to drive a car without oil or water, and not be found out. The policeman may not find him out, every time he breaks a moral law; but nature will. So will his conscience, especially at death. So will God.

Visit a hospital for incurable drunkards and drug-fiends. You will realise that nature does find out those who violate her laws. You will see that she punishes them even in this life by physical diseases that torment them day and night, or by distorted, sin-rotted characters that are more hideous and repulsive than bodily maladies can ever be. And there is always the next life with its everlasting pain. It is a terrible thing to be found out by nature in this world; but it is far worse to be found out by God in eternity.

5. The Commandments Are The Only Road To Happiness.

We are happy when we have no desires unsatisfied. How, then, can we have no desires unsatisfied in this life? There is one way, and only one. It is to keep the Commandments. In other words, to practise the moral VIRTUES. These are good HABITS which alone can save us from the EXCESSES into which people who fail to practise them must inevitably fall.

Take our desire for food and drink. One extreme here is to starve ourselves to death. The other, is to eat and drink to excess. The VIRTUE OF TEMPERANCE enables us to avoid both these extremes, by taking food and drink in a REASONABLE manner. Fail to practise it, and you must inevitably go to one extreme or the other. It is the same for every other desire that we can have - for money, property, pleasure, reputation, power and so on. In all of them, we can avoid excess only by practising the moral virtues, that make us seek the golden mean in all these things. These virtues limit our desires to REASONABLE ones; and just because they are reasonable, we can satisfy them all. In other words, we can be truly happy.

A person, on the other hand, who fails to practise the moral virtues cannot possibly be happy. He must soon have countless desires which he cannot satisfy, either because they are excessive, or because they are incompatible with one another. He will soon

desire so much money, pleasure, power and comfort that he cannot possibly satisfy his desire. Or he will want to be the most successful business man in the country, and at the same time the best golfer, only to find that he cannot be both, any more than he can have a feeling of perfect physical fitness and at the same time the pleasure of getting drunk three times a week. Just because his desires are UNREASONABLE ones, he cannot satisfy them all. In other words, he cannot be happy.

A virtuous man does not amass excessive riches, it is true; but he does not want to. He does not get drunk; but he does not want to. He does not steal; but he does not want to. He hasn't the beatific vision; but he does not want it yet. Having only REASONABLE desires, he can satisfy them all. He can, and must, be happy.

The Commandments, therefore, are the only road to happiness. Any road restricts our liberty, inasmuch as we have to go where it goes. At the same time, however, it preserves our liberty to get to our destination. If you wanted to drive a car from Wellington to Napier, would you follow the road, or would you try to drive straight across country, in the way a plane might fly? If you took the latter course, you would soon find yourself hopelessly bogged in the bush, or wrecked in a ravine. The road may be the longer way; but it is the surer and the safer in the end. The Commandments are like that. They preserve and guarantee our liberty. They take us with absolute certainty to our destination, which is union with God through grace and charity in this world and through the beatific vision in the next.

6. Our Lord's Summary Of The Commandments.

The Commandments are themselves a summary of the moral law. You would think it impossible to summarise them further. Yet Our Divine Lord does. He reduces them all to one: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart... and thy neighbour as thyself." (Luke 10:27). He reduces all to love: love of God for His infinitely lovable sake, and love of our neighbour for the sake of God. What simplicity! What clarity! What depth!

If we love God with a deep supernatural charity, how can we fail to keep the first three Commandments? And if we love our neighbour with this same supernatural charity, in God and for God and with

God, how can we fail to observe the other seven? And how can we fail to attain the end for which we have been created?

We have seen that our supernatural last end is the vision of heaven. We have seen, too, that we have to merit it by morally good, free acts done in a state of grace; and that the amount of merit we get for an act is proportionate to the intensity of the CHARITY behind it. Now, you can see why Our Divine Saviour reduces all to charity. Supernatural love of God and of our neighbour – this is the one thing that really matters in life. It is the one thing absolutely essential for happiness and success in time and in eternity.

7. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should often thank God for having revealed the Commandments; for this enables me to know with perfect ease and absolute certitude what I must do and not do, to save my immortal soul.
2. I should try to realise that, to violate them is to violate the moral laws that govern my nature as a free being; hence, it is to head straight for misery and ruin in this life and in the next.
3. I should treasure and obey the Commandments also because they are the only sure foundation for my supernatural life of grace, which cannot endure for long unless supported by the natural virtues.
4. I should try to realise that the only happy man is the man who practises all the moral virtues. He alone has only reasonable desires. He alone can satisfy all his desires, and so attain happiness.
5. I should often think of the immense load of suffering that would be lifted from men, if everyone obeyed the Commandments; and try to get as many as possible to obey and love them in daily life.

SUMMARY

1. What The Commandments Are.

- (a). The main precepts of the natural moral law.
- (b). Revealed by God, so that we may know them with the greatest ease and certitude.
- (c). They tell us what we must do and not do, to be happy in this world and in the next.
 - 1. I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.
 - 2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
 - 3. Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath Day.
 - 4. Honour thy father and thy mother
 - 5. Thou shalt not kill.
 - 6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
 - 7. Thou shalt not steal.
 - 8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.
 - 9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.
 - 10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.

2. The Order In The Commandments.

They put first things first.

- (A). Our duties to GOD, our last end – First three Commandments.
Our duties to our fellowmen – Last seven Commandments.
- (B). Gravity – most unreasonable, hence most sinful acts come first.
 - (i). Regarding God – sins against His UNITY, TRUTH, GOODNESS.
 - (ii). Regarding men – sins against parents. Sins against men in general, by DEED, VOICE, HEART.

3. They Are All-Embracing.

All other precepts of the natural and the supernatural law are either PRE-SUPPOSED by the Commandments, or follow from them as CONCLUSIONS.

4. Some Objections.

- (a). The Commandments are too hard to keep.
- (b). The Commandments are out of date.
- (c). Too many "Don't's."
- (d). I believe in only one Commandment: Thou shalt not be found out.

5. The Commandments Are The Only Road To Happiness.

- (i). By obeying the Commandments we must practise the MORAL VIRTUES.
- (ii). These are good HABITS, which save us from falling into excesses.
- (iii). They enable us to have only REASONABLE desires.
- (iv). Just because our desires are reasonable, we can fulfil them all.
- (v). Hence be happy; for man is happy when he has no desires unfulfilled.

6. Our Lord's Summary Of The Commandments.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy GOD with thy whole heart... And thy NEIGHBOUR as thyself."

The one thing that counts in this life and in eternity is SUPERNATURAL CHARITY.

7. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). God has revealed the Commandments in order that we may know them on His AUTHORITY, hence with absolute ease and (...). 2. We (can) (cannot) know these laws by our unaided reason. 3. Since there are ten of them, they are called the (...). 4. They are the (...) moral law in a nutshell. 5. They were first revealed by God to (...) on Mt. (...), about the year (...) B.C. 6. They apply to us just as much as they did to Adam, because our human (...) can never change essentially. 7. The first three Commandments order our life rightly towards (...), who is our last end. 8. The next seven order our life rightly towards our (...). 9. By obeying the first three Commandments, we acknowledge God's unity, (...) and (...). 10. A man says: "God may exist, or He may not. If He does exist, we can never be sure of His existence." Such a man is (an atheist) (an agnostic) (an idolater). 11. A man says: "I am quite sure that there is no God." Such a man is (an atheist) (an agnostic) (an idolater). 12. A man thinks that the state is God and hence gives it divine worship. He is an (...). 13. To deny God's existence is the worst of sins, because it is the most (...) thing a man can do. 14. It is therefore most opposed to man's (...) as a rational being. 15. To take God's name in vain is in itself a (more) (less) serious sin than to deny His existence. 16. To fail to pay one's debt of worship to God is in itself a (more) (less) serious sin than to doubt His existence. 17. After God, we owe most to (...). 18. Man's most fundamental right is his right to his (...). 19. Anger, if unwarranted and excessive, is forbidden by the (...) Commandment. 20. The Commandments (condemn) (do not condemn) us to a life of inactivity. 21. We can keep all the Commandments if we co-operate with God's (...). 22. A (positive) (negative) command obliges everybody, all the time, everywhere. 23. A man is happy when he has no (...) unsatisfied. 24. The only way to be happy is to have no (...) desires. 25. This is possible only if we practise the moral (...). 26. A moral virtue is simply a good (...). 27. A vice will therefore be a bad (...). 28. Our happiness in this life and in the next will be proportionate to our union with (...), through the supernatural virtue of (...). 29. Our Divine Saviour accordingly reduced the ten Commandments to one by saying that we must have a supernatural love of (...) and of our (...). 30. The effort I have to make to obey the Commandments is a test of my love of God, for Christ has said: "If you love Me, keep my (...)."

(B).

LIVING THE TRUTH

1. A non-Catholic friend asks you to recite each of the Commandments for him. Do this.
2. The Commandments put first things first. Show that this is so.
3. Pavlov thinks the Commandments are out of date. Enlighten him.
4. Our Lord says: "My yoke is sweet and my burden light." (Mat. 11:30). And St. John says: "His Commandments are not heavy." (1 John 5:3). What supernatural help does God give us to enable us to keep His Commandments?
5. A man who says that there is no evidence for the existence of God is like a stupid child who says that there is no evidence for the existence of his parents. Each forgets that he himself is abundant evidence. Do you consider this a just comparison? Give your reasons.
6. Squiffy thinks that the Commandments are too negative. What answer can you give him?
7. How did Our Lord sum up all the Commandments? Was He right?
8. Show that obedience to the Commandments is the only road to happiness.
9. Mulga Bill thinks that there is no harm in breaking all the Commandments, provided the policeman does not catch you. Is he right?
10. Describe what you consider the world would be like if everyone kept the ten Commandments perfectly.

Chapter 21

THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH

This chapter has been edited so as to be in line with the changes in the Church's disciplinary laws since Vatican II.

1. The Church Law.

The CHURCH law has to make definite what is indefinite in the SUPERNATURAL law revealed by God. Christ, you will remember, gave His Church the threefold power of TEACHING, SANCTIFYING and GOVERNING all men to the end of the world. Hence, She has from Him the right to make laws, since She cannot GOVERN without them.

History proves that She has exercised this right, from the beginning. At the COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM, held in the year 61 A.D., the Apostles laid down regulations for the early Christians; and they began their decrees with the words: "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" (Acts 15:28) which show how aware they were of their right to rule with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul, too, issued decrees concerning the Eucharist (1 Cor. 11:28) and marriage (1 Cor. 7:12). And from his day to our own, the Church has never ceased to make laws which help the faithful to sanctify and save their souls.

"Priest-ridden!" exclaims the unbeliever in disgust. But Catholics are no more priest-ridden by having to obey the laws of the Church than the members of an orchestra are conductor-ridden by having to obey his gestures. Obedience is necessary in any society. And it is always given ultimately to God. Nothing could be more in line with man's dignity. This is especially so in the case of the Church, since She is Christ's representative on earth. "He that heareth you, heareth Me," He says to Her (Luke 10:16). And He adds: "If anyone will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican." (Mat. 18:17). In other words, let him be EXCOMMUNICATED, an outcast from Christ's kingdom on earth.

As loyal subjects of the Church, let us put into practice St. Paul's exhortation to the Hebrews: "Obey those who have charge of you, and yield to their will. They are keeping unwearied watch over your souls, because they know they will have an account to give. Make it a grateful task for them; it is your own loss if they find it a laborious effort." (Heb. 13:17). Let us obey our prelates promptly, joyfully, wholeheartedly, that we may live the glorious truths brought us by Christ, and store up rich merits for ourselves in heaven.

The Church's laws are published in a book called the CODE OF CANON LAW. Fortunately, we do not have to study them all in this chapter, but only six which apply especially to us. They are called the PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH.

2. The First Precept Of The Church.¹

This obliges us to HEAR MASS and to REST FROM SERVILE WORKS on SUNDAYS and HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION.

The supernatural law bids us be HONEST with God by fulfilling as far as we can the DEBT OF WORSHIP due to Him. The First Precept tells us one of the ways in which we are to do this.

Why so much stress on the Mass? Because, though we may rightly pray to saints and be devoted to them, we are not allowed to offer SACRIFICE to them. This is an act of worship reserved to GOD alone. And, as you know, the Mass is a SACRIFICE. It is a perpetuation of the Sacrifice of the Cross; and through it the merits won for us on Calvary are applied to our souls. It is, consequently, the central act of Christian worship. That is why the Church lays such stress on it. That is why She orders us to go to Mass.

All the faithful who have reached the age of SEVEN and have the habitual use of reason are obliged to be present at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.² The latter are FIVE in number: Our

¹ [Editor's note]. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994) gives the following precepts: "You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation." 2. "You shall confess your sins at least once a year." 3. "You shall humbly receive your Creator in Holy Communion at least during Easter season." 4. "You shall observe the Church's laws regarding marriage." 5. "You shall observe the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence." (n. 2042; 1).

² [Editor's note]. The Australian Bishop's Conference has changed the Holy Days of Obligation from the earlier list as given above in the text by Fr. Bowler to *The Nativity of Our Lord* 25th Dec., *Assumption of the Blessed Virgin* 15th August and *The Ascension of Our Lord*, which is transferred to the following Sunday after what

Saviour's NATIVITY (Dec. 25) CIRCUMCISION (Jan. 1), and ASCENSION (Thursday, forty days after Easter), Our Lady's ASSUMPTION (Aug. 15), the feast of ALL SAINTS (Nov. 1). Of course, the Church exhorts us to go to Mass every day we can, and especially on important feasts such as Our Lady Help of Christians, St. Joseph, Christ the King, St. Francis Xavier, St. Patrick, and St. Teresa. But She does not OBLIGE us to do this under pain of sin.

HOW must we be present at Mass? Are you allowed to say to your brother: "You go to two Masses this Sunday, one for yourself and one for me, and I will do the same for you next Sunday"? No. You may get married by proxy, but you may not attend Mass that way. You must be present in person.

Is it enough to listen to a broadcast Mass? No. We have to go to a church with others and form a congregation. Why? Because in the Mass we pay a SOCIAL debt of worship to God. We worship Him inasmuch as we are part of a COMMUNITY. We cannot do this by listening in over the air.

What if the church is so packed that we cannot get inside? Are we then excused from hearing Mass? May we go fishing instead? No. We are still obliged to attend. How? By forming part of the congregation outside, and following the Mass by listening to the singing and the altar bell, by noticing when the people inside kneel or stand, and so on. We can fulfil our obligation quite well by doing this. But, remember, we are not allowed to stay outside if we can get into the church, unless we have a sufficient excuse such as a sudden feeling of sickness. Just to enjoy the sunshine is not a sufficient excuse.

Children sometimes think that they have not heard Mass properly if they cannot see the priest from where they are in church. There may be a pillar or a fat man in the way. Should they worry about this? No. They can fulfil their obligation just as well behind a pillar or a fat man, as in the front seat. They don't have to be able to see the priest.

HOW MUCH of the Mass are we obliged to hear? Before we answer this, let us get a couple of ideas clear. In the Tridentine Rite the Mass BEGINS with the LATIN prayers said at the foot of the altar. It ENDS with the "ITE MISSA EST" said before the last Gospel. In

would have been Ascension Thursday.

the Novus Ordo Rite it begins with the prayers before the readings and ends with the priest's blessing.

Remember, too, that some laws bind under pain of VENIAL sin ONLY. In breaking them, if we have a right conscience, we can commit only a VENIAL sin, as far as they themselves are concerned. Other laws bind under pain of MORTAL sin. They are GRAVE laws. Does this mean that it is ALWAYS a MORTAL sin to break them? No. Though they bind under pain of mortal sin, many of them admit of what we call LIGHT MATTER. The law forbidding stealing, for example, is a GRAVE law. It binds under pain of MORTAL sin. But it admits of light matter. We must steal an AMOUNT which can be considered GRAVE MATTER, before the sin is mortal. To steal a small amount is normally a VENIAL sin, because the matter is LIGHT.

Now, the law ordering us to attend Mass is a GRAVE law. It binds under pain of MORTAL sin. But it admits of LIGHT MATTER. We are obliged to be at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation under pain of MORTAL sin, just as we are obliged under pain of mortal sin not to steal. But, just as there can be a VENIAL sin on account of the small amount taken, so, too, missing a PART of the Mass can be a VENIAL sin, on account of its relative unimportance.

In other words, some PARTS of the Mass bind under pain of VENIAL sin; others, under pain of MORTAL sin. Here is the rule: from the BEGINNING to the OFFERTORY exclusively, binds under pain of VENIAL sin; from the OFFERTORY to the COMMUNION binds under pain of MORTAL sin; from the COMMUNION to the ITE MISSA EST (or priest's blessing) binds under pain of VENIAL sin.

If a person comes into Mass at the end of the Creed, he is not obliged under pain of MORTAL sin to go to another Mass that Sunday. By being present from the Offertory to the Communion, he fulfils his obligation SUBSTANTIALLY, and so avoids MORTAL sin. It is the same if a person leaves just after the Communion, and does not return. However, anyone who really appreciates and loves the Mass, and detests venial sin as it should be detested, will do his best to be present at the whole Mass from beginning to end. He will hate to cheat God of even the smallest part of the worship due to him. Moreover, he will hate to give bad example to others.

What ATTENTION must we pay to the Mass? If a person deliberately does something external which is INCOMPATIBLE with following the Mass – if he plays cards, for instance, or reads a novel – he does not fulfil his obligation even substantially. He is guilty of mortal sin.

A person gives way deliberately to many DISTRACTIONS during Mass, by thinking of football or cricket. Does he fulfil his obligation substantially? Yes. But of course he commits venial sin by being deliberately distracted without sufficient excuse. What about a man who accidentally falls asleep during Mass? He has gone to Mass with the intention of fulfilling his obligation. He is not responsible for falling asleep. So he fulfils his obligation.

HOW should we follow the Mass? Many like to read the Mass from their MISSAL. This is an excellent method. It keeps them in touch with the spirit of the liturgy; and acquaints them with the beautiful prayers of the Church. Others prefer to make acts of faith, hope, charity, contrition or to meditate on the Passion. It is for each to select the method that suits him best. We shall have more to say about this when we come to study the Mass as a Sacrifice.

Sometimes, we are EXCUSED from attending Mass. What, for example, constitutes a sufficient excuse? Here, we must try to be reasonable. Some exaggerate. They think a man should be at Mass even if he has to be carried there on a stretcher. Others excuse themselves too readily. "I might get a headache if I went, so I am excused," they say. Avoid these extremes, and cultivate a prudent judgment in this matter.

Can ILL-HEALTH be a sufficient excuse? Certainly. If going to Mass is a SERIOUS inconvenience to one's health, one is excused. Does one have to be actually confined to bed? No, one may be able to sit on the verandah, or take a stroll in the garden, and still be excused from going to Mass. In general, if one is well enough to go about one's ordinary duties, one is obliged to go to Mass. Billy, we'll say, is well enough to go to the pictures. In that case he is also well enough to have to go to Mass.

What about HELPING OTHERS? One member of a family may stay away from Mass to look after another who is sick or too young to be taken to church. But if this goes on from week to week, different members should take turns – the father one Sunday, the mother

after him, then the elder brother or sister – so that none will be away from Mass too many times on end. A person is excused, also, if he has to care for a neighbour who is sick. After all, charity is the greatest of the virtues.

DISTANCE? A strong, healthy person should be willing to walk about four kilometres to church on a fine Sunday. In a car, one should be willing to drive about fifteen kilometres. But here much depends on the health and strength of the persons concerned, the weather, the roads, and other things. If to go to Mass on a particular Sunday is a GRAVE inconvenience, one is excused. A greater reason is needed if Mass is missed often.

MATERIAL LOSSES? A farmer finds that he has to take his hay in on Sunday. Is he allowed to miss Mass to do this? Yes. Others, too, may stay from Mass to help him. A taxi-driver is asked to take someone a long distance on a Sunday. May he do this, though it means that he cannot get to Mass that day? Yes. Similarly, a tailor may work at a suit which has to be finished by Monday. But, of course, things like these must be rare exceptions. People are not allowed to make a practice of them.

Many have to work at their JOBS on Sunday – train drivers, doctors, pilots, policemen and the like. What about them? They are excused from Mass. But they should try to get some arrangement made by which they can attend Mass every second Sunday, say, or three times a month. This can usually be done if they take the trouble, and go the right way about it.

WEEK-ENDS? Persons working in city offices may derive real benefit from a week-end in the country. May they go, though it means missing Mass on a Sunday? Yes. But only a few times a year – say, three or four; and provided they really need the change. They should remember that the nearer the leaving time is to Sunday, the greater is the reason required to excuse them from Mass; and they should be on their guard against abuse in this matter.

These examples should help you to form a prudent judgment in regard to what is a sufficient excuse for missing Mass and what is not, and enable you to avoid becoming too strict, on the one hand, or too lax, on the other. Turn, now, to the second part of the Precept. RESTING FROM SERVILE WORKS.

The word "servile" comes from a Latin word meaning "pertaining to a slave." Servile works, then, were jobs done by slaves. They were performed mainly by man's bodily powers, and tended to develop these. Opposed to them were what were called the "liberal" works, done by the "liberi," the freemen. Performed mainly by man's mental powers, they tended to develop this side of his nature.

By servile works, therefore, we mean things like ploughing, harrowing or sowing a field, cutting hay or taking it in, fencing or draining a paddock, shearing sheep, milking cows, driving an engine or working a machine in a factory. Liberal works, on the other hand, include activities like reading, writing, studying, travelling, playing games, fishing or hunting, sketching or painting, and indulging in hobbies of all kinds.

The Church knows that it is easy for us to be taken up with things of this world, and to forget those of the next. So She obliges us to rest from work on one day of the week, in order that we may have time to go to Mass, and give some consideration to our supernatural life and the salvation of our soul. She realises, too, of course, that this rest from work is beneficial to our health of mind and body. But She does not want us to get from this the stupid idea that religion is something to be confined to Sunday, and forgotten during the rest of the week. She exhorts us to go to Mass every day, and to practise all the virtues every day. She wants us to sanctify everything we do by avoiding sin and by offering all our acts to God, thus putting into practice the words of St. Paul: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, do ALL to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). To restrict the practise of one's religion to Sunday is a capital error, utterly opposed to the mind of the Church.

On Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, then, She obliges us to rest from work – the work by which we normally gain a livelihood, done in the usual public way. This, of course, as far as we reasonably can. A farmer is allowed to milk his cows, wash his cans, feed the calves and pigs, and take his cream to the factory. But he is not allowed to carry on the other jobs he does on a week-day, such as ploughing, fencing or cutting hay. Similarly, a housewife is allowed to cook meals, sweep the house, wash the dishes and make the beds. But she is not allowed to do other things that can easily wait, such as washing clothes, spring-cleaning rooms, or making a large quantity of jam. After doing what is reasonably necessary, she has to rest from work. She must respect the Sunday.

The reasons that EXCUSE from this part of the precept are mainly SERIOUS MATERIAL LOSS, and CHARITY towards others. Since we have already seen these in regard to the Mass, we need not deal with them again. But what about things like GARDENING? It depends a good deal on what our neighbours think. We are not obliged to take any notice of what a few extremists think, but we should respect the views of normal persons, and avoid giving them any reasonable cause for being scandalised. If they regard gardening as a sort of recreation or hobby, there is no harm in our putting an hour or so into our garden on a Sunday, especially if the work is light, such as watering flowers or vegetables, doing a little weeding, raking paths, or cutting a small lawn.

This Precept, as we have said, binds under pain of MORTAL sin, but admits LIGHT MATTER. It is generally agreed that to do from two to three hours of fairly arduous servile work, unnecessarily, on a Sunday would be a serious sin. A notably less time spent at such work would be a venial sin.

In this matter, as with the Mass, the Church wants us to avoid extremes on the one hand, the puritanical outlook which forbids anyone to cook a meal, make a bed, play a game or even to whistle a lively tune; and, on the other, the Godless view which regards Sunday as a day to be given wholly to pleasure, with never a thought of God or the salvation of our soul. We should indeed have a deep respect for the Sunday; but not be fanatical about it. We should go to Mass, and, if possible, attend evening devotions as well. It is an excellent habit, also, to devote some time to reading good spiritual books such as the New Testament, thoughtfully and prayerfully; and to make a short meditation of such things as our duties of state, death, judgment, hell and heaven. The rest of the day may be well spent in healthy exercise, for it is better for us to be occupied in this way than to have nothing to do. An idle brain is the devil's workshop.

3. The Second Precept Of The Church.

As Christians who are to imitate our Crucified Saviour, and as heirs to heaven which is a supernatural end, we are expected to practise self-denial to a greater extent than that demanded by the natural law. The Second Precept gives one way in which we must do this. It obliges us to FAST and ABSTAIN on certain days appointed by the Church.

Distinguish clearly between (A) days of FAST ONLY; (B) days of ABSTINENCE ONLY; and (C) days of BOTH fast and abstinence.

(A). DAYS OF FAST ONLY.

FAST is concerned with the AMOUNT, not with the KIND of food we are allowed to take. HOW MUCH may we take on a fast day? We are allowed ONE FULL MEAL, about midday or in the evening. Also, TWO LIGHT MEALS. All KINDS of food, including meat, may be taken at each meal.

What the Church wants us to do is to restrict the AMOUNT taken at the two lesser meals to such an extent that the fast is really felt to be an act of self-denial. The amount will vary with different persons, according to their appetite, health, age and work. The Church does not want us to ruin our health by fasting unreasonably, nor does she want us to be too lenient on ourselves. If anyone is in doubt about his obligation to fast, he should consult the priest.

What about taking something BETWEEN MEALS? Well, EATING is forbidden between meals, except that a biscuit or a very small bit of bread may be taken when we have a drink, as at morning or afternoon tea. To eat about TWICE as much as we are allowed at the smallest meal would certainly break the fast, and hence be a MORTAL sin. But we are allowed to DRINK as much as we wish, provided that the drink is not a food. Soup, oil, thick chocolate drinks, milk - these are considered to be foods. Wine, beer, tea, coffee and cocoa are not.

WHO are obliged to fast? All baptised of sound mind who have had their TWENTY-FIRST birthday, and have not yet begun their SIXTIETH year.

Is the law a GRAVE law? Yes. It binds under pain of MORTAL sin. Does it admit LIGHT MATTER? Yes. To eat, say, more than is a reasonable amount on a fast day would be a VENIAL sin. If a person breaks the fast three times in the one day by having four huge meals, does he commit three sins or only one? Just one.

What EXCUSES from fasting? SICKNESS or WEAKNESS certainly does, if fasting is a SERIOUS inconvenience. What about one's JOB? If a person cannot do his work properly when he fasts, he is excused, whether the work be physical or mental. Thus nuns who

have to care for the sick are usually exempt from fasting. So are university students working hard for exams. Much depends on the health and strength of the persons concerned. What excuses one, does not excuse another. TRAVELLING, in itself, does NOT excuse from fasting. In general, whatever causes SERIOUS inconvenience excuses, but not just the fact that one feels hungry when fasting.

Those who are not able to fast during Lent are ADVISED, but not OBLIGED, to make some other sacrifice, such as giving up smoking, dancing, and the movies. Or they may rise promptly, go to Mass, visit the sick, and so on.

(B). DAYS OF ABSTINENCE ONLY.

ABSTINENCE is concerned with the KIND, not with the AMOUNT of food taken. It forbids us to take MEAT or MEAT EXTRACTS, such as soup made from meat. It allows milk, butter, cheese, eggs and any kind of fish. Suet, lard and dripping may be used as CONDIMENTS, i.e. in small quantities to make foods such as puddings and pancakes palatable.

WHO are bound to abstain? All who have completed their FOURTEENTH year.³ There is no year set down in old age as freeing from the law of abstinence, as there is in the case of fast. The law binds under pain of MORTAL sin, but admits LIGHT MATTER. To eat a large amount of meat on a day of abstinence is a MORTAL sin. To eat a notably smaller amount is a VENIAL sin. If a person takes meat at three separate meals on a Friday, he commits THREE sins. In this, abstinence differs from fast.

The causes that EXCUSE from abstaining are similar to those that excuse from fasting; but the reason must be more serious since the physical or mental inconvenience caused by abstaining is not so great as that caused by fasting. Hence, one who is excused from fasting is not by that fact excused from abstaining.

Forgetting that it is Good Friday, a person orders meat in a hotel. He then remembers that it is Good Friday. Does the fact that he has ordered the meat excuse him from abstaining? No. He can easily change his order. He is obliged to do so. A family sits down to a meat dinner. Someone remembers that it is a day of abstinence. Are

³ Code of Canon Law, n. 1252.

they allowed to eat the meat? Yes. It would be a grave inconvenience to get another dinner ready at this stage.

Pupils travelling to or from school during the term holidays are NOT excused from abstaining, just because they are travelling.

(C). DAYS OF BOTH FAST AND ABSTINENCE.

These, of course, combine both obligations. On such a day, a person who is obliged to fast and abstain must be careful not only about the AMOUNT but also the KIND of food he takes. If he breaks his fast, and also eats meat once, he is guilty of TWO sins, one against the law of fast, the other against that of abstinence.

On WHICH DAYS does this Second Precept bind during the year? Here are the rules for Australia:

- (i). SUNDAYS and HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION have NEITHER fast nor abstinence.
- (ii). ASH WEDNESDAY is a day of BOTH fast and abstinence.
- (iii). GOOD FRIDAY is a day of BOTH fast and abstinence.
- (iv). DAYS IN LENT, other than Sundays and Fridays, are days of FAST ONLY.
- (v). ST. PATRICK'S DAY. We are excused from the FAST, but if it falls on a Friday during Lent we are obliged to ABSTAIN.
- (vi). Traditionally FRIDAYS are considered to be days of abstinence or days of PENANCE.

4. The Third Precept Of The Church.

This obliges all who are in MORTAL sin, to GO TO CONFESSION once a year. If a person has not been guilty of mortal sin during the year, he is not obliged by this precept. Everyone has to go to Communion once a year. But a person in mortal sin is not allowed to receive Communion until he has gone to confession. Hence, his obligation to confess.

Of course, the Church exhorts us most earnestly to go to confession far more often than this - once a fortnight at least, and if possible, once a week. If one has the misfortune to fall into mortal sin, one should go to confession as soon as possible. Frequent, fervent confession can give innumerable graces even to most saintly souls.

5. The Fourth Precept Of The Church.

By this we are obliged under pain of MORTAL sin to receive HOLY COMMUNION at least once a year, about EASTER time. This means between ASH WEDNESDAY and TRINITY SUNDAY. No matter how often a person may go to Communion during the rest of the year, he must go at least once during this period.

Here again the Church exhorts us most earnestly to go to Communion every day we can. She tells us the conditions required for this, and the great graces we can get from it. But we shall have more to say about frequent Communion when we come to study the Eucharist.

6. The Fifth Precept Of The Church.

This obliges us to CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUPPORT OF PASTORS. There is a CONTRACT between the parish and its clergy. The latter undertake to teach their parishioners, say Mass, and administer the Sacraments; the former, to contribute what is necessary for divine worship, for the honourable maintenance of the clergy, and for the running of the parish. Sacred Scripture says that "They who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). The Fifth Precept ensures the fulfilment of this text.

7. The Sixth Precept Of The Church.

According to this, Catholics are forbidden to MARRY WITHIN CERTAIN DEGREES OF KINDRED, or TO SOLEMNISE MARRIAGE AT FORBIDDEN TIMES. This will be treated fully when we study marriage. For the present it is enough to know that a Catholic is not allowed to marry a second cousin, or any relative closer than that, or anyone to whom he or she is spiritually related through baptism; and that the forbidden times are from the first Sunday in ADVENT to Christmas Day, and from ASH WEDNESDAY to EASTER SUNDAY. Catholics may get married during these times, indeed; but, if the marriage is to be carried out with all the rites and ceremonies of the Church, permission must be obtained.

These, then, are the Precepts of the Church. In many of them, as we have said, the Church lays down the bare minimum. Any Catholic worthy of the name will of course fulfil them, but he will also do far more. He will not be content with merely avoiding mortal sin. He

will try to live Christ's truths in all their glorious fullness. He will realise that time is short, whereas eternity is long. Abhorring mediocrity, and having often before his mind Christ's challenge to his capacity for heroism: "Be ye therefore perfect, as also your Heavenly Father is perfect" (Mat. 5:48), he will aim at a perfection which is nothing less than a sharing in the infinite perfection of God.

SUMMARY

1. The Church Law.

- (a). Makes precise what is indefinite in the supernatural law.
- (b). Is written in the CODE OF CANON LAW.

2. First Precept: Go to Mass, And Rest From Servile Works.

(A). THE MASS.

- (a). Why? The SACRIFICE of the MASS is the central act of Christian worship.
- (b). Who? All who have reached the age of SEVEN.
- (c). When? Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation: Christmas Day, Assumption [Circumcision, Ascension, All Saints.]
- (d). How? In person, and as part of the congregation.
- (e). Gravity. Binds under pain of MORTAL sin; but admits LIGHT MATTER.

Beginning to Offertory - venial sin.

Offertory to Communion - mortal sin.

Communion to Ite missa est [priest's blessing] - venial sin.

- (f). Attention. Do nothing external incompatible with following the Mass. Distractions. Sleep.
- (g). Excuses. Ill-health. Charity to others. Distance. Material losses. One's job.
- (h). Week-ends. Three or four times a year, if health requires.

(B). SERVILE WORKS

- (a). What? Works formerly done by slaves. Develop mainly the physical side of man's nature. Cf. Liberal works.

- (b). Why? To have time to go to Mass, and think about eternity.
- (c). Gravity. Binds under pain of MORTAL sin; but admits LIGHT MATTER. 2-3 hours of hard work: grave matter.
- (d). Excuses. Material losses. Charity towards others.
- (e). Extremes. Puritanical Sunday. Godless Sunday.

3. Second Precept: To Fast And Abstain.

(A). DAYS OF FAST ONLY - the AMOUNT of food allowed.

- (a). What? ONE FULL MEAL about midday or in the evening.

Two LESSER.

Any KIND of food at all three meals, even meat.

BETWEEN MEALS: EATING is forbidden, but DRINKING is not, provided liquid is not a food.

- (b). Who? All who have had 21st birthday, and have not begun their 60th year.
- (c). Gravity. Binds under pain of MORTAL sin, but admits LIGHT MATTER.
- (d). No. of sins. To break one's fast three times on the one day is only ONE sin.
- (e). Excuses. Sickness or weakness. One job. Serious inconvenience. N.B. Travelling, in itself, does not excuse.

(B). DAYS OF ABSTINENCE ONLY - the KIND of food allowed.

- (a). What? No MEAT or things made from meat. Milk, eggs, butter, cheese, fish are allowed.

Suet, lard, dripping are allowed as condiments.

- (b). Who? All who have completed their 14th year.
- (c). Gravity. Under pain of MORTAL sin; but admits LIGHT MATTER. (An unreasonable amount): grave matter.
- (d). Excuses. Sickness or weakness. One's job. Serious inconvenience. N.B. Travelling, in itself, does not excuse.

(C). DAYS OF BOTH FAST AND ABSTINENCE.

- (a). Combine both obligations.
- (b). Two sins, if both laws are violated.

(D). REGULATIONS in Australia: -

- (a). Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation - neither fast nor abstinence.
- (b). Fridays - abstinence only. [Optional - if not, another penance is required].
- (c). Ash Wednesday - both fast and abstinence.
- (d). Good Friday - both fast and abstinence.
- (e). Days in Lent, other than Sundays and Fridays - fast only.
- (f). St. Patrick's Day - no fast; but bound to abstain if falls on a Friday during Lent.

4. Third Precept: To Go To Confession.

- (a). Who? All in mortal sin.
- (b). When? Once a year.
- (c). Why? To be able to receive Holy Communion.

5. Fourth Precept: To Go To Communion.

- (a). Who? All who have come to the use of reason in moral matters.
- (b). When? From Ash Wednesday to Trinity Sunday.

6. Fifth Precept: To Contribute To The Support Of Pastors.

- (a). Why? A contract between parish and clergy. "They who preach the Gospel, should live by the Gospel."
- (b). How? Each according to his means; and according to the custom in the parish.

7. Sixth Precept: Not To Marry Within Certain Degrees Of Kindred or to Solemnise Marriage At Forbidden Times.

- (a). Degrees. Second cousin or nearer. One related through baptism.
- (b). Times. Advent and Lent.

EXERCISES

(A). 1. Christ said to the Apostles: "If anyone will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the (...) and the (...). 2. The laws of the Church are written in a book called the (...). 3. We (are) (are not) allowed to offer sacrifice to a saint. 4. The (...) is a perpetuation of the Sacrifice of Calvary. 5. The two Holy Days of Obligation in Australia are (...) and (...). 6. Which feast occurs on 15th August? (...). 7. One who listens to a broadcast Mass (fulfils) (does not fulfil) his obligation of hearing Mass. 8. The Mass begins with (...) and ends with (...). 9. From the beginning to the Offertory binds under pain of (mortal) (venial) sin. 10. From the Offertory to the Communion binds under pain of (mortal) (venial) sin. 11. From the Communion to the *Ite missa est* binds under pain of (mortal) (venial) sin. 12. A man who accidentally falls asleep during Mass on Sunday (is) (is not) obliged to hear another Mass that day. 13. Billy, who has had measles, is now well enough to be able to go to the pictures. Is he obliged to go to Mass on Sunday? (yes) (no). 14. Harry, a strong, healthy young man, (is) (is not) obliged to walk four kilometres to attend Mass on a Sunday. 15. St. Paul says: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, do (...) to the glory of God." 16. The law to attend Mass binds under pain of (...) sin, but admits (...) matter. 17. The law of fast is concerned with the (amount) (kind) of food allowed. 18. On a fast day we are allowed one (...) meal, and (...) lesser meals. 19. Harry drinks lots of beer between meals on a fast day. Does he break his fast by doing this? (yes) (no). 20. James, who is obliged to fast, eats four huge meals on a fast day. How many sins does he commit? (...). 21. Those are obliged to fast who have had their (...) birthday, and who have not yet begun their (...) year. 22. If St. Patrick's Day falls on a Friday during Lent we are obliged (to fast, but not to abstain) (to fast and to abstain) (to abstain, but not to fast). 23. Abstinence concerns the (amount) (kind) of food allowed. 24. To eat a large amount of (...) on a Good Friday would be a mortal sin. 25. One who is excused from fasting is by that fact also excused from abstaining. This (is) (is not) correct. 26. John is bound to fast and to abstain. On a Friday which happens to be a fast day, he eats meat at two different meals and breaks his fast as well. How many sins does he commit? (...). 27. If the Assumption occurs on a Friday, we (are) (are not) obliged to observe the law of abstinence that day. 28. The two days during Lent which prescribe fast and abstinence are (...) and (...). 29. The only day other than Good Friday on which we have to abstain is (...). 30. The precept bidding us go to confession once a year obliges all who are in (...) sin. 31. We are obliged to go to Communion during

the period which stretches from (...) to (...). 32. We should support our pastors because there is a (...) between them and the parish. 33. St. Paul says that "Those who preach the Gospel, should (...) by the Gospel." 34. The times during which we are forbidden to solemnise marriage are (...) and (...). 35. Catholics are not allowed to marry a (...) cousin or any relative closer than that; or anyone to whom they are spiritually related by (...).

(B).

1. A non-Catholic thinks that we are priest-ridden because we have to obey the laws of the Church. What would you say to him?
2. Your non-Catholic neighbour wants to know why you have to go to Mass every Sunday. Tell him.
3. What are the days of obligation in Australia? Name five other important feast days on which we should make a special effort to attend Mass.
4. Your neighbour tells you that he thinks it is scandalous for you to whistle on Sundays. What reply would you make?
5. Peter wants to know why Catholics have to fast during Lent and why they are not allowed meat on Good Friday. Enlighten him.
6. Your mother asks you to explain the difference between a day of fast and a day of abstinence. Explain it.
7. Make a list of the sources of expense in your parish.
8. What would your house look like if it was swept only once a year? Can you see from this why you should go to confession far more frequently than once a year?

Chapter 22

ORIGINAL SIN

I. Adam's Gifts.

(a). Things due to Man.

When God made the first man, He had to give him what is DUE to human nature, just as you have to give a triangle three sides.

What, then, is DUE to man's nature? First of all, a human BODY and a human SOUL, united in such a way as to form one man. Why? Because these make up man's essence. He cannot BE man without them. Then, human FACULTIES and powers. Why? Because these flow necessarily from man's essence. He cannot ACT as man without them. Finally, God had to CONSERVE the first man in existence, and CO-OPERATE in all that was real and positive in his activities. Otherwise, he would have been instantly annihilated.

But, just as you can give presents to your friends at Christmas - things not DUE to them in any way, so, too, God could give Adam other things to which he had no RIGHT at all. He could give him things in no way DUE to human nature as such. He could give him what we call GIFTS.

(b). Kinds of Gifts.

These GIFTS could be of two kinds: Preternatural and Supernatural.

A PRETERNATURAL gift is one not due to MAN'S nature. If, just before an exam, God gave you ready-made all the ideas you needed to get full marks, this INFUSED knowledge would be a preternatural gift. Why? Because it would be in no way DUE to YOUR nature as man. The natural way for you to get ideas is to fashion them yourself from raw material offered by your sense faculties. You have no right to get them straight from God. An angel, on the other hand, does get his ideas that way. For him, infused knowledge is not a preternatural gift. It is quite natural for him to have it.

Again, if God freed you from bodily pain, this would be a preternatural gift. You have an animal body. So it is natural for you to experience pain. Very useful, too. When you put your hand by accident on a hot stove, you do not leave it there till it is roasted like a chop. You pull it away instantly, on account of the pain. Pain is a valuable danger signal to man, and quite natural to him. Freedom from it is consequently a preternatural gift for man. But not for an angel. He cannot get a toothache or a headache. He has no teeth, no head. He cannot twist his ankle or break his neck. He has no ankle to twist, no neck to break. As a spiritual being, he is exempt by nature from physical suffering. It is natural for him to be that way.

So, what is preternatural for man, may not be preternatural for an angel. It may be quite natural instead. That is the first thing you have to note about preternatural gifts. The second is this: they do not raise a creature to a higher ORDER. Ideas infused into your intellect by God before a mathematics exam would be of the same species as ideas formed by yourself. Similarly, freedom from physical suffering would perfect you as man. These preternatural gifts would not give you anything which was, in itself, above nature. They would not SUPERNATURALISE you in any way. Like all other preternatural gifts they would merely perfect you in your own ORDER.

A SUPERNATURAL gift, on the other hand, is one not DUE to ANY created or creatable nature, even that of the highest angel God could create. It does raise the creature ABOVE the natural order. It does SUPERNATURALISE the man or angel to whom it is given. It gives him a real if limited share in the nature of GOD. Hence it is far superior to a preternatural gift.

So much for the kinds of gifts God could have given to Adam. Now comes the question of fact. Did God give Adam gifts? Or did He give him merely what is due to human nature as such?

(c). Gifts actually given to Adam.

We have seen that God made man for a SUPERNATURAL last end. So we are not surprised when sacred Scripture tells us that God gave Adam GIFTS from the beginning. What were they?

There was first of all the SUPERNATURAL gift of SANCTIFYING GRACE. This is certainly a supernatural, not just a preternatural

gift; for, as Scripture says, it gives man a real if limited sharing in God's nature, makes him His adopted son, and an heir with Christ to heaven. It divinises man in the depths of his soul, by making him like God precisely inasmuch as God is God. It thus raises him to the SUPERNATURAL ORDER, and enables him to do things proportionate to heaven.

How do we know that Adam had sanctifying grace? The New Testament tells us that Christ, the Redeemer who was promised after the fall, came to restore the grace lost by Adam's sin. If Adam lost grace, he must have had it to lose. No one can lose what he has not got. Moreover, the Church teaches us infallibly that Adam had sanctifying grace. So we have God's authority for the fact that he did. Nothing could be more certain.

Did he have any other SUPERNATURAL gifts? Yes. He must also have had the SUPERNATURAL VIRTUES and the GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST. Why? Because these always accompany sanctifying grace, just as freedom always goes with a spiritual will. The supernatural virtues supernaturalised Adam's spiritual faculties enabling them to perform supernatural acts of faith, hope, charity and the like, able to merit heaven. The Gifts of the Holy Ghost made him exquisitely docile to the actual graces offered him by God. All these supernatural gifts co-operated to make Adam's intellect and will perfectly subject to God, his supernatural last end.

What about PRETERNATURAL gifts? Did he have any of these? Yes. The book of GENESIS, the first book of the Old Testament, deals with the creation of man; and it tells us that God gave Adam four of these gifts.

The most important of these was FREEDOM FROM CONCUPISCENCE.

To understand this, you have to remember that we have two ANIMAL APPETITES. One of them urges us to fight against enemies and overcome obstacles made known to us by our sense knowledge. It is called the IRASCIBLE appetite. Moved by it, even a hen will show courage in fighting against a hawk to protect her chickens. The other urges us to procure and enjoy good things known by our senses. It is called the CONCUPISCIBLE appetite. You can see it working in a cat that is trying to catch a mouse or get at a bit of fish.

Our PASSIONS are merely the functioning of these two appetites. Though our passions and sensible appetites belong to the animal side of our nature, they are good in themselves. But they must be FIXED ON WORTHY OBJECTS, and CONTROLLED in accordance with the demands of right reason.

This is no easy task for us. Why? Because our animal appetites and passions seek to satisfy themselves, even though our reason protests and tells us that what they want is sinful. When you are cold and hungry, your craving for a hot meat pie does not disappear or even grow less, just because you realise that it is Good Friday. If someone accidentally kicks you hard on the shin at football, your anger flares up, and urges you to kick him harder still, even though your reason says: "No, don't. He did not mean it. It was just an accident. Offer it up instead." One part of you urges you to kick. The other part of you urges you not to kick. Your powers are divided. There is a sort of civil war inside yourself. Your animal nature is at war with your rational nature. And you have to exercise a lot of self-control to prevent your lower nature from leading you into doing something unreasonable, something sinful.

At times, a man's passions may flare up so suddenly and so intensely that his reason and will do not get a chance to act at all. In a fit of sudden, violent anger a man may even kill another, without realising for a moment the sinfulness of his act. Here his passion anticipates his reason and his will. It rushes him into doing something, before they have time to interfere or control it in any way. Of course, this is exceptional. Usually our passions make a nuisance of themselves by urging us to do things which we have time to realise as sinful. Here, they do not wholly anticipate our reason; but they war against it.

This lack of harmony in us, this rebellion of our animal appetites and passions against reason is called CONCUPISCENCE. In itself it is not a sin. But it can be a source of great temptation to us. It can urge us to sin.

Well, Adam was at first free from all this. Through a preternatural gift given him by God, his passions and animal appetites were perfectly subject to his reason and to his will, just as by grace these in their turn were perfectly subject to God. Thus, all his powers, animal and rational, natural and supernatural, worked together in harmony for the gaining of his last end, heaven. Had the law of abstinence, for instance, bound him in the Garden, he would have

felt no bodily inclination whatever to eat meat on that day, since his passions and animal appetites could not ANTICIPATE his reason, or GO AGAINST it in the slightest way. He had FREEDOM FROM CONCUISCENCE. This is also called the GIFT OF INTEGRITY.

How do we know that Adam had this gift? Genesis tells us that he did. It puts it very delicately, yet very clearly. It says that, before his sin, Adam was not ashamed to be naked; whereas, after his sin, he was ashamed of his nakedness; and that this shame was due to his sin (Gen. 2:25; 3:7; 3:11).

By making his body perfectly subject to his soul, which is itself immortal inasmuch as it is spiritual, the gift of integrity carried with it another preternatural gift: FREEDOM FROM DEATH. This is also called the gift of IMMORTALITY.

Man is a composite being. He is made up of two elements, a body and a soul. Just as the body, at the start, must have certain conditions before the soul can make it a human body, so, too, it must retain certain conditions if the soul is to continue to keep it human. But a time must come when the body, through wounds or disease, especially that which we call old age, must reach a state in which the soul can no longer keep it alive. The soul is then said to be "separated" from the body, which returns to the dust whence it was taken in the beginning. This breaking up of the human composite, this dissolution of man, is called death. It is therefore natural for man to die – just as natural as it is for a cat.

Adam, however, thanks to the gift of IMMORTALITY, would have been exempt from death, had he been faithful to God. Had he not sinned, he would have been taken alive into heaven, when his period of trial on earth was ended. He would never have had to pass through the ugly gateway of death.

Again, Genesis makes this quite clear. It tells how God forbade Adam to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It was so called, because if Adam disobeyed God by eating its fruit, he would know the difference between moral good and moral evil, not just in theory, as he already knew it, but also in PRACTICE. He would EXPERIENCE the effects of sin upon his body and his soul. He would know moral evil EXPERIMENTALLY. God gave him this command to test his loyalty. He warned him of the punishment that would come to him if he proved himself disloyal. He told him clearly that it would be DEATH. And when Adam did at length break God's

command, God reminded him of the penalty He had attached to it. He told him that death would eventually come to him. "DUST THOU ART," He said, referring to Adam's body, "AND UNTO DUST THOU SHALT RETURN" (Gen. 3:19). Instead of being taken up alive with his soul to heaven, his body would be separated from his soul in the dissolution we call death. It would go back to the earth from which it was first made by God. From this it is clear that death was a result of Adam's sin; and that, consequently, had he not been unfaithful to God, he would not have had to die. In other words, he would have enjoyed freedom from death. He would have enjoyed the gift of IMMORTALITY.

The third preternatural gift God gave to Adam was that of FREEDOM FROM SUFFERING called IMPASSIBILITY. This complemented the gift of immortality and was demanded by it. After all, accidents and diseases, which cause suffering, tend to death. Adam was free from the illnesses and mishaps that normally afflict us today. In us they are due mainly to physical weaknesses, lack of advertence, and a failure to realise danger. Adam, however, was perfectly healthy. Moreover, the gifts of integrity and infused knowledge protected him against the unforeseen. In addition to this, it is quite likely that God exercised in his regard a special providence in keeping with the gifts He had given him. Anyway, we are sure that, before his sin, he was free from suffering, because Genesis attributes all human suffering to sin (Gen. 3:15).

Finally, he had the preternatural gift of INFUSED KNOWLEDGE. Why was this given to him? Because he was the first man, not just in time, but also in perfection. He was the first human FATHER. And a father's main duty is to EDUCATE his children, by his example and by his teaching. To enable Adam to carry out this task with perfection, God gave him all the knowledge he needed to be able to live properly himself, and to teach his children how to live in a manner in keeping with their high calling as rational beings and adopted children of God. We know that Adam had this gift, because Genesis tells us that he knew the names of all the animals, without having to learn them by experience (Gen. 2:9-20). Not gained in the normal human way, this knowledge must have been given him ready-made by God. It must have been infused. It must have been a gift.

(d). How these Gifts were given.

We have seen the gifts, supernatural and preternatural, which God gave to Adam. We must now ask: How did He give them? Did He give them merely as PERSONAL gifts, meant for Adam alone? Or did He give them in and through Adam to the human race, to HUMAN NATURE, so that they would be handed on to all of us with the nature we receive from him? Well, it is clear from Scripture that God intended all of them to come to us, except the gift of INFUSED KNOWLEDGE. That alone was a personal gift to Adam, as teacher of the race.

But God attached a CONDITION here. He intended them to come to us PROVIDED that Adam was faithful to Him. He could do this precisely because they were GIFTS, not DUE to our nature as such. They were given to Adam as HEAD of the human race. If, then, he sinned as HEAD of the race, he would lose them not merely for himself, but also for the race, for us.

Think of these gifts, and you will realise why Scripture says that "God made man right" (Eccles. 7:30). If, as Genesis says, God saw that all the creatures He had made were "good," He saw that this was especially true of man. For, by the supernatural gifts given him, man was given a share in the infinite goodness of God. And the preternatural gifts made it easy for him to preserve this supernatural goodness, since they made his animal appetites and passions perfectly subject to his reason and his will, just as grace made his reason and will perfectly subject to God.

God thus endowed man not merely with a natural, but with a supernatural RECTITUDE. Right ORDER ruled in all his powers. Even external nature, including the animals, were subject to him. And with this right order went perfect harmony, peace and happiness. This happy state in which Adam first found himself is called the state of ORIGINAL JUSTICE or SANCTITY. It is also called the state of INNOCENCE. And God intended it for us all.

2. Adam's Fall.

The devil knew that God had forbidden Adam to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He also knew that it was no use tempting Adam through his body, since this was wholly subject to his reason and will, through the gift of integrity. Any temptation he might put to Adam had to begin from the spiritual side of Adam's nature. It had to begin from his soul. In other words, it had to be a temptation to sin by PRIDE.

PRIDE is an inordinate seeking of one's own excellence. It is a spiritual vice. By it the angels themselves fell. By it, Adam too could fall in spite of the gifts God had given him. In fact, without humility, the very magnitude of these gifts could be a danger to him.

With masterly cunning, then, the devil tempted him to disobey God, through PRIDE. "YOU SHALL BE AS GODS," he said, "KNOWING GOOD AND EVIL" (Gen. 3:5).

Notice how he went about it. He did not ask Adam to eat the fruit because it tasted delicious, but in order that he and his wife might "BE AS GODS, KNOWING GOOD AND EVIL." He asked Adam to reject God as the SUPREME RULE OF MORAL GOOD AND EVIL, and to regard HIMSELF as this rule, instead. He tempted Adam to be HIS OWN RULE OF MORALITY, and in this sense to be EQUAL WITH GOD. What is this but PRIDE? It is the rebellion of the creature against the Creator in an effort to be like GOD Himself. It is the devil's "I WILL NOT SERVE." It is pride in its very worst form.

And Adam fell.

Was his sin a mortal sin? Yes. And a most grievous one both in itself and in its circumstances. In itself, it was most grievous on account of its nature. It was no ordinary sin of disobedience such as a child might commit by taking fruit forbidden him. Nor was it a sin of gluttony. The gift of integrity made this impossible. It was a heinous sin of pride, as we have shown, manifesting itself in disobedience, and equivalent to a total rejection of God's right to govern man. It was most grievous also in its circumstances; for no passions could arise to mar his judgment and trouble his will. At the moment of sinning, he had in his intelligence perfect human realisation of what he was doing, and perfect human freedom in his will. His sin was wholly inexcusable. It was, as St. Augustine says, "the ineffable sin."

Its effects in him? They were as terrible as they were instantaneous. He incurred God's wrath. He was driven from paradise. He came under the dominion of the devil. He lost the preternatural gifts that God had given through him to human nature. Above all, he lost the supernatural gift of sanctifying grace, and with it the supernatural virtues that were incompatible with his sin, and all the gifts of the Holy Ghost. And in losing sanctifying grace, he lost with it his elevation to the supernatural order, and his right to heaven.

Worse still, he lost all these not only for himself, but for us. Had he been faithful, they would have been transmitted to us by ordinary GENERATION, as gifts attached by God to the human nature we receive from him.

3. Original Sin In Us.

(a). What it is.

In any deliberate sin, we must distinguish between the ACT of the will by which it is committed, and the STATE of sin which remains after the act is finished. This state is one of debt as regards guilt and temporal punishment. The guilt remains till the sin has been forgiven – by a good confession, for example. The temporal punishment remains till it has been wiped out by satisfaction or an indulgence. The ACT by which sin is committed is called ACTUAL sin. The STATE that endures after it is called HABITUAL sin. Do not confuse this with a bad habit of sin. This is a natural vice which can remain even after the guilt of sin has been forgiven, as it usually does in a drunkard, for instance, who has just made a fruitful confession.

Now, in Adam, original sin was essentially an ACT. It was the act by which his will deliberately broke God's command – the act by which he COMMITTED the sin of pride. Of course this gave rise to a state of sin in him. But, for him, original sin consisted essentially, not in this state, but in the act which brought it about. It was something he DID. In him it was essentially an ACT, not a STATE.

In us, on the contrary, original sin is essentially a STATE. It is an HABITUAL sin, not an ACTUAL one. We do not COMMIT it in any way. We INHERIT it instead. In this it is quite distinct from what is called a PERSONAL sin – a sin which we ourselves commit. And it is rightly called a sin of NATURE because, through GENERATION, we inherit it with the human nature handed on to us from Adam.

But how can it rightly be called a sin in us, seeing that it is not committed by us? Well, a sin is a MORAL EVIL, which is in some way VOLUNTARY. And original sin in us is certainly a moral evil. Why? Because it consists primarily in the ABSENCE of the SANCTIFYING GRACE, that SHOULD adorn our soul at birth.

Notice the word “should.” Had man not been raised to the supernatural order, men would be born, of course, without

sanctifying grace. But in this case the absence of grace would not have been a moral evil. It would not be the absence of a good which OUGHT to be present. It would be what we call a mere lack, not a PRIVATION. Deafness in a tree, for example, is a mere lack – the absence of something which ought NOT to be there. But deafness in a man is a privation, not just a lack. A man OUGHT to be able to hear. Grace is not DUE to our nature as such, it is true; but since God gave man a supernatural last end and raised him to the supernatural order from the beginning by giving Adam grace as a gift which he should have handed on to us, we OUGHT to be born in a state of grace today. But we are not. So the absence of grace is a privation in our case. In other words, it is an EVIL; for evil is the absence of a good which OUGHT to be present. And since it is the absence of a MORAL perfection, it is a MORAL EVIL. Hence, a SIN.

But how is it VOLUNTARY? It is voluntary, not by an act of our will, but by an act of Adam's will. Just as an act done by your hand can be said to be voluntary, not in itself, but by reason of the impulse it receives from your will, which is something quite different from it, so, too, original sin in us can be said to be voluntary by an act of Adam's will, inasmuch as we receive from him, through generation, a human nature deprived of grace.

Finally, original sin in us is a MORTAL, not just a venial sin; for it is a deprivation of sanctifying grace which can alone turn us to God as our supernatural last end. Without it, we must be turned away from this end. In other words, we must be in a state of mortal sin.

(b). How it Affects Us.

(i). We are born without any supernatural gifts.

From the beginning, our soul is unadorned with sanctifying grace, the supernatural virtues, and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. We are, as St. Paul puts it, “sons of wrath by birth” (Ephes. 2:3). We are born in mortal sin, turned away from God our supernatural last end. This loss of grace is an appalling loss. To appreciate it fully, we should first have to appreciate the beatific vision, to which grace alone can lead us in eternity.

(ii). We are born without any preternatural gifts.

Gone, too, are the great gifts of integrity, immortality and freedom from suffering. We are a prey to concupiscence, death, and the countless pains and sorrows that we can experience in our bodies and in our souls. At best, our life is a sort of purgatory in which intense suffering mingles with intense happiness, as it did in Our Saviour on the Cross. At worst, it can be a foretaste of the lonely, hopeless sufferings of hell.

(iii). We lose heaven, if we die without having original sin forgiven.

In depriving us of sanctifying grace, original sin deprives us also of heaven. For heaven is a supernatural last end; and grace alone can raise us to the supernatural order, and give us due proportion to the beatific vision. That is why a child who dies before he comes to the use of reason in moral matters, and who has not had original sin forgiven, goes to Limbo. There, he is perfectly happy forever with the happiness proper to man; but not with the happiness proper to God as a soul is in heaven.

(iv). We are brought under the power of Satan.

There is a hierarchy in the creatures God has made: non-living things, plants, animals, men and angels. And the higher has a certain power or dominion over the lower. Thus, plants feed on inanimate matter; animals, on plants; men, on animals. In the natural order, then, angels have a certain power over all other creatures, including man. They are, as Scripture says, "the rulers of this world." However, a man in a state of grace is, as such, superior to an angel in its natural state - to one of the bad angels, for instance. They have no longer any natural dominion over him. By depriving us of grace, therefore, and by reducing us again to our natural state, original sin brings us once more under the power of Satan. This is what the Church means when She says that by original sin we are brought into captivity under the power of the devil." She does not mean that we are "possessed" by him.

(v). We are wounded in our Nature.

Man is by nature a RATIONAL being. Hence it is natural for him to impress the mark of REASON in everything he does. But to act reasonably is to act virtuously. Man, then, has a natural INCLINATION TO VIRTUE. Does original sin destroy this in us? No. It would have to destroy our very nature to do this. Does it lessen it in any way in itself? Again, no. This inclination flows from the depths of our nature as rational beings. It cannot be lessened in itself by original sin. But it can be given, as it were, a wrong direction. It can be directed inordinately on to things of this life. It can be, as it were, bent down on material and temporal goods. And it is. This bias is given it by original sin. In this sense our nature is wounded by this sin. What powers in us are affected? Here they are:

(i). Our INTELLIGENCE appreciates truths that pertain to this life much more keenly than truths that pertain to the next. Tell a man what won the big race or speak to him of the test match, and he is all ears. He listens intently. But tell him about God, and he is often quite uninterested. This wound affects us especially in the practical judgments which determine our daily conduct. It makes it difficult for us to live for heaven and eternity.

(ii). Our WILL remains free, of course, but its inclination to good is more easily aroused by material and temporal things than by those of eternity. Hence it finds it difficult to practise virtue and overcome vice.

(iii). Our IRASCIBLE APPETITE is less strong to conquer obstacles and to obey reason when it commands unpleasant things. Man is a coward, especially when it comes to doing what is required to sanctify and save his soul.

(iv). Our CONCUPISCIBLE APPETITE is borne immoderately on to material things that appeal to it, even against the protests of reason. Pleasure has a greater appeal to us than genuine happiness; for the former is experienced in our body, the latter, in our soul.

Such are the ugly wounds inflicted by original sin. In spite of them, we can still know many important truths such as the existence of God, and we can still do many morally good things, by our merely natural powers. But they obviously make it harder for us to practise virtue; and they put obstacles in the way of grace.

(c). The Remedy for Original Sin.

As regards its FORGIVENESS, the remedy is of course BAPTISM. Original sin is forgiven by baptism by WATER, which is the Sacrament; by baptism of DESIRE, which is the same as an act of perfect contrition or an act of supernatural charity; and by baptism of BLOOD, which is the same as martyrdom.

The remedy for the WOUNDS it has inflicted in us is ACTUAL GRACE. Weighed down almost beyond endurance with the struggle against concupiscence which would destroy grace and so bring about the supernatural death of our soul, St. Paul cries out: "Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And he gives the only answer known to man: "The GRACE OF GOD, by Jesus Christ Our Lord" (Roms. 7:24-25).

4. Objections.

(a). "It is silly to think that we should be deprived of so great gifts and that such misery should be brought on the world by a trivial sin like that of taking a bit of fruit."

Adam's sin was not a trivial sin. It was a very serious mortal sin of pride in which he rejected God as the Supreme Rule of Morality, and wished to set himself up as this instead. It was the devil's "I will not serve."

(b). "It is unjust for God to deprive us of good things on account of the sin of another."

Justice does not come into it at all. We were deprived of gifts, not of anything DUE to our human nature as such. God could attach a condition to the giving of these gifts, just because we had no right to them in any way.

(c). "If Adam had the gifts you say he had, he could not have sinned."

God's will cannot sin; for He is Himself the Supreme Rule of Morality. Christ's human will could not sin; because everything it did was done by the Second Person of the Trinity. The will of a soul in heaven cannot sin, because the soul there knows God as He really is. But Adam did not have the beatific vision on earth. Like us, he was on trial. In spite of his gifts, he was consequently able to sin.

(d). "Parents in a state of grace should hand on grace to their children. The latter should not be born in sin."

The grace that parents have is a personal gift to them. It is not a gift to human nature, as was the grace given to Adam as natural and supernatural head of the race. They can hand on only what they themselves received: a nature deprived of grace.

5. God's Goodness And Mercy.

God permits sin, only because He is wise enough and powerful enough to get good out of evil. Think of the good things He has given us in spite of Adam's sin. Our gains more than outweigh our losses.

- (i). We lost sanctifying grace. But we have gained the SACRAMENTS and the MASS. There is no limit to the graces these can give us.
- (ii). We lost integrity. But, by using well the means of grace God has given us, we can gradually gain almost complete control over our passions, through the GOOD HABITS, natural and supernatural, we can cultivate.
- (iii). We lost freedom from suffering. But we have Christ's example and teaching to show us how to suffer in union with Him, for the good of souls.
- (iv). We lost immortality. But we can offer our death to God, in union with Christ, and be thus aggregated to Him as our Redeemer.
- (v). We lost the knowledge that Adam would have taught his children. But we have instead the revelation brought us by Christ, preserved and interpreted for us infallibly by His everlasting, indefectible Church.
- (vi). We lost the companionship of God enjoyed by Adam in the Garden. But we have Our Saviour as our Companion in the Eucharist; and we can experience the sweet companionship of the Trinity in our souls, if we increase the functioning of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

(vii). We lost a spiritual father in Adam. We have Our Divine Lord instead, as the New Adam, Head of the Mystical Body, which is His Church.

(viii). We lost Eve as our spiritual mother. But we have Our Blessed Lady, who is the Mother of God as well as our Mother, and who is all-powerful in her intercession with her Son.

Think of these gains, and you will realise why St. Paul can cry so triumphantly: "Where SIN abounded, GRACE did MORE abound" (Roms. 5:20). The Church expresses the same idea in the Mass when She says: "Deus qui humanae substantiae dignitatem mirabiliter condidisti. MIRABILIS reformasti..." "O God, Who in creating human nature, didst marvellously ennoble it, and has STILL MORE MARVELLOUSLY renewed it..." And, during Easter week, She does not hesitate to sing: "O FELIX CULPA, quae talem ac tantum meruit habere Redemptorem." "O happy fault (of Adam) which brought to us such and so great a Redeemer."

Deliberate mortal sin is an attempt on man's part to be wholly independent of God. But, for a creature to be wholly independent of God is to be annihilated. Adam's sin, then, should have resulted in his annihilation and in that of the human race. Instead, what a drama of love was enacted in heaven. The Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, determined to become Man, to redeem us from sin, to restore to us the possibility of going to heaven, to leave us His example, His truths, His wondrous means of grace, His infallible, everlasting Church, and even His own Immaculate Mother.

That is the way in which the infinite mercy and goodness of God answers man's insane selfishness and pride. For God is God and man is man; and the difference between them is infinite.

SUMMARY

1. Adam's Gifts.

ORIGINAL SIN

- (a). Things DUE to Adam: Body and soul; Faculties; God's conserving influence. Cf. GIFTS – not DUE to our nature as such.
- (b). Kinds of Gifts: PRETERNATURAL – perfect man within own order.
SUPERNATURAL – raise man to a higher order.
- (c). Gift given to Adam: Supernatural: Sanctifying grace.
Supernatural Virtues.
Gifts of the Holy Ghost.
Preternatural: Integrity (freedom from concupiscence).
Immortality (freedom from death).
Impassibility – (freedom from suffering).
Infused knowledge.
- (d). How given. Infused Knowledge, as a PERSONAL gift, to Adam alone. The rest, as gifts to human NATURE, to be handed on, by natural GENERATION, from Adam to us all.

2. Adam's Fall.

- (a). Kind of sin: A sin of PRIDE, manifesting itself in DISOBEDIENCE.
- (b). Gravity: A very serious MORTAL sin – in itself and in its circumstances.

3. Original Sin In Us.

- (a). What it is: Not an ACTUAL sin, but an HABITUAL sin. A sin of NATURE. A STATE OF SIN. Consists essentially in the DEPRIVATION OF SANCTIFYING GRACE. Is VOLUNTARY, not by an act of our will, but by an act of Adam's. We do not COMMIT it. We INHERIT it.
- (b). How it affects us:
 - (i). We are born without any SUPERNATURAL gifts.
 - (ii). We are born without any PRETERNATURAL gifts.

- (iii). We lose HEAVEN, unless original sin is forgiven.
- (iv). We are brought under the POWER OF SATAN.
- (v). We are WOUNDED in our nature: our intelligence, will, irascible appetite, and concupiscible appetite.
- (c). Remedy for Original Sin: BAPTISM of water, desire, or blood.

4. Objections.

- (i). "A trivial sin."
- (ii). "Unjust."
- (iii). "Adam could not have sinned."
- (iv). "Parents in grace should hand on grace."

5. God's Mercy and Goodness.

Comparison between our present state and the state we should be in, if no original sin.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. Good things not due to our nature as such are called (...). 2. God gave Adam these three supernatural gifts (...) (...) (...). 3. And these four preternatural gifts (...) (...) (...) (...). 4. Gifts which perfect man within the limits of his own order are called (supernatural) (preternatural) gifts. 5. The warring between our lower and our higher nature is called (...). 6. In us, concupiscence (is) (is not) a personal sin. 7. Adam had full realisation and full freedom when he sinned, because he had the gift of (...). 8. One of the gifts given to Adam was a personal gift. This was the gift of (...). 9. The other gifts were intended by God to come to us through natural (...) from Adam. 10. Adam's sin was a sin of (...) which manifested itself in (...). 11. Adam wanted to be his own supreme rule of (...). 12. The devil said: "You shall be as (...), knowing (...) and (...)." 13. Adam's sin was a (mortal) (venial) sin. 14. Adam (had) (did not have) the beatific vision when on earth. 15. In us, original sin is an (actual) (habitual) sin. 16. In us, original sin is (a personal sin) (a sin of nature). 17. In us original sin is something we (do) (inherit). It is a (...) of sin. 18. We are born without any supernatural and any (...) gifts. 19. In losing sanctifying grace, we have lost also the (...) virtues and the (...) of the (...). 20. The following are the faculties or powers in which we are wounded by original sin: our (...), our (...) and our (...). 21. There are three kinds of baptism: baptism of (...), baptism of (...) and baptism of (...). 22. St. Paul reminds us that "Where sin abounded, (...) did more abound." 23. Instead of having Adam as our teacher, we have now Christ's everlasting and infallible (...). 24. Instead of having Eve as our spiritual mother, we have now (...). 25. The Church does not hesitate to call Adam's sin a fortunate one, inasmuch as it has brought to us "such and so great a (...)."

(B).

1. Which do you consider the most important of the gifts given to Adam? Give your reasons.
2. Little Andrew wants to know the difference between preternatural and supernatural gifts. Tell him.
3. Peterkin asks you to explain concupiscence to him. Explain it.
4. Popeye thinks that Adam's sin was a trivial one. Enlighten him.
5. Mr. Prodnose considers that it is unfair that we should be deprived of gifts, because of another's sin. What can you say to him?

LIVING THE TRUTH

6. We are really better off than if Adam had not sinned. Discuss this.
7. Name the gifts we have lost through Adam's sin. Explain each briefly.
8. What is the difference between original sin in Adam and original sin in us?

Chapter 23

PERSONAL SIN

1. What We Must Do To Commit A Sin.

PERSONAL sin is opposed to ORIGINAL sin. A personal sin is one which WE ourselves commit. To commit a sin, we must perform an act. What sort of act?

In the first place, it must be a HUMAN act - one over which we have some CONTROL, one that comes from our INTELLIGENCE and WILL, one for which we are RESPONSIBLE, one that has consequently a MORAL value. The functioning of our liver cannot be a sin. It is not a HUMAN act. But acts like eating and drinking, talking and reading can be sins. They are HUMAN acts.

In the second place, our act must VIOLATE A LAW OF GOD. Every human act is not a sin. To be a sin, it must be forbidden by God's law.

A man walks in his sleep; and, while still asleep, kills another person. Is this a sin? Are the two conditions present? One of them certainly is. He breaks a law of God which forbids us to kill the innocent. But what about the other? Is he performing a human act? No. He is asleep. He has no control over his action. He is not responsible for it in any way. It is not a human act; hence it is right OUTSIDE the sphere of morality altogether. It cannot be a sin of any kind.

A good Catholic lives near the Church. On a week-day which is not a day of obligation, he does not go to Mass. He has no sinful motive, such as laziness. Does he commit a sin? Are the two conditions present? Does he perform a human act? Yes. He freely decides to stay away from Mass. Does he break a law of God? No. There is no law obliging him to go to Mass. So he does not commit a sin.

Notice, however, that it would be BETTER for him to go to Mass; and that, though God does not OBLIGE him to go, He can reasonably EXPECT him to go, since he lives so near the Church. In

these circumstances, his failure to attend Mass is said to be AN IMPERFECTION.

These examples show how sin differs on the one hand from an act which is not HUMAN; and, on the other, from an act which is only an IMPERFECTION.

Considered as an ACT, therefore, a SIN can be defined as A HUMAN ACT WHICH VIOLATES A LAW OF GOD.

2. Kinds Of Sin.

Peter, a Catholic, realises that it is Good Friday, and that he is obliged to abstain. Yet he deliberately chooses to eat meat. John, a Catholic, who is also obliged to abstain, eats meat on Good Friday, but forgets that it is Good Friday. Do they both commit a sin of some sort? Yes. Each performs a HUMAN act. Each BREAKS A LAW OF GOD. So each commits a sin.

Yet there is a big difference between their sins. Peter has to be sorry for his sin; and he has to tell it in confession. John cannot be sorry for his; and it would be silly for him to mention it in confession. Moreover, Peter's sin can send him to hell. John's can never put him there.

Why this great difference? Well, Peter REALISED not merely that he was eating meat, but that in doing this he was breaking God's LAW. So he is RESPONSIBLE not only for the eating of the meat, but also for the VIOLATION OF GOD'S LAW, i.e. the SIN. He KNEW he was sinning, at the moment he decided to eat the meat. So he can rightly be BLAMED for his sin. It has GUILT attached to it. Now, what about John's sin? Did he realise that he was eating meat? Of course he did. He was awake at the time. His act was a human act, just as Peter's was. But did he realise that he was breaking God's law? No. Hence, he is not responsible for this violation of the law. He is not responsible for the SIN he committed. There is NO GUILT attached to it.

REALISATION of the SINFULNESS of an act, at the moment when the will chooses to do it, is called ADVERTENCE. It is in our INTELLIGENCE. The FREEDOM, on the other hand, is in our WILL.

ADVERTENCE can, of course, be more or less FULL. When you are asleep, you cannot have an advertence at all. But when you begin to wake up, you begin to have it. At first, it is very incomplete. There is just enough to make a HUMAN act possible. Then, it gets more and more complete, till you have FULL advertence. You are properly awake, and know quite clearly what you are doing. So there are many degrees of advertence, ranging from full advertence to the barest minimum that distinguishes a human act from one not human. It is very necessary to realise this, when you are dealing with sin.

Normally, the freedom in our will is proportionate to the advertence in our intelligence. The less the advertence, the less the freedom. For FULL freedom, there must be FULL advertence.

The difference between Peter's sin and John's sin can therefore be expressed this way: in breaking God's law, Peter had ADVERTENCE and FREEDOM, whereas John had neither. Peter KNEW he was sinning. John did not. In other words, Peter committed a FORMAL sin; John, a MATERIAL sin. Try to grasp clearly the difference between them.

A person commits a FORMAL sin, when he:

- (a). performs a HUMAN ACT (a non-human act can never be a sin).
- (b). which BREAKS A LAW OF GOD (hence, is not just an imperfection).
- (c). with AT LEAST SOME ADVERTENCE (in his intelligence) .
- (d). and with AT LEAST SOME FREEDOM (in his will).
- (e). so that there is AT LEAST SOME GUILT attached to it (and some temporal punishment also).

Note the words "at least some advertence" and "at least some freedom." The AMOUNT, of course, will vary with different acts. In the case of a formal MORTAL sin, as we shall see, both the advertence and the freedom must be FULL. But our definition of formal sin must include formal VENIAL sin, as well as formal MORTAL sin. That is why we say that at least SOME advertence and at least SOME freedom must be present in our act. This does not exclude the FULL advertence and FULL freedom required for

formal MORTAL sin. At the same time, it allows a formal VENIAL sin, in which the advertence and freedom are not full.

A person commits a MATERIAL sin, when he:-

- (a). performs a HUMAN ACT,
- (b). which BREAKS A LAW OF GOD,
- (c). but with NO ADVERTENCE AT ALL,
- (d). hence, with NO FREEDOM WHATEVER, as regards the sinfulness of the act,
- (e). so that there is NO GUILT attached to the sin.

If we consider sin, then, from the point of view of the presence or absence of GUILT, we divide it into FORMAL and MATERIAL.

We can also consider sin from the point of view of how SERIOUS it is. Then, we divide it into MORTAL and VENIAL sin.

A MORTAL wound is one which causes DEATH. Well, we have a SUPERNATURAL life as well as a NATURAL one. It is given by SANCTIFYING GRACE. And we can lose it, just as we can lose our natural life. Just as we can commit suicide in the natural order, we can commit suicide also in the supernatural order. And the sin by which we do this is said to be a MORTAL sin, because it removes SANCTIFYING GRACE from our soul. It kills our supernatural life.

By removing SANCTIFYING GRACE, it makes it impossible for us to gain HEAVEN. In this sense, it SEPARATES us from GOD, our supernatural LAST END, inasmuch as He is known, loved and enjoyed in the beatific vision. It cuts us off from heaven. But we cannot thus TURN AWAY from GOD, our last end, without TURNING TO A CREATURE, which we take as our last end, in preference to God.

In committing a MORTAL sin, therefore, a person chooses a creature AS HIS LAST END, instead of GOD. That is why mortal sin is such an insult to God. A mere creature, which of itself is nothing, is preferred to Him Who is infinite. That, too, is why personal mortal sin deserves everlasting punishment in hell: the pain of loss which punishes it inasmuch as it is a turning away from God, and the pain of fire which punishes it inasmuch as it is a turning to a creature.

A VENIAL sin, on the contrary, does not remove SANCTIFYING GRACE from our soul. Grace and charity remain. These can forgive venial sin. So it is much more easily forgiven than mortal sin. That is why it is called “venial,” a word which means “easily pardoned.”

When a person commits a VENIAL sin, he does not choose a creature AS HIS LAST END, instead of God. But he does perform a human act which cannot be DIRECTED to his last end. All our human acts should be directed to heaven by charity, in accordance with the great law of love: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind... Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Mat. 22: 37-39). But charity cannot do this with an act which is a venial sin. Inasmuch as such an act is sinful, it cannot merit heaven.

In committing a venial sin, a person does not cut himself off from heaven, or turn away from God as his last end. But he does HALT on the way to heaven, instead of hastening thither by ever-quickenings steps of love. Venial sin is thus an obstacle to the FERVOUR OF CHARITY. It limits the dominion that charity should exercise over all our human acts, inasmuch as this virtue should direct them all to our last end, by making them meritorious for heaven.

Conditions Required For Formal Mortal Sin.

To commit a FORMAL MORTAL SIN, a person must:-

- (a). perform a HUMAN ACT,
- (b). which breaks a GRAVE law of God, in GRAVE MATTER,
- (c). with FULL advertence, and
- (d). with FULL freedom,
- (e). so that the GUILT is such as to exclude the sinner from heaven.

These conditions, as you can see, are more restricted than those we mentioned in regard to formal sin in general, because the latter had to be broad enough to include formal VENIAL sin.

To break ANY law of God suffices for a formal venial sin. But, to get a formal MORTAL sin, one must violate a GRAVE law - one that binds under pain of MORTAL SIN.

However, this does not mean that every time we break a GRAVE law of God, we commit a MORTAL sin. Why not? Because many of God's GRAVE laws admit LIGHT MATTER, as we saw in a previous chapter. To commit a MORTAL sin by breaking these laws, we must break them in GRAVE matter. Thus, we must steal a certain amount, or miss a certain amount of the Mass on a Sunday, to commit a MORTAL sin.

Some grave laws of God do NOT admit light matter. In their case, the matter is always grave. To break them with FULL advertence and FULL freedom is therefore always a mortal sin. The only way in which a sin against them can be venial, is through lack of full advertence or full freedom. Blasphemy, for instance, does not admit light matter; but a man's blasphemy may be only a formal venial sin, owing to lack of full realisation of the sinfulness of his act.

For formal VENIAL sin, it is enough to have at least SOME advertence and freedom. For a formal MORTAL sin, however, it is necessary to have FULL advertence and freedom. After all, formal mortal sin is a most terrible thing. It means the loss of grace and of heaven, and the dreadful, endless sufferings of hell. A person cannot bring such staggering penalties on himself, unless he realises quite clearly what he is doing when he is committing a mortal sin. Terrifying as these penalties are, they are yet a just punishment for deliberate mortal sin.

So, try to realise this: if there is not FULL advertence and FULL freedom, an act may be a formal venial sin, but it can never be a formal mortal sin.

CONDITIONS REQUIRED FOR FORMAL VENIAL SIN.

A sin can be venial in three ways: -

- (a). The law which is broken binds only under pain of venial sin. If a person gives way to vainglory, even with full advertence and full freedom, this is only a formal venial sin, since the law here binds only under pain of venial sin.
- (b). The law binds under pain of mortal sin, but it admits of light matter, and it is broken only in light matter.

A person misses Mass on Sunday, from the start to the Gospel. He breaks a grave law, but one which admits light matter.

He breaks it only in light matter. Even if he does this with full advertence and freedom, he commits only a venial sin on account of the lightness of the matter.

- (c). The law binds under pain of mortal sin, and is broken in grave matter, but without full advertence and full freedom.

Thus, a man may get quite drunk, without realising clearly at any stage that he is committing a mortal sin, though he knows he is committing some sin. Through lack of full advertence and freedom, he is guilty of only venial sin.

Consider, now, a few cases. Apply what you have learnt to them.

(A). Algy uses very bad language when under chloroform. Is this a sin of any sort? No. It is not a human act. It is quite outside the sphere of morality.

(B). Jimmy fires at what he thinks is just an old bottle. He smashes it. Then he finds out that it is an expensive meteorological instrument. Does he commit a sin? Yes. He performs a human act, which breaks a law of God. Is it a formal or a material sin? A material sin. He has no advertence, hence no freedom, hence no guilt.

(C). Harry wakes up fully on Sunday morning. He realises quite clearly that he is obliged under pain of mortal sin to go to Mass. He deliberately decides to stay in bed instead. Later, he gets tired of bed, gets up, and goes to Mass. Any sin? Yes. Formal or material? Formal. Mortal or venial? Mortal. With full advertence and full freedom, he breaks a grave law, in grave matter.

(D). With full advertence and freedom Pancho blasphemes, but just for a short while. Any sin? Yes. Formal or material? Formal. Mortal or venial? Mortal. No light matter in blasphemy.

(E). A person, when half asleep, yields in his will to feelings against purity. He realises that he is offending God; but he is not sufficiently awake to have full advertence or full freedom. Any sin?

Yes. Formal or material? Formal. Mortal or venial? Venial. No one can ever commit a formal mortal sin, without full advertence and full freedom.

3. The Effects Of Sin.

(a). Material Sin.

Material sin has no guilt attached to it. That is why it should never be told in confession. But do not think that it can have no bad consequences at all. It is a violation of God's law; and we cannot break a law of nature without having to pay for it. A man may take a drink, not knowing that there is deadly poison in it. There is no formal sin of suicide here; but the drink will kill him all the same. Similarly, a person may sincerely think that it is not a sin to get drunk; and may get drunk very often as a consequence. His sin is only a material sin. But he necessarily develops the BAD HABIT of intemperance. If, one day, he finds out that it is a mortal sin to get drunk, he will have to make a great effort not to give way again to his bad habit. He will have to fight very hard to avoid formal sin in future. He is clearly at a great disadvantage.

Material sins, then, can have this evil consequence: they can give rise to BAD HABITS, which are cruelly tyrannous things.

Sometimes, too, a person committing a material sin may give BAD EXAMPLE to others. A good Catholic, for instance, may be taking a meal of meat on Good Friday, because he does not realise that it is Good Friday. Other Catholics, seeing him, may be scandalised. They may say: "If he can eat meat on Good Friday, we can eat it too." Thus, his bad example may lead others to commit formal sin.

(b). Formal Venial Sin

Formal Venial Sin does not destroy sanctifying grace or charity; but it has disastrous effects all the same. Here are some of them:

1. It prevents our supernatural CHARITY from growing in FERVOUR, as it ought from day to day.
2. It forms a sort of SLIPPERY INCLINE down which it is easy to fall into mortal sin.

3. Through it, we remain UNDEVELOPED in the SUPERNATURAL LIFE, like stunted children who fail to grow up in body and in mind.
4. By preventing our charity from growing in fervour, it prevents the Gifts of the Holy Ghost from developing, and so robs us of that SUPERNATURAL CONTEMPLATION which enable fervent souls to experience the presence of the Trinity, and to have a genuine foretaste in this life of the peace and the bliss of heaven.

From this, you can see that formal venial sin is the worst evil after formal mortal sin; and that it is a far greater evil than any bodily disease that we can experience. Do we hate it more than we hate cancer, leprosy, or tuberculosis? We should. God does. And His judgement is right.

(c). Formal Mortal Sin

No words can fully express how evil formal mortal sin really is. Why not? Because, as an offence against God, Who is infinite, it is, in a true sense, an infinite evil. That is why it can be fully atoned for only by our Divine Redeemer, Whose acts and sufferings are of infinite value, since they are those of God.

To appreciate fully the malice of deliberate mortal sin, we should have to appreciate what sanctifying grace is, what heaven is, what hell is. We should have to appreciate in all its depths the Incarnation of the Son of God, His Passion, and His Death upon the Cross.

We can but give some of the evil effects of mortal sin. Try to realise them. Ask God to give you His actual grace, to enlighten your mind and inflame your heart. Above all, try to increase the fervour of your charity every day, so that the Gifts of the Holy Ghost may enable you to see sin as Our Divine Saviour saw it in the garden of His agony and on the Cross.

1. It removes SANCTIFYING GRACE from the soul.
2. Hence, it makes us cease to be GOD'S ADOPTED CHILDREN.
3. It removes from our soul the INDWELLING OF THE BLESSED TRINITY.
4. It loses for us all MERITS we have gained for heaven.

PERSONAL SIN

5. It removes all the SUPERNATURAL VIRTUES, except FAITH and HOPE. It removes even these, if it is expressly against them, as is a mortal sin of heresy or one of despair.
6. It makes us cease to be God's FRIENDS, since it removes charity. It makes us His ENEMIES instead.
7. It loses for us all the GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST: fear, piety, fortitude, counsel, knowledge, understanding and wisdom.
8. It entails the loss of HEAVEN in eternity, unless we repent.
9. It destines us for the everlasting miseries of HELL: the remorse, the despair, the fire and the infinite loneliness of the pain of loss which is the worst suffering of the damned.
10. It makes us RESPONSIBLE for the PASSION and DEATH OF CHRIST.
11. It makes us guilty of the deepest INGRATITUDE to our loving Saviour, Who redeemed us at such a great price.
12. It makes us TRAITORS to CHRIST, OUR LADY, and THE CHURCH.
13. It ranges us on the side of the DEVIL, against GOD.
14. It robs God of the EXTERNAL GLORY due to Him from us in this world, for we promote His glory here only by loving and obeying Him as perfectly as we can.
15. It makes us the SLAVES of sin. "He who sins," says St. John, "is the slave of sin" (John 8:34). It is impossible to think of a worse form of slavery. We carry it with us wherever we go.
16. It DISTORTS OUR NATURE in its very depths; for it is opposed to the fundamental tendency in us to love God more than self, inasmuch as we depend wholly on Him for our existence.
17. It DESTROYS OUR PERSONALITY. Virtue knits all our powers into a unity. It builds up our personality. Sin only disintegrates and destroys.
18. It DESTROYS OUR HEALTH of mind and body; for it is against our NATURE as rational beings.
19. It RUINS OUR HAPPINESS in its very source by planting in us, at least in our subconscious mind, a FEAR of death and judgment.
20. It makes our life a journeying towards HELL.

Any one of these terrible consequences, if realised, would make us live as a saint. Ask God to help you to appreciate them all. Think of them every day, especially when you are tempted to commit mortal sin.

4. The Faculty In Us That Can Sin.

We have seen that, to commit a formal sin, we must realise that we are sinning. This realisation is in our intelligence. But it is not our intelligence that sins. It is our WILL, and it alone. For it alone is free in its acts.

Sin, then, is committed by our WILL. Only when our will freely COMMANDS or CONSENTS TO something which our intelligence tells us is against God's law, do we commit a formal sin. Sin is in this FREE CHOICE made by our will, and in it alone.

If a man sees a \$500 note sticking out of the pocket of someone near him in a crowded train, he may be tempted to steal the money. His conscience immediately reminds him that to do this is a mortal sin. His will then has to make a choice. It has to choose between stealing the money and refusing to steal it. In other words, it has to choose between the money and God. It is this free choice of the will that matters. If the man deliberately chooses the money in preference to God, he commits a formal mortal sin. The sin is in this choice. Till it is made, there cannot be a sin of theft.

Images that are a danger to purity may arise OF THEIR OWN ACCORD in our imagination. Their mere presence there is not sin. Sin comes only when our will deliberately chooses to accept them, though our intelligence tells us that to do so is sinful. It is our WILL that sins, not our intelligence, nor our imagination, nor our feelings.

5. Means Of Avoiding Sin.

Here are some means of avoiding sin. Make the best possible use of them all.

1. Daily, fervent HOLY COMMUNION.
2. Regular, sincere CONFESSION – say, once a week.
3. Fervent attendance at daily MASS.
4. Regular, humble, confident, fervent PRAYER.

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5. Prudence in avoiding DANGEROUS OCCASIONS OF SIN.
6. Life-long, sincere DEVOTION TO OUR LADY.
7. Fidelity to family ROSARY.
8. MEDITATIONS on HELL, HEAVEN, DEATH, JUDGMENT, and the PASSION.
9. The regular reading of the NEW TESTAMENT.
10. The gradual building up of NATURAL VIRTUES or GOOD HABITS.
11. Good COMPANIONS.
12. A taste for good LITERATURE, MUSIC and CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY.
13. A HOBBY to occupy spare time.
14. A healthy desire to ENJOY LIFE, as a free being, not enslaved by bad habits.
15. Reflection on the necessity of giving GOOD EXAMPLE as a Catholic.
16. Having HIGH IDEALS in life; to be not merely a first-class doctor, lawyer, farmer, etc., but a first-class Christian, even a saint.
17. A deep, supernatural LOVE of one's fellow-men, especially of one's fellow-members of the Mystical Body.
18. A POSITIVE view of life - not "I must not," but "I must, for the love of God."
19. Taking a LONG VIEW of things, looking through death into eternity.
20. A deep sense of GRATITUDE to God.

6. Practical Conclusions:

1. I should hate formal mortal sin as I hate hell itself.
2. I should hate formal venial sin far more than any bodily disease.
3. I should shun dangerous occasions of sin as I would shun a poisonous reptile.

4. I should cultivate daily natural good habits; for grace is built on nature.
5. I should use well all the means of grace God has given me; for, without grace, I cannot hope to avoid mortal sin for long.

SUMMARY

1. What We Must Do To Commit A Sin.

We must (i). perform a human act.
(ii). which breaks a law of God. Cf. An Imperfection.

2. Kinds Of Sin.

(A). Formal and Material.

Formal: (i). At least some advertence.
(ii). At least some freedom.
(iii). At least some guilt.

Material: (i). No advertence.
(ii). No freedom.
(iii). No guilt.

(B). Mortal and Venial.

Mortal: (i). Removes sanctifying grace from our soul.
(ii). Cuts us off from God, as our supernatural last end.

Venial: (i). Does not destroy sanctifying grace.
(ii). Does not cut us off from heaven; makes us halt on the way.

Conditions for formal mortal sin: -

- (i). Violation of grave law, in grave matter.
- (ii). With full advertence, and
- (iii). With full freedom.

Conditions for formal venial sin: -

- (i). Law binds only under pain of venial sin.

or

- (ii). Law binds under pain of mortal sin, but is broken only in light matter.

or

- (iii). Law binds under pain of mortal sin, and is broken in grave matter, but without sufficient advertence or freedom to allow a mortal sin.

3. Effects Of Sin.

(a). Material sin : -

- (i). Bad Habits.
- (ii). Bad Example.

(b). Formal Venial Sin: -

- (i). Prevents supernatural charity from growing in fervour.
- (ii). Forms a slippery incline towards mortal sin.
- (iii). Leaves us undeveloped in the supernatural life.
- (iv). Robs us of supernatural contemplation.

(c). Formal Mortal Sin: -

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Loss of sanctifying grace. | 11. Ingratitude to Christ. |
| 2. Loss of adopted sonship.
Church. | 12. Traitors to Christ, Mary, the |
| 3. Loss of Indwelling of Trinity. | 13. A siding with the devil. |
| 4. Loss of all merits. | 14. Robs God of glory. |
| 5. Loss of supernatural virtues. | 15. Slavery to sin. |
| 6. Loss of God's friendship. | 16. Distorts our nature. |
| 7. Loss of all Gifts of Holy Ghost. | 17. Destroys our personality. |
| 8. Loss of heaven. | 18. Destroys our health. |
| 9. Danger of hell.
fear. | 19. Ruins happiness through |
| 10. Responsibility for the
death of Christ. | 20. Makes life a journey to hell. |

4. The Faculty In Us That Can Sin.

The WILL alone, making a FREE CHOICE.

5. Means Of Avoiding Sin: -

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Holy Communion. | 6. Good companions. |
| 2. Confession.
philosophy | 7. Good literature, music, |
| 3. Mass. | 8. Hobby. |
| 4. Avoiding dangerous occasions. | 9. Desire to live as a free man. |
| 5. Prayer. | 10. Need to give good example. |
| 11. Devotion to Our Lady. | 16. High ideals. |
| 12. Family Rosary.
fellowmen. | 17. Supernatural love of |
| 13. Meditation on hell, etc. | 18. Viewing things from eternity. |
| 14. Reading of New Testament. | 19. Deep gratitude to God. |
| 15. Natural virtues. | |

6. Practical Conclusions: -

1. Hate formal mortal sin as I hate hell.
2. Hate formal venial sin more than any disease.
3. Avoid occasions of sin, as I would avoid a serpent.
4. Cultivate daily natural good habits.
5. Use all means of grace God has given me.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in blanks, and cross out wrong alternatives in the following : -

1. To be a sin, an act must be a (...) act, and it must break a (...). 2. A non-human act (can) (cannot) be a sin. 3. One who fails to do something which it would be better for him to do, and which God can expect him to do, but which He does not oblige him to do, is guilty of (...). 4. In committing an imperfection, we (do) (do not) violate a law of God. 5. Sin is divided into formal and (...), and into mortal and (...). 6. Realisation of the sinfulness of an act at the moment we decide to do it is called (...). 7. Advertence is in our (...). Freedom is in our (...). 8. The only faculty that can sin is our (...). 9. To commit a formal sin, we must have (at least some) (full) advertence, and (at least some) (full) freedom. 10. Billy forgets that it is a holy day of obligation, and so does not go to Mass. He commits (an imperfection) (a material sin) (a formal venial sin) (a formal mortal sin). 11. Mortal sin is so called because it causes God to remove (...) from our soul. 12. Venial sin (does) (does not) remove sanctifying grace from our soul. 13. Formal mortal sin separates us from God considered as our supernatural (...). 14. When a man commits a formal mortal sin, he chooses a creature as his (...). 15. Formal venial sin is opposed to the (...) of charity. 16. To commit a formal mortal sin, we must break a (...) law of God, in (...) matter, with (...) advertence and (...) freedom. 17. With full advertence and freedom, a man gives way to vain glory. He commits (an imperfection) (a material sin) (a formal venial sin) (a formal mortal sin). 18. Material sin can have two bad effects: (...) and (...). 19. Formal venial sin prevents our supernatural (...) from growing in fervour. 20. Hence, it also prevents the Gifts of (...) from developing. 21. Hence it robs us of supernatural (...) which is a sort of foretaste of heaven. 22. Formal mortal sin removes the

indwelling of (...) in our soul. 23. Any formal mortal sin destroys all the supernatural virtues. This (is) (is not) correct. 24. Any formal mortal sin destroys all the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. This (is) (is not) correct. 25. Formal mortal sin makes us responsible for the death of (...). 26. By removing supernatural charity, formal mortal sin makes us cease to be God's (...). 27. The worst suffering in hell is the (...). 28. The worst feature of the sufferings in hell is the fact that they are (...). 29. Scripture says: "He who sins is the (...) of sin." 30. Formal mortal sin makes our life a journeying towards (...).

(B).

1. How does a sin differ from an imperfection?
2. What must we do to commit formal sin?
3. What is a material sin? What bad effects can material sins have?
4. What conditions must be present for a formal mortal sin?
5. In what three ways can a sin be venial?
6. Give four evil effects of formal venial sin.
7. Give ten evil effects of formal mortal sin.
8. Give ten means of avoiding sin.

Chapter 24

THE INCARNATION

1. What And Why.

The gravity of an offence is proportionate to the dignity of the one offended. But sin is an insult to GOD. He is infinite in dignity. So, from this point of view, sin is an INFINITE offence. Hence, it is impossible for man, a mere creature, to make full atonement for sin.

To make full atonement for sin, the being making it must be at the same time GOD and MAN. He must be Man, to atone for man's sin. He must be God, in order that His atonement may be infinite. That is why the Son of God determined to become Man. That is why the INCARNATION took place.

Scripture records this momentous event in the simplest terms. It tells us, on the one hand, that the WORD, the Second Person of the Trinity, is truly GOD; and, on the other, that He became MAN. It says: -

“In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, and the WORD WAS GOD” (John 1:1).

“And the WORD WAS MADE FLESH, and dwelt amongst us” (John 1:14).

The term “flesh,” as all admit, here means “man.” So the Second Person, without ceasing to be God, became MAN. And, since the Latin word for flesh is ‘caro’ - ‘carnis’, we call this event the INCARNATION.

2. Christ Is Truly God.

Are we absolutely certain that Christ is God Yes. Why? Because GOD tells us that He is. How do we know that God tells us this? The Church assures us infallibly that He does. What evidence does she

go on, in making this infallible decision? That found in SCRIPTURE and in TRADITION.

(A). SCRIPTURE.

1. Christ is Called God In Scripture.

The two texts given above assure us that the WORD is GOD, and that this same WORD became MAN - the Man we call CHRIST. So Christ must be God.

St. Paul, too, calls Christ GOD, when he speaks of Him as being over all things, "GOD, blessed forever" (Roms. 9:5).

St. John also asserts that Christ is "The true GOD, and life eternal" (1 John 5:20).

Since God is the principal Author of Scripture, it is He Who reveals to us through these texts the Divinity of Christ. It is He Who tells us that Christ is God.

2. Scripture Calls Christ The Son Of God In The Proper Sense Of The Term.

Thus, St. John says: "God so loved the world as to give His ONLY-BEGOTTEN Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting" (John 3:16).

Again, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us; and we saw His glory, that of the ONLY-BEGOTTEN of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Again, "By this hath the charity of God appeared towards us, because God hath sent His ONLY-BEGOTTEN Son into the world, that we may live by Him" (1 John 4:9).

In many other texts, Scripture calls Christ the SON OF GOD, in the proper sense - never in any other sense. He is God's ONLY-BEGOTTEN Son, eternally GENERATED by the Father. And, as

SON in this strict sense, He must have the same NATURE as His Father. He must be truly GOD.

3. Scripture Gives Christ Perfections Which Belong To God Alone.

(a). Christ is EQUAL with the FATHER.

St. Paul tells us that, though Christ “thought it not robbery to be EQUAL with God,” He yet became Man to redeem us (Philip, 2:5-7).

When Christ said: “I AND THE FATHER ARE ONE,” the Jews understood Him to mean one in NATURE, since they wanted to stone Him to death for thus claiming to be God. Did He correct them, as He was accustomed to do, when they misunderstood His words? On the contrary, He appealed to His MIRACLES as God's own witness to the truth of His claim. His argument was irresistible. No wonder they sought the more to kill Him” (John 10:30-38).

(b). He is ETERNAL, with the eternity proper to God.

This is seen from the text: “In the beginning WAS the Word.” When the first creatures were made, the Word or Son of God already WAS. Hence, He exists OUTSIDE time. He is eternal with the eternity of God.

The Jews once sneered at Christ. “Thou art not yet fifty years old,” they said, “and hast Thou seen Abraham?” He made this staggering reply: “Before Abraham was made, I AM” (John 8:57-58). What a contrast! Abraham needed to be made. He began to be. He ceased to be. He lived in TIME, with its past, present and future. Christ, on the contrary, was not made. And He is OUTSIDE time. His is the ever-present “now” of the eternity of God. So He must indeed be God.

(c). He is the CREATOR and CONSERVER of all things.

St. Paul says: “In Him were all things created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible... And by Him all things endure” (Colos. 1:16-17). But God alone can create and conserve creatures in existence. So Christ must be God.

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(d). He FORGAVE SIN by His own power.

He once worked a special miracle, to prove that He could forgive sin (Mat. 9:1-8). And how often He said to repentant sinners: "Go in peace. Thy sins are forgiven thee." Since God alone can forgive sin by His own power, and in His own right, Christ must be God.

(e). He worked MIRACLES by His own power.

He said to Lazarus: "Come forth!" (John 11:43). To the leper: "I will; be thou made clean!" (Mat. 8:3). To the centurion: "As thou hast believed, so be it done to thee" (Mat. 8:13). But God alone can thus work miracles by His own power and in His own right. So, Christ is God.

(f). He sent the HOLY GHOST to the Apostles.

He sent the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Trinity, to His Apostles; and gave them the power of administering the Sacraments and of ruling the "Church of GOD, which He purchased with His blood" (Mat. 28:19), (John 20:21-22), (Acts 2:38; 3, 12, 28). Only a Divine Person can thus send the Holy Ghost to men. Hence, Christ is God.

(g). He gives us GRACE and LIFE ETERNAL.

Speaking of His followers, He says: "I know them... I give them life everlasting" (John 10:27). Scores of other texts show that He is the Author of our supernatural life. Since this is a sharing in GOD'S life, Christ must Himself be God. No one can ever give what he has not got.

(h). He is TRUTH and LIFE.

Ordinary men can say that they HAVE truth and life. God alone can claim to BE Truth and Life. Yet Christ makes this claim: "I am the way, and the truth and the life." (John 14:6). Hence, He must be God.

(i). He is Supreme JUDGE of the living and the dead.

At Christ's trial, the High Priest put this question to Him: "Art Thou the SON OF THE LIVING GOD?" He replied: "I AM." And He told

His questioner that he would one day see Him coming in majesty to judge the living and the dead (Mark 14, 61-64, etc.). It was this claim to Divinity that sealed Christ's fate, and doomed Him to His Passion and the Cross.

Many other divine perfections are attributed to Christ in Scripture; but these few will suffice. Any one of them is a sufficient witness to the fact that Christ is God.

(B). TRADITION.

The evidence from Tradition is abundant, because errors concerning Christ arose almost from the start. St. John, remember, had to write his Gospel to combat these. In spite of it, fresh heresies arose as time went on. Some taught that there is only one nature in Christ. Others, that there are two persons. Others, that He had only one intellect. Others, one will. Others denied that Mary is the Mother of God. And so on. Amongst these heretics, the most influential was a man called ARIUS. He taught that Christ was merely a man. His teaching is called ARIANISM. He died in the year 336.

God raised up gifted men such as ATHANASIUS, BASIL THE GREAT, GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS and GREGORY OF NYSSA to defend the Divinity of His Son. These great men routed the heretics in controversy. We cannot give the testimonies of these early FATHERS here, as that would require, not a chapter, but a large book. We shall limit ourselves to some of the CREEDS and COUNCILS of the Church.

As early as the second century, the Church gave Her infallible teaching in a creed which ran: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ, His only-begotten Son, our Lord, Who was born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and was buried; Who rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father, whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead; and in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting."

A UNIVERSAL COUNCIL was held at NICAEA, in 325. It excommunicated ARIUS, and condemned ARIANISM. It defined the DIVINITY OF CHRIST. Another UNIVERSAL COUNCIL met at

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CONSTANTINOPLE in 381. It reaffirmed Christ's Divinity; and gave us the CREED which we sing today at Mass. In 431 the UNIVERSAL COUNCIL OF EPHESUS declared that Our Lady is the MOTHER OF GOD. Finally, that of CHALCEDON, which was held in 451 and at which there were six hundred and thirty bishops, condemned other errors concerning Christ, and developed further the doctrine of the Incarnation.

In the fifth century, the ATHANASIAN CREED was made obligatory on all Catholics. It begins with these striking words: "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith. Which faith, unless everyone keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall PERISH EVERLASTINGLY. And the Catholic faith is this: that we worship God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity...." Here the Creed gives a detailed account of what we must believe concerning the Trinity. Then, it deals with the Incarnation. It says:-

"Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right faith is that we believe and confess that Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man.

"God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man, of the substance of His Mother, born into the world. Perfect God, and Perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father in regard to His Godhead; and inferior to the Father in regard to His Manhood. Who, though He is God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ. One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the Manhood into God; one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For, as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one Christ. Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell; rose again the third day from the dead. He ascended into heaven; He sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty, whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. At whose coming, all men shall rise again with their bodies, and shall give an account of their works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire. This is the Catholic faith which, unless a man believe faithfully and firmly, he CANNOT BE SAVED."

No private judgment here, is there? Instead, a Church aware of her right and duty to teach with the **AUTHORITY** of God. Her threats seem intolerant to many today; but they are in no way different from that made by Christ Himself when He said to His Apostles: "Go ye into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth shall be **SAVED**; he that believeth not shall be **CONDEMNED**" (Mark 6:15-16). It comes to this: since God is Knowledge and Truth Itself, He has a **RIGHT** to be believed when He speaks to us; and we have the **OBLIGATION** to accept His teaching. To reject it **CULPABLY** is a formal mortal sin. And to die in formal mortal sin is to be lost forever.

From what has been said, you can see how the Church interprets **SCRIPTURE** and **TRADITION** for us **INFALLIBLY**, and thus enables us to be absolutely certain that God has revealed the Divinity of Christ. Then, by an act of divine **FAITH**, we accept this truth on the **AUTHORITY OF GOD**, Who makes it known to us. And our **CERTITUDE** is proportionate to this **AUTHORITY**. It is a **SUPERNATURAL** certitude, the greatest possible to us on earth.

3. Christ Is Truly Man.

We are equally certain that Christ is Man; for we know this, too, on the infinitely reliable **AUTHORITY OF GOD**. He assures us that "The Word was made **FLESH**." And "flesh" here means "man."

Christ has a human **BODY**. Did He not say over the bread at the Last Supper: "This is My **BODY**?" Moreover, He was born of the Virgin Mary, and placed as an infant in the crib. He grew up. He experienced hunger, thirst, weariness. He ate and drank. He slept. He suffered and died. He was buried. He rose from the dead, and proved to Thomas the reality of His risen Body "Feel and see," He said, "for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see Me to have" (Luke 24:39).

He has a human **SOUL**. Did He not exclaim in the Garden: "My **SOUL** is sorrowful even unto death?" (Mat. 26:38). Moreover, He formed universal ideas and judgments. He reasoned things out. He reflected on His own conduct and teaching. He appreciated spiritual goods like grace and heaven. He hated spiritual evils such as the pain of loss in hell. He experienced emotions of all kinds, as when He showed zeal for His Father's glory, or shed tears at the tomb of Lazarus, or cried forth His ghastly loneliness in the Garden and on

the Cross. Acts such as these can come only from a human intellect and a human will; and these are faculties of the human soul.

Finally, His Soul and His Body are united SUBSTANTIALLY, to form a human NATURE. Otherwise, He could not have died. Death, as we have seen, is the dissolution of the human composite. Since, then, Christ possesses a HUMAN NATURE, He must indeed be MAN as well as GOD.

4. How Christ Can Be God And Man.

A square cannot be a circle, can it? How, then, can Christ be God and Man? Try to see why it is not obviously a contradiction.

Each of us has a human NATURE. Christ, however, has TWO NATURES: that of God and that of Man. Is this the only difference between Him and us?

No. In each of us, in addition to a human nature, there is a human PERSONALITY. It OWNS our nature, and its activities and sufferings. It is what we call our SELF. It enables us to say: "My intellect," "my free acts," "my headache." To it we attribute all we have and do and suffer.

Note well that it is not our PERSONALITY that makes us human beings. It is our NATURE which does that. Wherever there is a human NATURE, there is a human being, whether he have a human personality or not.

Now, Christ has a human NATURE. Hence, He is MAN. But in Him there is NO corresponding human PERSONALITY. Its place is taken, and its work is done by that of the SON or WORD of God.

Hence, Christ's Body, Soul and faculties are OWNED, not by a human SELF or PERSONALITY but by the SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY. They are HIS, just as ours are ours. So it is to this DIVINE PERSONALITY that we must attribute all that Christ thinks, says, does or suffers in His Human NATURE, since there is no other personality in Him to whom we can attribute these.

Thus, He can say things which you or I could never say: "I and the Father are one"; "I am the resurrection and the life"; "Before Abraham was made, I am"; "I am with you all days, even to the end of the world." These things are true when said by Christ; for they are then said by the Son of God, speaking through the human lips which are His.

Others, again, can say things of Christ which they could not say of anyone else. His Father can say of Him: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Demons can cry out at His approach: "What have we to do with Thee, the Son of the Most High God?" The angel Gabriel can tell Our Lady: "The Holy that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Finally, whatever is done to Christ is done to the Son of God. When Christ is nailed to the Cross, it is the Son of God Who is crucified. When Christ dies and rises from the dead, it is the Son of God Who dies and triumphs over death. That is why His death is of infinite worth, and can atone fully for our sins.

Christ, then, is God, because as the Second Person of the Trinity, He shares the Divine NATURE with the Father and the Holy Ghost. He is also Man, because He OWNS a human NATURE like ours.

These two NATURES are united through the Divine PERSONALITY which owns them both. And, since the Greek word for "personality" is "hypostasis," this unique union is called the HYPOSTATIC union.

Neither nature, remember, is mixed with the other. Each remains itself. They are not united by a union in NATURE, as are hydrogen and oxygen to form water. Such a union would be a contradiction, like a square circle. But it is not a contradiction for the two NATURES in Christ to be OWNED by the one PERSONALITY, and to be UNITED in and through it. The Second Person of the Trinity can surely fulfil the function of personality to the Human Nature in Christ, just as our created personality can fulfil its function in each of us. What God can do through a created personality in us, He can do in Christ by the infinite Personality of His Son.

A square cannot be a circle. Quite true. But you, as a person, can OWN both a square and a circle. So, too, Christ's Human Nature cannot be His Divine Nature. But the Second Person of the Trinity

can OWN them both. Now you can see why it is not obviously a contradiction to say that Christ is both God and Man.

5. Some Perfections Of Christ's Human Nature.

(A). HIS SANCTITY.

Sanctity consists in a stable, supernatural UNION WITH GOD. It implies, of course, an absence of sin; for sin separates us from God.

Christ was absolutely sinless. Why? Because any sin in Him would have to be attributed to the Son of God. Moreover, He had the beatific vision. Finally, He had an absolute fullness of grace. All these made sin IMPOSSIBLE to Him. Likewise any imperfection.

He had no ORIGINAL SIN, for this is handed on by active generation on the part of the human father. But, as Scripture assures us, Christ had no human father. He was generated by the Holy Ghost. He had no PERSONAL SIN, either. "Which of you shall convince Me of sin?" He could say to His enemies. And even the most bitter amongst them had to let His challenge go unanswered (John 8:46). That is why St. Peter can remind us that Christ "committed no sin," but "bore our sins Himself... that we, being dead to sin, should live again to justice" (1 Pet. 8:22-24).

What, now, of His GRACES? In the first place He had in the HYPOSTATIC UNION an UNCREATED grace, which made Him holy with the SUBSTANTIAL, INFINITE sanctity of God.

He had also the following CREATED graces:-

(a). An ABSOLUTE fullness of SANCTIFYING GRACE.

Our Lady, St. Stephen, St. Barnabas had a RELATIVE fullness of grace. They had all the graces demanded by their office. But Christ had from the beginning an ABSOLUTE fullness of grace - all that God could give Him. He could not increase His grace. He could, however, MANIFEST it more and more to men, as He grew up, just as He could manifest His wisdom to them. This He did; for St. Luke tells us that "Jesus advanced in wisdom, age and grace with God and men" (Luke 2:52).

(b). All the SUPERNATURAL VIRTUES that He could have.

He had no FAITH or HOPE, for He had the beatific vision. He had no PENANCE, for He was sinless. He had no CONTINENCE,¹ for He had no concupiscence. But He had all other virtues, natural and supernatural, in their absolute fullness.

Perhaps the most admirable thing about His virtues is their wonderful HARMONY. In Him there is perfect harmony between the natural and the supernatural, between wisdom and practical common sense, between justice and mercy, between dignity and humility, and between fortitude and mildness. We should try to imitate Him especially in this.

(c). All the GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST.

These Gifts of Fear, Fortitude, Piety, Counsel, Knowledge, Understanding and Wisdom made His soul exquisitely docile to actual grace, and made Him the Model of all contemplatives.

(d). Extraordinary graces called CHARISMS.

These are graces such as the gift of PROPHECY, or that of MIRACLES or that of TONGUES. As Teacher of men, He needed them to convert and sanctify others. He possessed them all in a permanent way, and He could use them whenever He willed.

Christ, remember, had these created graces not only as an individual for His own sanctification, but also as HEAD OF THE MYSTICAL BODY, so that He could give them to others.

St. John sums up all Christ's graces by saying: "The Word was made flesh (the grace of union) and dwelt amongst us; and we saw His glory, that of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (His graces as an individual). "And of His fullness we have all received, grace for grace" (His graces as Head of the Mystical Body) (John 1:14, 16).

(B). HIS KNOWLEDGE.

¹ Continence – Self Control: Virtue whereby the will is inclined to resist inordinate movements of concupiscence.

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In addition to the UNCREATED knowledge which He had as God, Christ had a threefold CREATED knowledge: -

- (a). ACQUIRED knowledge which He gained, as any other human being does, by using His human faculties.
- (b). INFUSED knowledge which He received direct from God, as the angels receive theirs.
- (c). BEATIFIC knowledge which He had through the beatific vision.

No wonder, then, Scripture can say that in Him “are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colos. 2:3). No wonder He can say: “I am the light of the world. He that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12). No wonder He can be our perfect TEACHER.

(C). HIS POWER.

As God, Christ has infinite power. As Man, His NATURAL power was great, since His body, soul and faculties were perfect. But His SUPERNATURAL power was much greater. As an INSTRUMENT JOINED TO HIS DIVINITY, His human Nature had the power to work miracles, as a habit; and His soul had perfect dominion over His body.

It is good to remember that in Him each of us has a friend who is not merely all-good, all-loving, and all-merciful, but also all-powerful. He can do anything we want. No other friend can compare with Him.

6. The Worship Due To Christ.

We WORSHIP a person when we pay honour to him, and at the same time submit ourselves to him, on account of his superior excellence. We can honour equals or inferiors, but worship only superior beings. Worship is HONOUR with SUBMISSION. There are three kinds: -

- (a). LATRIA. This is given to GOD ALONE, on account of His infinite excellence.
- (b). DULIA. This is given to SAINTS other than Our Lady, on account of the excellence of their sanctity.
- (c). HYPERDULIA. This is given to OUR LADY, on account of her unique excellence as Mother of God.

Again, each of these forms of worship may be;

(i). ABSOLUTE or

(ii). RELATIVE.

Worship is ABSOLUTE, when the person is worshipped on account of the excellence that is in HIM. Worship is RELATIVE when it is given to a being, not on account of itself, but on account of another whom it REPRESENTS. Thus, we give ABSOLUTE worship to God, Our Lady, and other saints; but only a RELATIVE worship to such things as pictures, statues and relics.

What worship, now, must we give to Christ? Is it an ABSOLUTE worship, or is it a RELATIVE one? Obviously, it is an ABSOLUTE worship. We honour Christ and submit ourselves to Him on account of the excellence that is in HIM. Again, is this worship one of dulia, hyperdulia or latria? Clearly, one of LATRIA. Why? Because the excellence that we honour in Christ is the INFINITE excellence of the SON OF GOD. So we give Christ an ABSOLUTE worship of LATRIA. In other words we ADORE Him as the INCARNATE WORD OF GOD.

Take our devotion to the SACRED HEART, for instance. WHOM do we worship in this beautiful devotion? The PERSON of the Word Incarnate, symbolised in His HEART, which is ever burning with love for us. THROUGH WHAT do we worship Him? Through His HEART, inasmuch as it is personally united to the Word, i.e. owned by Him, and inasmuch as it is a symbol of Christ's love for us. WHY do we give Him this worship? On account of His infinite EXCELLENCE as the Son of God.

It is the same for a kindred devotion – that to the EUCHARISTIC HEART. In it we consider the Heart of Christ as moving Him to

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institute the Eucharist in order that He may remain with us as our COMPANION, in our tabernacles, as our VICTIM, in the Mass, and as our GUEST in Holy Communion.

In neither devotion do we ever SEPARATE the Heart from the Person owning it. We adore it as belonging to the Son of God made Man, and our adoration goes to HIM.

We should be deeply devoted to the Sacred Heart and to the Eucharistic Heart of Christ. You will find in the Raccolta many lovely, indulgenced prayers that you can use in these devotions. Here are some of the invocations given concerning the Eucharistic Heart:

Heart of Jesus, in the Eucharist, sweet Companion of our exile,

I adore Thee;

Heart solitary, Heart humiliated.

Heart abandoned, Heart forgotten,

Heart despised, Heart outraged,

Heart, silent, desirous to speak to souls,

Heart, sweet refuge of the hidden life,

Heart, Teacher of the secrets of union with God,

Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.

7. God With Us.

In a previous chapter we saw that reason proves that God exists, and that He is a self-existing, eternal, necessary, infinitely-perfect Being, all-good, all-loving, all-wise, all-powerful, all-merciful, and so on. Thus known by reason, God may seem very unreal to us. He is so infinitely different from us. He is hidden in light inaccessible, and in impenetrable mystery. By the Incarnation, however, He is brought within the grasp of our earth-bound minds and hearts.

He there takes to Himself a Human Nature. He speaks to us through human lips, with an accent and an authority that are His alone. "I am Truth Itself," He says. And those who listen to Him are moved to the depths of their being by the power and the sincerity of His teaching. "Never did man speak as this Man" (John 7:46). By

thus making God's infinite authority visible, as it were, to us, the Incarnation greatly helps our FAITH. For this virtue is based on God's right to be believed when He deigns to reveal to us, His little ones, the treasures of His wisdom and His love.

By the many miracles that Christ works, He makes concrete for us the infinite power of God. And by His kindness to repentant sinners, He brings before our eyes God's limitless mercy. Hence, the Incarnation is also a great aid to our HOPE. For this is based on the omnipotence of God, helping us to gain heaven.

Finally, Christ brings home to us the fact that God loves us, and that He Himself is infinitely worthy of our love. He does this especially by dying for us on the Cross, and by giving us Himself in the Eucharist. He also shows us the dignity and value of a human soul. All this is, obviously, a great help to our CHARITY, the supreme virtue which moves us to love God above all else, for His own infinitely lovable sake, and our neighbour as ourselves, for the sake of God.

Thus, the Incarnation helps us to practise the three THEOLOGICAL virtues, FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY, which are the faculties of our supernatural life.

8. Practical Conclusions.

1. Every day, I should thank God for the Incarnation.
2. I should try to realise who it is I speak to in the confessional, visit in the Chapel, and receive in Holy Communion.
3. Christ is infinite Truth; hence I should accept His teaching. He is also infinite Wisdom; hence I should live His teaching.
4. In Christ I have a Friend Who is infinitely good, loving, powerful and merciful – One Who can never fail. I should never fail Him.
5. By my prayers and example I should try to bring others to know and love Christ. My heart, like His, should be on fire with zeal for souls.

SUMMARY

1. The Incarnation: The Son of God became Man, to atone for sin.

2. Christ Is Truly God.

- (a). We believe this on the AUTHORITY of God revealing it.
- (b). The CHURCH assures us INFALLIBLY that He did reveal it.
- (c). In making this decision, she relies on SCRIPTURE and TRADITION.

(A) . SCRIPTURE: -

- 1. Scripture calls Christ GOD.
- 2. Scripture calls Him the SON OF GOD, in the proper sense of the term.
- 3. Scripture gives Him PERFECTIONS that belong to GOD alone: -
 - (a). He is EQUAL TO THE FATHER.
 - (b). He is ETERNAL, with the eternity proper to God.
 - (c). He is the CREATOR and CONSERVER of all creatures.
 - (d). He FORGAVE SIN by His own power.
 - (e). He WORKED MIRACLES by His own power.
 - (f). He SENT THE HOLY GHOST to His Apostles.
 - (g). He gives us GRACE and ETERNAL LIFE - a sharing in God's life.
 - (h). He IS TRUTH and LIFE itself.
 - (i). He is SUPREME JUDGE of the living and the dead.

(B). TRADITION: -

- (a). The Church's condemnation of heresies. e.g. ARIANISM.
- (b). Decisions of UNIVERSAL COUNCILS. e.g. Nicaea (325); Constantinople (381); Ephesus (431); Chalcedon (451).
- (c). CREEDS. e.g. The Athanasian Creed.

3. Christ Is Truly Man.

- (a). We believe this on God's AUTHORITY. "The Word was made flesh."
- (b). He has a human body and soul, united to form one nature. Hence, He is Man.

4. How Christ Can Be God And Man.

- (a). In each of us there is a human NATURE and a human PERSONALITY.
- (b). In Christ there is a human NATURE, but no human PERSONALITY. Its place is taken by that of the Second Person of the Trinity.
- (c). Christ has TWO NATURES, one human, one Divine; but only ONE PERSONALITY.
- (d). The two NATURES are UNITED, not by a union in NATURE, but by a union in PERSON. Hence, it is called the HYPOSTATIC union.
- (e). No evident contradiction in saying that the one Divine Person OWNS two natures – the nature of God and the nature of Man.

5. Some Perfections Of Christ's Human Nature.

(A). SANCTITY.

- (a). Christ was infinitely SINLESS.
- (b). His UNCREATED GRACE: that of the HYPOSTATIC UNION, which made Him holy with the SUBSTANTIAL, INFINITE sanctity of God.
- (c). His CREATED GRACES: –
 - (i). An ABSOLUTE fullness of SANCTIFYING GRACE.
 - (ii). All the SUPERNATURAL VIRTUES, except faith, hope, penance, continence.
 - (iii). All the GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST.
 - (iv). Extraordinary graces: CHARISMS. e.g. Gift of prophecy, miracles, tongues.

He had all these different graces, not only as an individual, but also as HEAD of the MYSTICAL BODY, to be able to give them to us.

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(B). KNOWLEDGE.

- (a). His UNCREATED knowledge, as God.
- (b). His CREATED knowledge: (i). Acquired. (ii). Infused. (iii). Beatific.

(C). POWER.

- (a). His INFINITE power, as God.
- (b). His NATURAL power – perfect body, soul and faculties.
- (c). His SUPERNATURAL power – His Humanity as INSTRUMENT of His Divinity.

6. Worship Due To Christ.

- (a). Worship is HONOUR with SUBMISSION.
- (b). Kinds: (i). LATRIA – given to GOD alone.
 - (ii). DULIA – given to SAINTS, other than Our Lady.
 - (iii). HYPERDULIA – Given to Our Lady, as Mother of God.

Each can be:

ABSOLUTE - given to a being on account of excellence found in it,
e.g. St. John, Our Lady, Christ.

RELATIVE - given to a being on account of what it represents. e.g.
a holy picture, statue, relic, cross.

We give Christ an ABSOLUTE worship of LATRIA. It is given to the only PERSON in Him – that of the Son of God. We adore Him as God.

- (c). Devotions. e.g. Sacred Heart. Eucharistic Heart.

7. God With Us.

The Incarnation makes God as it were VISIBLE to us. Hence, it greatly helps our FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY.

EXERCISES

- (A). Fill in blanks or cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. St. John says: "The Word was made (...)." 2. Scripture calls Christ "the only (...) Son of God." 3. "I and the Father are one." Christ is here referring to His (Human) (Divine) nature. 4. "The Father is greater than I." Christ is here referring to His (Human) (Divine) nature. 5. Christ was put to death for claiming to be (...). 6. Four early Fathers who defended Christ's Divinity are (...). 7. Four early Councils that did the same are (...). 8. The longest of the early Creeds is the (...) Creed. 9. Christ said over the bread at the Last Supper: "This is My (...)" ; and in the Garden He exclaimed: "My (...)" is sorrowful even unto death. 10. In Christ there are two (natures) (persons). 11. Christ has (one intellect) (two intellects), and (one will) (two wills). 12. Since Christ's two natures are united in the Person of the Word, this is called the (...) union. 13. It (is) (is not) a contradiction to say that the one Divine Personality in Christ can own two natures. 14. By Christ's uncreated grace, we mean the (...) union. 15. Christ has (an absolute) (a relative) fullness of grace. 16. Christ (had) (had not) all the supernatural virtues. 17. He had extraordinary graces called (...). 18. He had three kinds of created knowledge, namely: (...). 19. We give Christ (a relative) (an absolute) worship of (latria) (dulia) (hyperdulia). 20. Two lovely devotions to Christ are those of the (...) and of the (...).

(B). How would you answer each of the following?

1. What does Scripture tell us about the Divinity of Christ?
2. What evidence have we that Christ is truly Man?
3. Show that it is not an evident contradiction for Christ to be God and Man.
4. What kind of worship do we give to Christ; and why?
5. What do you know about Christ's sanctity?
6. What kinds of knowledge did Christ have on earth?
7. Why was Christ's human nature endowed with a special power?
8. Describe these two devotions: that to the Sacred Heart, and that to the Eucharistic Heart of Christ.

Chapter 25

REDEMPTION

1. What It Is.

To REDEEM means to SET FREE, by PAYING THE PRICE. Thus, certain religious orders once did a noble work of charity by redeeming Christians taken captive by the Turks. They freed them from slavery, by paying the price demanded.

In REDEEMING the human race, consequently, Christ SETS IT FREE. From what? From the SLAVERY of SATAN brought on it by Adam. At the same time, He restores to us the GRACE lost by sin; and with this, a right to heaven. How does He do this? By PAYING THE PRICE. What price? That of His DEATH and SACRIFICE on the Cross. To whom does He pay it? To the Devil? No. To God, Who has been grievously dishonoured by sin.

The main element in redemption, then, is the full PAYING OF THE PRICE, by SACRIFICE. The freeing from slavery and the restoring of grace are consequences of this.

When we say that Christ redeemed us, we do not mean that each of us will inevitably be saved. We mean that He redeemed the human race CAUSALLY. As we shall see in a later chapter, each of us has to use his free will to apply Christ's merits to his soul. At present, we are considering redemption objectively, in its CAUSES, not subjectively, inasmuch as it is applied to individual souls.

2. Christ Is Our Redeemer.

Why did the Second Person of the Trinity become Man? Was it to establish an infallible, everlasting Church? Yes. But not primarily for that. Was it to be our unrivalled Teacher, Miracle Worker, or King? Yes. But not primarily. The Son of God became Man primarily to REDEEM us. The MOTIVE of the Incarnation is one of infinite MERCY.

Look at a Crucifix. Who is represented on the Cross? The Son of God made Man. As Man, He can suffer; and, since the Human Nature in which He suffers belongs to the Second Person of the Trinity, His sufferings are of infinite worth. What is He doing on the Cross? He is shedding the last drop of His precious Blood. He is offering to God a SACRIFICE. For what purpose? To satisfy fully for man's sin, and to restore to him the grace and friendship of God. He is paying what St. Paul calls the "great price" of our redemption - great, not merely on account of the intensity of the suffering, but especially on account of the intensity of His love for God and man, and on account of the infinite dignity of the PERSON who redeems us. Yes, the Crucifix shows us that Christ is before all else our SAVIOUR, our REDEEMER.

This is seen, too, from the words of the angel announcing His birth. For Gabriel said to Mary: "Thou shalt bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS" (Luke 1:31). Then he said to St. Joseph: "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS. For He shall SAVE His people from their sins" (Mat. 1:20-21). The holy name of Jesus thus means SAVIOUR. It is the name given by GOD Himself, through Gabriel His messenger. And when God gives a name, it always indicates the office to be fulfilled by the one named. Christ's very name, then, shows that He is first and foremost our loving Saviour.

From the very beginning, Christ Himself recognised this. Over and over again, He said that He had come on earth to save mankind: "The Son of Man is come that He may GIVE HIS LIFE, a REDEMPTION for many" (Mat. 20:28); "I am the good shepherd... I LAY DOWN MY LIFE for My sheep" (John 10:15). And so on.

When Peter made his act of faith in Christ's Divinity at Caesarea-Philippi, Our Saviour spoke of His coming Passion and Death in Jerusalem. Moved by a purely natural love for His Master, Peter said: "Lord, be it far from Thee; this shall not be unto Thee." But Our Lord rebuked him sternly, saying: "Go behind Me, SATAN, for thou savourest not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men" (Mat. 16:22-23). Without realising it, Peter was trying to prevent God's plan of redemption from being fulfilled. He was trying to stop Christ from doing the very thing He came on earth to do. Can we wonder that the gentle Saviour called him Satan?

The thought of His Passion was never absent from Christ's mind, even on Mt. Thabor. There, He allowed the beatific vision to have its full effect on His Human Nature. And what happened? It poured such a deluge of light and joy into all His faculties that His body shone like the sun, and His garments were made whiter than snow. Yet, even here, He saw from afar the scourging, the crown of thorns, the nails, the shame and the agony of His Passion. In an ineffable torrent of happiness, He pictured to Himself an abyss of sorrow. In the midst of the joys of heaven itself, He looked at the Cross. Even here, the thought of Calvary dominated all others.

Thinking always of His death, He also longed for it. "I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptised," He said, "and how I am straitened until it be accomplished" (Luke 12:49-50). And Scripture assures us that He here spoke of the baptism of blood, the martyrdom He was to undergo upon the Cross. He yearned for it, on account of the grace that filled His soul, urged Him to fulfil perfectly the mission entrusted Him by His Father. So ardently did He yearn for it, in fact, that He constantly spoke of it as His HOUR, as if it were the one hour He had come on earth to fulfil. Others come into this world to live. He came, to die.

And the closer He drew to the Cross, the more emphatically did He warn His Apostles, so that they would not be scandalised by its apparent failure, its degradation and its shame. Thus, He said to them: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes and ancients; and they shall condemn Him to death; and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles. And they shall mock Him and scourge Him and kill Him" (Mark 10:33-34) .

Finally, at the Last Supper, He made it clear that His death would be a SACRIFICE offered to God for the redemption of the world. "This is My Body, which is GIVEN for you." "This is My Blood... which shall be SHED for you" (Luke, 22:19-20, etc.). And, to make it impossible for His Church ever to forget His sacrificial death, He added the words: "DO THIS IN COMMEMORATION OF ME." Hence, the Mass today perpetuates Calvary, and distributes its merits to millions of souls. You have merely to assist at it intelligently to realise that Christ is before all else our Divine Redeemer.

3. How Christ Redeemed Us.

REDEMPTION

Recall what you learnt about Adam's sin. It was, in the first place, a grievous OFFENCE against God, an injury to the honour due to Him. Secondly, it DEPRIVED us of GRACE. Thirdly, it made us SLAVES of Satan. Finally, it brought down God's ANGER on the human race.

Now, in redeeming us, Christ had to exercise a fourfold causality, to repair this fourfold ruin caused by Adam's sin. In other words, He had to:-

- (a). make full SATISFACTION for sin, principally for Adam's but also for our own;
- (b). MERIT again for us grace lost by sin;
- (c). FREE us from the slavery of the devil; and
- (d). APPEASE GOD'S ANGER, by offering to Him a SACRIFICE of infinite worth.

That Christ did all this in redeeming us is infallibly defined by the Church. It is vouched for, too, by scores of texts from Scripture, and by the abundant writings of the early Fathers. But we can treat it only briefly.

(a). Christ caused our Redemption by making full SATISFACTION to God.

SATISFACTION means the complete paying of a DEBT that is due. Left to himself, man could never pay this debt completely, because sin is an infinite offence. Only the GOD-MAN could do this. As Man, He could suffer; and, since His sufferings were those of the Son of God, they were of infinite worth. As manifesting Christ's love and obedience, they gave God immeasurably more honour and glory than that of which He was deprived by sin. They atoned fully for the sins of the whole world.

That is why St. Peter can remind us that we have been redeemed, not by corruptible things such as gold and silver, but by "the precious Blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled" (1 Pet. 1:19). And why St. Paul can tell us that "We were reconciled to God by the death of His Son" (Roms. 5:10). And why St. John can say that Christ is "a propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for those of the whole world" (1 John 2: 2).

(b). Christ caused our Redemption by MERITING grace lost by sin.

Satisfaction concerns a DEBT to be paid. MERIT concerns a GOOD to be gained, a REWARD. Supernatural merit can mean a RIGHT to a supernatural good; or it can mean a WORK to which a supernatural good is due.

Christ did not merit the grace given to Adam before the fall. But He did merit the re-giving of grace to man.

St. Paul, for instance, speaks of our “being justified freely by His GRACE” (Roms. 3:24). Again, he says that we have been redeemed by Christ “according to the riches of His GRACE” (Ephes. 1:7).

From these and many similar texts, it is clear that Christ's passion and death obtained for us the restoration of grace and of eternal beatitude. Hence, He redeemed us by way of MERIT.

(c). Christ caused our Redemption by FREEING us from the slavery of Satan.

This, too, is clear from Scripture. Christ Himself tells us over and over again that He came to redeem us. And St. Paul confirms this by saying that God sent His Son that He might redeem us, and that we might receive again the adoption of sons (Galat. 4:4-5). He also bids us thank God for having “translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have REDEMPTION through His blood” (Colos. 1:13-14).

But redemption is the paying of a price by which someone is freed from slavery. Hence, in redeeming us by paying the price of His sufferings and death, Christ freed us from the slavery of sin.

(d). Christ caused our Redemption by offering a SACRIFICE to God.

St. Paul makes this quite clear when he says: "Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath delivered Himself for us, an oblation and a SACRIFICE to God" (Ephes. 5:2).

In many other texts, St. Paul refers to Christ's SACRIFICE on the Cross. He even wrote a whole epistle, his Epistle to the Hebrews, to explain the nature and efficacy of this sacrifice.

We shall deal with Christ's Sacrifice later, when we come to speak of the Mass. For the present, it is enough to know that He redeemed us by offering to God a sacrifice of infinite value, in which He was both Priest and Victim. It appeased completely the anger of God, caused by sin.

4. Christ's Resurrection.

Our redemption was ESSENTIALLY completed on the Cross. Still, Christ's RESURRECTION is an integral part of it. How? In these ways: -

- (a). It is the INSTRUMENTAL cause of our resurrection, both corporal and spiritual.

Our body will rise from the dead on the Last Day. This will be our corporal resurrection. Our soul, too, rises from the dead when it changes from a state of mortal sin to one of grace. This is a spiritual resurrection. Now, Christ's resurrection is the instrumental efficient cause of both these risings from the dead, just as a pen is the instrumental efficient cause of the letters which we form with it. Hence, His resurrection plays a part in our redemption. It makes it complete. For Christ came not just to die, but to rise again, and to unite us to Himself in glory.

- (b). It is the EXEMPLARY cause of our resurrection, both corporal and spiritual.

The EXEMPLARY cause is the MODEL according to which something is made, or something is done. Scripture repeatedly asserts that Christ's resurrection is the exemplary cause, not only of the resurrection of our bodies, but also of our souls. St. Paul, for example, writes: "We are buried together with Him in baptism into death, that, as Christ is risen from the dead, so we also may walk in

NEW-NESS of life" (Roms. 6:4). And he shows that this "newness of life" is the life of grace, which is a sharing in the life of God.

(c). It enables Christ to APPLY His merits to us.

Christ's resurrection showed that God had accepted His sacrifice for the redemption of the world. Through His resurrection, consequently, Christ was made ACTUALLY, PERMANENTLY, and in FULL LIBERTY capable of communicating grace to us. That is why He did not send the Holy Ghost to His Apostles, nor did He send them forth to teach, sanctify and govern men, till He Himself had risen from the dead. From this it is surely obvious that His resurrection was an integral part of our redemption.

5. The Cross.

To the Jews, the Cross was a thing of horror. It was associated with brutality, torture, degradation and death. It stood for the torments of criminals and slaves, dying in parched agony and shame, the offscourings of humanity. "Cursed is the man that hangeth upon the tree" was a saying known to all Jews; and it summed up their attitude to the cross. They hated even to mention its name. They called it "the tree."

How shocked the Apostles must have been, therefore, when Christ put to them the repulsive invitation: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his CROSS daily, and follow Me." Surely it was to them the strangest invitation ever put: by friend to friend. And can we wonder at St. Peter's protest of horror, when Christ foretold His Passion? Can we wonder that all the Apostles, except St. John, deserted Him, as He hung in agony and shame on the vile gibbet on Calvary, the Son of God, dying like a criminal, an outcast, a slave?

Then came Pentecost, and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. The hateful Cross was seen in a new light, as the instrument chosen by God's infinite wisdom for the salvation of the world. Like their Divine Master, the Apostles could now stretch out loving hands to this once repulsive symbol. They could embrace it with tears of gratitude and love. Think of Peter at the end of his life, asking to be crucified head-downwards, as if unworthy to die in the way His Saviour had died! Think of Andrew, as he catches into eager hands

the cross of his execution, and lays his lips against its hard wood, as something ineffably precious in the eyes of God!

See the astonishment on the faces of the pagans, as they watch the once hateful Cross become the instrument of hope and love and consolation to millions of Christians! See Christ's missionaries go forth to conquer the world, armed only with His Cross. Yet it is victorious, where swords fail. Magdalen and repentant thieves turn from a life of sin to kneel in humility, contrition and gratitude at the feet of the Crucified. Innocent youths leave the world to take upon themselves the cross of self-denial to which their Saviour invites them; and thousands of them die in the arenas of the Empire, loyal to the Cross they have so lovingly embraced. Hordes of hermits flee to the desert, not to sit at the feet of some philosopher of this world, but to kneel at the feet of Him who died upon the Cross. And there they find a wisdom not to be given by the wise ones of this world, for it is a wisdom from above, the very wisdom of God.

The centuries roll by; and you see St. Thomas Aquinas drawing from the Crucifix the vast treasury of truth contained in his mighty volumes. You see Crusaders marching with a Cross to regain to Christianity the places made sacred by Christ. Later, comes Joan of Arc, wearing over her heart a Cross, which carries her triumphant through battle, nay, through martyrdom itself.

The Jews of old had said: "Cursed is the man that hangeth upon the tree." But today at Easter-tide, hundreds of millions of Catholics throughout the world sing the majestic strains of the "Vexilla Regis"; and they hail the Cross as "*Arbor decora et fulgida*" – "a tree most beautiful and radiant with light." Today, too, we see the Cross converted into a thing of exquisite beauty in the noble churches that exist in every land; for what is a cathedral but a Cross laid upon the ground? The apse is that short section on which Christ's head was laid. The nave is the long section that held His Body. The transepts are the arms of the Cross. And is not the Crucifix found today in every Catholic home, in every Catholic hospital, in every Catholic school? And is not the life of each of us enclosed between crosses – the cross made on us in baptism, and that which signs us in Extreme Unction when Christ comes to us at the end to take us safe to heaven? Does not the day begin for each of us with the sign of the Cross, as we make our morning offering? And does it not end with the Cross we make before we sink into sleep, the image of death?

To us the Cross is indeed a treasure. It is the standard of Christ. It is the key of heaven. It is the tree of life. It is the altar of sacrifice. It is the remedy to pride which is the root of all sin. It is the great book of all Christian knowledge, the perfect abridgment of Christianity. It is the pulpit from which Our Saviour speaks to us. It tells us how to live and how to die. It brings home to us the hatefulness of sin, the magnitude of God's mercy, and the worth of a human soul.

6. Practical Conclusions.

1. By prayer, good works, the Mass and the Sacraments I should make my own the merits won by Christ on Calvary.
2. I should try to realise the black ingratitude of sin, in the light of all the sufferings of Christ.
3. I should offer my sufferings in union with Christ's, in the Mass, for the salvation of souls.
4. I should love and revere the Mass, since it brings before me each day Christ's great sacrifice on Calvary.
5. I should often make the Stations of the Cross fervently and devoutly.

SUMMARY

1. Redemption.

- (a). Christ SETS US FREE from the slavery of Satan.
- (b). He restores GRACE, and with a RIGHT to heaven.
- (c). By paying the PRICE – His SACRIFICE on the Cross.

2. Christ Is Our Redeemer.

- (a). The Crucifix shows it.
- (b). The angel named Him Jesus, which means Saviour.
- (c). He repeatedly declared that He came to redeem us.
- (d). His words to Peter: "Go behind Me, Satan."
- (e). His prophecies concerning His Passion and Death.
- (f). His institution of the Eucharist and the Mass.

3. How Christ Redeemed Us.

- (a). By making full SATISFACTION to God.
- (b). By MERITING grace lost by sin.
- (c). By FREEING us from the slavery of Satan.
- (d). By offering to God a SACRIFICE of infinite worth.

4. Christ's Resurrection.

It is an integral part of redemption, because: -

- (a). It is the INSTRUMENTAL cause of our corporal and spiritual resurrection.
- (b). It is the EXEMPLARY cause of our corporal and spiritual resurrection.
- (c). It enables Christ to apply His merits to our souls.

5. The Cross.

- (a). To the Apostles before Pentecost.
- (b). To the Apostles after Pentecost.
- (c). To all Christians ever since.

6. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following:

1. To redeem means to set (...), by paying the (...) demanded. 2. St. Paul says that we have been bought with "a (...) price." 3. The Son of God became Man primarily in order to (...) us. 4. The Holy Name of Jesus means (...). 5. Christ said that He came to give His life "a (...) for many." He says: "I am the good (...). I lay down My (...) for My sheep." 7. When Peter tried to dissuade Him from undergoing His Passion, He said: "Go behind Me, (...)." 8. Christ thought of His Passion even during the (...) on Mt. Thabor. 9. Christ said: "I have a (...) wherewith I am to be baptised; and how I am straitened until it be accomplished." 10. He often spoke of His Passion as His (...). 11. At the Last Supper, He said over the bread: "This is My Body which is (...) for you." 12. And over the wine: "This is My Blood which shall be (...) for you." 13. This shows that His death was to be a true (...),

and that it is perpetuated in the (...). 14. He redeemed us by making full (...) for sin. 15. He redeemed us by (...) grace lost by sin. 16. He redeemed us by freeing us from the (...) of Satan. 17. He redeemed us by offering to God a (...) of infinite worth. 18. His resurrection is the (...) and the (...) cause of our resurrection, both (...) and (...). 19. It was St. (...) who asked to be crucified head-downwards 20. Christ's standard is the (...).

(B). Answer the following: -

1. What do we mean when we say that Christ redeemed us?
2. In what four ways did Christ cause our redemption?
3. How would you show from Scripture that Christ is primarily our Redeemer?
4. What part does His resurrection play in our redemption?
5. Write all you can on the Cross, showing what it means to us.
6. Why should you often make the Stations of the Cross?
7. What does Calvary teach us about the malice of mortal sin?
8. On Calvary God's justice and mercy are united. Explain this.

Chapter 26

THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST

1. Society Comes From God.

Man is a RATIONAL animal. Hence, he is also a SOCIAL animal. He must live in society with his fellow men, if he is to attain perfection.

Hence, SOCIETY itself comes from GOD. It does not come from Him directly, as does the Church. But it does come from Him INDIRECTLY, inasmuch as He has made man a social being. In making man a social being, God establishes society. It owes its existence to Him just as much as man does.

From this, it follows that SOCIETY has OBLIGATIONS to God. Its first obligation is that of RECOGNISING God as its Author, and of paying Him the homage due to Him as such.

But this is just what many nations fail to do today. Instead, they are either indifferent to God's claims, or they are bitterly opposed to Him, and seek to banish His name from amongst men.

This is what Cardinal Mercier calls the sin of national APOSTASY. It is the refusal on the part of nations and states to recognise God officially as their Author. It is the dreadful modern crime of national TREASON to God.

What is the result? "More than all the sins of individuals or of families," writes Cardinal Mercier, "this sin calls down upon society the punishment of God." And you have only to look at the amount of misery and suffering in the world today to realise that this is true.

To make REPARATION to God for this sin of national treason and apostasy, the Church established the Feast of CHRIST, THE KING, in 1925. In it, She honours Our Divine Saviour as UNIVERSAL KING, not only of individuals and families, but of nations also, and so pays to God, through His Incarnate Son, the homage due to Him. Let us try to appreciate it.

2. Christ's Kingship In Scripture And in Tradition.

(A). THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The first book of the Old Testament tells us that, immediately after Adam's sin, God promised mankind a Redeemer, who would redeem not merely this or that nation, but ALL peoples. For Genesis says that in Him "all the nations of the earth shall be blessed." (Gen. 26:4).

Psalm 2 speaks of Him as a KING – a king who will be none other than the only-begotten Son of God. It foretells, too, the universality of His kingship, since in it God says to Him: "I will give Thee the GENTILES for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for Thy possession." (Ps. 2:8).

Psalm 109 pictures Him as a KING who will rule even over His enemies. "Sit Thou at My right hand," God says to Him, "until I make Thy enemies Thy FOOTSTOOL." And again: "Rule Thou in the midst of Thy enemies. With Thee there is principality in the days of Thy strength, in the brightness of the saints." (Ps. 109:1-3).

While insisting on the universality of His kingship, Psalm 71 insists also on the fact that justice, peace and spiritual prosperity will abound under His all-wise rule:

"He shall rule from sea to sea...

"The kings of Tharsis and the Islands shall offer presents; the kings of the Arabians and of Saba shall bring gifts.

"All the kings of the earth shall adore Him; all nations shall serve Him.

"For He shall deliver the poor from the mighty, and the needy that hath no helper.

"He shall spare the poor and the needy; He shall save the soul of the poor..." (Ps. 71).

The PROPHETS also foretell His ROYAL dignity. Isaias, for example, almost shouts for joy as he portrays the character of Christ King. "A

Child is born to us," he exclaims, "and a Son is given to us; and the GOVERNMENT is upon His shoulder. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor God the Mighty... the Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6).

Daniel assures us that Christ will receive from God "power and glory and a kingdom," and that "all peoples, tribes and tongues shall serve Him"; and that His power shall be "an everlasting power that shall not be taken away," and His kingdom one "that shall not be destroyed." (Dan. 7:14).

Thus the prophets give more and more details concerning Christ's kingship till, not long before His birth, Zacharias describes His entry into Jerusalem, as a King who is also the Saviour of men: "Behold, thy KING will come to thee, the Just, the SAVIOUR. He is poor, and riding upon an ass." (Zachar. 9:8).

From the Old Testament, then, it is clear that Christ, the promised Redeemer, is to be at the same time a universal KING.

(B). THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Here, Our Divine Saviour's kingship is made clearer still. Announcing His birth, the angel says to Our Lady:

"Behold, thou shalt conceive... and bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus.

"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the THRONE of David His father; and He shall REIGN in the house of Jacob FOREVER.

"And of His KINGDOM there shall be NO END." (Luke 1:31-33).

Recall the adoration of the Magi. These wise men from the East offered the Infant Christ gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Why gold? In recognition of His KINGSHIP. Why frankincense? In recognition of His DIVINITY. Why myrrh? In recognition of His sacrifice and death upon the Cross. And since the Magi were GENTILES, not Jews, their homage brings home to us the universality of the Kingship of Christ.

During His public life, Christ exercised in all kinds of ways His power as KING, not only over angels and men, but over the rest of creation as well. He worked miracles of every sort by His own power and in His own right. He forgave sin. He perfected the Old Law, though it had been given by God Himself. He showed Himself Master of the Sabbath. He gave men grace, which is a sharing in the life of God. Even the angels were happy to be His servants.

He did not at first stress the fact that He was a KING, because He knew that the Jews would misunderstand Him, by taking Him to be a merely TEMPORAL King. When they wanted to make Him such a King, He fled from them to the mountain. He had come on earth to found, not a temporal, but a spiritual kingdom, His everlasting Church, which would lead its citizens to heaven.

At the close of His public life, however, when the crowd again hailed Him as their King as He entered Jerusalem, He did not flee from them. Instead, He accepted their acclamations: "Blessed be the KING who cometh in the name of the Lord." (Luke 19:38). Why? Because, whether they realised it or not, they were now witnessing to His spiritual royalty; for He was entering the Holy City to redeem us, to conquer His kingdom by His death upon the Cross. He was fulfilling the prophecy of Zacharias, for He was seated upon an ass, fit mount for Him who had come to trample under foot human pride and vanity and the false grandeur of the world.

During Christ's trial, Pilate said to Him: "Art Thou the KING of the Jews?" Our Saviour replied: "My kingdom is not of this world." And He explained why. But Pilate insisted: "Art Thou a KING, then?" Christ replied that He was. Then He added these words: "For this was I born, and for this came I into the world, that I should give testimony to the truth. EVERYONE THAT IS OF THE TRUTH heareth My voice." (John 18:33-37). Here Christ tells Pilate, at a most solemn moment of His life, that He is indeed a KING, and that His kingship is UNIVERSAL, since He will rule not only over the Jews, but over all those who will accept His truth.

He who had fled from royal honours during His public life, now openly declares that He is a King. He who forbade even His Apostles to call Him King during the days of His miracles, publishes His kingship during His Passion. And never was He more kingly than during those dreadful hours of suffering, humiliation and shame.

(C). TRADITION.

Like Scripture, Tradition teaches that Christ is a King.

Among the early Fathers who taught that Christ is a King we can mention St. Justin, St. Irenaeus, St. Cyril of Alexandria and St. Ambrose. The latter writes: "Rightly was the title of King placed on the Cross, because from it radiated the kingly majesty of Christ."

The teaching of Tradition is seen, too, in the liturgy of the Church. In the Te Deum the Church sings "Tu Rex gloriae, Christe," hailing Christ as a King of glory. In the office of Advent, it greets Him as "Rex Gentium," the King of Nations. And in the Feast of Corpus Christi it addresses Him as "Christum Regem dominantem gentibus," the Lord and Ruler of the peoples of the earth. The Mass of Christ the King sums up the Church's teaching when it says: "Almighty, everlasting God, who in Thy beloved Son, King of the whole world, hast willed to restore all things anew, grant in Thy mercy that all the families of nations, rent asunder by the wound of sin, may be subjected to His most gentle rule."

Thus, the Church has both Scripture and Tradition behind her when she establishes the Feast of Christ the King. And this majestic Feast is especially appropriate to our age, since its aims is to make REPARATION to God, through His Incarnate Son, for the neglect, the indifference, the apostasy and treason of the nations.

3. Christ's Titles To Kingship.

In the first place, Christ is a King by His very BIRTH.

By birth, He is the only-begotten Son of God. Hence, He is Lord and King of all creation. Because of the Hypostatic Union, Christ has, even as Man, a power of ruling over all creatures, just as He has a right to our adoration and love. By birth, He is a universal King.

In the second place, He is a King by RIGHT OF CONQUEST.

In REDEEMING us, He has freed us from the power of Satan, and acquired us for His own kingdom, at the price of His own Blood. Hence, we belong to Him. "Know you not... that you are not your own?" says St. Paul; "For you are bought with a great price." (1 Cor. 6:19-20). And again: "You are Christ's." (1 Cor. 3:23). By His

Passion and death, therefore, Christ acquired His kingship by conquest, over the souls of men.

The Jews gave Our Saviour a crown of thorns in derision, and a fragile reed as a sceptre, little realising the universal royalty symbolised by that reed, little thinking that the drops of blood on that crown were infinitely more precious than all the diamonds belonging to the kings of this earth.

Pilate had Christ's title, "King of the Jews," fixed to the top of the Cross. Written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, the three universal languages of the time, it witnessed to the universality of Our Redeemer's Kingship. And, reading it, men could realise that His Kingship was not of this world; for His lacerated body was His strength, His Blood was His royal purple, and His throne was a shameful Cross.

Yet, He was a King. In three days He rose in glory from the dead. And, before ascending to heaven, He said to His Apostles: "ALL POWER is given Me in heaven and on earth. Going, therefore, TEACH all nations, BAPTISING them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to OBSERVE all things whatsoever I have COMMANDED you. And behold I AM WITH YOU ALL DAYS, even to the consummation of the world." (Mat. 28:18).

Did ever an earthly king speak words like these, or give such powers to men? Did ever an earthly king make such a promise? Astounding words, these are. They flow from human lips, indeed, but from human lips that belong to the Son of God. They give three mighty powers - those of TEACHING, SANCTIFYING and GOVERNING all men to the end of time - powers which are a participation in the very power of God. And they bear with them God's own assurance of help, not for a few years or a few centuries, but for all centuries, to the end of the world. More perhaps than any others, these words of the risen Christ bring home to us the dignity, the nobility, the majesty of His Kingship. They show Him to be indeed the "KING OF KINGS" (Apoc. 19:16), who will reign over the minds and hearts of the faithful all days, till He come again in judgment at the end.

4. The Nature Of Christ's Royalty.

There is a twofold royalty: a TEMPORAL royalty, and a SPIRITUAL royalty. The end of the former is to promote the temporal welfare of men. The end of the latter is to direct men to their supernatural last end – the vision in heaven.

Has Our Lord a TEMPORAL royalty over the world? Yes. He has it both as God and as Man. “ALL power is given Me in heaven and on earth,” He said; and He was speaking of Himself, not as God, but as Man. Even as Man, then, as St. Paul says, “All things are subject to Him.” (1 Cor. 15:27). It could not be otherwise, given the Hypostatic Union.

Did he choose to EXERCISE this temporal royalty on earth? No. Had He done so, He would have been playing into the hands of the Jews, who wanted Him to be a merely temporal King. Instead, He chose to live as a subject of the temporal power. He chose a life of poverty. He paid tribute to Caesar. He fled from those who would make Him a king. When the sons of Zebedee asked if they could sit on each side of Him in the kingdom they expected Him to establish, He asked them if they could drink the chalice of suffering that He was going to drink. This He did to show that His kingdom was to be a SPIRITUAL, a SUPERNATURAL one, whose end was the salvation of souls, and not just their welfare in this world. Christ had a RIGHT to exercise His temporal sovereignty, indeed; but He preferred not to exercise it on earth.

He did, however, exercise His SPIRITUAL sovereignty. He exercised it over the minds and hearts of His Apostles when He made them the foundation of His Church. He exercises it today over the one billion Catholics that belong to the body of that Church; through the grace He gives them. In fact, all human beings come under His spiritual sovereignty, since they are all, in God's sight, subject to Him. And He will exercise His spiritual sovereignty to the very end.

5. The Excellence Of Christ's Royalty.

Its excellence is seen in its AUTHORITY, and in the PURPOSE for which it is exercised.

Its AUTHORITY is supreme. It is that of the Son of God. He has power not only over bodies, but also over souls, not only over individuals but also over families and nations. His is the authority of

the highest intelligence, the most upright will, and the most intense love the world has ever seen; for it is the authority of the Word of God, made Man for love of us.

It implies the power of LEGISLATOR, and that of Supreme JUDGE. Christ's power as Legislator is seen in the fact that He replaced the Old Law of fear, by the New Law of love. "A new Commandment I give unto you: that you LOVE one another, as I have loved you." (John 13:34). His power as Judge is seen from His words: "Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." (Mat. 16:19).

Finally, this authority is universal. It extends to all places, all times, all creatures. Even the angels act as messengers of Christ's kingdom. At present, all creatures are submitted to Him by RIGHT. On the Last Day, all will be submitted to Him in FACT, as well.

In regard to Him, NEUTRALITY is impossible. "He that is not WITH Me, is AGAINST Me," He says. (Mat. 12:30). Why? Because man cannot be neutral in regard to his LAST END. Not to will it is to turn away from it. To neglect or ignore it is to fail to gain it. It is to lose one's soul. And it is to this last end that the royalty of Christ orders all things. "I am the way, the truth and the life." He is indeed all these, for He is Knowledge, Truth and Life Itself; and by the example, the teaching and the grace He gives us, He leads us to Himself in heaven.

His royalty is thus most excellent also in the PURPOSE for which He exercises it. Through His own sufferings and death, He leads us to the infinite, the never-ending happiness of the beatific vision. He gives us His light, strength, life and love to enable us to gain this glorious end. He even gives us HIMSELF in Holy Communion. He comes in Person to each of us here in exile, in a most intimate union, which should be a foretaste of our union with Him in heaven. In all this we see the infinite kindness and goodness of our King.

He makes even His enemies serve Him. The persecution of His martyrs contributes to His glory, as did of old the ignominy of the Cross. And a day will come when His enemies will be finally overthrown. If they will not allow Him to reign over them by mercy, He will reign over them by justice. And it will be justice of God.

For us, His reign is one of love. It is our happiness and our salvation. It brings with it a wondrous peace, which arises from the right order He established on the Cross. We should do our best to spread this peace throughout the world.

6. How Christ Exercises His Royalty.

(A). In CIVIL SOCIETY.

Christ warns civil rulers not to deny God's authority, since it is the foundation of their own; and not to rule by atheistic principles since these can bring only misery and ruin to families and nations. He reminds them of the debt of public worship every nation owes to Him, as universal King. He insists on His right, as Incarnate Truth, to be taught in schools and preached in churches; and on His right, as Incarnate Love, to be carried to the sick in hospitals, and to the dying. He tells rulers that they will be severely judged for violating His rights, and for trying to remain indifferent or neutral in regard to Him who is the Last End of every creature.

(B). In THE CHURCH.

Here Christ exercises His royalty by governing His Church through the Pope, His vicar, and through the Bishops.

In the Church, which is His Mystical Body, Christ is the absolute Master. But He is also the living Head. He directs all. He gives life to all, especially by His Sacraments. He regenerates children by baptism; makes them His soldiers by confirmation; restores grace to them by confession; comes to each of them in Holy Communion; ensures the continuance of society by matrimony, and of the priesthood by ordination; strengthens them in their last agony by extreme unction, and thus leads them through death to heaven.

It is He who inspires His religious, protects His innocent children, assists His Christian families, and gives vocations. And if He allows imperfections and scandals to arise, it is only that the divine element in His Church may appear the more clearly, manifesting His unwearied protection and love.

(C). In INDIVIDUAL SOULS.

Here Christ exercises His royalty in a most intimate and often hidden manner. He enlightens souls by faith, and by the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. He draws them ever nearer to Himself, and to the Father, and to the Holy Spirit. He inspires good resolutions. He gives courage to carry them out in practice. With a love that is as undying as it is tender and strong. He leads His heroes and heroines through the "dark night" of the senses and of the soul, to the highest sanctity. He turns sinners into saints.

7. The Two Standards.

There are two armies on this earth, and each human being belongs to one or other of them. One owes allegiance to Satan. It fights under his banner. The other owes allegiance to Christ. It fights under the banner of the cross. Neutrality is impossible. It is question of man's Last End.

Each of the leaders promises a reward to those who fight with him. Satan offers sinful satisfactions of soul and body in this life, and a never-ending hell of torments in the next. Christ offers us the suffering and self-denial entailed in avoiding sin, but with it peace and true happiness in this world, and a sharing of God's infinite happiness in the next. Which of these is the nobler way of life? Which, the most reasonable? Which gives us the greater happiness in time and in eternity?

By the everlasting CHARACTER given me by baptism, and by my baptismal promises which I have often freely renewed, I BELONG wholly to Christ. By the equally indelible CHARACTER given me by confirmation, I am signed forever as a soldier of Christ. I am obliged to fight and die for Him, even as He fought Satan for me, and died for me upon the Cross.

This fight is, in the first place, an interior one, to be waged inside myself. Helped by Christ's grace, I must carry on a life-long battle against my unruly appetites and passions, and all that would lead me into sin.

But I must wage an external battle, too, against Christ's enemies on earth. I must play my part in CATHOLIC ACTION.

To do this, I must first learn and understand my religion as well as I can. Then I must prudently assist others to understand it also. I

must be able to answer their objections, correct their errors, and dispel their prejudices, with a deep charity born of a love of truth, and of a supernatural love of souls for whom Christ has died. Above all, I must PRACTISE my religion in all its fullness, and show by my example the good things it can do for man. EXAMPLE is the subtlest of teachers, and the most successful.

Living and fighting for Christ, I shall realise that to serve Him is indeed to reign – to reign with Him over my own passions, over the spirit of the world, and over the devil, in a wondrous peace and happiness which death will make eternal. For He is in very truth the King of Kings; and of His kingdom there can be no end.

8. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should remember that by baptism I belong wholly to Christ.
2. I should be willing to fight and even die for Him; for, by my confirmation I am signed forever as a soldier of Christ.
3. I should do my best to learn and understand my religion, so that I may be able to explain it to others, and so bring them to Christ.
4. I should live it as fully as I can, so that my example may show others all the good it can do for man.
5. I should take a very active part in Catholic Action, and show real zeal for the spread of Christ's kingdom on earth.

SUMMARY

1. Society Comes From God.

- (a). Indirectly, inasmuch as man is a social being.
- (b). It should recognise God as its Author.
- (c). Feast of Christ the King – Reparation for the sin of national apostasy.

2. Christ's Kingship In Scripture And Tradition.

- (A). Old Testament.
 - (a). Christ will be a King.
 - (b). His kingdom will be a spiritual and universal one.
- (B). New Testament.
 - (a). Testimony of the angel Gabriel.

- (b). Testimony of the Magi.
- (c). Testimony of His people, as He enters Jerusalem.
- (d). His own testimony before Pilate.

(C). Tradition.

- (a). Early Fathers of the Church.
- (b). The Liturgy.

3. Christ's Titles To Kingship.

- (a). By birth. The Hypostatic Union.
- (b). By conquest. Redemption.

4. The Nature Of His Royalty.

- (a). Temporal – not exercised in practice.
- (b). Spiritual – exercised in practice.

5. The Excellence of His Royalty.

- (a). Its authority – that of the Son of God.
- (b). Its purpose – salvation of souls.
- (c). Neutrality impossible – He is our Last End.

6. How Christ Exercises His Royalty.

- (a). In civil society.
- (b). In the Church.
- (c). In individual souls.

7. The Two Standards.

- (a). That of Satan.
- (b). That of Christ.
- (c). Why I should fight for Christ:
 - Character given by baptism.
 - Character given by confirmation.
 - Happiness in this life and in eternity.

8. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks, and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. Because man is a rational animal, he is also a (...) animal. 2. Society comes from God (directly) (indirectly). 3. The Feast of Christ the King was established in the year (...). 4. It was established to make reparation for the sin of national (...). 5. It was the prophet (...) who spoke of Christ as "the prince of peace." 6. It was the prophet (...) who foretold Our Lord's entry into Jerusalem. 7. At His trial, Christ said to Pilate: "My kingdom is not of (...)." 8. Christ has two titles to kingship: that of (...) and that of (...). 9. Scripture calls Christ the "King of (...)." 10. Christ (has) (has not) a temporal royalty over the world. 11. The royalty which He exercised was a (temporal) (spiritual) one. 12. Christ calls His commandment of love a "(...) commandment." 13. A man (can) (cannot) be neutral

in regard to Christ. 14. Christ exercises His royalty for the noblest of ends: to leads us to (...). 15. The state (has a right) (has not any right) to prevent Christ's religion from being taught in schools. 16. The state (has a right) (has not any right) to prevent the Catholic Church from teaching, sanctifying and governing men in such a way as to lead them to heaven. 17. The Church gets its right to teach us from (God) (the state). 18. In virtue of the indelible (...) given me by baptism, I belong wholly to Christ. 19. The character given me by the sacrament of (...) makes me a soldier of Christ. 20. I can influence others most by my (instruction) (example).

(B). Answer each of the following as fully as you can: -

1. What was the Church's purpose in establishing the Feast of Christ the King?
2. What has the Old Testament to say about Christ's Kingship?
3. What does the New Testament tell us about it?
4. What are Christ's two titles to kingship?
5. Show that His royalty is most excellent from the point of view of its authority and of its end.
6. Show how Christ exercises His royalty in civil society, in the Church, and in individual souls.
7. I must fight for one of two standards. What are they? Why should I fight on the side of Christ?
8. Give all the reasons you can to show that you ought take an active part in Catholic Action; and point out how to go about it.

Chapter 27

OUR BLESSED LADY

1. Who She Is.

Our Blessed Lady is THE MOTHER OF GOD.

How do we know? God tells us that she is. Are we certain that He has revealed her Divine Maternity? Yes, absolutely; because the Church assures us of this infallibly, as His official interpreter of Scripture and Tradition. Let us first see what Scripture has to say about it. Then, Tradition.

(A). SCRIPTURE.

(i). Scripture tells us that Mary is the MOTHER OF CHRIST.

Recall the angel's words to her: "Behold, thou shalt CONCEIVE in thy womb, and BRING FORTH a SON, and thou shalt call His name Jesus." (Luke 1:31). And his words to St. Joseph: "Fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife; for that which is CONCEIVED in her is of the Holy Ghost." (Mat. 1:20). Since Our Lady conceived Christ, she must be His MOTHER.

Consider Elizabeth's greeting: "Whence is this to me, that the MOTHER of My Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:43). Here, Our Lady is acknowledged to be the MOTHER of God, by one who is herself inspired by the Holy Ghost.

Think of the visit of the Magi to the Infant Christ. Scripture tells us that "They found the Child with Mary, His MOTHER." (Mat. 2:11).

Read the account of the marriage feast at Cana. It says: "The MOTHER of Jesus was there." (John 2:1). Or read St. John's description of the Passion. It says: "There stood by the side of the Cross of Jesus, His MOTHER." (John 19:25).

Thus, Scripture insists on the fact that Mary is the MOTHER OF CHRIST.

(ii). Scripture also tells us that CHRIST IS GOD.

When we studied the Incarnation, we saw many texts which witness to the fact that Christ is truly GOD. We need not give them again here.

So it comes simply to this: by telling us that Mary is the MOTHER OF CHRIST, and that CHRIST HIMSELF IS GOD, God at the same time reveals the fact that MARY IS THE MOTHER OF GOD. Nothing could be more evident.

(B). TRADITION.

(a). The Fathers of the Church.

St. Ignatius, St. Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, St. Ephraem, St. Athanasius, St. Gregory Nazianzus, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine - these, and hosts of others, teach that Mary is the Mother of Christ, and therefore also the Mother of God, since Christ Himself is God.

(b). The Creeds.

The APOSTLES' Creed, the NICENE Creed, and the ATHANASIAN Creed all declare that Mary, in being the Mother of Christ, is by that very fact the Mother of God. They are infallible witnesses to the Church's teaching concerning the Divine Maternity.

(c). Popes and Councils.

As we have seen in a previous chapter, the great Council of Ephesus, held in the year 431, declared Mary to be the Mother of God. Other universal councils have reaffirmed this teaching. So have many Popes.

Hence Tradition is one with Scripture in witnessing to the fact that God Himself has told us that Mary is in very truth the MOTHER OF GOD.

And how can she be otherwise, since Christ Himself is God? After all, a mother is a mother inasmuch as she generates a child. The term of human generation is not a NATURE, but a PERSON, who exists in a human nature, which is similar to that in the one who

generates him. But the PERSON whom Our Lady generates is CHRIST, the SON OF GOD, existing in a Human Nature, by which He is made a Human Being, just as she is. Hence, She is Christ's Mother in exactly the same way as any other woman is the mother of her son; and for exactly the same reason. To deny that she is the Mother of God is to deny the Divinity of her Son. The two truths are inseparable.

Try to realise Our Lady's DIGNITY, as Mother of God. Hers is a unique grace, the greatest after that of the Hypostatic Union, since it belongs to the order of the Incarnation.

By it, she is most intimately related to each of the three Persons in the Trinity, and precisely inasmuch as each is a distinct Person. With the FATHER, she has a relation of AFFINITY, since Christ, her Son, is His Son also. With the SON, she has a relation of CONSANGUINITY, since she is His Mother, through the Human Nature she provides for Him. With the HOLY GHOST she has, again, a relation of AFFINITY, since He proceeds from the Father and from the Son - the Son of whom she is the Mother. Moreover, she is the SPOUSE of the Holy Ghost.

In spite of these unique relations, Our Lady remains a creature, infinitely inferior to her Divine Son, infinitely inferior to God.

Yet, her DIGNITY can be said to be MORALLY infinite. Hence, St. Thomas Aquinas can write: "The Blessed Virgin, as Mother of God, has a certain INFINITE dignity, from an infinite good, which is God." St. Albert the Great can likewise say: "The Son makes INFINITE the goodness of the Mother, for every tree is known by its fruit." And St. Bonaventure can remind us that, though "God can make a greater world, He cannot make a mother greater than the Mother of God."

Think of this: there are, and for all eternity there will be, only two beings who can look at Christ and say: "This is my Son." One of these is GOD THE FATHER. The other is OUR LADY. This ought to bring home to us her sublime dignity as Mother of God.

Can we wonder, then, that sacred Scripture should be content to refer to her simply as "The Mother of Christ," "The Mother of Jesus?" In thus calling her the Mother of God, has it not said all? Yes, all - except this: SHE IS OUR MOTHER, TOO.

2. Our Lady's Sanctity.

(A). Her Immaculate Conception.

The Immaculate Conception means simply this: at the instant Our Lady began to exist, she was preserved from all stain of ORIGINAL sin. Conceived by her parents in the ordinary manner, she would normally have contracted original sin, as does any other child. But, because of the future merits of Her Son, her soul was adorned with sanctifying grace from the beginning.

We know that Our Lady was conceived immaculate, because God has told us that she was. And we know that He revealed this truth, because Pius IX defined the Immaculate Conception as an article of divine faith, in the year 1854.

When did God reveal this mystery? He did this when He inspired the writer of Genesis to say: "I will put enmities between thee (the serpent) and the woman, and thy seed and her seed. She shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel." (Gen. 3:15).

The serpent here is the devil. The seed of the serpent are all who acknowledge him as their leader. The seed of the woman is Christ; but it includes also all who are on His side in the war against evil. The woman, of course, is Our Lady.

Here, then, God reveals the fact that the Blessed Virgin is one with Christ, not only in His war against the devil, but also in His complete VICTORY over him. But if Mary's victory over Satan is a COMPLETE one, like that of her Son, she can never have contracted original sin. In other words, she was conceived immaculate.

So, in revealing Our Lady's absolute oneness with Christ in His complete victory over Satan and sin, God at the same time reveals the Immaculate Conception. The latter truth is not DEDUCED from the former by a REASONING process. It is CONTAINED in it, as a part is contained in a whole; since, to say that Mary is free from ALL sin, is to say that she is free from ORIGINAL sin. That is why we accept the Immaculate Conception, not merely on the authority of the Church which teaches it infallibly, as we accept, for instance, the canonisation of a saint; but on the AUTHORITY OF GOD who reveals this truth to us. It is a matter of DIVINE, not of ECCLESIASTICAL faith.

According to Pius IX, God also revealed this mystery when He bade the angel salute Mary with the words: "Hail, FULL OF GRACE, the Lord is with thee, BLESSED ART THOU AMONGST WOMEN." (Luke 1:28). This title, "full of grace," is equal to a PROPER NAME given by God to Mary. It marks her off from ALL other women. And it is utterly incompatible with any victory over her by Satan. It tells us that Mary was completely SINLESS; hence, CONCEIVED WITHOUT SIN. In thus revealing Mary's unique fullness of grace, God at the same time reveals her preservation from original sin. In other words, He reveals the Immaculate Conception. So, by an act of DIVINE faith, we accept it on His authority, not merely on the authority of the Church.

It is clearly most fitting that she, who was to be the Mother of Him who is Sanctity Itself, should be made resplendent with grace from the beginning. It is most fitting, again, that the Blood of Christ, which was to redeem the world, should be taken from a Mother who was completely sinless.

Moreover, her Divine Maternity was an absolutely exceptional privilege. So, hers would surely be an absolutely exceptional conception, in which the Son of God would protect His Mother from all stain of sin. This is expressed in one of the most ancient rituals which says:

"O Emmanuel! as God, Thou didst create her from whom Thou wert to be born as Man, and of whom Thou wert to be the Son. O unique prerogative! Jesus is the only Son who has existed before His Mother; the only Son who has been able to form His Mother and adorn her to His own liking. O rich prerogative! What marvellous effects ought we not expect from it! What son, capable of giving himself a mother after his own heart, would not have created her ineffably beautiful and good and resplendent, incomparable in everything? The divine Word was able to give Himself such a Mother. Would He not have enriched her with all gifts?"

Arguments such as these show how fitting the Immaculate Conception is. But God's revelation of this mystery goes infinitely beyond this. It gives us a certitude which is a sharing in His own.

OUR BLESSED LADY

Like her Divine Son, therefore, Mary was wholly sinless. He, however, was sinless by nature; she, by grace. He, by excellence; she, by privilege. He, as Redeemer; she, as the first to be sanctified by His precious Blood.

Like us, she is redeemed by the Blood of her Son. But, unlike us, she has the privilege that this Blood will come from her own chaste body. Christ sheds His Blood for her, as for us. But He receives it from her alone. And, anticipating His future merits, it sanctifies the source whence it itself will spring. Mary is sanctified, not by a redemption which RESTORES grace, but by a redemption which PRESERVES her from ever contracting sin. She is conceived immaculate.

(B). Her Virginity.

“Behold, a VIRGIN shall conceive, and bear a son.” (Isaias 7:14). In these words, the prophet foretold the miraculous conception and birth of Christ, as St. Matthew himself attests. (Mat. 1:22-23). Normally, a woman ceases to be a virgin when she gives birth to a child. But this text assures us that Our Lady retained her virginity at the conception and birth of Christ. It really means: “Behold, a virgin, REMAINING A VIRGIN, shall conceive and bear a son,” because it is given as a unique event, a sign to the nations, a miracle.

Our Lady remained a virgin at the conception of Christ, because He had no human father. She remained a virgin at His birth also, because, being completely sinless, she was exempt from the pains of childbirth, which are given in Scripture as one of the penalties of original sin. This is why the Church declares that Our Lady's virginity, before, during, and after the birth of her Divine Son, is a truth revealed to us by God.

As a MOTHER who is at the same time a VIRGIN, Mary can be a model and an example for all women: for mothers who bring forth children and train them to be worthy members of Christ's Mystical Body; and for virgins who consecrate themselves to God in the religious life, and thus acquire a spiritual motherhood over the souls of children whom they educate for heaven.

(C). Her Sanctifying Grace.

(a). The Grace she began with.

St. Thomas teaches that Our Lady had, at the start, more grace than all other human beings and all angels had, together.

He bases this assertion on Mary's title, "full of grace," which was equivalent to a proper name, which marked her off from all other creatures. Moreover, he points out that her grace was proportionate to her nearness to Christ. And who could be nearer to a son than his mother?

He argues, too, that Mary's first grace must have been proportionate to the sanctity God intended her ultimately to attain. Since hers was the greatest sanctity, her initial grace must likewise have been the greatest. Finally, he reminds us that grace is the effect of God's love; and that, from the beginning, Christ loved His Mother more than He loved all other creatures put together. So He must have given her more grace than He gave to them.

(b). How this increased daily.

Her grace increased in two ways: (i). by meritorious acts of more intense CHARITY; and (ii). by special grants made by God, on occasions such as the Incarnation, the Passion, Pentecost, and whenever she received Holy Communion.

By its very nature, CHARITY must grow from day to day at an ever quickening rate, unless it is prevented from doing so by venial sin. But Our Lady was wholly free from even the slightest venial sin. What, then, must have been the growth of her charity, especially when we take into account also the special grants of grace made to her by God?

(c). The grace she had at the end of her life.

St. Thomas asserts that Mary had, at the end of her life, as much grace as Christ had. The Office of the Immaculate Conception teaches this, too, for it says: "In Mariam totius gratiae quae in Christo est plenitudo venit, quanquam aliter." "The fullness of grace which is in Christ came to Mary, but in a different way." He had His

by Right; and He had it from the beginning. Hers depended on His; and she had it only at the end.

She did not enjoy the beatific vision on earth, as did Her Son. But she enjoyed the highest form of contemplation, which is a foretaste of this vision. Why? Because the Gifts of the Holy Ghost which give contemplation function in proportion to the intensity of the CHARITY which adorns a soul. And Mary's charity was supreme.

With sanctifying grace she had, of course, all the supernatural virtues, except PENANCE, all the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, and actual graces in keeping with her sanctity. So she is for us a model of perfect holiness. After her Son, she is the saint of saints.

3. Our Lady's Offices Towards Us.

(A). She is Co-Redemptrix of the World.

Christ is our sole Redeemer. He alone offered to God INFINITE satisfaction for sin. He alone merited grace for us in strict JUSTICE, and with it a right to heaven.

But, just as Eve co-operated with Satan in bringing ruin to mankind, so, too, Our Lady co-operated with her Son in redeeming the world. The early Fathers never tire of contrasting her with Eve in this respect. And we have seen how God Himself foretold how intimately she would be associated with Christ in His triumph over sin.

As many Popes have pointed out, she cooperated with her Son in the work of redemption, not merely PHYSICALLY, by bringing Him into the world, but also MORALLY, by consenting first to His Incarnation and later to His immolation, by offering Him to God as the price of redemption, and by suffering in union with Him during His Passion, especially during His death upon the Cross.

Years before, the aged Simeon had warned her of the martyrdom of heart she would one day undergo in union with her Son. "Thy own soul a SWORD shall pierce," he said. And St. John tells us how this prophecy was fulfilled when he writes: "There stood by the side of the Cross of Jesus, His Mother." (John 19:25).

Think of her as she stands there, transfixed with a sword of sorrow. The magnitude and the intensity of her suffering can be gauged

from the fact that she suffered, as did her Son, on account of SIN. Hence, her suffering was proportionate to her hatred of sin and her love of God. It was consequently measureless.

It was proportionate, also, to her compassion for her Son. There was no need of a separate cross for her. Her Son's was hers as well as it was His. Sympathy and love made her one with Him. Every torment of soul and body that He experienced, she experienced also, as a perfect Mother, and according to the immensity of her love.

Hence, she is rightly called the QUEEN OF MARTYRS; for no stigmatist ever suffered a martyrdom of heart comparable with hers. Rightly does the Church apply to her the text: "O all ye that pass by the way, attend and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow." (Lam. 1:12). And again: "To what shall I compare thee, or to what shall I liken thee, O daughter of Jerusalem? To what shall I equal thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Sion? For, great as the sea is thy grief." (Lam. 2:13). Her grief was as great as the sea, indeed; for it was measured by her love of God, her hatred of sin, and her compassion for her only Son. Which of us can fathom it?

By suffering in union with Christ, Mary merited for us, with a merit based on FRIENDSHIP, all that her Son merited for us in strict JUSTICE. Thus, she won for herself the most exalted title of CO-REDEMPTRIX OF THE WORLD.

(B). She is the Mediatrix of all Grace.

Pope after Pope, from Benedict XV to John Paul II, have taught that all graces come to us through Mary. Their teaching is based on Scripture which shows us that Our Lady is joined to Christ in an indissoluble union, both in combating the devil and in winning final victory over him.

It is not enough for Christ to win grace for us on Calvary. He must DISPENSE it to us, as well. So, too, it is not enough for Mary to cooperate with Him in acquiring grace. She must co-operate with Him also in DISTRIBUTING it to individual souls. She must be MEDIATRIX or DISPENSATRIX of all grace, as well as Co-Redemptrix of the world.

OUR BLESSED LADY

Grace here means actual grace as well as sanctifying grace; and it includes the supernatural virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. All grace, even that given by the Sacraments, comes to us from God, through Christ, and through Our Lady.

This does not mean that only those who pray to her receive grace. As a perfect Mother, she intercedes for people even when they do not ask her to do so. All the same, salvation is made more difficult for those who neglect to beg her intercession. To be deeply devoted to her is a short and sure way to heaven.

Nor does it follow that the intercession of other saints is useless. As ministers of Mary, their Queen, they can obtain graces for us by their prayers. But their mediation is neither necessary, nor universal. And it is subordinate to Mary's, since, to be efficacious, it must pass through her hands to Christ.

(C). She is Queen of Angels and of Men.

The Fathers insisted on calling Our Lady a Queen, just as they hailed her Son as a King. In the liturgy, too, she has been greeted as Queen for centuries and centuries – as Queen of Heaven, Queen of the World, and Queen of all the saints. Amongst the mysteries of the Rosary that has been said in the Church since the thirteenth century we find The Crowning of Mary in Heaven, a scene represented by one of Fra Angelico's most beautiful frescoes.

Christ is King, even as Man, by reason of His Divine Personality. As His Mother, Mary shares in His dignity; for His Person is the term of her divine Motherhood. Hence, she shares in His Kingship. She is Queen of heaven and of earth.

Christ is King also by His victory over Satan. Associated with Him in this victory, Our Lady must be associated also in His kingship. She must be a universal Queen.

In the Litany of Loreto, therefore, we greet her with the lovely titles: Queen of Angels, Queen of Patriarchs, Queen of Prophets, Queen of Martyrs, Queen of Confessors, Queen of Virgins, Queen of all the saints, and Queen of Peace. And we begin a beautiful prayer to her with the words: "Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy. Hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope...."

To understand in what exact sense Our Lady is a Queen, you would have to go very deeply into the nature of her Divine Maternity and of her co-operation with Christ. Later on in life, you may be privileged to do this. Then you will appreciate the glory of Mary's Queenship. In the meantime, remember that she is your Queen; and treat her as such.

(D). She is our Mother.

The Church has infallibly defined the truth that Mary is our Mother. Mother of God, she is also mother of men, not as regards their physical life, but as regards their supernatural life of grace.

She is our SPIRITUAL Mother. She is our Mother through her co-operation with Christ in the work of redemption, by meriting, on the score of friendship, the grace which He merited in strict justice. In doing this, she generated us in the supernatural order, as adopted children of God. So she is indeed our spiritual Mother.

She is our Mother, too, on a title of love. With perfect motherly solicitude, she watches over each of us, as if each were her only child; and she obtains from her Son all the graces we need to save our immortal souls.

Mary became our Mother when she gave her consent to the Incarnation. And Christ proclaimed her the Mother of all men with His own dying lips from the Cross.

Picture Him as He hangs on Calvary. His hands that have been so often raised to bless, can now be raised to bless no longer. They are nailed firmly to the Cross. His feet that have travelled far to bring consolation to the afflicted can now no longer move. They, too, are fastened to the wood. His lips that have spoken so many words of comfort, kindness and wisdom are soon to be stilled in death. He seems to have given us all. Stripped of His very garments, deserted by almost all His friends, abandoned, it would seem, even by His Heavenly Father, He has surely nothing left to give. Yet He has. And it is something very precious to Him. It is his Mother. And He gives her to each of us, that she may be our Mother as well as His, in time and in eternity. "Behold thy Mother," He says to St. John. (John 19:27). And St. John is each of us. He represents mankind.

Thanks to these words of the dying Christ, each of us has in heaven a Mother to whom we can go in every joy, in every success, in every need, in every pain and grief. Everything that wins reverence, confidence and love in a noble earthly mother is found in her, but raised almost to the infinite. She loves each of us with a love that is as strong and steadfast as it is kind and tender. She has our welfare immeasurably more at heart than we can ever have it ourselves. She yearns to help us with a yearning born of her measureless love of God and of souls, and proportionate to it. And she CAN always help us, for she is, as the Church says, OMNIPOTENT in her power of intercession. She is OMNIPOTENTIA SUPPLEX. It is indeed good for us to have such a Mother.

4. Our Lady's Assumption.

On the first of November, 1950, Pope Pius XII defined Our Lady's Assumption as a truth revealed by God.

Seated on a throne in front of St. Peter's, surrounded by nearly forty Cardinals and six hundred and fifty Bishops, before a mighty host of people who thronged to overflowing the nearby piazzas and streets, the Pope first gave the reason why he considered the Assumption a revealed truth, and why he thought its definition opportune.

Then he said: "For which reason, having poured forth prayers of supplication again and again to God, and having called upon the Spirit of Truth, for the glory of Almighty God who has lavished His special affection upon the Virgin Mary, for the honour of her Son, the immortal King of the ages and the Victor over sin and death, for the increase of the glory of that same august Mother, and for the joy and exultation of the whole Church; by the authority of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and by Our own authority, we PRONOUNCE, DECLARE and DEFINE IT TO BE A DIVINELY REVEALED DOGMA: THAT THE IMMACULATE MOTHER OF GOD, THE EVER VIRGIN MARY, HAVING COMPLETED THE COURSE OF HER EARTHLY LIFE, WAS ASSUMED BODY AND SOUL INTO HEAVENLY GLORY."

What a majestic passage this is! How clear and definite! How final! How full of a certitude not of this world! It is obviously the declaration of a Church perfectly aware of her God given mission to guard Christ's truths and interpret them infallibly with the help of

the Holy Ghost, who, as Christ promised, abides with Her forever and guides Her into all truth. It is obviously the voice of Her to whom Christ said in the beginning: "He that heareth You heareth Me"; and "Going, therefore, teach all nations... and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."

Nearly two thousand years ago, a young woman married to a labourer called Joseph, had looked down the vista of the centuries, and said: "Behold, all generations shall call me blessed." (Luke 1:48). And, on the Feast of All Saints, 1950, hundreds of millions of Catholics throughout the world united in receiving, with a joy amounting almost to ecstasy, the definition of her Assumption into heaven, thus affording a striking testimony to the fulfilment of her astounding prophecy.

It is clearly most fitting that Our Lady's body, as well as her soul, should be taken to heaven immediately after her death, and not be left to the corruption of the grave. Moreover, as a perfect Son, Christ must surely have yearned for her sweet companionship in heaven, not as a disembodied spirit, but as a PERSON, made up of body as well as soul.

And her Assumption can be proved by REASONING from revealed truths such as the Immaculate Conception and her perpetual virginity.

But, when did God REVEAL it expressly? He did this when He gave the two texts we have already used to prove that the Immaculate Conception was revealed. Recall them for a moment. "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed. She shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel." (Gen. 3:15). And "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women." (Luke 1:28).

Here, God reveals Mary's absolute conformity with Christ in His complete triumph over the devil and over sin, and over all the evil effects of sin not in keeping with the purpose of the Incarnation.

Like her Divine Son, Mary was free not only from original and personal sin, but also from all the effects of sin that He Himself was free from. Amongst these was the corruption of the grave.

For us who have inherited original sin, death is a punishment for sin. Christ died, indeed, but not because of any sin that He inherited or committed. He died to redeem the world. Hence, Our Lady, perfectly conformed to Christ, also died, as His intimate associate in redeeming mankind. Like His, her death was in keeping with the purpose of the Incarnation. Not so, the corruption of her body after death. That could no more help in the work of redemption than the corruption of His Body could. So, like Him, she was freed from this disgusting effect of sin, this triumph of the devil over man. Immediately after death, she was taken up body and soul into heaven. The general RESURRECTION was forestalled for her, as it had already been for her Son.

In revealing to us Mary's absolute conformity to Christ in His complete victory over Satan and sin, God at the same time reveals the Assumption. So we can accept it, and must accept it, on the infinitely reliable AUTHORITY of Him who is Knowledge and Truth Itself, and who makes it known to us.

As the Pope points out, the definition of Our Lady's Assumption should be a great help to us. It should greatly increase our devotion towards Mary. It should bring home to us the value of human life. And it should increase our hope in our own glorious resurrection from the dead.

Hence, it should help us to combat the degrading materialism that threatens to destroy our Christian civilisation and banish the spiritual and the supernatural forever from this earth.

While saying the fourth Glorious Mystery of the Rosary, let us rejoice in Our Lady's triumphant entry into heaven, and her meeting again with the Son she loved. Let us rejoice, too, in the fact that she who stood by His Cross, her heart pierced with a sword of sorrow, now stands on His right hand as Queen, so that with Him and through Him she may lead us to heaven, where with her Divine Son she will live and reign and be a source of inexhaustible happiness to us forever.

5. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should be deeply and sincerely devoted to Our Lady. For instance, I can practise the FATIMA devotions which consist in
 - (i). fulfilling my daily duties, and offering the sacrifices entailed

in this, for the conversion of sinners; (ii). Daily recitation of the Rosary; (iii). consecration of my home, family and self to Mary's Immaculate Heart; and (iv) reception of Holy Communion on the first Saturday of the month, to make reparation to her for the insults she receives from men.

2. I should at least see that the Rosary is recited by my family every evening, remembering that the family that prays together stays together.
3. I should love the Hail Mary, since in it I ask Our Lady to obtain for me the grace needed at the present moment, and that of a happy death.
4. I should try to imitate Our Lady's virtues, especially her love for God and for men, her faith, her hope, her courage and humility.
5. I should go to her in all my successes, sorrows and needs, realising that she is my Mother, all powerful in her intercession, and that a truly devoted servant of Mary will never lose his soul.

SUMMARY

1. Who Our Lady Is.

- (a). Mother of Christ. He is God. So she is Mother of God.
- (b). Revealed in Scripture and in Tradition.
- (c). Dignity - Relation to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

2. Her Sanctity.

(A). Immaculate Conception.

- (a). What it means.
- (b). When revealed.

(B). Perpetual Virginity.

- (a). Before, during, and after the birth of Christ.
- (b). A model to all women.

(C). Sanctifying Grace.

- (a). At the beginning .

(b). How it increased.

(c). At death.

3. Her Offices Towards Us.

(A). Co-Redemptrix of the World.

(a). She merited in friendship all that Christ merited in strict justice.

(b). Her role is wholly subordinate to His.

(B). Mediatrix of all Grace.

(a). All graces come through her.

(b). She is all powerful in her intercession.

(C). Queen of Angels and of Men.

(a). As Mother of God.

(b). Through her co-operation with Her Son.

(D). Our Mother.

(a). When she became our Mother.

(b). When Christ proclaimed her Motherhood.

4. Her Assumption Into Heaven.

(a). When defined.

(b). When revealed.

(c). How it should help us.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. Scripture tells us that Mary is the (...) of Christ. 2. It also tells us that Christ is truly (...). 3. Hence, it is revealed that Mary is the (...) of God. 4. Speaking of the marriage feast at Cana, St. John says: "The (...) of Jesus was there." 5. The Magi found the infant Christ "with Mary, His (...)." 6. Scripture says: "There stood by the side of the Cross of Jesus, His (...)." 7. The names of three great Creeds are: (...). 8. The Divine Maternity was defined at the Council of (...) in 341. 9. As Mother of God, Our Lady has a relation of (consanguinity) (affinity) with the Father; a relation of (...) with the Son; and a relation of (...) with the Holy Ghost. 10. Only two beings

can look at Christ and say: "This is my Son." These are (...) and (...). 11. By the Immaculate Conception we mean that Mary was free from (...) sin. 12. We accept the Immaculate Conception by an act of (divine) (ecclesiastical) faith. 13. The angel said to Mary: "Hail, full of (...), the Lord is with thee." 14. The prophet Isaias said: "A (...) shall conceive and bear a Son." 15. Mary's initial grace was (less than) (equal to) (greater than) the graces given to angels and all other human beings together. 16. She increased her grace daily by performing acts of more intense (...). 17. She had all the supernatural virtues except (...). 18. She merited for us on the score of (...) all that Christ merited in strict justice. 19. Hence, she is called "the (...) of the world." 20. Since all grace comes through her, she is also called the (...). 21. Just as Christ is our King, Our Lady is our (...). 22. Simeon said to her in the Temple: "Thy own soul a (...) shall pierce." 23. Our Lady became our Mother when she (...). 24. Christ proclaimed her universal motherhood when He said to St. John who represented us all: "Behold thy (...)." 25. Mary (is) (is not) all-powerful in her intercession. 26. The Assumption was defined as an article of divine faith in the year (...). 27. It means that, immediately after her death, Mary was taken up (...) and soul into heaven. 28. In other words, the general (...) was anticipated for her, as it was for Her Son. 29. The Hail Mary is a precious prayer, because in it I ask for two all-important graces: that needed at the present moment, and that of (...). 30. This is an age-old saying in the Church: "A devoted servant of (...) will never perish."

(B). Answer as fully as you can each of the following: -

1. Show that it is right for us to believe that Mary is the Mother of God.
2. Why is her Divine Motherhood the greatest dignity?
3. Explain the Immaculate Conception; and show when it was revealed.
4. Account for the amount of grace Mary had at death.
5. Mary is Co-Redemptrix of the world. What does this mean?
6. All graces come through Mary. Explain this.
7. Why do we hold that Mary is our Mother? Why is she a good Mother to us?
8. Explain the Assumption. Justify the Pope's definition of the Assumption as an article of divine faith.

Chapter 28

SAINT JOSEPH

1. His Life.

THE VILLAGE TRADESMAN.

Hidden in an obscure corner of Rome's vast Empire, nearly two thousand years ago, was the little village of Nazareth. In it dwelt a working man, called Joseph.

Joseph bar-Jacob was his full name - Joseph, son of Jacob. For he was descended from the royal house of David. Because of this, he could have taken his place with the highest in the land. But he was doubtless quite content with his obscurity. Royal blood was a dangerous thing in the Palestine of Herod, the Great, who sat uneasily on his throne, ever ready to exterminate any rival. Perhaps it was to be more secure from this tyrant, that Joseph's people had shifted from Bethlehem, their ancestral home near Jerusalem, to Nazareth, more than one hundred miles away. At any rate, they were dwelling here, at the time when the Son of God was about to become Man.

In our Gospels, Joseph is called a carpenter. But the original word means a sort of handyman. He was a tradesman, carpenter, and builder all in one. He was expected to turn his hand to anything that needed to be made or mended in his little village. That is why he can be, today, the model of all workmen.

Little is known of his home life. But we are sure that it was a God fearing one; for Scripture says that he was a "just" man - a man with all the virtues well balanced and well developed.

The people amongst whom he lived and worked, however, had a poor reputation for religion and culture. Recall Nathanael's remark when Philip first told him about Christ: "Can anything of good come from Nazareth?" (John 1:46).

With such people, Joseph and his parents would have little in common. So they would have lived a fairly lonely life. Their very virtues would have brought on them the jibes of their neighbours. Perhaps this is why St. Joseph was so patient and so silent. Not a single word of his has been recorded in Scripture, though he had more amazing events to talk about than any other man in history. He was well trained to keep the momentous secrets that God would entrust to him, concerning the Incarnation of His Son and His presence amongst men.

MARY'S HUSBAND.

In Nazareth, there was another home in which God was obeyed and loved. It was that of Joachim and Anna, blood relations of Joseph. For years they had been childless. So they, too, were doubtless a prey to the criticism of their neighbours; for sterility was regarded as a sign of God's displeasure. At last, however, God had taken away their reproach. He had given them a child. It was Mary, the Immaculate.

Predestined from eternity to be husband and wife, Joseph and Mary were in due time betrothed, according to the custom of the Jews. In the presence of witnesses, they exchanged gifts as pledges of fidelity, and became legally husband and wife. But custom prescribed that they should live apart in their respective homes, for a period set down in the contract of betrothal.

It was during this period that the angel came to Mary in her humble home, and the Incarnation was accomplished. Warned of this event by the same angel, St. Joseph had their nuptials solemnised. These celebrations consisted in bringing his wife to her new home, and preparing a feast for the guests, similar to that of Cana.

Though each intended to remain a virgin for life, the marriage between Our Lady and St. Joseph was a true one. Marriage is a contract in which each of the parties gives to the other the right to perform acts necessary for the generation and the education of children. It does not necessarily imply the USE of these rights. And both Mary and Joseph freely agreed not to use them. Each, consequently, transferred his or her virginity to the other, to be guarded and kept intact till death.

Theirs was a marriage inspired by God Himself, who thus provided for His Incarnate Son a foster father who could protect Him, supply Him with the means of livelihood, and help to educate Him; and at the same time protect the honour of His Immaculate Mother.

BETHLEHEM.

As the time approached for the Saviour to be born, St. Joseph must have wondered how the Scriptures were to be fulfilled. For the prophets had said that Christ would be born in Bethlehem. However, he knew that Providence would provide. It did not fail him.

An imperial edict was posted up in Nazareth, ordering all living outside their tribal territory to return to their ancestral homes to fill in a census there. So, Joseph and Mary set off immediately for Bethlehem. It was winter. They had to face up to four or five days of hard travelling along sodden, windswept roads, and as many nights spent in cold, comfortless inns. No miracles were worked to make things easy for them. Joseph was left to his own resources, to make the journey as comfortable as possible for his precious charge.

When they arrived at Bethlehem, they found the inn so overcrowded with visitors that they had to seek shelter in a cave in the hillside, meant to house cattle. There, the Saviour of the world was born, wrapped in swaddling clothes by His Mother, and cradled in the straw.

Joseph's name is not mentioned in the Gospel's beautiful account of the Nativity. He was present, of course, but hidden away, adoring in silence in the shadows of the cave. His office was to hide Christ from the world, and he did this by keeping silent.

THE PRESENTATION.

Within forty days after the birth of Christ, Mary and Joseph set out from Bethlehem to go to Jerusalem to offer the Child to God, as the Law prescribed. Mary there made her offering – a pair of pigeons ordinarily given by the poor; and Joseph gave his five pieces of silver to ransom Him who was Himself the Ransom of the world.

Before they left the Temple, the aged Simeon took the Infant Saviour into his trembling hands and said:

"Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word in peace;

"Because my eyes have seen Thy salvation,

"Which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples:

"A light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel." (Luke 2:29-32).

How the hearts of Mary and Joseph must have thrilled with joy at the lofty sentiments expressed in this glorious little canticle! But Simeon then reminded them of another aspect of the Saviour's life by saying to Our Lady: "And thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts, thoughts may be revealed." (Luke 2:35). With this prophecy of the sufferings of the Mother of Sorrows ringing in their ears, they returned to Bethlehem.

EGYPT.

Suffering soon came to the Holy Family. The Magi arrived from the East. They offered the Holy Child gold, frankincense and myrrh, in token of His kingship, His Divinity and His death. Before they left, they would doubtless have mentioned their interview with Herod, and his anxiety to find the birthplace of the Infant King. How distressing this must have been to Joseph, who knew only too well that if Herod came to Bethlehem, it would be, not to adore, as he had said, but to kill and destroy. How could Joseph protect the Child from the murderous designs of this bloodstained tyrant? Again, he trusted Providence. Again, his trust was rewarded.

An angel warned him to take the Child and His Mother and flee immediately into Egypt. So, without a moment's delay, he set out on his long journey, taking no doubt the Way of the Wilderness rather than the ordinary caravan route, which would be crowded with travellers and infested by Herod's spies. It would take a week or more for the Holy Family to reach the River of Egypt, that marked the end of Herod's jurisdiction. But they had many weary miles of desert to cross, before they could find a place to make some sort of home.

We do not know where they finally settled. Nor do we know exactly how long they had to stay in Egypt. But it was not more than two years before Herod sickened for his horrible and lingering death.

Then the angel told them to return to Israel. Joseph intended to go back to Bethlehem, which had such sacred memories for him; but, since Herod's son, Archelaus, ruled in place of his late father, and was almost as tyrannical as he, the angel warned them to go to Nazareth instead. Thus began the hidden life of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, which has been the model and the inspiration of all contemplatives ever since.

THE HIDDEN LIFE.

What a wonderful privilege Joseph had, in helping Our Lady to educate the Infant Christ. With her, he watched the Divine Child making His first stumbling efforts to walk, and His first feeble attempts to use a hammer and a saw. He heard Him trying to lisp His Mother's and His foster father's names. He saw Him grow to manhood.

How supernatural must have been the atmosphere in the little home at Nazareth! Think of those who dwelt there: St. Joseph, the greatest of the saints after Our Lady; Mary, already incomparable in her sanctity; and the Infant Jesus, infinite Sanctity Itself. Yet how ordinary must that life have appeared to persons round about. At the beginning of his Gospel, St. Luke prides himself on "having diligently attained to all things from the beginning." (Luke 1:3). Yet he finds nothing to tell of the boyhood of Christ, except that He was lost for three days in Jerusalem, at the age of twelve. Nothing more is said about the Holy Family, till Christ begins His public life, at about the age of thirty.

What an astounding thing this hidden life of the Incarnate God really is! No wonder the mystics and contemplatives of every age since then have loved to meditate upon it, and have tried to wrest from it the secret it contains.

Worldly men seek publicity and honours and the esteem of others. But the Son of God made Man, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, prefers to live in obscurity. Thirty years of hidden life compared with three years of public life! And this, in spite of the fact that He had so much to do and to teach, before returning to heaven. How different God's ways are from those of man!

DEATH.

We do not know when or where St. Joseph died. Obscure in life, he remained in obscurity to the end. However, tradition has always pictured him as dying in the arms of Jesus and Mary. That is why he is universally regarded as the patron of a happy death.

Death took him from the arms of those he loved, and his soul went to limbo where the souls of the just who had died so far were waiting till Christ should open heaven to them. Joseph had not long to wait. Christ was soon to begin his short three years of public life, that would lead to Calvary and the Redemption of the world.

2. St. Joseph's Dignity.

St. Joseph's dignity flows from two facts: he was Mary's husband, and he was the foster father of the Saviour of the world.

(A). His Dignity as Spouse of Our Lady.

As we have said, Joseph was Mary's husband in the proper sense of the term, since the marriage between them was a true marriage. However, it was a unique marriage.

In the first place, it was willed and preordained by Christ Himself, by a special providence. As God, He could choose His own foster father, just as He could choose His own Mother, and endow him with the graces demanded by his office.

Secondly, because this marriage was preordained from eternity for the sole purpose of providing a suitable home and fitting parents for Christ, St. Joseph can be said to be the husband of Mary precisely inasmuch as she is the Mother of Christ, the Mother of God. Hence, sacred Scripture speaks with perfect accuracy when it refers to St. Joseph as "the husband of Mary, from whom Jesus was born." (Mat. 1:16).

Through being Our Lady's husband precisely inasmuch as she is the Mother of Christ, St. Joseph shares in her incomparable dignity as Mother of God.

(B). His Dignity as Foster-father of the Saviour of the World.

We call St. Joseph the foster-father of Christ, to remind ourselves that he is not the father of Christ in the physical sense of the term, as is an ordinary father of the son he generates.

Christ has only one Father. This is the First Person of the Trinity who generates Him eternally through an act of knowledge. True, the Holy Ghost co-operated as First Cause with Our Lady in producing Christ's Human Nature. But the Holy Ghost is not His Father. A father communicates his own SUBSTANCE to the child he generates, and thus produces a NATURE similar to, or identical with, his own. The Holy Ghost does not do this for Christ. Christ's Human Nature is a creature. Hence, quite distinct from the divine Nature which He shares with the other Persons in the Trinity.

However, St. Joseph is much more than a foster-father to Christ. In fact, his fatherhood to Him is unique. We have, consequently, no word in English to express it accurately.

It is unique for two reasons. The first is this. Unlike an earthly father, St. Joseph was predestined by Christ Himself, as God, to be His adoptive father on earth. Therefore, his heart received from God a special grace – a truly fatherly love for the Son entrusted to him.

Here is the second reason. It was from Mary's virginity, through the creative power of the Holy Ghost, that Christ was conceived. But St. Joseph had dominion over this virginity, in virtue of his marriage. It had been given to him to guard and keep intact till death. Hence, while St. Joseph is not Christ's father in the sense that Our Lady is His Mother, he is still much more than an ordinary foster-father to Him. His fatherhood in relation to the Divine Child is indeed unique.

No wonder Our Lady was quite content to call St. Joseph simply the father of her Child, as she did when she found Him in the Temple: "Son, why hast Thou done so to us? Behold Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing." (Luke 2:48).

It is obvious that St. Joseph has a special dignity, in virtue of his fatherhood in regard to Our Divine Saviour. That is why he is so often mentioned with Jesus and Mary in the prayers of the Church.

With them, he belongs to the order of the Incarnation. As members of the Holy Family, Jesus, Mary and Joseph are inseparable.

That is why the Church names St. Joseph after Our Lady, and before the Apostles, in Her prayers. That is why She gives him a special preface in his Mass. That is why She consecrates the month of March to him. That is why She appoints him Patron of the universal Church.

Think often of his mission. It was to protect and educate the Son of God made Man, to guard the virginity and the honour of Our Lady, and thus share most intimately in the redemption of the world. Think often, also, of his rare dignity as husband of the Mother of God, and father, in a unique sense, of the Saviour of men.

3. St. Joseph's Sanctity.

We say that St. Joseph is the greatest of the saints, after Our Lady.

Why? Because St. Joseph's mission in life was the most important after that of Our Lady; and he was chosen for it by God immediately, not through the medium of others. When God thus selects a person for an office, He gives him grace proportionate to that office. So He must have given St. Joseph more grace than He gave to anyone other than Mary. Apart from her, he is the greatest of the saints.

True, Our Lord said of John the Baptist: "I say unto you that amongst the children of men there hath not appeared a greater than John the Baptist." (Mat. 11:11) . But this does not mean that St. John the Baptist was a greater saint than St. Joseph. Our Lord was comparing John with the other PROPHETS in the OLD LAW, not with anyone in the New. Of the prophets, St. John was the greatest, because his mission as PRECURSOR was more intimately connected with the Incarnation than that of any of the others. In fact, Christ went on to say: "But he that is LEAST in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." The kingdom of heaven is the Church, the New Law or covenant between God and men.

By the "least" Our Saviour here means the "most humble," as when He later said to His Apostles, showing them a little child: "He that is least among you is the greater." (Luke 9:48).

Our Lady was the most humble of women, as we see from her "Magnificat." But who was the most humble of men, after Christ? It was surely St. Joseph. And, just as pride is the root of all sin, humility is the foundation of all sanctity. The foundation upon which a building is erected must be proportionate to it. In a similar way, a person's humility must be proportionate to his sanctity. Hence, St. Joseph, the humblest of men, is also the most saintly.

The mission of the Apostles was that of making Christ known to the world, by proclaiming His glorious miracles that proved Him to be God. St. Joseph's mission was a far more humble one. It was to hide Christ from the world, amidst the lowly toils and the silence of Nazareth. The Apostles are like bright lights, causing Our Saviour to be seen by the world. St. Joseph is like a saintly veil to hide from men the miraculous virginity of Mary, and the grandeur of the Son of God made Man. God glorified the Apostles by giving them the honour of preaching Christ to the world. He glorified St. Joseph by the humility of silence.

Moreover, perfection consists in fulfilling as perfectly as we can the vocation God gives us. St. Joseph's vocation was superior to that of the Apostles, because it was more closely connected with the Incarnation, and the Redemption of the world. So he is superior to them also in sanctity.

Think of it! St. Joseph was not an apostle. Not an evangelist. Not a martyr. Not a Pope. Not a doctor. Not a priest. Yet he surpasses all these in holiness. In sanctity, he ranks with the angels and archangels who minister to God.

Let us strive to imitate his virtues, especially his deep faith, his spotless purity, his rare prudence, his great courage, his unbounded charity, his lifelong fidelity to his vocation, and above all his charming humility.

4. The Dignity of Manual Work.

Aristotle was indeed a great philosopher. He has left us a precious heritage of natural wisdom. His thought is, for the most part, astonishingly deep and accurate. But he had a false idea of manual work.

He taught that man is a RATIONAL animal. In this, of course, he was perfectly right. But from this he wrongly concluded that RATIONAL or INTELLECTUAL work is the only one worthy of man.

To Aristotle, consequently, a man was a HUMAN being to the extent that he devoted his time to CONTEMPLATING the truths made known by philosophy. Manual work, he thought, was fit only for slaves, since it was done mainly by the body. And slaves, in Aristotle's eyes, were in no sense true human beings. They were merely animals. They were not PERSONS at all, but just THINGS.

This teaching has had a profound influence in every age since Aristotle's time. You can notice it even today in the way some so called "society" or "intellectual" people despise manual work, and look down on the "worker" as a sort of inferior type.

Needless to say, Christianity does not follow Aristotle here. It follows Christ instead. He corrected Aristotle's false ideas, not only by His teaching, but also by His example.

Christ taught that CONTEMPLATION is indeed a glorious thing. But the contemplation He would have us all enjoy is not the NATURAL contemplation that Aristotle speaks about. It is not something we experience by meditating deeply on truths known by the natural power of our intellect. It is not something reserved to the rich who do not have to work for a living, or to the intellectually gifted who find philosophy easy and interesting. It is, on the contrary, a SUPERNATURAL contemplation. And it is meant to be enjoyed by ALL.

It is SUPERNATURAL, because it is given to us by the GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST. These come into the soul with sanctifying grace. The intensity with which they function is proportionate to the intensity of our supernatural CHARITY. If we increase this, we must at the same time intensify the functioning of the Gifts. And a time must come when they work so energetically that they give us infused contemplation. To gain this, we do not have to sit down and think deeply about natural truths, as a philosopher does. We have merely to LOVE GOD more ardently every day. The Gifts of the Holy Ghost will do the rest.

From this, you can see that supernatural contemplation is within the reach of ALL persons, not just those who have the time to

devote to philosophy, and the ability to understand it. Any person, even the most illiterate and the dullest, can increase his love of God daily, and thus become a contemplative.

Manual work is no obstacle here. On the contrary, it is a great help, provided it is honest work, done for a worthy motive, and offered to God as an act of love. Work thus supernaturalised becomes an act of religion. It is an act of homage to God. It is the equivalent of a lovely prayer, no matter how humble or commonplace it may be. Our best prayers are not necessarily those we say in the Chapel. They may be those we say at work. They may be our work itself.

Moreover, Christ taught that ALL human beings are ESSENTIALLY equal, since each has a human nature, just as all squares are essentially equal inasmuch as each has the nature of a square. He taught also that all human beings, the enslaved as well as the free, the poor as well as the rich, have been redeemed by His own Precious Blood. All, again, have the same Last End - the beatific vision in eternity. All have the same Father in heaven. Thus Christ condemns slavery in all its ugly forms. He makes its abolition inevitable. He restores man to his true dignity as a rational being, made in the image of God, and destined for heaven.

Again, He taught the dignity of ALL work, even the most menial and commonplace. He pointed out that its dignity arises from the human PERSONALITY responsible for it, whether it be work done mainly by the mind, or mainly by the body.

Finally, He showed how beneficial honest work of any sort may be. It can benefit the one who does it by meriting a reward in heaven, by helping him to do away with his purgatory, by building up his character, by enabling him to earn honest wages and so acquire that amount of private property which is necessary for his security, self respect, and independence.

Work, too, can benefit others. In fact any honest work a man does must help his fellow men in some way. Thus, persons who erect a cathedral benefit their fellow men by giving them a fitting place in which to worship God, for centuries and centuries. A man who writes a good book such as St. John's Gospel benefits countless others who will derive consolation and encouragement from reading it, even to the end of time. Those who build houses, those who drive trains, trams or buses, those who help to manufacture

useful goods, foods or medicines, those who invent machines that abolish drudgery from life, do a worthy service to the community. They benefit others as well as themselves.

Thus, manual work is a great means of fulfilling the first of the Commandments, by which we are obliged to love God for His own sake, and our neighbour in and for God. The love we must show our neighbour is not a mere feeling. Nor is it a mere good will. It must show itself in ACTION. We must DO good to others. And we do this when we work diligently at any honest work, no matter how lowly it may be.

Christ taught all these noble ideas about work, not only by His words, but also by His example. He, the Son of God, was, by His own choice, born amongst the poor. Most of His life was spent as a manual worker at Nazareth. His last three years He devoted to intellectual work, teaching His Apostles and all who would listen to Him. Thus, He sanctified all work, manual and intellectual, and restored to it its true dignity and purpose.

In doing this, He corrected not only Aristotle's error, but others also, that have arisen since His day. Protestantism, for example, gave people a wrong idea of work, by teaching that it can be of no value for gaining heaven. Industrialism went further into error by treating workers as if they existed merely to make money for their employers. Atheistic communism goes further still by making work the sole end of man. These are fundamental errors. They are all condemned by Christ.

Hence, let us avoid them as we would a deadly poison. Let us hold fast to Our Saviour's infinitely wise teaching. Let us do our work honestly and well, and in a state of grace. Let us do it through love of God and of our neighbour, as well as through a desire to be reasonably well off and independent in life.

Then, it will help us spiritually as well as physically. It will promote our happiness. It will ennoble our character. It will foster civilisation, for this depends on the good use we make of the raw material God has given us. It will unite us to our fellow men. It will enable us to love God and our neighbour better. It will help us to do away with our purgatory. It will win merit for heaven, and so give us a deeper sharing of God's own knowledge, love and happiness in eternity.

5. The Hidden Life.

This is a life modelled on that of Jesus, Mary and Joseph at Nazareth. It is one lived for God and in union with Him. Daily acts are all supernaturalised by grace, and directed to God by charity and purity of intention. All are acts of homage to Him.

Unnecessary publicity is shunned, as this leads to pride. Worldly honours and the praise of men are never sought for their own sake. As Creator of the universe, Christ could have created most perfect works of art at Nazareth, that would have won Him fame throughout the Empire. But earthly fame meant nothing to Him. He saw it in the light of eternity. He saw it as God sees it. He saw it as it really is. Hence, He preferred to work as an ordinary tradesman, using the primitive instruments of His trade; and to be known by His neighbours simply as "the son of Joseph, the carpenter." Our Lady, too, lived for God and for eternity. So did St. Joseph. So does anyone who wishes to imitate their hidden life. His life must be, as St. Paul says, "hid with Christ in God." (Colos. 3:3).

Here is an extract from a book recently published by F. B. Thornton. It shows how happy such a life can be, even midst the squalor of a great modern city. He writes: "The happiest person I ever met was an old scrub woman. She had no relations that she knew. She lived alone; and, from seven in the morning to seven at night, she mopped and cleaned. Dirty floors, casual people, underpaid existence - what a saga of revolt and misery Hemingway or Steinbeck would have made of her life. But they would have been wrong. This old woman also thought and prayed. I could hear her often singing on the stairs....'

'Though she had almost no education, this little old woman knew more about the art of living than do people who habitually exist in velvet-padded rooms, and go from Bermuda to Biarritz or from New York to Nagasaki... She lived hard, and her days knew only the smallest occasional luxuries; but she was a great soul, and she loved people and simple beauty with a passion that made her life lusted. She sorrowed with sorrow, but she joyed with joy.... She is

certainly one of the greatest souls I have met in a considerable acquaintance on four continents.”

Thus can the hidden life fill even a poverty-stricken existence with a serenity and a joy that are in very truth a foretaste of heaven.

6. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should be deeply devoted to St. Joseph.
2. I should often pray to him for help at death.
3. I should cherish the hidden life he led at Nazareth.
4. I should sanctify my daily work as he did.
5. I should imitate his virtues.

SUMMARY

1. St. Joseph's Life.

- (a). The Village Tradesman.
- (b). Mary's Husband.
- (c). Bethlehem.
- (d). The Presentation.
- (e). Egypt.
- (f). Nazareth.
- (g). Death.

2. His Dignity.

- (a). As Spouse of Our Lady.
- (b). As Foster Father of Our Lord.

3. His Sanctity.

- (a). Greatest saint after Mary.
- (b). Sanctity proportionate to his office.

4. The Dignity Of Manual Work.

- (a). Errors: Aristotle, Protestantism, Industrialism, Communism.
- (b). Christ's teaching: True idea of contemplation.
 Essential equality of all human beings.

Dignity of work.

Value of work.

5. The Hidden Life.

- (a). State of grace.
- (b). Intense charity.
- (c). Purity of intention.
- (d). Avoidance of unnecessary publicity.
- (e). A life modelled on that of the Holy Family at Nazareth.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. Joseph was descended from the royal house of (...). 2. He lived in the time of (...), the Great, and of his son (...). 3. Nathanael said: "Can anything of good come from (...)." 4. Our Lady was the daughter of (...) and (...). 5. The Incarnation took place (before) (after) she had been betrothed to Joseph. 6. It took four or five days to travel from Nazareth to (...). 7. At the Presentation, Our Lady offered (...) and Joseph offered (...). 8. It was the aged (...) who there prophesied Our Lord's greatness and Our Lady's sorrows. 9. To save the Divine Child from Herod, St. Joseph and Our Lady had to flee into (...). 10. St. Joseph's dignity comes from the fact that he was Our Lady's (...) and the (...) of Christ. 11. Christ has only one Father: (St. Joseph) (the Holy Ghost) (the First Person of the Trinity). 12. St. Joseph (is) (is not) Christ's father in the same sense as Mary is His Mother. 13. St. Joseph is given a special (...) in his Mass. 14. He is Patron of the universal (...), as well as of a (...). 15. The Precursor is St. (...). 16. St. Joseph's sanctity was proportionate to his (...). 17. (...) was the greatest of the prophets. 18. The greatest saint after Our Lady is (...). 19. The contemplation Christ wants us all to enjoy is a (natural) (supernatural) one, given by the (...). 20. Our daily work is one way in which we can fulfil the great law of (...).

SAINT JOSEPH

(B). Answer as fully as you can each of the following: -

1. Little Arnold wants to know who St. Joseph was. Tell him.
2. Explain St. Joseph's great dignity.
3. Account for St. Joseph's sanctity.
4. What errors do the following teach concerning work: Aristotle; Protestantism; Industrialism; Atheistic communism.
5. Why does Christ's teaching make the abolition of slavery inevitable?
6. Explain the true dignity of work.
7. Explain fully the value of work.
8. What is meant by the hidden life? What reward does it bring to us?

Chapter 29

NATURAL HABITS

1. Dispositions.

(a). Inborn Dispositions.

At birth a child has a human NATURE, and FACULTIES that correspond to this. Moreover, his faculties have certain DISPOSITIONS. These exist in the faculty, but they are distinct from it. And, since they are in it before it begins to act in any way, they are said to be INBORN. They are due to HEREDITY. They come from the parents.

Thus, some children have from birth a good ear for music. Others have not. Some have better eyesight than others. Some, a keener imagination. Some are disposed to be mild, friendly, sympathetic, courageous, temperate, prudent and well-balanced. Others, just the opposite.

Are these INBORN dispositions important? Of course. Why? Because they either HELP a faculty to function well, or they HINDER it from doing so. It is easier for a child with good dispositions to acquire good moral habits than for one with poor dispositions, just as it is easier for a child with a good ear to learn the piano than for one not so well endowed.

Hence, PARENTS should keep themselves healthy, and practise all the virtues. You often hear parents say: "We want to give our children a good start in life." They usually have in mind things like money, reputation, or a good job. But the best start parents can give their children is a healthy body, enriched with good dispositions that will enable them to live rightly as rational beings and adopted children of God.

(b). Dispositions acquired before the Use of Reason.

Consider now the dispositions a child ACQUIRES by his own activity before he comes to the use of reason.

As soon as a child is born, he starts to DO things. He begins to USE his faculties. He squalls. He moves his fingers, arms and legs. He takes his meals. After a while, he learns to sit up, to crawl, and to walk. He utters single words. He makes little sentences. He asks endless questions: "Why has Daddy a red nose?" "How does a centipede know which leg to shift?" When not asleep, he is DOING something.

Now, when he does anything, his act does not just come and go. It leaves behind it in the faculty a TENDENCY to act in a similar way next time, just as creasing a bit of paper gives it a tendency to fold the same way again.

Watch a child trying to put something into his mouth for the first time. He fails. He tries again. At last, he flukes a bull's eye. He soon becomes an expert. He pops a lolly into his mouth in record time. What has happened? By exercising his faculty of TOUCH, he has acquired a certain skill in finding his mouth. He has given this faculty a disposition it did not have before. He does the same, too, when he learns to walk, or to wash himself, or put on his clothes.

Thus a child does countless things before he comes to the use of reason. As a RATIONAL being, he ought to act REASONABLY from the start. But how can he, since he has not yet the use of his reason? Here, again, is where the PARENTS come in. They have to train him to act reasonably. How? By a wise use of rewards and punishments.

An example will show how this can be done. A child who has not yet gained the use of reason sees his mother attending to his little sister. Jealousy surges up in him, and with it anger and hate. He screams in protest. If his mother goes to him and fondles him, he will act the same way the next time he feels neglected. And the next, too. What is she doing? She is training him to give way to his passions. She is spoiling him. If, on the contrary, she refuses to soothe him, he soon learns that it does not pay to scream. He gives it up. Without realising it, he is learning to control his passions. He is acquiring good dispositions that will stand him in good stead in later life.

Are these ACQUIRED dispositions also important? Most certainly. Why? Because, if a child has good dispositions, morally good acts will appeal to him; whereas if he has bad dispositions they will not.

He will be attracted by morally evil acts instead. Thus, excessive drinking appeals strongly to a drunkard. He considers it a good thing. It has no appeal at all to a temperate man. He thinks it is a mad thing. Dispositions make all the difference.

Aristotle summed it up long ago by saying: "AS EACH PERSON IS, SO DOES AN END SEEM TO HIM." Shakespeare put the same thing in another way when he wrote: "WISDOM AND GOODNESS TO THE VILE SEEM VILE." Both express a most profound principle concerning human conduct. Try to remember it for life. No wonder Aristotle warns parents to train their little ones to act reasonably from the very start. No wonder he writes: "It makes, not a slight, but an important difference, whether we have been brought up in the right habits or in the wrong from childhood... For he who lives in obedience to passion will not listen to reasoning which turns him from it; nay, more, he will not understand it." This last sentence is worth a lot of pondering. It is deep, very deep; and very true.

From this you can see how unwise it is for parents to let wee children do absolutely what they like. Just as a mother is obliged to prevent her little one from pulling a teapot of scalding water on to himself from the table, so she is likewise obliged to prevent him from acquiring dispositions that will make it difficult for him to practise virtue in later life.

Some writers call these dispositions "HABITS." But we shall follow those who keep the word for dispositions that are far more DIFFICULT TO REMOVE than these. Habits are hard to shift. Let us see why.

2. Natural Habits.

Once a child gains the use of his reason, he begins to perform HUMAN acts. These are acts over which he has CONTROL, and for which he is consequently RESPONSIBLE. They flow from his REASON and WILL.

Like his other acts, they build up DISPOSITIONS in the faculties that produce them. But there is a big difference. The faculties in which these are ultimately rooted are SPIRITUAL faculties. They are the child's intelligence and will. Rooted in what is spiritual, these dispositions can become extremely stable and enduring. Unlike the dispositions which a child has from birth and those

which he acquires before he comes to the use of reason, these dispositions acquired by human acts can become extremely DIFFICULT TO REMOVE. In other words, they can become HABITS in the strictest sense.

Think of a great pianist. In his INTELLIGENCE there is the HABIT which we call his art. In the nerves and muscles of his hands and fingers there is the corresponding skill which his art uses as an instrument in expressing itself. This can be destroyed in an instant. His fingers can be crushed in gears or cut off by a bandsaw. But nothing can touch his art. It is in a spiritual faculty. It has about it something of the awesome permanence of God. Deeply rooted, it is hard to shift.

We can describe a HABIT, then, as a DEEPLY-ROOTED TENDENCY which is produced by our HUMAN acts, and which either HELPS us to act in accordance with our NATURE and END, or which HINDERS us from so acting.

It is a TENDENCY or DISPOSITION to act in a certain way. Thus, a man with the habit of swearing TENDS to swear the moment he is annoyed. His words may rush out before he has time to realise that he is shocking anyone. A drunkard is DISPOSED to bend his elbow too readily when there is a drink about. He is INCLINED to act as a sponge. He has a TENDENCY to guzzle.

But not every tendency is rightly called a habit. It must be DEEPLY ROOTED. If a man picks up a rifle for the first time and flukes a bull's eye at a thousand yards on a windy day, he can hardly be said to be a crack marksman, any more than a beginner can be said to be an expert billiard player just because he flukes a big break. Habits are deeply-rooted tendencies.

Deeply-rooted, not just in our body, but in what is SPIRITUAL in us, habits are necessarily DIFFICULT TO REMOVE. That is why they play such a mighty role in life. If good, they can be our life-long friends. If bad, our worst enemies, even to the grave.

Finally, a habit either HELPS us to act in line with our NATURE and END, or it HINDERS us from acting thus. If it HELPS us, it is said to be a GOOD habit. If it HINDERS us, a BAD one.

Now, do not run away with the idea that the type of habit we have just described is the only one man can have. There are lots of others. We shall deal with them in later chapters.

3. How Habits Develop.

Once you understand what "being" is, and what "non-being" is, you know with metaphysical certitude that a thing cannot "be" and "not be" at the same time and from the same point of view. Similarly, once you understand what "good" is and what "evil" is in the moral order, you are absolutely certain that good must be done, and evil must be avoided. Here, then, is an extraordinary habit. Why? Because it is gained by ONE act. It is called the HABIT OF FIRST PRINCIPLES. No repetition necessary here. The habit is acquired first pop. And it is fixed for life. Just as well, too, since it is absolutely necessary for right thought and right conduct.

But in almost all other cases one experience is not enough to generate a habit. An act must be REPEATED over and over again. A man does not become an habitual drunkard by being taken home in the wheelbarrow after winning an art union. No one can become a champion golfer by one swing of a club. A man must PRACTISE and PRACTISE. He must REPEAT and REPEAT. Normally, natural habits are generated by REPETITION of their acts.

So much for the ORIGIN of habits. How, now, do they INCREASE? To increase a habit, we must perform acts that are MORE INTENSE than is the habit itself. If a man smokes ten cigarettes every day, he does not increase his habit. To do that, he must smoke eleven; then twelve; then thirteen, and so on. By the time he gets to ninety a day, he will find it hard to give up cigarettes.

From this you can get some idea of what is meant by HEROIC SANCTITY. It is easy to make an act of CHARITY which is not very intense. Easy, too, to make another a bit more intense. Then another. But a time comes when it demands absolute HEROISM to go on increasing the INTENSITY of one's charity. Most people have not enough courage to do this. Saints have. That is why they are canonised. If you think they don't deserve it, try it yourself and see.

How, now, are habits DONE AWAY WITH? Well, we can get rid of a habit only by REPEATING THE OPPOSITE ACT. This implies, of

course, that we give up acts that foster the habit we want to be rid of.

Thus, we get rid of the bad habit of being late, by being punctual. We lose the good habit of telling the truth, by telling lies. Obvious, isn't it?

4. Rules For Acquiring Good Habits.

(a). Make a strong Resolution to start with.

A man once promised his wife that he would not get drunk again. He then put an advertisement in the paper offering a reward of fifty dollars to anyone who found him drinking in a hotel. He made a genuine resolution.

Many children IMAGINE how grand it would be to be a famous doctor, engineer, lawyer, and so on. But hard work at their studies to fit themselves for such a vocation – oh no, they never dream of doing that. They have no real RESOLUTION. A resolution is in the WILL, not in the imagination. Such children are just day-dreaming. They are not in earnest. They will end up licking stamps in an office or running messages. If you want a habit, then, don't just dream about it. Make as firm a resolution as you can, just as a good forward does when he grits his teeth near the scoring line and goes over to win the game, carrying three or four of his opponents with him.

(b). Back up your Resolution with Good Motives.

A resolution is in the will. But the will is a BLIND faculty. It must have a good SHOWN to it, by the INTELLECT. Hence the necessity of realising WHY you should do a thing. The more important and numerous your REASONS are, the more likely you are to do it.

If you wake up at night to find that the house is very much on fire, you get out, quickly. No mere day-dreaming here. Prompt action instead. Why? Because the reason for it is acutely appreciated. In making a resolution to acquire a good habit, then, back it up with as many good REASONS as you possibly can; and try to appreciate them fully.

(c). Do not allow any Exceptions.

Never say: "I won't count this time." You may not count it, but nature will. Every lapse is like letting fall a ball of string which you have been winding up. A single slip may undo more than many turns will wind up again. So no exceptions!

(d). Use every Opportunity to practise your Resolution.

If, for instance, you resolve to do immediately whatever your father or mother asks you to do, do not avoid their presence so that they will not have a chance to ask you. Seek it instead. Even ask them if you can help them in any way.

Suppose you make a resolution to be kind to others. Well, go straightaway and "shout" an ice-cream to the boy you naturally dislike most; or chat in a genuinely friendly manner with the prefect who gave you the bad note. Strike while the iron is red. Don't just wait for opportunities. Seek them.

(e). Do every day something difficult or distasteful.

Do not do a thing MERELY because it is difficult or distasteful. That would be silly. But do good things that you find hard to do, for a worthy MOTIVE - to help the Holy Souls, for instance, or to assist the dying, or to gain merit for heaven.

Going for a swim when the water is rather cool, do not just put your toe in first, and then submerge the rest of your body by slow degrees. Take a header in from the start. If you cannot pluck up enough courage to do this, ask someone to push you in. Plenty will be willing to oblige.

(f). Tackle a bad habit right from the start.

Pull a wee kauri out by the roots. Easy enough, isn't it? But how would you like to pull "Tane Mahuta," "the god of the forest," out by the roots? It is a giant kauri in the Waipoua State Forest. It is about one hundred and fifty feet tall, and is sixty-two feet in girth at the base. Experts say that it is well over a thousand years old. You could not just grab it and walk off with it, as you could a tiny kauri. Well, habits are like that. They increase by becoming more and more DEEPLY-ROOTED in our faculties. That is why you must

tackle bad dispositions at the start, before they get properly rooted, if you want to get rid of them, and build up a good habit instead. Check beginnings. This is a golden rule.

5. A Little Self-Examination.

Look now into your daily life. Check up on a few habits. First, your home life. Ask yourself these questions, and answer them sincerely: Do I go to bed and get up at a reasonable time? Do I keep my room tidy? Do I keep myself clean? My boots? My clothes? My finger nails? My teeth? Am I polite to my father and mother and others at home, or do I keep my best manners for strangers? Do I try to help those about me every way I can? Do I obey my father and mother promptly and with good grace, or do I hesitate and grumble? Do I want to do all the talking? Am I too taciturn? Do I show my parents deep respect and love? Do I confide in them in my difficulties? Do I act always in such a way that they are proud of me? Do I ever cause them any unnecessary worry? Am I particularly solicitous when they are ill?

When I am travelling to and from school, do I ever give people a chance to form a poor opinion of my school by the way I act in the train or bus? Do I give up my seat cheerfully to adults, especially those that are elderly and not good-looking? Do I talk quietly, or am I just a loud-mouthed lout? Do I ever use vulgar language and cheap slang? Do I promptly shut a window when I can see that it is annoying another passenger? Do I spend the whole journey eating? What sort of "literature" do I read in the train? Is it such that I would willingly ask my father or mother to read it? Am I given to migrating from one end of the train to the other, to the annoyance of passengers in every carriage? Do I leave bits of paper and other rubbish in the carriage? Is everything I do compatible with my morning offering?

At school, am I punctual in ranks and at class? Do I keep silent when I ought? Do I concentrate on work in class? Do I sit up in a manly way, or do I flop all over my desk like a jelly-fish? Do I do my work as neatly and accurately as I can? Am I wholly truthful in the excuses I give? Do I co-operate wholeheartedly with my teacher in

every class? Do I think things out for myself, or just use my memory as a parrot does? Do I speak distinctly and with sufficient loudness to be easily heard when I am asked a question? Do I do all my work honestly, refusing to seek help from another when it is forbidden? Do I offer my work to God, and give Him the best I can?

What is my attitude towards games? Do I exaggerate their importance by thinking them the only thing that matters? Do I minimise their value by failing to appreciate the great good they can do me? Do I use them to foster the habit of co-operating with others? And the habit of fair play? Do I take a victory and a beating in the right spirit? Do I grumble about the referee and about my team mates? Do I control my temper during a game? Do I play fairly? Do I ever take a mean advantage over another? Do I inwardly applaud good things done by the opposing team? Do I play for the success of the team, or just for my own glory?

Am I keen on some cultural pursuits? Am I a member of the school orchestra? Or the choir? Do I take an active part in oratory and debating? Am I interested in any of the other arts? Am I cultivating a good taste in literature? Am I reasonably critical of what I read? Am I training myself to rejoice in, and to be grieved at, the right objects? Do I read from time to time good Catholic books that have thoughts which are deep and worth while? Am I cultivating a thoroughly Catholic outlook on life? Am I preparing myself to take a vigorous part in Catholic Action when I leave school?

These are obviously only a few of the numberless questions you can ask yourself, to find out whether you are cultivating good habits or not. You can think of scores of others yourself. You can, of course, ask dozens of questions about your prayers, the Mass, the Sacraments, the Stations of the Cross, and so on; but these are concerned more with supernatural habits which will be dealt with later on. At present, we are dealing with the natural order.

6. Effects Of Good Habits.

(a). They make their acts easy.

You find it far easier to ride a bicycle now than when you were first learning to ride. Good habits always have this effect. The more deeply-rooted the habit is, the easier are its acts. It is consoling to remember this when you are fighting hard to acquire a good habit.

(b). They make their acts more perfect.

No one would pay a large sum to hear a child practising the scales on a piano. But people will pay a lot to hear a world's champion pianist. Why? His acts are far more perfect, thanks to the good habit he has acquired.

(c). They make acts more meritorious.

A man with the vice of intemperance has to drag himself past a bar. He may get little reward for his effort. A man with the habit of temperance goes past the same bar without the slightest effort. Yet his reward in heaven will be far greater. His act is much more perfect. You expect more marks in an exam for a paper in which all your sums are right than in one in which half of them are wrong, don't you? The reward due to an act is proportionate to the perfection of that act. That is why saints merit so much as they draw near the grave. How wise it is, then, for us to acquire good habits.

7. The Reward Of Good Habits.

From what has just been said, you can see that good habits bring their own rich reward even in this life. Moreover, they promote health and happiness, true freedom, mental balance, the respect of others, noble friendships and a host of other good things as well. Above all, they give us a good CHARACTER.

Our CHARACTER depends on three things: HEREDITY, ENVIRONMENT, and THE USE WE MAKE OF OUR FREE WILL.

Of these, the most important is obviously the last. Demosthenes, it is said, was born with an impediment. Yet he became a great orator. How? By practice. In other words, by willing it. St. Francis de Sales was by temperament fiery and passionate. Yet he became the meekest of men. How? By the good use he made of his free will to co-operate with God's grace. Think of the many saints who were born in the most unpromising environment. Scores of examples can be given from history to prove that what counts most in the

development of character is not heredity nor environment but the use one makes of free will. It cannot be otherwise. For what is character but the sum-total of the good habits a person has? The more numerous, and the more deeply rooted they are, the nobler is the character.

CHARACTERS tend to fall into certain types. Some people, for example, are inclined by temperament to be too STOLID. They rarely manifest any intense feelings. People near them at a big football match will be yelling their heads off; but they will be as cool, calm and collected as if they were at an egg-laying competition. Such persons may have a good judgment, since it is not influenced by their passions or emotions; but they miss a lot in life. Moreover, they are inclined to be selfish, and to lack sympathy for others. They can be cruel, without realising it. They do well in a job that requires little imagination and endless patience – research work of some sort.

Other people are just the opposite. They are too passionate and emotional. They are the SENSITIVE type. They are often graceful in their movements. They love music and dancing. They are often affectionate, frank and sincere. But they are usually too impulsive. They rush into action without thinking of the consequences. They may also be unstable.

Others, again, belong to the INTELLECTUAL type. They are led by their reason rather than by their feelings. They love study. Theirs is a life of thought. Sometimes, they are just cranks. They build up theory after theory, always on the quest for something new. Shelley and his pantisocracy is an example. They are utterly unpractical. They forget that what matters is not just thought, but truth. Sometimes, however, they do love the truth, and they do live it. Then they are glorious characters like St. Augustine or St. Thomas Aquinas, like St. Catherine of Sienna or St. Theresa of Avila. They are hard to beat, then.

Then, there is the DOMINEERING type. These are very strong willed. They master themselves, and they master others. They are usually cold and forbidding. They are born leaders. They should try to realise that the power to command others is a great gift; but they should be on their guard not to abuse it by becoming too haughty and domineering. They can become great bullies, without realising it.

Opposite to these, there is the TIMID type. People of this type have too little confidence in themselves. They won't push themselves forward. They don't like responsibility. They lack initiative. They fear failure. They are often very amiable characters from other points of view. But they should learn to assert themselves more. They should remember that, if humility forbids us to accept offices that are clearly beyond our ability, it also urges us to fulfil as perfectly as we can the office marked out for us by Providence. Catholics are too often content to sit still and let others be elected mayor, or president or chairman. This is not genuine humility, they are fit for the job. It is not Catholic Action. It is just a form of laziness, a form of cowardice.

Finally, there is the ACTIVE type. These love external acts. They must be always doing something. They can never relax. Sometimes they are all noise and bustle. They accomplish very little. Sometimes, however, they are resolute. They do well what they do. They finish what they begin. Then, they can be great, provided they have thought as well as action. Think of St. Vincent de Paul. Think of Maritain – the countless lectures he has given, the many books he has written, all so deep and full of thought! He gets things done, but he thinks as well. He is indeed a great character.

Look now, at your own character. Try to fashion it according to what is BEST in the types we have mentioned. Try to make a well-balanced character – the bright, happy, noble, deep, practical, lovable character of a saint.

8. How To Develop A Good Character.

Here are some hints on how to develop a good character. Ponder on each. If you cannot see why it is important, ask your teacher.

- (a). Keep your body healthy.
- (b). Build up as many good habits as you can.
- (c). Practise self-control and self-denial every day.
- (d). Control your moods at all costs.
- (c). Have only good companions.
- (f). Make noble friendships.
- (g). Acquire a liberal education.

- (h). Cultivate refinement.
- (i). Foster noble interests.
- (j). Avoid rush and dissipation.

9. The Importance Of Good Habits.

Here is what a modern non-Catholic writer says about habits: "The hell to be endured hereafter is no worse than the hell we make for ourselves in this world by habitually fashioning our characters the wrong way. Could the young but realise how soon they will become walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct in the plastic state. We are spinning our fates, good or evil, and never to be undone. Every smallest stroke of virtue or of vice leaves its never-so-little scar. The drunken Rip Van Winkle in Jefferson's play excuses himself for every fresh dereliction by saying: 'I won't count this time.' Well, he may not count it, and a kind Providence may not count it; but it is being counted none the less. Down among his nerve cells and fibres the molecules are counting it, and registering and storing it up to be used against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out."

This writer does not seem to realise what hell really is, does he? Nor does he seem to take into account sufficiently the help we can get from God's grace. Still, he does realise how important habits are in life. That is why he has been quoted.

Here, finally, is an old saying which sums up the value of good habits:

Sow an act, reap a habit;
Sow a habit, reap a character;
Sow a character, reap a destiny.

Notice how it goes: act, habit, character, destiny – hell or heaven forever. Could anything, then, be more important?

10. Practical Conclusions.

- 1. I should regard the daily rule, not as a restriction on liberty, but as a means of gaining good habits.

2. I should never say: "I can't help it; I'm made like that." This is sheer materialism. It denies free will, and God's grace. Or it is a mere rationalisation of cowardice.
3. I should acquire good habits by daily practice, and not expect them to be injected into me by a doctor.
4. I should foster a manly self-reliance, and not be childishly dependent on others, or on the state.
5. I should never forget the profound practical truth expressed by Our Lord when He said: "He that shall lose his life for My sake, shall find it." (Mat. 16:25). I must learn to give, if I am to receive.

SUMMARY

1. Dispositions.

- (a). Inborn Dispositions – their importance.
- (b). Dispositions acquired before the Use of Reason – their importance.

2. Natural Habits.

- (a). An acquired operative HABIT is: A DEEPLY-ROOTED TENDENCY which is produced by our HUMAN ACTS, and which either HELPS us to act in accordance with our NATURE and END, or HINDERS us from so acting.
- (b). This is not the only type of habit man can have.

3. How Habits Develop.

- (a). How they originate: By REPETITION of their acts.
- (b). How they increase: by doing acts MORE INTENSE than the habit.
- (c). How they are done away with: by performing acts of the opposite habit.

4. Rules For Acquiring Good Habits.

- (a). Make a strong resolution to start with.
- (b). Back up your resolution with good motives.
- (c). Do not allow any exceptions.
- (d). Use every opportunity to practise your resolution.
- (e). Do every day something difficult or distasteful.
- (f). Tackle a bad habit right from the start.

5. A Little Self-Examination.

Habits I am cultivating at home, when travelling, at school.

6. Effects Of Good Habits.

- (a). They make acts easy.
- (b). They make acts more perfect.
- (c). They make acts more meritorious.

7. The Reward Of Good Habits.

- (a). Character – The sum-total of my habits.
- (b). It depends on: heredity, environment, the use I make of my free will.
- (c). Types: stolid; sensitive; intellectual; domineering; timid; active.
- (d). I should develop a well-balanced character, that has in it what is best in all these.

8. How To develop A Good Character.

- (a). Keep your body healthy.
- (b). Build up as many good habits as you can.
- (c). Practise self-control and self-denial.
- (d). Control your moods at all costs.
- (e). Have only good companions.

- (f). Make noble friendships.
- (g). Acquire a liberal education.
- (h) Cultivate refinement.
- (i). Foster noble interests.
- (j). Avoid rush and dissipation.

9. Importance Of Good Habits: Sow an act, reap a habit;
 Sow a habit, reap a character.
 Sow a character, reap a destiny.

10. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following:

1. Dispositions given by heredity are in our (body) (soul). 2. Those acquired before the use of reason are in our (body) (soul). 3. Those generated by our human acts are in our (...) and (...). 4. A habit is a (...) tendency which is produced by our (...) acts, and which helps or hinders action in line with our (...) and (...). 5. A habit which helps us to act in line with our nature and end is called a (...); one that hinders us is called a (...) habit. 6. Habits normally originate through (...) of their acts. 7. An exception is the habit of first (...). 8. We increase habits by doing acts that are more (...) than the habit. 9. We destroy a habit by doing acts of the (...) habit. 10. To gain a habit, I should make a strong (...) at the start. 11. I should back this up with as many good (...) as I can. 12. I should allow no (...). 13. Good habits make their acts more (...), (...), (...). 14. Character is the sum-total of (...). 15. Character is due to (...), (...) and (...). 16. I should build up a well-(...) character. 17. This is a wise saying: Sow an (...), reap a (...); sow a (...), reap a (...); sow a (...), reap a (...), 18. I should regard the rule as a means of (...). 19. It is true wisdom to say: "I should do what I (like) (ought). 20. Our Lord says: "He that shall lose his life for My sake, shall (...) it."

(B). Answer the following as fully as you can: -

1. Why is it important to have healthy, virtuous and wise parents?
2. What is an acquired natural habit?
3. Show how habits originate and increase, and how they are done away with.
4. Give five rules for acquiring good habits.
5. Give the three effects that good habits have on actions.
6. Write all you can about character.
7. Give ten hints on how to develop a good character.
8. Show that good habits are extremely important.

Chapter 30

THE NATURAL VIRTUES

(A). THE INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES

1. Natural Virtues.

A VIRTUE is a GOOD HABIT. It moves us to DO good things: to THINK rightly, and to ACT rightly. In other words, it helps us to do things that are REASONABLE; hence, in line with our NATURE and END. It is opposed to a VICE, which is a BAD habit.

Since the virtues are HABITS, all that we have said about good habits in the last chapter applies to them. Except for the habit of First Principles, they are formed gradually. They ORIGINATE by repetition of their acts. They INCREASE by acts that are more intense than the habit. They are LOST by acts of the opposite vice. They make their acts EASIER, MORE PLEASANT, and more MERITORIOUS. They are of the utmost value. We cannot live as rational beings without them.

2. Kinds.

Two spiritual faculties raise us immeasurably above the mere animals. They are our INTELLECT, which is made for knowing TRUTH, and our WILL, which is made for seeking GOOD. As rational beings, we have to perfect these. We do this by forming VIRTUES in each of them.

The virtues that perfect our INTELLECT are called the INTELLECTUAL virtues. Those that perfect our will, the MORAL virtues.

With the exception of PRUDENCE, the INTELLECTUAL virtues perfect us only in a limited sphere of activity. They help us to be good mathematicians, good engineers, good doctors, good artists, and so on. But they do not make us good HUMAN BEINGS.

Susan Setsquare may be a world's champion at mathematics but a gangstress at the same time. Percy Popvalve may be a famous boiler maker, yet a despicable hypocrite. Sawny Sawbones may be the first doctor in a city, but not the sort of man you would care to have as a friend. Quizzy Quidjuris may be a world beater as a lawyer, and a wife-beater as a husband. Except for PRUDENCE which is in a sense a MORAL virtue as well as an intellectual virtue, the intellectual virtues do not give a person a title to canonisation.

The MORAL virtues, on the contrary, including PRUDENCE, do make us good HUMAN BEINGS. That is why they are more important than the others. Our end in life is not to be just a good farmer or a good footballer or a good doctor, but a good MAN. Of course, it is really much more. It is to be a good ADOPTED SON OF GOD, a good heir to heaven. But we cannot be this unless we are first good human beings. The supernatural does not destroy the natural. It presupposes it instead.

The main INTELLECTUAL virtues are: UNDERSTANDING, SCIENCE, WISDOM, ART and PRUDENCE. The main MORAL virtues are: FORTITUDE, TEMPERANCE, and JUSTICE. Connected with these are many others. We shall speak of them in the next chapter. At present, we are concerned with the INTELLECTUAL virtues.

3. The Intellectual Virtues.

(A). UNDERSTANDING.

This is the HABIT OF FIRST PRINCIPLES. It is the most fundamental of the intellectual virtues. Without it, none of the others could exist.

Once you understand what "is" means, and what "is not" means, you know for the rest of your life that what is, is; and what is not, is not. You accept the principle of IDENTITY. You also accept the principle of NON-CONTRADICTION: a thing cannot be, and not be, at the same time and from the same point of view. It is the same for other first principles that flow immediately from these, and for other self-evident truths.

Similarly, once you understand what "good" means, and what "evil" means, you know that good must be done and evil must be avoided.

Once you know what God is, you also know that He must be loved above all creatures. And so on.

Since these first principles are absolutely necessary for right thought and right conduct, the virtue of UNDERSTANDING is formed by a single act. Repetition is not necessary here.

(B). SCIENCE.

It is not enough for us to grasp first principles. We must USE these to form CONCLUSIONS based on demonstration. Think of all the demonstrations you meet with in any science you learn, and of the conclusions you come to. The virtue that perfects your intellect here is the virtue of SCIENCE. It gives an orderly knowledge of things, got through a study of their proximate causes. In doing this, it obviously perfects our intellect. So it is an intellectual virtue.

(C). WISDOM.

This is the noblest of the intellectual virtues. Why? Because it gets at the ULTIMATE explanations of things. It enables our reason to rise even to a knowledge of God, the first uncaused Cause of all else that is. It is the highest part of what we have called PHILOSOPHY. Its proper name is METAPHYSICS. It is natural WISDOM, the noblest science to which the human mind can attain, apart from any revelation from God.

The virtue of science is well cultivated today, at least in regard to the experimental sciences and mathematics, but the virtue of wisdom is almost wholly neglected outside Catholic schools and universities. That is why modern knowledge is woefully lacking in foundations. That, too, is why the hierarchy of the sciences is ignored, with disastrous results, as we saw in an earlier chapter.

Today, many outside the Church are hopelessly lost in their search for truth. They have not even the means of recognising it when found. Confusing one grade of science with another, forcing their pet science to answer questions quite beyond its scope, neglecting metaphysics which alone can help them, they despair of ever coming to the truth. They are like children who deliberately shut their eyes at noon, and then complain bitterly of the dark. Civilisation must return to metaphysics, and to God's supernatural

wisdom which it prepares us to accept, or it will perish from the earth.

(D). ART.

There is only one intellect in each of us. But it has two different ways of acting. Sometimes, it knows in such a way that its act is quite COMPLETE by the mere fact that it has gained knowledge. At other times, its act of knowing is NOT COMPLETE, till we have carried it out in practice. The first sort of knowledge is called SPECULATIVE knowledge. The second, PRACTICAL.

For instance: you may lie in bed enjoying a cigarette, while contemplating the truth that two and two make four. Your knowledge of this truth is purely SPECULATIVE. It does not demand any ACTION on your part to complete it. It is complete on its own.

But, what happens if you notice that the bed is on fire? You do not just lie there, and contemplate the blazing blankets. You DO something. Your intelligence is not content with mere knowledge. It is not content with having within itself the FORMAL cause of the thing known, as it is in speculative knowledge. It gets busy in regard to a FINAL cause as well. It sees what is GOOD for you to DO in the circumstances. So it issues a COMMAND to the WILL, by ENLIGHTENING it as to what it ought DO immediately. And the will obeys most obligingly. You hop out of bed, and rush for the first extinguisher. Very different from purely speculative knowledge, isn't it? Here an END is sought. MEANS are chosen. The WILL is enlightened. Something is DONE. Knowledge is LIVED. The judgment here is a wholly PRACTICAL one.

Well, now, the virtues we have seen so far perfect our intellect in its SPECULATIVE knowledge. ART, on the contrary, perfects it in its PRACTICAL knowledge.

The job of the artist is not to CONTEMPLATE truth as a philosopher does. His job is to PRODUCE something artistic – shoes, paintings, symphonies, plays, and so on. For ART IS RIGHT REASON IN MAKING THINGS.

Art, remember, is a virtue. Hence, it is well to cultivate it. If you cannot actually produce great works of art, you can still train

yourself to appreciate these. And it is really worth while. The education of your emotions to a right appreciation in art is an important part of your training. It is unwise to neglect it.

(E). PRUDENCE.

Like art, PRUDENCE perfects our intellect in its PRACTICAL judgments. But, whereas ART is right reason in MAKING things, PRUDENCE is right reason in DOING things. As it is the only intellectual virtue that makes us not merely good at this or that, but good human beings, it is of the utmost importance. We shall devote the rest of this chapter to it.

(a). WHAT IT IS.

PRUDENCE is an intellectual virtue which helps us to JUDGE and USE the right MEANS to gain man's true END, in the many individual acts we perform each day.

Our END in the natural order is DETERMINED for us by GOD, who gives us a RATIONAL nature. It is to act always REASONABLY, and so gain HAPPINESS.

The MEANS are the HUMAN ACTS we perform daily, provided, of course, that they are REASONABLE ones.

Think of the many human acts you can perform in a day by means of your intellect, will, internal senses, external senses, and your lower appetites. How numerous! How varied! They can be noble or ignoble, selfish or unselfish, reasonable or unreasonable. They can range from the basest and the most unnatural of sins to the most heroic of virtuous acts. You can use your intellect to praise God or to blaspheme against Him. You can use your will to love Him or to hate Him. It is the same for all your other faculties inasmuch as they come under the control of your intellect and will.

It is the job of PRUDENCE to regulate our conduct in such a way that we do only what is right. Its task is to put the stamp of RIGHT REASON on everything we do, so that, avoiding what is unreasonable, we may behave in a manner worthy of our dignity as rational beings, made in the image of God. It is a gigantic task. Just try for one day to do nothing that is in the least unreasonable, and you will realise how difficult it is.

(b). HOW IT FULFILS ITS TASK.

An example will show this. Take eating. A man can, on the one hand, be a repulsive glutton. This is sinning by EXCESS. On the other hand, he can starve himself to death. This is sinning by DEFECT. One eats too much. The other, too little. Both are quite UNREASONABLE. Where, now, does REASONABLE conduct lie here? It is obviously that which avoids these two EXTREMES. In other words, it is that which follows the GOLDEN MEAN.

We regulate our appetites for food by means of the virtue of TEMPERANCE. It can do this only by conforming to the GOLDEN MEAN. But temperance is a MORAL virtue. It is in our APPETITES. And appetites are blind. Their job is not to KNOW things. It is to seek good and avoid evil. Hence the virtue of temperance cannot itself KNOW the golden mean. It has to have this set before it by an INTELLECTUAL virtue. This is the virtue of PRUDENCE.

So PRUDENCE fulfils its task by imposing on the moral virtues the GOLDEN MEAN that lies between EXCESS on the one hand, and DEFECT on the other. And it does this, not by forming a universal judgment such as "good is to be done, evil to be avoided," but by forming a wholly PRACTICAL judgment which declares what is reasonable for us to do in the definite circumstances in which we find ourselves at the moment of acting – circumstances that are always unique, and can never be renewed.

By thus causing us to follow the GOLDEN MEAN, prudence does not condemn us to mediocrity. It does not forbid heroic actions. The golden mean is simply what is REASONABLE for us to do in the particular circumstances in which we find ourselves. It varies for different people. As regards eating, for example, the golden mean is not the same for an adult as for a child, for a monk as for a soldier, for an athlete in training as for a hard-working farmer. It even varies for the same person from day to day as circumstances change. It can call for HEROIC virtue, as it does in a man who, with a right motive, is ready to risk his life in defence of his country. It is perfectly compatible with heroism in conduct.

(c). ITS ACTS.

Prudence moves us to select and use the right means to man's true end. What acts does this imply? An example may make them clear.

Suppose you want to go to the pictures. This is the END you intend to achieve. What MEANS do you take? You first find out what pictures are on. You consider the merits of each. In other words, you REFLECT. But you cannot keep reflecting all night. You must make up your mind as to which picture is the best. You must make a practical judgment. You must JUDGE that "Three Live Ghosts" is the most suitable picture, and that you will go to it. After this, you must EXECUTE the judgment by going to the theatre and getting a seat there. You must actually take the means to the end. This is prudence.

To be prudent, then, we must train ourselves to REFLECT reasonably, to JUDGE rightly, and to EXECUTE this judgment in practice.

TO REFLECT. There are, of course, lots of acts before which we do not need to reflect much. We know immediately what we ought to do in the circumstances. When the bell goes for ranks, for example, we know we ought fall in, and keep silent. The bell is the voice of authority; hence the voice of God. But there are many acts which demand careful reflection. Choosing a vocation is an example. So is selecting a partner for life. A business man does not sign a contract involving thousands of dollars without considering carefully what he is doing. Neither should we rush into action that has serious consequences without due thought and consideration. "Look before you leap" is a wise old saying. It is often very necessary for the exercise of prudence.

TO JUDGE RIGHTLY. This is usually easy for a person whose appetites are rightly governed by reason. Why? Because it is question here of a wholly practical judgment which enlightens us as to what we should do in the particular circumstances in which we find ourselves. And TRUTH in the practical order, as we saw in a previous lesson, is the AGREEMENT of our PRACTICAL JUDGMENT with AN UPRIGHT APPETITE. This agreement is not possible if our WILL is not UPRIGHT, that is to say, DIRECTED towards man's true LAST END, by the moral virtues.

Do not forget that, in practice, we judge according to INCLINATION. If the inclination in our will is right, we judge rightly concerning what is to be done. If this inclination is towards an end other than our true end, we judge wrongly. As Aristotle said: "As a person IS, so does an END seem to him." If we want to judge

rightly what we ought to do in our daily trials and temptations and problems, we must cultivate an UPRIGHT WILL. We must practise the MORAL virtues. Prudence cannot exist without them, any more than they can exist without prudence, just as a bird cannot fly without wings, nor can the wings fly without the bird. It is a question of two different kinds of causes acting on each other.

TO EXECUTE THIS JUDGMENT. Once our intelligence judges what is reasonable for us to do in the circumstances in which we find ourselves, it then issues a COMMAND to the will. It does this by ENLIGHTENING the will as to what it ought to DO and why. Beyond this, the intelligence cannot go. It is, remember, a faculty for KNOWING things, not one for DOING them. The DOING must be accomplished by the WILL. It is the faculty of ACTION. It remains, then, for the WILL to EXECUTE the practical judgment made by the intellect.

It will do this, provided the OBSTACLES it meets with are not too strong. These obstacles come from our ungoverned PASSIONS and our BAD HABITS. Thus, a boy may rightly judge that he ought to do his homework neatly, carefully, and fully. But, if he has the vice of cowardice in regard to study, he will fail to execute this right judgment. The effort and self-denial required will be too great an obstacle to his will. This, again, shows how necessary it is for us to cultivate the moral virtues if we want to be truly prudent in everything we do.

(d). OBSTACLES TO PRUDENCE.

Whatever prevents a person from reflecting reasonably, judging rightly, and executing this judgment is an obstacle to prudence.

Thus, a person who constantly rushes headlong into activity cannot be prudent. It is the same for a person who reflects too much. Some do this because they want to be too certain before they act. They are not content with moral certitude. They want a sort of physical certitude such as you get in mathematics. But this cannot be had. Others purposely put off deciding, until it is too late, as does a man who weighs the pros and cons of going to a football match for so long that the game is finished before he has come to a decision. Avoid excessive haste, on the one hand, and excessive reflection, on the other, if you want to be prudent. Look before you leap, by all means; but do not keep looking so long that it is too late to leap.

Again, a person may reflect reasonably, but fail to judge rightly what is to be done. Take the case of a Catholic who deliberately stays in bed on Sunday morning without any real excuse, instead of going to Mass. He knows that good is to be done and evil to be avoided. But the good he judges to be done is the enjoyment of a sleep-in, and the evil he judges to be avoided is the self-denial entailed in going to Mass. If he judged rightly, he would judge that the good to be done would be the benefit of attending Mass, and the evil to be avoided would be the evil of the sin of missing Mass. Of the two goods, he deliberately decides on the wrong one. Same for the two evils to be avoided. Why does he act this way? Because in practice we judge according to INCLINATION. As a man IS so does an END seem to him. Because this Catholic is lazy and self-indulgent, the pleasure of staying in bed appeals to him more than the happiness of serving God. So, if you want to judge rightly what is to be done, you must LIVE the truth. You must practise the moral virtues.

Finally, a person may reflect reasonably, judge rightly, yet fail in prudence, because he does not EXECUTE this right judgment by actually using the means he has selected. He is said to be guilty of NEGLIGENCE. This word comes from the Latin “nec eligere” which means “not to love.” The opposite to this is DILIGENCE which comes from a verb meaning to love. What, then, is the matter with a person who knows what he ought do, but neglects to do it? He lacks LOVE. Love of what? Love of the END to be attained. He suffers from lukewarmness. The remedy is simple. He must increase his LOVE of the END. A good mother will not neglect her duties towards her little child, will she? Why not? She LOVES the child. If we really love the END to be attained by our human acts – natural happiness, which is the fruit of reasonable conduct, we shall put into practice the right judgments made by our intellect, and so practise the virtue of prudence. Love can do the most heroic things, if it is only strong enough.

(e). FALSE FORMS OF PRUDENCE.

A man's actions may seem prudent when they are really not so. His so-called prudence is only a sham, like a bogus cheque. Here are examples:

(i). Excessive caution.

A small boy who insists on wearing a pair of braces as well as a belt may seem a prodigy of prudence. But he is not. He is sinning by excess. Prudence picks the golden mean. Excess is a vice, not a virtue.

(ii). Prudence of the flesh.

This is practised by those who think that bodily pleasure is man's true end. They forget that our true end is reasonable conduct, leading to happiness. They reduce man to the level of a brute. Their sham prudence is nothing but a repulsive vice.

(iii). Excessive care for material goods.

Without making pleasure their last end, many err by being excessively worried about material goods. They give so much time and attention to these that they have no time left for developing the spiritual side of their nature. They forget Our Lord's very wise words: "Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." (Mat. 6:33). They forget the tender care of God's all-loving providence.

(f). HELPS TO PRUDENCE.

Here are a few things that will help you to practise prudence.

(i). Face facts truthfully.

At the outbreak of war, a man may be the first to enlist. He may deceive himself into thinking that his motive is one of patriotism. In reality, however, it may be sheer cowardice. He may be trying to escape from a nagging wife. This process by which we attribute to ourself a better motive than that which is behind our conduct is called RATIONALISATION. It is fatal to prudence. If we want to be prudent we must see things as they really are, no matter how mortifying this may be to our self-esteem. We must be utterly sincere.

(ii). Be truly humble.

A truly humble person is ready to admit the evil he is capable of. He realises his own failings and miseries. He is ready to see the unworthy motive that may be the real one prompting him to act. A proud man, on the contrary, is likely to shut his eyes to this. It wounds his self-esteem. Blind to reality, he must fall into many sins of imprudence. Humility is founded on truth. That is why it is necessary for the exercise of prudence; for prudence is truth in action, truth in life, truth lived.

(iii). Profit by your own experience.

If, for example, you find that something is an occasion of sin to you, avoid it if this is at all possible. If not, take special precautions when you have to go into it. Similarly, when you find that some devotion or spiritual exercise such as reading the life of a saint helps you to live a better life, keep this up. Learn by experience. Be docile. Docility is a great help to prudence.

(iv). Ask advice from others.

We cannot have all experiences. Hence, we should ask advice from others more experienced, more learned, more wise than ourselves, just as a lawyer studies hundreds of cases, to profit by the experience of others. So, do not be afraid to ask your parents or teachers for advice. It costs nothing. It is often invaluable.

(v). Learn from the example of others.

If a healthy man near you takes a drink from a cup and drops dead, there is no need for you to take a drink from the same cup to see if it will have the same effect on you. Learn from his example. It should be the same in moral matters. It is not necessary for you to acquire bad habits to know that they are tyrannous. You have only to see their effects in others such as drunkards and drug-fiends. The example of others can teach us a lot.

(vi). Get rid of false ideas and prejudices.

Some people are so prejudiced against the Church that they refuse to consider Her claims from the start. How can they practise prudence in this matter? They do not give themselves a chance.

Others start with the prejudice that matter alone exists. How can they prudently examine the arguments we give for the spirituality of the soul or the existence of God? Prejudices can be fatal to prudence.

(vii). Govern your passions.

Influenced by strong passions such as love or hate, fear, anger or jealousy, men can do the most imprudent things. You have only to think of a stampede in a crowded theatre to realise this. Someone has but to yell, "Fire! Fire!" to make such a crowd lose their head. Hence, control your passions according to right reason if you want to be prudent.

(viii). Control your moods.

A man has a big win at the races. He goes crazy with delight. He gets drunk to celebrate. While he is drunk, someone steals his money. He then gets into the opposite mood. He wants to commit suicide. A prudent man must learn to control his moods. He cannot be prudent otherwise.

(ix). Cultivate tact.

Tact is shown when a person sums up a situation very quickly, and then says or does the right thing. Thus when Our Lord was asked whether it was lawful to pay tribute to Caesar, He replied: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's." (Luke 20:25). Again, when they requested that a poor sinful woman be stoned to death, He said: "He that is without sin among you, let him cast a stone at her." (John 8:7). These are admirable examples of tact. In each case the Jews thought they had Our Lord in a dilemma; but they found to their sorrow that they did not. We should imitate His tact.

(x). Look well ahead.

Train yourself to look not just at the immediate effects of what you are doing, but at effects that it may have, say, fifty years from now. Look ahead, even to death, even into eternity. "What shall I think of this at death?" "What shall I wish to have done when death closes forever my time of merit, and ushers me into the ever-present 'now' of eternity?" Questions like these help us to act prudently.

(g). IMPORTANCE OF PRUDENCE.

From what has been said, you can see that prudence is a most important virtue. It imposes the golden mean on the acts of the moral virtues. That is why the ancients called it the CHARIOTEER of the virtues. An expert chariot driver had to know all the good and all the weak points in each of his steeds. He had to know that this one was inclined to rear up at the corners, that one to pull too hard, another, to take things easy, and so on. And he had to guide and govern each in such a masterly way that they all co-operated towards the end – the winning of the race. Well, prudence is like an expert charioteer in its relation to the moral virtues. It urges, checks, guides and disciplines their acts to keep them in accord with the demands of right reason, avoiding excess and defect, with its eyes ever fixed on the end to be attained. It is indeed the light, the guide, the ruler of the moral virtues – their charioteer.

Because it deals with particular, concrete acts, done in circumstances that are unique and can never be renewed, prudence cannot be taught to others. Even the most learned and devoted of teachers cannot impart it to his students. But it can be acquired by practice. It is each man's personal possession, if he will only make the effort to gain it – his own incommunicable wisdom. Moral philosophy may be learnt, Moral sciences may be taught. But prudence must be lived.

(h). PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS.

1. I should practise prudence daily by using right means to right ends.
2. I should avoid all unnecessary occasions of sin.
3. I should often say to God: "May I know myself; may I know Thee." (St. Augustine).
4. I should fight especially hard to overcome my ruling passion.
5. I should practise all the virtues, not just those I find easy.

SUMMARY

1. Natural Virtues.

A virtue is a good habit. Cf. a vice.

It helps us to act in line with our nature and end.

2. Kinds.

(i). Intellectual. These perfect our intellect.

(ii). Moral. These perfect our will.

The intellectual virtues: Understanding, science, wisdom, art and prudence.

The moral virtues: Fortitude, temperance, justice (and prudence).

3. The Intellectual Virtues.

(A). UNDERSTANDING. The habit of first principles.

(B). SCIENCE. The habit of drawing conclusions from demonstration.

(C). WISDOM. Knowledge of the ultimate explanations of things.

(D). ART. Right reason in making things.

(E). PRUDENCE. Right reason in doing things.

4. Prudence.

(a). What it is. An intellectual virtue that helps us to judge and use the right means to man's true end.

(b). How it fulfils its task. By imposing the golden mean on the acts of the moral virtues.

(c). Its acts: To act prudently I must train myself to reflect reasonably, judge rightly, and execute this judgment.

(d). Obstacles: (i). excessive haste; (ii). excessive caution; (iii). lack of uprightness of will; (iv). lukewarmness; (v). impurity.

(e). Sham prudence: (i). excessive caution; (ii). wrong notion of man's end as pleasure; (iii). excessive care for material goods.

(f). Helps:

(i). Face facts truthfully.

(ii). Be truly humble.

- (iii). Profit by your own experience.
- (iv). Ask advice from others.
- (v). Learn from the example of others.
- (vi). Get rid of false ideas and prejudices.
- (vii). Govern your passions.
- (viii). Control your moods,
- (ix). Cultivate tact.
- (x). Look well ahead.

(g). Importance. Prudence is the charioteer of the moral virtues.

5. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: –

1. A virtue is a good (...); a vice, a bad (...). 2. A virtue helps us to do things that are in line with our (...) and with our (...). 3. We have two spiritual faculties: our (...) and our (...). 4. Our intellect is perfected by the (...) virtues; our will, by the (...) virtues. 5. The five main intellectual virtues are called respectively (...). 6. The most fundamental of them is (...). 7. The one that helps us to be a good human being is (...). 8. The habit of first principles is called the virtue of (...). 9. The virtue that helps us to know the ultimate causes of things is (...). 10. We acquire this virtue by studying that part of philosophy which is called (...). 11. Art is right reason in (...) things. 12. Prudence is right reason in (...) things. 13. Prudence helps us to judge and use the right means to attain our true (...). 14. Prudence perfects our (speculative) (practical) judgments. 15. It does this by imposing the golden (...) on the acts of the moral virtues. 16. The golden mean (is) (is not) compatible with heroism in conduct. 17. To be prudent, I must train myself to do three things: to (...) reasonably, to (...) rightly, and to (...) this judgment in practice. 18. By practical truth I mean the conformity of my practical judgment with an (...) will. 19. Aristotle wisely reminds us that “As a man (...) so does an end seem to him.” 20. If a person habitually gives way to his passions, he (can still) (cannot) be prudent. 21. Lukewarmness is cured by increasing our love of the (...). 22. Our Saviour says: “Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of (...) and His glory, and (...) these things shall be added unto you.” 23. A person who shrewdly cheats in business (is) (is not) here

exercising the virtue of prudence. 24. Attributing a nobler motive to our acts than that which we really have is called (rationalisation) (nationalisation) (civilisation). 25. The ancients called prudence the (...) of the virtues.

(B). Answer each of the following as fully as you can: –

1. How many intellectual virtues are there? What does each do?
2. Which of them is the most fundamental and why? Which is the most noble and why? Which is most necessary in daily life and why?
3. How does art differ from prudence? Which would you rather be: a great artist, or a prudent man? Why?
4. How does prudence perform its task? Why does following the golden mean not condemn us to a life of mediocrity?
5. What three acts are involved in exercising prudence?
6. What are the main obstacles to the acquisition of prudence?
7. Mention some false forms of prudence. Show how they are false.
8. Mention ten things that help us to acquire prudence.

Chapter 31

THE NATURAL VIRTUES

(B). THE MORAL VIRTUES

We have seen that there are three main MORAL virtues: FORTITUDE, TEMPERANCE and JUSTICE. They perfect our sense APPETITES, inasmuch as these come under the control of our WILL. In the present chapter, we shall speak of FORTITUDE and TEMPERANCE. JUSTICE will be treated in the next.

1. FORTITUDE.

1. What It Is.

In the last chapter we saw that PRUDENCE imprints the mark of REASON on what we do, and that its chief obstacles are our unruly PASSIONS.

Now, there are two passions which we need to control particularly. They are those of FEAR and DARING. Why? Because these are concerned with DANGERS and DIFFICULTIES. Every day we have to face up to dangers and to difficulties. Some are physical, such as earthquakes and diseases. Others are moral, such as occasions of sin, and the many temptations that come to us.

Like the other passions, these two tend to go to EXTREMES. FEAR tends to COWARDICE; DARING, to RASHNESS. Hence, we need a virtue which protects us from these two extremes. This is FORTITUDE. It is also called COURAGE.

It saves us from COWARDICE by urging us to face perils, even death itself, when it is REASONABLE for us to do so. It saves us from RASHNESS by preventing us from rushing unreasonably into dangers.

A car driver who tries to cross a few feet in front of an express travelling at ninety kilometres an hour is not a brave man. He is a fool. He is taking unnecessary risks. A good swimmer who refuses

to rescue a drowning child because he sees a slight risk to his own life is not a brave man, either. He is a coward. He is afraid of a danger which he ought face.

In the golden mean between cowardice and recklessness lies the virtue of FORTITUDE. Thus, a nurse who deliberately and from a worthy motive offers to look after persons stricken with a plague is a brave woman. She deliberately faces risk of death, for the welfare of others. Nothing mediocre about the golden mean in this case, is there? She is a heroine, and one of the best.

We despise cowardice in all its ugly forms. We think extreme rashness a sort of temporary madness. But we admire real bravery. We cannot help it. For, to be brave is to be truly human. Fortitude is a most manly virtue. It is the virtue of man as man.

2. False Forms.

A workman strolling along a girder in a skeleton building fifty storeys up may seem brave to us. So may a person doing stunts in a circus. But these men are not necessarily brave. They are experienced, instead. There is really very little danger for them. Hence, no call for fortitude.

A small boy dashing in blind fury at a bigger boy who has insulted him may seem brave. But what is urging him to attack? ANGER. And anger is a passion here. Reason does not come into it at all. Courage, on the contrary, like all other natural virtues, must be based on right REASON, and on it alone.

Some rush into danger because they are insensible to fear. They do not know what fear is. These are not courageous, either. They are simply inhuman. They lack something man ought have. Fear is natural to man.

Others, again, are ignorant of the danger that threatens them, as is a cashier who smiles at the loaded revolver of a gangster whom he takes to be just joking. He does not know what is coming to him. He is ignorant rather than courageous.

Finally, people who face dangers, even the risk of death, from an UNWORTHY motive such as that of vanity or avarice are not

exercising the virtue of courage. They are not obeying a command of REASON. They are yielding to a vice instead.

3. Vices Opposed to Fortitude.

(a). COWARDICE.

This consists in running away from something that causes FEAR, when we OUGHT to stand and face it. It is an UNREASONABLE yielding to fear.

A priest or a doctor who, through fear, refuses to attend the sick during a plague is a coward. So is a Catholic who, through fear of the self-denial entailed, refuses to go to Mass on a Sunday. So is a boy who will not make an effort to pay attention in class, or do his homework well, or learn his lessons. His laziness is at bottom sheer cowardice.

(b). RASHNESS.

Here it is the passion of DARING which is uncontrolled. It gets the better of reason. It makes its victim rush blindly into danger, and so take risks that are unreasonable.

It is rash for you, for instance, to try to shoot a peanut off the top of your father's bald head at a distance of twenty yards with a revolver. It is just as rash for you to go into unnecessary proximate occasions of sin.

(c). INSENSIBILITY.

A courageous man is not one who never experiences fear. He is one who CONTROLS his fear. Not to experience fear when we OUGHT is not a virtue. It is a vice instead. It is called INSENSIBILITY. You do not drive a car at ninety kilometres an hour through a crowded street. Why not? Through FEAR of killing people. This fear is surely a reasonable one. Its lack would be a defect.

4. Degrees In Cowardice.

The least base degree of cowardice is seen in a person who fails, through fear, to do what he OUGHT, but who admits that his conduct is wrong. He at least pays God that compliment of

admitting that God's law is right, and that it is unworthy of man to break it.

A baser form of cowardice is seen in one who breaks a natural law, and then justifies his action by denying that there is any such law. Thus, an employer may, through greed, refuse to give a living wage, and then rationalise his injustice by claiming that he is not obliged to give such a wage.

The lowest type of cowardice is seen in those who deny that there are any natural laws at all, by denying God's existence and the spirituality of the human soul. This is the cowardice of the materialist and the atheist. It robs man of the very principles of his humanity. It makes him just a brute.

5. Virtues Connected With Fortitude.

(a). MAGNANIMITY.

"Magna anima" is the Latin for "a great soul." So, magnanimity is simply GREATNESS OF SOUL. As a virtue, it moves us to DO great things, from a great MOTIVE, and in a great WAY. Hence, its connection with fortitude.

It regulates our thirst for HONOUR. How? By protecting us from two extremes: PUSILLANIMITY and VAIN GLORY.

A "pusilla anima" is the opposite of a "magna anima." It is a mean, sordid, petty soul - one that cannot see beyond the paltry and the trivial. A pusillanimous person is blind to all that is truly great and noble in life. His big moment comes when some actress writes to him as a pen friend, or when he passes a cheap remark that makes the crowd laugh at a football match, or when he shakes the hand that shook the hand of the country's best wrestler. True honour is unknown to him.

Vain glory consists in seeking approbation for its own sake. It may be the approbation of others, or of oneself. It shows itself in boasting, which is blowing one's own trumpet, or in vanity, which is a desire to be noticed by men. It is seen, too, in a certain mania for what is new, whether this be in regard to fashions in hats, or models in cars, or theories in science. It leads to hypocrisy, since its victims yearn to be considered better than they really are. To

stubbornness, also, for persons given to vain glory hate to admit that anyone has a better mind than they. Finally, to disobedience, quarrelling and discord. In itself, vain glory is a venial sin. But its offsprings are an ugly brood.

In saving us from pusillanimity and from vain glory, magnanimity enables us to look beyond what is cheap and mean in life, and to seek instead what is really great. And it makes us seek this in a HUMBLE way. A magnanimous man knows that there is only one glory which is not vain. It is that which true grandeur first merits, and then has the wisdom to offer in homage to God. Magnanimity is the virtue of heroes and heroines. From it saints are made.

(b). MUNIFICENCE.

This moves us to MAKE great things, for a worthy motive. It regulates the spending of huge sums of money on buildings and their adornment. The poor as well as the rich can practise it, by contributing generously according to their means. It strikes the golden mean between prodigality and niggardliness.

The magnificent cathedrals built to God's glory in the Middle Ages are a result of this virtue. They are fit temples for the Eucharist, fit homes for God on earth. Munificence, too, is responsible for the majestic ceremonies that take place within them. It is measured by the limitless honour due to God.

(c). CONSTANCY.

We need to be firm and unyielding in our RESOLUTIONS to do what is reasonable, in spite of obstacles and temptations. CONSTANCY assures this firmness. It saves us from being unreasonably obstinate, on the one hand, and from acting merely from whims, on the other. It is seen at its best in the martyrs.

(d). PATIENCE.

This enables us to govern the passion of SADNESS, which is aroused by the evils and burdens of life. It saves us from the extremes of apathy and impatience.

It is the passive aspect of fortitude. It is usually more noble and more meritorious than its active aspect. In attacking obstacles, we

may easily be doing our own will; hence, acting in a selfish way. But in resigning ourselves to God's providence by lovingly accepting the crosses He sends, we are sure to be doing His will. That is why patience brings with it power and peace. Exercised over a long period, it is called PERSEVERANCE. Its value can be seen from the reward Scripture promises to those who practise it to the end: "Be thou faithful unto death," it says, "and I will give thee the CROWN OF LIFE." (Apoc. 2:10).

Such is FORTITUDE, with its four glorious offsprings: MAGNANIMITY, MUNIFICENCE, CONSTANCY and PATIENCE. It is indeed a great virtue. With it, we can rise even to the sublime and the heroic in life. Without it, we must sink to the sub-human. We must end in slavery.

2. TEMPERANCE.

1. What It Is.

TEMPERANCE enables us to act REASONABLY in regard to PLEASURE. The pleasures it principally regulates are those of EATING, DRINKING and SEX.

The PRINCIPLES governing the right use of pleasure are these: THE PLEASURE IS FOR THE ACT to which it is attached, not vice versa. Thus, we may rightly eat to live; but we may not rightly live to eat.

Moreover, the ACT IS FOR THE END which it is meant by nature to attain. Hence we may never POSITIVELY exclude this end. To do so is to act unreasonably. Hence, to foster a vice. Thus, it is right for us to eat for pleasure. But we are not allowed POSITIVELY to exclude the END or PURPOSE of eating, as this is laid down for us by nature, namely, to promote bodily health and vigour. To take an emetic after eating a full meal, in order to begin another is clearly unreasonable, since it positively excludes the natural END of taking food. The vomitorium in the mansions of ancient Rome was a sign of animality rather than culture. It finds no place in the blue prints of houses built today. Its absence, however, is no guarantee of our temperance. Pride or shortness of cash may have something to do with it.

2. Vices Opposed To Temperance.

(a). GLUTTONY.

This consists in EATING and DRINKING to EXCESS. The excess is relative to the capacity of one's stomach. What would be a normal hearty meal for a hungry hardworking farmer would be a gluttonous one for a child of seven. Temperance takes circumstances into account.

Normally, gluttony is a VENIAL sin, even when it entails the use of the vomitorium. It can, however, involve a mortal sin, if it does really serious harm to one's health, or is just a means of killing oneself. Thus, a man who sets out to break the world's record in pie-eating, and who succeeds merely in breaking something inside himself, can hardly be let off with a venial sin. Suicide, after all, is a mortal sin.

We should avoid gluttony because it is a SIN. Moreover, it gives rise to other evils. It makes us mentally dull, since it is a particularly animal failing. It leads to mad hilarity and buffoonery in manners. It can be a real danger to purity. It is a degrading, a disgusting habit.

(b). DRUNKENNESS.

Here it is question of taking too much INTOXICATING drink. The "too much" does not refer to the capacity of one's stomach, as it does in gluttony, but to one's ability to retain the use of REASON, in spite of what one drinks. Intoxication is said to be COMPLETE, when there is TOTAL loss of REASON, for some continuous time - for an hour, say, at least.

Unlike gluttony, COMPLETE intoxication is a MORTAL sin. Why? Because it deprives man completely of the use of his REASON, the very faculty that constitutes his dignity as a human being. We are not allowed thus to deprive ourselves of the use of reason, without sufficient excuse.

Any state short of COMPLETE intoxication is a VENIAL sin in itself. However, a person obliged to give good example in virtue of the

dignity of his office could easily be guilty of serious sin by appearing in public in a semi-intoxicated condition.

To be guilty of formal MORTAL sin through intoxication, a person must have FULL advertence and FULL freedom in regard to the gravity of his offence. If a young man says: "I know it is a mortal sin to get drunk, yet I am going to get completely drunk next Monday, since it is my twenty-first birthday," he is clearly guilty of mortal sin from the moment he makes this decision. But a person not used to drinking can easily get quite drunk without realising FULLY at any stage that he is committing a serious sin. In this case he may be guilty of VENIAL sin, but he lacks the FULL advertence and FULL freedom required for any formal mortal sin.

Just as a man can deprive himself of the temporary use of his reason by taking chlorophorm to undergo an operation, a man can get drunk for a grave and just reason. Needness to say, a win at football is not such a reason. Nor is a birthday celebration. Nor is an addition to the family, nor the meeting of old friends. But a man in the Islands, bitten by a centipede, could rightly get drunk to prevent the pain from driving him crazy, if he had no one with him to give him an anaesthetic. Competitions in drinking are, of course, wrong. They may injure health; and they lead to drunkenness.

Is a person responsible for sins committed when drunk? It depends. If he foresees that he will commit these sins, he is responsible for them. If he does not foresee them in any way, he is not. They are then only material sins.

We should avoid drunkenness at all costs, because: -

1. It is a mortal sin.
2. It ruins happiness in the home.
3. It gives bad example to children.
4. It causes the loss of good name for one's family.
5. It gives rise to filthy language which may include blasphemy.
6. It leads to the making known of secrets that ought be kept.
7. It causes people to neglect their work.
8. It often brings abject poverty to a family.
9. It may entail serious risk to others.

10. It easily leads to other sins such as theft and impurity.

Insobriety is a very harmful as well as a very disgusting vice. It can ruin a man's happiness completely. It can enslave him as few other vices can. It can cause suffering which cannot be described and is beyond description. Though not the worst sin a man can commit, it is one of the most degrading, because it robs man of the use of the very faculty that makes him man. It reduces him to the sub-human.

REMEDIES AGAINST GLUTTONY AND DRUNKENNESS.

1. Deny yourself from time to time what is pleasant to taste.
2. Eat and drink, not just for pleasure, but for a nobler motive: to promote health, to keep alive, to give God glory, to merit heaven.
3. Train yourself to govern your appetite for food and drink.
4. Never take intoxicating drink between meals.
5. Never take intoxicating drink on an empty stomach.
6. Never take intoxicating drink on your own.
7. Never compete with others in taking drink.
8. Think quietly from time to time of the evil effects of insobriety.
9. Think often of the example of Our Lord with His infinitely wise moderation.
10. Think of the value of fasting: it keeps our reason master of passion; it is a sort of restitution by which we make up for sinful pleasures we have indulged in; it helps us to have a clear mind, and a deeper appreciation of truth. Every contemplative has been a most frugal person.

THE PLEDGE.

It is a good thing for children to take a pledge to abstain from intoxicating drink till they are twenty-one, provided that they take it freely, and know what it means, and realise that it does not bind under pain of any sin.

If a person finds that he cannot take intoxicating drink without going to extremes, or that drunkenness has been a curse in his family, it is wise for him to take a life-long pledge. Total abstinence is the only thing for him.

One who has decided not to observe total abstinence should learn to drink in the proper manner at HOME, in the presence of his parents. He should not begin furtively in a hotel, with companions who do not know what it is to act reasonably when it is question of drink.

(c). IMPURITY.

Just as God attaches pleasure to acts of eating and drinking since these are necessary for the continuance of the individual, so too, He attaches pleasure to the act of generation since this is necessary for the continuance of the race. As with eating and drinking, the pleasure is for the ACT, not vice versa. And the act is for the END God intends it to achieve, namely, the BIRTH and EDUCATION of children. Hence, sexual pleasure may be lawfully WILLED only by those who are truly married to each other, and who use their marriage rights in such a way as not to violate any law of God. The DELIBERATE accepting of sexual pleasure, by the WILL, is in every other case a SIN.

It is most important here to realise that sin is committed by the WILL, and by it alone. The mere FEELING or EXPERIENCE of sexual pleasure is not in itself sinful. Sin comes only when the WILL deliberately ACCEPTS this pleasure, though the intellect tells it that it is sinful for it to do so.

At times images that are a danger to purity arise spontaneously in our IMAGINATION. We do not bring them there by any act of our will. They come of their own accord. Once there, they give rise to a certain amount of sexual feeling. The mere awareness of this feeling is as yet no sin. Why not? Because the will has so far had nothing to do with it. And the will alone can sin. But our conscience soon tells us that these images are an OCCASION of sin; and that we must GET RID of them, since we have no reasonable excuse for keeping them in our imagination. If, then, our WILL refuses to ACCEPT any pleasure they may give, and if it MAKES AN EFFORT to GET RID of these dangerous images by quietly but resolutely putting other "good" images in their place, there is no sin of any kind, not even an imperfection.

Some actions, by their very NATURE, give rise to sexual pleasure. With these, there is NO LIGHT MATTER, as far as sin is concerned. One can get a venial sin here ONLY through lack of FULL

advertence and FULL freedom – through not being fully awake, for instance. If there is full advertence and full freedom, the sin is always a MORTAL sin.

Other actions may accidentally give rise to sexual pleasure, though by their nature they do not necessarily do so. For instance, some forms of physical exercise. These actions DO admit LIGHT MATTER. One can get a VENIAL sin here, even though there is full advertence and full freedom. It is necessary to keep this distinction in mind if you want to have a right conscience concerning purity.

A person who habitually yields to temptations against purity is said to be a DISSOLUTE person. This adjective is very significant. For nothing tends to DISSOLVE our personality more quickly or more thoroughly than sins against this virtue. Impurity is indeed a most horrible vice. It is the abuse of a function which is absolutely fundamental. That is why it can destroy whole nations from the earth.

Avoid impurity as you would avoid the fire of hell, because: –

1. It is a MORTAL sin.
2. It can so easily become a bad habit.
3. It quickly blinds the intellect concerning divine things.
4. It soon develops a disgust for everything supernatural.
5. It leads to hatred of God as the Avenger of Sin.
6. It gives rise to envy and jealousy of the pure of heart.
7. It fosters cruelty in its most inhuman forms.
8. It fills us with a harassing fear of death and of suffering.
9. It leads easily to injustice of all kinds.
10. It brings with it a slavery which is a foretaste of the lonely misery of hell.

HELPS TO PURITY.

Check temptations right from the start.

1. Avoid as far as you can all occasions of sin.
2. Shun pride by practising humility.

THE NATURAL VIRTUES

3. Avoid idleness.
4. Avoid morbid unhealthy curiosity.
5. Seek advice and help from others – your parents, the priest, etc.
6. Take plenty of vigorous outdoor exercise.
7. Keep your body clean.
8. Practise abstinence in food and drink.
9. Control your moods.
10. Have healthy hobbies in life.
11. Cultivate lofty ideals.
12. Foster noble friendships e.g. with Our Lord, Our Lady, saints.
13. Go to confession and Holy Communion frequently and fervently.
14. Try to attend Mass daily if possible.
15. Pray often for the grace of life-long purity.
16. Often meditate on death, judgment, hell and heaven.
17. Meditate frequently on the Passion of Christ.
18. Practise the presence of God. Respect your body as the temple of the Trinity on earth.
19. Be deeply devoted to the Immaculate Mother of God.

CHASTITY.

Inasmuch as TEMPERANCE regulates eating and drinking, it is called ABSTINENCE. Inasmuch as it regulates intoxicating drink, it is called SOBRIETY. Inasmuch as it regulates sexual pleasure, it is called CHASTITY. It may be chastity of the unmarried before marriage, chastity of the married, or chastity of one whose husband or wife has died.

Just as impurity makes the human soul more and more subject to the body, and so brutalises man, chastity has the opposite effect. It makes the body ever more and more subject to the soul. It spiritualises man. That is why it is sometimes called “the angelic virtue.”

At the same time, it gives us a special sharing in the perfections appropriated to the three Divine Persons in the Trinity: POWER, LIGHT and LOVE.

Think of the POWER shown by St. Cecilia in the presence of her tormentors, or of St. Agnes, or St. Catherine of Alexandria, or St. Lucy of Syracuse, and you will realise what amazing strength chastity can give a soul. And God Himself assures of us the LIGHT it gives: "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall SEE God." (John 6:55). Think, too, of the mighty intellect of St. Thomas Aquinas. How penetrating! How angelic! No wonder he is called "The Angel of the Schools." From this light there follows LOVE; for this is always proportionate to our insight into the goodness in things. That is why purity is a good preparation for the love that is found in CONTEMPLATION, which is itself a foretaste of the intimacy of heaven.

3. Virtues Connected With Temperance.

(a). MEEKNESS.

This controls ANGER. It saves us, on the one hand, from being inhumanly callous to insults and injuries that ought stir up our anger, and, on the other, from anger which is excessive.

A meek man is not one who lets others use him as a door-mat. He is a strong man who knows how to get angry when he ought, and how to control his anger so that it does not lead him into doing unreasonable things. The noble anger shown by Our Lord in driving the money-changers from the Temple is an example of meekness. So is the anger He felt at the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. Nothing weak about meekness. Like every other virtue, it is a source of strength.

(b). CLEMENCY.

This regulates PUNISHMENT. It protects us from the weakness of those who cannot make the effort required to punish the guilty - weak parents, for instance or weak judges. At the same time it saves us from punishing excessively. It knows how to lessen punishment by showing mercy to those to whom it is due.

(c). HUMILITY.

Humility consists in a reasonable seeking of EXCELLENCE. It regulates, consequently, the passion and emotion of HOPE in this matter. It keeps us, on the one hand, from seeking an excellence which is beyond our talents, and, on the other, it urges us to use as well as we can all the gifts we have so that we may not fall short of the excellence God expects us to attain. It is perfectly compatible with magnanimity, therefore, and with an ardent longing to become a saint. It protects us against PRIDE and against AN INFERIORITY COMPLEX which are the two extremes into which we can fall in the seeking of excellence.

It makes us respect God's gifts in ourselves and in others. Hence, it moves us to be perfectly submissive to God's PROVIDENCE. Its MOTIVE is that of SUBJECTION TO GOD.

As a moral virtue, humility is in our WILL. But it demands on the part of our INTELLECT a right judgment concerning our condition as creatures. It presupposes that we realise that we have been CREATED from nothing by God, and that we would instantly return to nothingness if He removed from us His conserving influence. Hence, that all that is real and positive in us is from Him; and that of ourselves we can only fall into error and sin, just as, left wholly to ourselves, we can only cease to exist. And, while recognising that all the goodness in us is from God, we must at the same time appreciate rightly the gifts He has given us. We must not exaggerate them. Nor must we ignore them. We must see them as God sees them. We must see them as they really are. For humility is founded on TRUTH - a truthful recognition of our complete dependence on God as creatures, and a truthful appreciation of the good things He has given us. St. Augustine's lovely little prayer: "Noverim me; noverim Te" - "May I know myself; may I know Thee" is indeed the cry of a humble heart. Our Divine Saviour was the humblest of human beings. Why? Because He, more than any other human being, realised the INFINITE gap that separates the creature from the Creator, and man from God.

(d). MODESTY.

Modesty regulates EXTERNAL things such as looks, dress, speech, and, in general, our behaviour in the intimate presence of others. It brings a sweet reasonableness into our conduct. It is, as it were, a rampart to purity. Hence, a very necessary safeguard for this lovely virtue.

(e). URBANITY.

This moderates the use of recreation, laughter and merriment. The Greeks called it EUTRAPELIA. It protects us from moroseness, by defect, and from buffoonery, by excess. It is one of the marks of a gentleman.

(f). STUDIOUSNESS.

A person is said to be studious when he studies diligently. So studiousness is a virtue which regulates our desire for LEARNING. Some fail in this matter by defect. They do not study hard enough. Others fail by excess. They spend too much time in studying, or they study things outside their course and neglect what is included in it, or they study only creatures and neglect God, and so on. Faust selling his soul to the devil for universal knowledge is an example of the harm that can come from neglect of this virtue.

Such, then, is TEMPERANCE with its six charming offsprings: MEEKNESS, CLEMENCY, HUMILITY, MODESTY, URBANITY and STUDIOUSNESS. To appreciate these glorious virtues, you have only to think of the vices from which they save us, and the consequent degradation.

SUMMARY

1. FORTITUDE.

1. What. A moral virtue which regulates FEAR and DARING. It saves us from COWARDICE and RECKLESSNESS.

2. False Forms.

- (a). Workman on a girder in a skeleton building.
- (b). Small boy rushing in blind fury at a bigger boy.
- (c). Those who are insensible to fear.
- (d). Those ignorant of a particular danger.

- (e). Those who face danger from an unworthy motive.

3. Vices Opposed To Fortitude.

- (a). Cowardice.
- (b). Rashness.
- (c). Insensibility.

4. Degrees In Cowardice.

- (a). One who fails to do what he ought, but admits his conduct is wrong.
- (b). One who rationalises his violation of a law.
- (c). One who denies all natural law.

5. Virtues Connected With Fortitude.

- (a). Magnanimity. Greatness of soul.
 Avoids pusillanimity and vain glory.
- (b). Munificence. Making great things for a worthy motive.
 Avoids prodigality and niggardliness.
- (c). Constancy.
- (d). Patience. Keeping resolutions.
 Avoids inconstancy and obstinacy.
 Governs sadness.
 Avoids apathy and impatience.

II. TEMPERANCE.

- 1. What.** A moral virtue which regulates our conduct in regard to PLEASURE, especially that of EATING, DRINKING and SEX.

- Principles: (i). The pleasure is for the act.
 (ii). The act is for the end set down by nature.

2. Vices Opposed To Temperance.

- (a). Gluttony. Excess in eating and drinking.
 Normally a venial sin.
 Why we ought avoid it.
- (b). Drunkenness. Excess in taking intoxicating drink.

Complete intoxication a mortal sin.

Responsibility for sins committed when drunk.

Why we ought avoid drunkenness.

Remedies against gluttony and drunkenness.

The pledge.

(c). Impurity. When it is a sin.

Dangerous images.

Actions in which there is no light matter.

Actions in which there is light matter.

Why we ought to avoid impurity.

Helps to purity.

The value of chastity: It gives us a share in the power, light and love of God.

3. Virtues Connected With Temperance.

(a). Meekness. Controls anger.

Saves us from inhuman callousness, and excessive anger.

(b). Clemency. Regulates punishment.

Saves us from weakness, and cruelty.

(c). Humility. Puts right order into our seeking of excellence.

Saves us from pride and an inferiority complex.

(d). Modesty. Regulates externals such as looks, dress, speech, etc.

Is a rampart to purity.

(e). Urbanity. Moderates our use of recreation, laughter, merriment.

Saves us from moroseness and buffoonery.

(f). Studiosness. Controls our desire for learning.

Enables us to study wisely.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. The two passions controlled by fortitude are (...) and (...). 2. Fortitude saves us from (...) and from (...). 3. One who risks his life out of vain glory (is) (is not) truly brave. 4. Bravery is shown in (never feeling) (controlling) fear. 5. Magnanimity means greatness of (...). 6. It regulates our thirst for (honour) (knowledge) (beer). 7. Pusillanimity means smallness of (...). 8. Vain glory is in itself a (venial) (mortal) sin. 9. Cathedrals are an effect of the virtue of (...). 10. It is (...) that enables us to keep our resolutions. 11. Scripture says: "Be thou faithful unto (...) and I will give thee the (...) of life." Hence it asks us to practise the virtue of (...). 12. We regulate pleasure by the virtue of (...). 13. We must (live to eat) (eat to live). In other words, the (act is for the pleasure) (the pleasure is for the act). 14. We (may) (may not) lawfully exclude the end which nature has attached to an act. 15. Excess in eating and drinking is called (...). 16. Excess in taking intoxicating drink is called (...). 17. Gluttony is normally a (venial) (mortal) sin; drunkenness is a

(venial) (mortal) sin. 18. It (is) (is not) a sin to break the pledge. 19. The mere feeling of sexual pleasure in one who is not married (is) (is not) in itself a sin. 20. Acts that cause sexual pleasure by their very nature (admit) (do not admit) light matter. 21. "A" says that we should get rid of dangerous images in our imagination by, centring our attention on them. "B" says we should get rid of them by putting other good images there instead. Which is right? ("A") ("B"). 22. Chastity gives us a share in three great perfections of God, namely, His (...), (...), and (...). 23. Anger is governed by the virtue of (...). 24. To punish rightly, we must exercise the virtue of (...). 25. It is the virtue of (...) which enables us to seek excellence in a reasonable way. 26. Humility is opposed to (...) and to (...). 27. To study wisely, we need the virtue of (...). 28. The virtue that regulates recreation, laughter and merriment is called (...). The Greeks called it by the beautiful name of (...). 29. The glorious religious ceremonies seen in the Church are an example of (extravagance) (munificence) (pomposity). 30. Meekness, clemency, humility, modesty, urbanity, studiousness. The most important of these virtues is (...), since it roots our pride which is at the back of every sin.

(B). Answer each of these as fully as you can.

1. What is fortitude? What vices does it save us from? What are the three degrees of cowardice? Give an example of each.
2. What four virtues are connected with fortitude? Explain each.
3. What is temperance? What vices does it protect us against?
4. Give ten remedies against gluttony and drunkenness.
5. "In the question of purity there is no light matter." Is this true? How should we treat dangerous images in our imagination? When does one sin in regard to them?
6. Give ten helps to purity.
7. Name six virtues connected with temperance. Explain each.
8. Why is purity so important in life? Why is humility also important?

Chapter 32

JUSTICE

1. What It Is.

Justice is a moral virtue which urges us to give others what is DUE to them. A thing is due to another when he has a RIGHT to it.

Inasmuch as justice is concerned with RIGHTS, it is different from CHARITY. In exercising charity, we do good to others; but they have no RIGHT to what we do for them. If a tramp asks for money, and you give him ten dollars, this is a GIFT. It is given in CHARITY. He has no RIGHT to it. But, if you promise to give him ten dollars for cutting wood, and he cuts it, you are OBLIGED to pay him the money. He has a RIGHT to it in justice.

We have seen that we can have a right to anything that helps us to gain heaven. Hence, to INTERNAL goods such as truth, virtue, or liberty of conscience; and to EXTERNAL goods such as reputation, the friendship of others, or a reasonable amount of property.

Since there are different kinds of RIGHTS, there are different kinds of JUSTICE. Here they are.

2. Kinds of Justice.

(a). DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE.

Society has to appoint persons to OFFICES. It has also to put BURDENS, such as taxes, on its members. In doing these two things, it should obey the laws of justice by appointing people to office according to their MERIT, and by proportioning taxes to the payers' ability to pay. To act otherwise is to violate DISTRIBUTIVE justice. It is to practise the vice of FAVOURITISM.

(b). LEGAL JUSTICE.

This deals with the obligations that citizens have towards SOCIETY. When it makes just laws, it has a right that its members obey these

laws; and when it appoints persons to office, it has a right that they carry out honestly the duties imposed on them. If citizens fail to fulfil their obligations towards society, they offend against LEGAL justice.

(c). COMMUTATIVE JUSTICE.

The word “commutative” is from a Latin verb meaning “to exchange.” So COMMUTATIVE justice regulates exchanges of all sorts, like buying, selling and lending. Here, it is question of rights and obligations that exist, not between individuals and society or vice versa, but between one individual or group and another.

This is justice in the STRICT sense. Why? Because there can be strict EQUALITY here between what is given and what is due. If you give me a dollar, and I give you five twenty-cent pieces, there is exact equality between what you give and what you receive. And justice in the strict sense demands this equality. This is why COMMUTATIVE justice is the only kind which binds to RESTITUTION.

Distributive justice and legal justice are both extremely important. Any society that neglects them to a serious extent commits suicide. However, lack of space compels us to restrict our study at present to COMMUTATIVE justice. Even then, we can deal only with a small part of this vast subject.

3. Acts That Violate Commutative Justice.

(a). HOMICIDE.

Man's right to LIFE is a fundamental one. Take a person's life, and you take everything. Moreover, you give nothing in return. This is why HOMICIDE or the killing of a human being can be a very grave injustice.

Is it ever lawful for us to kill another person? Before we can answer this question, we must distinguish between DIRECT and INDIRECT killing and between an INNOCENT person and one who is NOT INNOCENT.

Direct and Indirect Killing.

Wako is intensely jealous of Jako's virtue. So he decides to kill him. Notice that he wills Jako's death for its own sake, as an END.

Popeye has no grudge against Walleye, but he kills him to get his gold. He wills Walleye's death, not as something desirable in itself, not as an end, but as a MEANS to an end - the possession of the gold.

In each of these cases you have an example of DIRECT killing, because death is willed either as an END or as a MEANS to an end.

Now, a very different case. A soldier is ordered to blow up a bridge to stop enemy tanks from crossing. Immediately he notices them approaching the bridge, he also sees one of his own men on it. He is in a fix. If he obeys orders, he will kill his comrade. If he does not, the tanks will cross. Is he allowed to blow up the bridge? Yes. Try to see why.

He is doing something which is GOOD in itself, but which has TWO EFFECTS. One of these is good - the stopping of the tanks. The other is bad - the killing of his comrade. What he desires DIRECTLY is the GOOD effect. True, he foresees the bad one, but he does not will it directly. He does not will it either as an END or as a MEANS to an end. He merely PERMITS it, because he cannot avoid it. This is a case of INDIRECT killing, and of the principle of the DOUBLE EFFECT.

The Innocent and the Not Innocent.

A person is here said to be INNOCENT if he has not FORFEITED his right to life.

A man who attacks you UNJUSTLY and in such a way as to make it clear that he is out to KILL you is not an innocent man. He is an UNJUST AGGRESSOR. One who murders another in cold blood is not an innocent man, either. He is a MURDERER. Nor is one guilty of high treason. He is a TRAITOR. None of these are innocent. All have forfeited their right to life.

Now we can answer the question: Is it ever lawful to kill a human being? Here are the principles that provide the answer.

- (i). It is never lawful DIRECTLY to kill the INNOCENT.

Imagine an old man suffering from an incurable disease. He will die within a few weeks. Is it lawful for a doctor to give him a lethal dose of morphia? No. This is a DIRECT killing of the INNOCENT. It is murder. The doctor may have a good intention – that of relieving pain; but this does not make any difference. Why not? Because AN INTRINSICALLY GOOD END CAN NEVER JUSTIFY INTRINSICALLY EVIL MEANS.

If the man ASKS the doctor to put him out of his misery, is the doctor then allowed to go ahead? No. The man has no right to make the request. If the doctor fulfils it, he commits TWO sins – that of MURDER and that of co-operating in SUICIDE.

(ii). It is sometimes lawful to kill the INNOCENT INDIRECTLY.

We say “sometimes” because cases where this is allowed are rare. Four conditions must be present: the act must not be sinful in itself; there must be a proportionate reason for doing it; the one doing it must not desire the evil effect directly; and the good effect must not follow from the evil effect as from a means.

All these are present in the case we gave about the bridge. To destroy a bridge is not sinful in itself. To stop the enemy from crossing is a proportionate reason. The man doing the act desires directly the good effect. He merely permits the evil one. Finally, the stopping of the enemy does not follow from his comrade's death as from a means. So there is no question of the end justifying the means here. It is an application of the principle of the DOUBLE EFFECT.

So much for the killing of the INNOCENT. Consider now, the killing of those who are NOT innocent.

(iii). It is lawful to kill an UNJUST AGGRESSOR.

Certain conditions must be present, of course. You are not allowed to provoke another to defend himself, and then kill him on the plea that he is attacking you. He must be really an unjust aggressor, not a man acting in self-defence. Nor are you allowed to kill someone today, because he attacked you a week ago, or because he is likely to attack you in a week's time. He must be actually attacking you. Finally, you are not allowed to kill him if you can protect your life

by less drastic means such as punching him hard on the jaw, or merely side-stepping him if he is too drunk to catch up with you. The killing of an enemy soldier fighting against you during a war is justified on the score that he is an unjust aggressor.

(iv). It is lawful for SOCIETY to put CRIMINALS to death.

You can rightly have a foot amputated to protect yourself from disease. So, too, society can rightly put a criminal to death to protect itself. It is lawful, then, for a judge to sentence a criminal to death, when the evidence proves his guilt. Lawful, also, for a hangman to execute this sentence. Both are acting in the name of the state. But it is never lawful for PRIVATE individuals to kill criminals, no matter how bad or how obvious their crime may be. No open season here.

(b). SUICIDE.

May a poor man commit suicide in order that his family may benefit by his insurance? No. May a drunkard kill himself in order that his wife may be rid of him? No. An intrinsically good end never justifies intrinsically evil means. No one is allowed to commit suicide. God alone has full dominion over human life.

A person jumps off Sydney bridge to rescue a child. The man is drowned. A man waits behind in a burning building to give women and children a chance to get out. He is burnt to death. Oates walks out into a blizzard, so that his comrades will have enough food to reach the base. Are these cases of suicide? No. There is no DIRECT killing of the innocent here. They are cases of the DOUBLE EFFECT. They are heroic acts.

(c). MUTILATION.

Man has a right not only to life but also to the members of his body. If diseased, these can be removed. But, apart from this, no one has a right to mutilate the innocent. Society has, in theory, a right to mutilate the guilty. In practice, however, it should have recourse to SEGREGATION instead.

(d). DESTRUCTION OF ANOTHER'S GOOD NAME.

One's good name can be destroyed unjustly by LIES. This is called CALUMNY. It can be destroyed unjustly also by the revelation of TRUTHS which ought be kept secret. This is called DETRACTION. Since a good name is precious, calumny and detraction can be very serious sins. If, however, the injury done to one's reputation is slight, the sin will be only a venial one.

(e). TALE-BEARING.

Other things being equal, TALE-BEARING is worse than calumny or detraction, because its object is to destroy FRIENDSHIP. And friendship is even more precious than reputation. Without friends, life can become unbearable.

(f). LIES.

Just as our faculty of sight is given us for the purpose of seeing, so, too, our faculty of speech is given for the purpose of telling the truth. To tell lies is to abuse its natural function. It is just as unnatural as to drive nails with your eyes. That is why it is a sin.

We are never allowed to tell a lie. It is question, of course, of speech meant to be taken seriously, not of words spoken just in fun. Asked by parents or teachers if he has been smoking, a child must tell the truth. They have authority over him. Hence a right to ask. It is a sin for him to tell a lie to escape punishment, or even to shield his companion. An intrinsically good end never justifies intrinsically evil means.

Sometimes, however, a person is not allowed to give information asked for, because he is bound to secrecy by an oath or by his office. In this case he can say: "I do not know," just as he can tell an unwelcome caller that "Father is not in." Every sensible person knows that these answers can mean either "I do not really know" and "Father is really not at home" or "Though I do know I am not allowed to tell you" and "Though father is in, he does not want to see you just now." It is for the interpreter to use his common sense, and put the right interpretation on them. Thus understood, each is true.

In ITSELF, a lie is a VENIAL sin. If, however, in telling a lie a person violates a grave law in grave matter, he commits a MORTAL sin. You have an example in calumny which does very serious

damage to another's good name, and in a lie told when speaking under oath.

Lying is a vice that can easily grow. It is a repulsive one. It can do untold harm. No one trusts a liar. No one respects him. No one likes him. Hence, children should be on their guard against lying. They should consider it a point of honour to be perfectly truthful, even about what they consider to be not very important things such as excuses they give for being late or not doing their homework. They should remember, also, that FLATTERY is a form of lying, and that CHEATING is, too; and avoid them. Truthfulness is an admirable trait in character. It is a sharing in the veracity of God. It should be treasured as such.

(g). INSULT AND DERISION.

A person has a right to be treated with respect, especially in public. The right is violated by INSULT and DERISION. Derision is worse than insult, because it adds CONTEMPT to it. Its purpose is to SHAME another in public, and make fun of his shame. The greater claim its victim has to respect, the greater is the sin. Mockery of parents is worse than mockery of strangers. Derision reaches its peak in mockery of God.

(h). STEALING AND DOING UNJUST DAMAGE.

THEFT consists in taking something belonging to another, who is REASONABLY opposed to its loss. If a starving person takes a loaf of bread from someone who is well-off, this is not theft, because the rich man cannot be REASONABLY opposed to his taking it. Doing unjust damage is similar to theft, except that the agent does not benefit by what he destroys as does the thief by what he steals.

The law here binds under pain of MORTAL sin. But it admits LIGHT matter. Consider an ordinary worker, who is not rich but yet not poor. How much must he steal from another worker who is in the same condition as himself? About a DAY'S WAGE. This, of course, varies in different countries and even in the same country from time to time. But whatever it happens to be, it is considered a serious loss to a worker, since it is the means by which he supports himself and his family. Hence, sufficient matter for a mortal sin.

If one steals from the poor, or, say, from a fellow pupil who does not get much pocket money, less is required to make GRAVE matter. To steal even five dollars from a very poor man would be a MORTAL sin, if the inconvenience caused him were as great as that caused an ordinary worker by stealing his day's wage. If the theft is from the very rich, of course more is required than the equivalent of an ordinary worker's daily wage to constitute grave matter. But it is wrong to think that you can steal a large sum, say \$150, from a millionaire or a company or the state without serious sin. It is not a question here of the relative injury done, but of the right that SOCIETY has to protect itself against the harm that would come of it, if theft were not checked by proper sanctions.

Suppose you see a wallet lying on the footpath. Are you OBLIGED in justice to pick it up? No. If you do take it, are you obliged to make a reasonable effort to find the owner? Yes. If he turns up, are you obliged to return it with its contents? Yes. Things found in the school grounds should be handed in to some responsible person so that their owners may recover them. "Finders keep" does not apply here.

Like the vice of lying, that of stealing can be quickly acquired. And it can lead to ruin. Children should avoid it as they would a poisonous reptile. They should cultivate instead a deep respect for the property of others. Petty thieving and all forms of vandalism such as damage done to desks, doors, walls and floors, should be absolutely taboo. They should remember that a sense of responsibility and of the rights of others is a sure sign of a manly character and a mature mind.

4. Restitution.

Is one who has committed a sin against commutative justice always bound to make restitution? No. It depends on whether his sin is a formal or a material sin, and also on whether he actually does damage to another or not. One is NOT obliged to restitution if the sin he commits is only a MATERIAL sin. Nor is he obliged to restitution if NO DAMAGE has been actually inflicted on another. Thus, a man who thinks an animal is a deer, and shoots it, and then finds that it is a cow is not obliged to restitution. The sin is only a material one. Again, a person who deliberately decides to burn his neighbour's house down, but does not actually set fire to it is not obliged to restitution. No damage has been done to the house.

One IS obliged to restitution, then, only when the sin against justice is a FORMAL sin, and at least some DAMAGE has been actually done to another. This obligation is one in MORTAL sin when the person commits a FORMAL MORTAL sin against justice, and actually does GRAVE damage or injury to another. Otherwise, the obligation is one binding in VENIAL sin. Thus, if a man deliberately decides to burn another's house down, and actually burns it down, he is obliged in MORTAL sin to make restitution. If, however, he does only slight damage to the house, he will be obliged under pain of venial sin. Same, too, if he does serious damage, but his sin is only a venial sin. What happens if a person who is bound to make restitution cannot make it immediately? May he go to confession in the meantime? Yes, provided he is WILLING to make the restitution when he can.

5. Virtues Connected With Justice.

(a). RELIGION.

As our CREATOR, GOVERNOR and GUIDE TO HAPPINESS, God has a RIGHT to our HOMAGE. Hence, there is in us a corresponding OBLIGATION to WORSHIP Him. It is a question of a DEBT. It is one of HONESTY towards God. As rational beings, we must acknowledge this debt, and pay it as fully as we can. The virtue that urges us to do this is the virtue of RELIGION.

RELIGION, then, is a moral virtue which moves us to pay our DEBT OF WORSHIP to God, as our CREATOR, GOVERNOR and GUIDE TO HAPPINESS. Its MOTIVE is that of HONESTY. That is why it is connected with justice.

Religion is not the result of fear. It is not a sop for failure. It is not an opiate for the down-trodden. It is not a mere feeling or an emotional outburst. It is not something fit only for the feeble-minded. It is a VIRTUE, a good habit. Moreover, it is a virtue that issues from the profoundest depths of our nature, recognising its absolute dependence on God. He cannot cease to be our Creator, Conserver and Last End. Nor can we cease to be His rational creatures. Hence all who have come to the use of reason are obliged to pay their debt of homage to Him. Human nature demands the practice of the virtue of religion for its own completeness, its true education and its lasting happiness. To neglect it is to cease to be fully human. It is to be DISHONEST

towards Him who has first claim to our honesty. It is, in a sense, to steal from God.

As a virtue, religion is something **INSIDE** ourselves. It is in our **WILL**. But it should manifest itself in **EXTERNAL** acts such as genuflections, assisting at Mass, or saying community prayers. Why? In the first place, it is the **WHOLE** man, body as well as soul, that must pay a debt of worship to God. Secondly, it is natural for us to manifest our sentiments by external acts. Notice how people cheer at a football match, or at a race meeting when their horse is coming in. Sentiments not expressed externally are likely to die. Finally, man is a **SOCIAL** being. Hence he is obliged to pay society's debt of homage to God. That is why we have community or family prayers, the Mass, and the Feast of Christ the King. To make religion something merely internal is to ignore man's nature. To make it something merely external is to practise hypocrisy. Only when it is both internal and external does it enable us to worship God "in spirit and in truth."

What are the main **ACTS** of the virtue of religion? They are: **DEVOTION**, **SACRIFICE**, **PRAYER** and the keeping of **OATHS** and **VOWS**.

We say that a child prays devoutly, genuflects devoutly, speaks devoutly, and so on. From this it is easy to get the false idea that **DEVOTION** is merely a **MANNER** of doing things. It is, on the contrary, a special **ACT**. It is the primary act of the virtue of religion just as love is the primary act of the virtue of charity. Without devotion it is impossible to get any of the other acts of religion, just as without love it is impossible to get any of the other acts of the virtue of charity, such as almsgiving or burying the dead. Devotion is, as it were, the very soul of religion.

DEVOTION is an act by which we give our **WILL** promptly and wholly to the **WORSHIP** of **GOD**. Remember that it is in our **WILL**, not in our **FEELINGS**. A mother may not feel like attending to her child at night; but, if she attends to him all the same, she is truly a devoted mother. Similarly, a child may not feel like getting up early and going to Mass, but, if he does go in spite of his feelings, he is indeed a devout child. Since devotion is in our will, which is a **SPIRITUAL** faculty, it is independent of feelings, just as contrition is, or our love of God.

How can we INCREASE it? Mainly by MEDITATING. On what? On God's infinite goodness, and on our absolute need of His gifts. Its fruits? They are peace and light and love.

SACRIFICE is the one act of worship that can be offered to GOD ALONE. It is the central act of religion. By it we ADORE God, we THANK Him, we BEG PARDON for our sins, and we ASK for further graces and blessings. We shall have more to say about it when we come to deal with the MASS.

PRAYER is also an act of the virtue of religion, because in it we recognise God's existence, His infinite excellence, His power, goodness, mercy and love; and we pay homage to the wisdom of His Providence. For by prayer, as we shall see in a later chapter, we bring our intelligence and will into line with God's, and thus co-operate with Him as secondary causes in fulfilling the destiny He has planned for us from all eternity.

A VOW is a promise. But it differs from an ordinary promise in that it BINDS UNDER PAIN OF SIN. That is why a resolution you may make to give up sweets during Lent is not a vow. Of course, it must be made DELIBERATELY and FREELY. No one can make a vow while he is asleep or under chloroform. Nor can one make a vow to jump to the moon. It must be concerned with something GOOD, too. One cannot take a vow to murder an innocent man. Moreover it must be a BETTER good – an act of virtue which is better than its omission, and which does not prevent a person from doing a better act. Finally, a vow is made to GOD alone, not to an angel or to a saint, or even to Our Lady. Its purpose is to unite our will more firmly and stably to God.

Vows are either PRIVATE or PUBLIC. A vow is PUBLIC when it is accepted by a superior in the name of the CHURCH. Otherwise, it is PRIVATE. It is SOLEMN, if the Church acknowledges it as such. Otherwise, it is SIMPLE. The three vows taken by religious are those of POVERTY, CHASTITY and OBEDIENCE. If SOLEMN, they make acts opposed to them not only ILLICIT but also INVALID. If SIMPLE, merely ILLICIT. These vows remove the chief OBSTACLES to perfection: a sinful attachment to riches, pleasure, and one's own will.

These vows give strength and stability to our will, and so bind us more firmly to God. Man is most noble when most subject to God;

and most free when most conformed to His will. Men and women take religious vows not because they despise material things or home life or initiative, but because they realise that these are really precious things. Just because they are precious, they offer them to God. Love always gives what is best.

In an OATH we call GOD to WITNESS that what we say is true. By its very nature, an oath contains a gesture of reverence towards God. It admits that He is Knowledge and Truth Itself. The awe inspired by His infinite majesty forbids us to ask Him to be a witness to a trivial truth. Hence, an oath should not be taken without grave necessity. And once taken, it should be kept. To violate it is to ask the First Truth to be a witness to a LIE. It is to offend God most grievously.

Let us look now at some acts that are AGAINST the virtue of religion.

You would never take a man's footprint to be the man himself, would you? It is just something made by him. It is even more silly to take creatures to be God. They are made by Him. And they are INFINITELY different from Him. That is why it is a horrible sin to give them worship which is due to Him alone. It is the sin of IDOLATRY.

Another detestable sin against religion is that of COMMUNICATING WITH THE DEVIL. Sometimes this is done quite openly as when a person makes a pact with Satan like that which Faust is supposed to have made. Sometimes it is done in a more or less indirect way by astrology, spiritualism, black magic and the like. It is, of course, a very serious mortal sin.

It is sheer madness for anyone to seek help from the devil. He is confirmed in evil. He can never have our real welfare at heart. He hates us with a most malignant hate. He seeks only to drag us to hell. Moreover, with him we are completely out of our depth, intellectually. And he is the father of lies. He can pretend to be an angel of light. He can so easily lead us into error. So we should avoid him as we would avoid hell itself. We should avoid not only all practices such as spiritualism which are forbidden under pain of mortal sin, but also silly things like cup-reading or palm-reading, because the devil can take advantage of these to drag us into the unending miseries of hell.

The atheist Ingersoll used to take out his watch and give God five minutes to strike him dead. This is the sin of TEMPTING God. It is obviously one against religion. It is the insane arrogance of a creature who dares to put His Creator to a test. There is a test, of course, but it occurs in God's good time. And He is the Judge. And His decision is absolutely final.

A person who asks God to get him through an examination, though he makes no effort to gain the necessary knowledge, commits the sin of PRESUMPTION. He forgets that his ability to help himself is a God-given power – a participation in causality of God. He forgets, too, that it is through secondary causes that God's Providence normally works. To spurn them is to spurn Providence itself. That is why presumption is a sin against religion.

We offend against religion, too, by violating VOWS and OATHS. Since a VOW binds under pain of sin, it is a sin to violate it. It may be mortal or VENIAL accordingly as the vow binds, or the matter is grave or light. But it is always a MORTAL sin to violate an OATH. It is the heinous sin of PERJURY.

SACRILEGE is another sin against religion. It is the violation of a sacred person, place or thing that has been publicly dedicated to God.

Thus, to steal from the plate in church is a sacrilege. To steal from your neighbour's pocket in church is not. Can you see why? To strike a priest or a nun in anger is a sacrilege. To strike one's parents is not. To use a chalice as an ordinary drinking cup at a banquet, to go to Holy Communion in mortal sin without any effort at all to make an act of contrition, to ape the Mass through derision – these are obviously examples of sacrilege. If the matter is grave, sacrilege is of course a mortal sin.

When SIMON MAGUS saw the gifts of grace which the Apostles gave their converts, he wanted to buy this power. Hence the sin of buying or selling something SUPERNATURAL, as such, is called SIMONY. If a person bought rosary beads for fifty-cents, and then sold them for five dollars just because the Pope had put special indulgences on them, this would be a sin of simony. Such a person would be selling what did not belong to him, but to God. So he would be offending God whose supernatural goods are beyond all material price. He would be sinning against religion.

To think that the number thirteen can bring bad luck, or that throwing salt over your shoulder can bring good luck, or that the wearing of a shark's tooth can protect you from enemy bullets in wartime - these are sins of SUPERSTITION. It consists in attributing to things a power that they simply have not got. Usually, it is a venial sin, but a very silly one.

It is not superstitious to put a Christopher Medal on the dash-board of a car. Of itself, the medal cannot protect us from accidents, any more than twenty-cents can. But St. Christopher can. The medal merely shows our devotion to him. It is from him, not from it as a bit of metal, that we expect help. Nothing more reasonable. It is the same for scapulars, holy pictures, crucifixes and the like. These are honoured, not for their own sake as bits of cloth, paper or metal, but for the sake of those whom they represent. And the latter can obviously reward our devotion by their help, protection and love.

Much more could be said about the virtue of religion. But our space is limited. We must pass over to other virtues connected with justice.

(b). PIETY.

After God, we owe most to our PARENTS. To them we owe a debt of REVERENCE, HONOUR and SUBMISSION. Our submission ceases when we are old enough to act wisely for ourselves. But our debt of reverence and honour remains right through life. The virtue that moves us to pay as fully as we can our debt to our parents is the lovely virtue of PIETY.

PIETY shows itself in true DEVOTION - a willingness to promote our parents' welfare, materially and spiritually. Children can do this not only by praying for their parents, but also by helping them in the home, by working hard at school, by passing exams with high marks and by doing well in other sorts of school activities, and especially by growing up excellent Catholics. The best return a Catholic child can ever make to its parents for all they have done for it is to become a saint. The worst, is to marry outside the Church or to give up the practice of religion. This can never bring happiness to Catholic parents. Instead it can only lead them in sorrow to an early and a lonely grave.

The virtue of PIETY is an absolutely fundamental one, because the family is the unit of society. Here is what a modern writer says about it: "A house without piety can hardly lay title to the hallowed name of home. It is lacking in fundamental order. It is not so much disordered as in chaos. No one really belongs here, for no one has his place in such an establishment. The child's rights are as vague as his obligations; the parents' responsibilities as dimly seen as their duties. It is a topsy-turvy domestic world committed to a condition of civil war and selfish rivalry. It is a dishonourable establishment, since it has eliminated the fundamental honesty involved in the recognition of a fundamental debt. It is no place of privilege or perfection for the child, who is given no reason here for that reverence, honour and subjection that would do so much to perfect him. There is no hierarchy here; the child must fight for what he can get; and, of course, the child loses, never more emphatically than when he has his own way."

Without PIETY, then, true home life is impossible. And when home life is destroyed, a nation is doomed.

(c). PATRIOTISM.

After our parents, we owe most to our COUNTRY. The virtue that urges us to pay this debt is called PATRIOTISM.

PATRIOTISM is not primarily a matter of love. It is a matter of SERVICE. Like religion and like piety, it is question of paying a DEBT, through a motive of HONESTY.

Like them, too, it shows itself in DEVOTION - a willingness to serve one's country in a noble way and from the right motive. One who fits himself to be a worthy and a useful citizen is a true patriot, as is an expert conscientious doctor, a great engineer, a hardworking farmer or a teacher who educates children to be excellent citizens not merely of this world but of the next. Devotion to one's country is a kind of civic morale. On it depends the health of the nation. Once it is undermined by treachery, a nation crumbles in ruins.

Patriotism brings right order into a nation, and with it that peace and happiness that every government must strive to foster. Without

it, disorder and chaos must prevail. And they are the signs of Satan and his gang.

(d). OBSERVANCE.

This virtue inclines us to pay our debt to the COMMUNITY. How? By paying respect, honour and submission to those in AUTHORITY, and to those who excel us in KNOWLEDGE and in VIRTUE. Its motive is, again, that of HONESTY.

The practice of this virtue fosters a community morale, a sort of team spirit, which is invaluable in any community such as a family or a school, a football team or a class. It trains us to sacrifice our selfish interests, and to work for the common good.

(e). OBEDIENCE.

We owe OBEDIENCE to God, and to those who REPRESENT Him in society. Their AUTHORITY comes from Him. In obeying them, we are obeying Him. That is why obedience is so noble an act, and so worthy of the rational dignity of man.

There are many other virtues connected with justice. GRATITUDE is one. So is CHEERFULNESS. Others are: TRUTHFULNESS, FRIENDLINESS, LIBERALITY and POLITENESS. We can do no more than mention them here. But do not think that they are unimportant. It is impossible to live a fully human life without them.

What a wonderful world this would be if everyone practised the virtue of justice and the other virtues connected with it. What a load of misery would be lifted from the hearts of men. Right order would reign in most things; and it would bring with it peace and light and joy.

SUMMARY

1. Justice. A moral virtue that moves us to give others what is DUE to them: that to which they have a RIGHT.

2. Kinds.

- (a). Distributive – obligations of society towards its members.
- (b). Legal – obligations of members towards society.

(c). Commutative – obligations of individuals towards individuals.

It alone binds to RESTITUTION.

3. Acts That Violate Commutative Justice.

(a). Homicide.

(i). Direct killing of the Innocent : Never lawful.

(ii). Indirect killing of the Innocent: Sometimes lawful. The Double effect.

(iii). Killing of an unjust Aggressor: Lawful, if conditions are present.

(iv). Killing of Criminals: Lawful for society.

(b). Suicide.

(c). Mutilation.

(d). Destruction of another's Good Name. (i). By calumny. (ii). By detraction.

(e). Tale-bearing.

(f). Lies.

(g). Insult and Derision.

(h). Stealing and Doing unjust Damage.

4. Restitution.

5. Virtues Connected With Justice.

(a). RELIGION.

(i). What? A moral virtue that urges us to pay our debt of worship to God through a motive of honesty.

(ii). Both external and internal.

(iii). Chief Acts: Devotion, Sacrifice, Prayer, the Keeping of Oaths and Vows.

(iv). Acts against: Idolatry, Communicating with the Devil, Tempting God, Presumption, Violation of Oaths and Vows, Sacrilege, Simony and Superstitious Practices.

(b). PIETY. By it we pay our debt of reverence, honour and submission to our PARENTS, through a motive of honesty.

(c). PATRIOTISM. By it we pay our debt of service to our COUNTRY, through a motive of honesty.

- (d). OBSERVANCE. By it we pay respect, honour and submission to those who are superior in AUTHORITY, KNOWLEDGE and VIRTUE.
- (e). OTHER VIRTUES such as: GRATITUDE, CHEERFULNESS, TRUTHFULNESS, FRIENDLINESS, LIBERALITY and POLITENESS.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. Justice urges us to give others what is (...) to them, i.e. that to which they have a (...). 2. That part of justice which regulates society's obligations to its members is called (...) justice. 3. That part which regulates their obligations to society is called (...) justice. 4. The justice that rules between individuals is called (...) justice. 5. (...) justice alone binds to restitution. 6. One is not allowed to kill an innocent person in order to put an end to suffering. It is (a direct) (an indirect) killing of the innocent; and the (...) never justifies the (...). 7. One is sometimes allowed to kill an innocent person (directly) (indirectly). It is a case of the (...) effect. 8. It is (never) (sometimes) (always) lawful to kill an unjust aggressor. 9. One who is drowned in an attempt to rescue another (commits) (does not commit) suicide. 10. An innocent person (is) (is not) allowed to commit suicide so that his family may benefit by his insurance. 11. Destruction of another's good name by means of lies is called (...). One guilty of it (is) (is not) bound to restitution. 12. The object of tale-bearing is the destruction of (...). 13. We are (never) (sometimes) allowed to tell a lie. 14. Flattery and cheating are forms of (...). 15. In itself a lie is a (mortal) (venial) sin. 16. While walking in his sleep, a man burns down a house belonging to another. He (is) (is not) obliged to make restitution. 17. Knowing that it is a mortal sin, Podgy deliberately burns down Budgy's house. "A" says that he is obliged to make restitution under pain of mortal sin; "B", under pain of venial sin. "C" says that there is no obligation. Which is right." ("A"), ("B"), ("C"). 18. It is the virtue of (...) that moves us to pay our debt of worship to God. Its motive is that of (...). 19. Religion should be (merely internal) (merely external) (both internal and external). 20. The act by which we will to worship God, promptly and wholeheartedly is called (...). 21. The one act of worship that be given to God alone is that of (...). 22. It is by (...) that we bring our intelligence and our will into line with

God's. 23. The three religious vows are those of (...), (...) and (...). 24. Solemn religious vows make the opposite acts (illicit only) (invalid) (or both illicit and invalid). 25. To call God to witness that what one says is true is to take (...). To violate it is to commit the sin of (...). 26. It is the sin of (...) to give divine worship to a creature as such. 27. To sell rosary beads at a much greater price on account of indulgences attached to them is to commit the sin of (...). 28. The virtue that moves us to pay our debt of submission, reverence and honour to our parents is called (...). 29. Patriotism is primarily a question of (love) (service) of one's country. 30. It is the virtue of (...) that inclines us to show respect to those superior to us in authority, knowledge and virtue.

(B). Answer the following as fully as you can: -

1. Percy wants to know the difference between Distributive, Legal and Commutative Justice; and why Commutative justice binds to restitution. Tell him.
2. Algy asks if it is ever lawful for us to kill a human being. Tell him what is lawful and what is not.
3. An undertaker wants to know why it is not lawful for people to commit suicide. What answer would you give him?
4. In the presence of other doctors a famous surgeon has just performed most skilfully a difficult abdominal operation. Is it lawful for him to whip off one of the patient's toes or ears, by way of an encore?
5. Explain each of the following and show why each can be serious sins: (i). Calumny. (ii). Detraction. (iii). Tale-bearing. (iv). Lies (v). Insult and derision.
6. Why should all forms of petty thieving and of vandalism be absolutely taboo?
7. Write an essay on the virtue of religion explaining what it is, why it should be both internal and external, its chief acts, and the main acts opposed to it.
8. Explain briefly each of these virtues: Piety, Patriotism, Observance and Obedience. Write an appreciation also of: Gratitude, Cheerfulness, Friendliness, Liberality and Politeness.

Chapter 33

THE SUPERNATURAL ORDER

SANCTIFYING GRACE

1. Man's Last End.

In the last few chapters we have spoken of the NATURAL virtues. These are important, because grace pre-supposes nature. If a man with a vice of drunkenness goes to confession, he receives the SUPERNATURAL virtue of temperance. But he still has his natural bad habit to fight against. And he will have to fight very hard, if he is not to fall into sin again, and so lose this supernatural virtue. The supernatural is built upon the natural. That is why the latter is so important.

However, the natural is not enough. Why? Because God has made man for a SUPERNATURAL last end - the beatific vision. He has raised man to the supernatural order; and this is above the natural powers not only of man but of the highest angel that could be created. It is natural only to God.

Since our last end is a SUPERNATURAL one, God must give us SUPERNATURAL means by which we can attain it; for the MEANS must be proportionate to the END. We can appreciate them best, perhaps, by comparing them with what He gives us in the natural order.

In the NATURAL order, we have a human NATURE. This is the RADICAL principle of our activities. We have also FACULTIES. These are the PROXIMATE principles of everything we do. They must be MOVED to act by things other than themselves, as our faculty of sight is by the light rays that come to it. Finally, our faculties must have certain DISPOSITIONS if they are to act in a healthy, vigorous way. We cannot see properly if we are colour-blind or suffering from a cataract.

In the SUPERNATURAL order we are not less richly endowed. Corresponding to our NATURE, we have a new supernatural nature called SANCTIFYING GRACE. Corresponding to our natural FACULTIES, we have the SUPERNATURAL VIRTUES. These are MOVED to their activities by ACTUAL GRACE. And they are given DISPOSITIONS to act in a vigorous manner by the GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST. Briefly, it comes to this: –

Natural Order	Supernatural Order
Human nature	Sanctifying grace
Faculties	Supernatural virtues
Movers	Actual graces
Dispositions	Gifts of the Holy Ghost

Of these supernatural gifts, the greatest is sanctifying grace. The others flow from it, or are demanded by it. So we shall devote this present chapter to it, and speak of the others later on.

2. What Sanctifying Grace Is.

Sanctifying grace must be either God or a creature, mustn't it?

Well, it is not God. It is a creature. Every creature must be either something material or something spiritual. Sanctifying grace is something spiritual. Again, every creature must be either a substance, able to exist on its own, like a bit of paper, or it must be an accident, capable of existing only in another, like the colour, size or shape of the paper. Sanctifying grace is an accident. Every accident must belong to the realm of quantity or to that of quality. Sanctifying grace is a quality. Every accident must be either natural or supernatural. Sanctifying grace is supernatural. Finally, every accident in us must be either in our faculties, or in our body or our soul. Sanctifying grace is in our soul. Now we can see exactly what it is. Go over the steps in the argument again. Here they are: –

LIVING THE TRUTH

God	Substance	Material
Creature	Accident	Spiritual
Quantity	In faculties	Natural
Quality	In soul	Supernatural

From this, it is obvious that we must define sanctifying grace as A SUPERNATURAL QUALITY EXISTING IN OUR SOUL.

Just as health is a natural quality existing in our body, and just as knowledge is a natural quality existing in our intellect (mind), sanctifying grace is a SUPERNATURAL QUALITY existing in the very depths of our SOUL.

Since it is quality, it is something REAL, just as our health is or our knowledge. Moreover, it is something in US, not just something in GOD, as the Protestants teach. Yes, it is a priceless REALITY which God's omnipotence brings forth from the soul, inasmuch as the latter is a spiritual being, made in His image. And why priceless? Because it makes our soul like unto GOD Himself, and this, precisely inasmuch as He is God.

A star is like God inasmuch as He is a BEING. A tree or an animal are more like Him than is a star. They are like Him inasmuch as He is a LIVING Being. Man is more like Him still, for man is like Him inasmuch as He is an INTELLECTUAL Being. An angel is most like Him, in the natural order, for it is like Him inasmuch as He is a pure SPIRIT. But a man in a state of grace is immeasurably more like God than is the highest angel in its natural state, for man in grace is like Him precisely inasmuch as He is GOD. Why? Because grace gives us a share in the INNER LIFE of God, the life He leads in the TRINITY.

3. What It Does.

Here are some of the marvellous things that sanctifying grace does for us. Any one of them on its own should bring us to our knees in gratitude, and make us resolve to love Him with our whole heart and soul. Think quietly and prayerfully on each. Ask God for LIGHT to appreciate them, and to appreciate at the same time the

appalling evil of formal mortal sin, for this is the only thing that can cause God to withdraw His grace from our soul.

1. IT GIVES US A REAL SHARE IN THE NATURE OF GOD.

That sanctifying grace gives us a NEW NATURE is evident from many texts in Scripture that speak of our being RE-GENERATED and BORN AGAIN by grace.

Our Lord, for instance, says to Nicodemus: "Unless a man be BORN AGAIN of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." (John 3:5). St. John is more precise when he tells us that those in grace are "BORN, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but OF GOD." (John 1:13). He repeats the same phrase in his epistle: "We know that whosoever is BORN OF GOD sinneth not." (1 John 5:8). And so on, for other texts.

To be born again, we must be RE-GENERATED, generated anew, a second time. Hence many texts speak of our RE-GENERATION by grace. St. Paul, for instance, speaks of Christ as saving us "by the laver of RE-GENERATION, and the renovation of the Holy Ghost." (Titus. 3:5).

Just as by natural generation and birth we receive from our parents a human NATURE, so, too, by a new generation and a new birth we receive through grace a new NATURE.

What kind of nature is it? Scripture makes it quite clear that it is a SUPERNATURAL nature, not a natural one; nay, more, that it is a SHARING IN THE VERY NATURE OF GOD. St. Peter tells us this explicitly when he assures us that by the grace won for us by Christ we are made "PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE." (2 Pet. 1:4).

What can this astounding phrase mean? Does it mean that God gives us a share in His nature by giving each of us a piece of it, in the way that you might give a friend a piece of an apple or a cake? No. God's nature is SPIRITUAL. It has no parts. It cannot be cut up or divided into bits. It is infinitely simple.

Does it mean that God gives us His whole nature in such a way that ours is annihilated, and His takes its place? No. In that case each of us would be God. This is the absurd error of PANTHEISM, which says that God is everything and everything is God. It fails to see a

real and essential distinction between God and creatures. It is blasphemy. Grace is not a substance. It is an accident, a quality. Hence with it we keep our own nature. We remain creatures, and as such infinitely distinct from God.

To understand how grace gives us a share in God's nature we must first think of what His nature is. Then think of what heaven is. Then think of what grace does for us in this life.

First, then, what is God's NATURE? It is God, of course, but looked at from the point of view of what He DOES. And what does He do? As a spiritual Being, He does two things: He KNOWS and He LOVES. Whom? HIMSELF. To what extent? INFINITELY, EXHAUSTIVELY.

But in what WAY does God thus know Himself? Is it by means of CREATED IDEAS, in the way we know things on this earth? No. God knows Himself by means of Himself. He is at once THAT WHICH and THAT BY WHICH He is known. Created ideas, no matter how perfect, could never express Him as He is. Only the Infinite can fully express the Infinite.

Knowing Himself thus, He LOVES Himself as thus known, for love always vibrates in unison with knowledge. And, as a consequence, He is eternally and infinitely HAPPY. Infinite knowledge, love and happiness - these make up the inner life of God, the life He leads in the Trinity.

Think now of HEAVEN. There, a soul knows God in the WAY in which He knows Himself. Hence, not by means of created ideas that could never express Him as He is, but by means of God Himself. With it, as with Him, He is at once that which and that by which He is known. He is known immediately, without any created medium at all. He is known intuitively. True, a soul in the beatific vision does not know God to the EXTENT to which He knows Himself. It does not know Him infinitely. Only an infinite intelligence can do that. Our knowledge in heaven is not EQUAL to God's. It is only a SHARING in His. But it is a real sharing, for the MANNER of knowing is the same.

Knowing God immediately, the soul in heaven loves Him as thus known. Hence it loves Him in the WAY in which He loves Himself. Consequently, it shares in His limitless happiness.

We are not privileged, as Our Lord was, to enjoy the beatific vision on earth. But we have to MERIT it here. And this is where sanctifying grace comes in.

Because grace is the MEANS by which we gain heaven, it must itself have due PROPORTION to the beatific vision. Otherwise, the means would not be proportionate to the end. Hence it must enable us to live here on earth in the obscurity of the faith a supernatural life which is ESSENTIALLY the same as that lived by a soul in heaven. In other words it must give us a real share in God's own inner life, in what He does eternally in the Trinity.

Inasmuch as sanctifying grace gives us due proportion to HEAVEN and enables our free, un sinful acts to MERIT the beatific vision, it can in very truth be said to give us a real share in the nature of God.

While leaving us creatures, and therefore infinitely distinct from God, it does DIVINISE us. It does DEIFY us. It does make our soul like unto God precisely inasmuch as He is God. For, just as the life in a little acorn is ESSENTIALLY the same as is the life in the giant oak that grows from it, so, too, the supernatural life in a soul in grace is ESSENTIALLY the same as that of the beatific vision. And what is this but a real sharing in the inner life of God? Yes, sanctifying grace is the SEED OF GLORY. And that is what we mean when we say that it makes us "PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE," or gives us a share in the very nature of God.

2. IT MAKES US GOD'S ADOPTED CHILDREN.

The Second Person of the Trinity is God's Son by NATURE. If I am in a state of grace, I am God's ADOPTED son. I am, in the accidental order, what Christ is in the order of substance.

What a privilege this is! Which of us could believe it, unless God had made it known to us? That He has revealed it is abundantly clear from Scripture.

St. John reminds us that to those who received Christ when He came on earth He gave the power of becoming the "SONS OF GOD." (John 1:12). He says again: "Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed on us that we should be called and should be the SONS OF GOD." (1 John 3:1).

Listen to what St. Paul says to the Galatians: "God sent His Son ... that we might receive the ADOPTION OF SONS. And, because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father." (Galat. 4:4-6). To the Romans, again, he writes: "Whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the SONS OF GOD. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear, but you have received the spirit of ADOPTION OF SONS, whereby we cry: Abba (Father). For the Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit that we are SONS OF GOD. And if sons, heirs also, HEIRS indeed OF GOD, and JOINT-HEIRS with CHRIST." (Roms. 8:14-17). How he exults in this ineffable privilege!

"I will not leave you orphans," Our Divine Lord said. And He fulfilled His promise in a way that goes beyond our wildest dreams. By the grace which He won for us on the Cross, He makes us God's adopted children, and so gives us His heavenly Father to be our very own. With such a Father, how can we be said to be orphans?

On earth, when a person adopts a child, he takes it into his family, and he gives it a right to share his riches. When God adopts us, He takes us into the Family of the Blessed Trinity, and He gives us a right to share in the very riches by which He Himself is rich. These are His knowledge, love and happiness in heaven.

In adopting a child, a person does not give it a new life. He does not give it anything supernatural. He merely gives it a right to temporal riches. But, when God adopts us, He does give us a new life. He does give us something supernatural. And He adopts us, not, to passing riches which we must leave at death, but to His own imperishable riches in eternity. That is why His adoption is so superior to any natural adoption on earth. We should treasure it as such.

3. IT MAKES US BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF CHRIST.

Since God the Father is our Father too if we are in a state of grace, it follows that grace makes us the brothers of Christ. This is why St. Paul reminds his converts that Christ is not ashamed to call them "BROTHERS." (Heb. 2:11).

A person in grace may be a beggar clad in rags, despised by the great ones of this world. But the angels in heaven look upon him with religious awe, and God Himself contemplates him with love,

for He sees in him a brother of His own Divine Son, and a joint-heir with Him to heaven.

Adopted sons of God and brothers of Christ! What glorious titles these are. Compared with them the most cherished titles that this world can give us are as dust and ashes. They are titles of honour in the present, and pledges of glory in eternity. They are the divine charter of our rights as Christians. But they are at the same time the code of our duties. As God's adopted sons and brothers of Christ we are under the obligation of acting as such. Noblesse oblige! From us to whom much is given, much is expected. We are expected to LIVE in a manner befitting our high calling, so that others may be brought by our example to share in our privilege, and become, like us, heirs to God's riches in heaven.

4. IT MAKES US LIVING TEMPLES OF THE TRINITY.

God is present in every creature inasmuch as He ACTS there, conserving it in being and co-operating in all that is real and positive in its activity. In this way, He is present even in a soul in mortal sin, and in the devils in hell. This mode of presence is called His IMMENSITY. But for it, every creature would be instantly annihilated.

He is present in the Eucharist in a wholly different way. He is present there because the substance of the bread has been changed into the substance of the Body of His Incarnate Son, and the substance of the wine into that of His Blood. He is present by reason of transubstantiation.

In a soul in grace, God is present in a different way again. He is present in somewhat that same way as He is present to a soul in the beatific vision. True, He is not known in the soul by means of Himself as He is in heaven, nor is He loved as thus intuitively known. But He is present all the same in the Trinity of His Persons, and as an object of our knowledge and love. He is present as a FRIEND and a GUEST, whose sweet presence can be spiritually tasted and enjoyed by infused CONTEMPLATION which is given by the GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST, and which is a genuine foretaste of the bliss and the peace of heaven.

This special presence of God in a soul in grace is called the INDWELLING OF THE TRINITY.

It is vouched for by many texts in Scripture. St. Paul, for instance, says: "Know you not that you are the TEMPLE OF GOD, and that the SPIRIT OF GOD dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16). And again: "Know you not that your members are the TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST who is in you?" (1 Cor. 6:19). St. Paul realises, of course, that where the Holy Ghost is, there the Father and the Son must also be. But he here appropriates the indwelling of the Trinity to the Third Person, because we naturally associate the Holy Ghost with love, and our sanctification is an effect of the infinite love of God.

In a similar way, Our Lord appropriates this indwelling to the Father and Himself when He says: "If ANY man will love Me, he shall keep My word, and My Father will love him; and WE will come to him, and MAKE OUR ABODE with him." (John 14:23).

This is surely one of the loveliest and most consoling texts in all Scripture. It should thrill our soul to its very depths. Notice that He says "ANY" man - not just a priest or a religious or a saint, but ANY human being in a state of grace, ANYONE who loves God with genuine charity. No matter how poor or how lowly or illiterate such a one may be, Christ assures us that He and the Father and of course the Holy Ghost who cannot be separated from them in work such as this, will COME to him. In a passing visit that might last for a moment or so? No. That would be glorious enough. But this is better still. "We will make our ABODE with him." We will DWELL with him in the depths of his soul in an ABIDING presence that can last right through life, and turn the lonely exile of this earth into a sort of ante-room of heaven.

Living temples of the Blessed Trinity. What insight this gives into the dignity of a soul in grace. Can you wonder at St. Catherine of Sienna going down on her knees out of respect for such a soul? Yet how few Christians, even Catholics, fail to appreciate the indwelling of the Trinity! How few profit by it! How few experience and enjoy the gracious presence of the three Divine Persons in their soul!

How few make daily use of their amazing privilege of being able to act the HOST to GOD!

5. IT MAKES OUR FREE, UNSINFUL ACTS MERIT HEAVEN.

One of the most tormenting features of our life is the way in which it passes. With immortal souls made for eternity, we are yet linked

to time through our bodies. And time is ever on the move. We cannot pronounce the word "now" before the moment that it stands for has ceased to be the present and has become the past. We cannot pin time down. We cannot stop its onflow, though it bears with it a thing we naturally loathe. That thing is death.

You woke up this morning. You made your morning offering. You said your prayers. You went to Mass. Will you ever do any of these acts again? Never. You may do many like them, but they are gone forever. It is the same for the millions of acts you have performed since you were born. How many of them can you even remember? What has happened to the rest? They are in oblivion. What remains of them? Habits? Yes. But is that all? How unbearable life would be if that were so!

To unbelievers who do any serious thinking at all about man's nature and end, life is a galling enigma. Its utter futility nauseates them. It fills them with a sense of absolute frustration. It contorts their mind. It embitters their heart. It sometimes makes them seek refuge in suicide.

But, for us who accept God's revelation concerning man's end and our dignity as His adopted sons, life is the very opposite. It is a precious thing, every moment of it. If we are in grace, no human act that is not sinful is ever wasted, even the most trivial and commonplace. Instead, it is stored up for us as merit beyond the grave, to give us a deeper sharing of God's knowledge, love and happiness, not just for a year or a century but forever in eternity.

How consoling this is! What zest we should have for life. How we thank God for it! How we should treasure the present moment and try to get from it as much merit as we possibly can through the purity of our motives and the intensity of our love of God.

6. IT BRINGS ALL THE SUPERNATURAL VIRTUES INTO THE SOUL.

Sanctifying grace does not come alone. From it spring the SUPERNATURAL VIRTUES, which are the PROXIMATE principles of our supernatural acts, just as our natural faculties are of our natural acts.

Grace supernaturalises the essence of our soul. It acts after the manner of a NATURE. But no created nature can act without FACULTIES. Grace demands supernatural faculties proportionate to itself, just as our human nature demands natural faculties that correspond to it. These supernatural faculties are the supernatural virtues.

Three of these are called THEOLOGICAL virtues, because they have GOD for their object. They are FAITH, which gives us a share in God's knowledge, HOPE, which gives us a share in His omnipotence, and CHARITY, which gives us a share in His love.

The others are called the infused MORAL virtues, because they enable us to perform supernatural acts that have something other than God for their object. They are supernatural PRUDENCE, JUSTICE, FORTITUDE and TEMPERANCE, and the many virtues connected with these.

We shall devote whole chapters to the supernatural virtues later on. So we need say no more about them here.

7. IT MAKES US THE FRIENDS OF GOD.

FRIENDSHIP implies a certain EQUALITY. That is why there cannot be friendship between a man and a brick. The inequality is too great. But there can be friendship between one human being and another, since all human beings are essentially equal.

However, equality is not enough. If it were, all human beings would be friends. In addition to equality, friendship demands a certain SHARING OF GOODS and of LIFE. Friends tend to become one: to share not only material goods, but also thoughts, ideals, desires, joys and sufferings. Theirs is a sharing of life.

Friendship implies also an UNSELFISH love. To love is to seek a good. But we can seek a good for OURSELF, or we can seek it for ANOTHER. The former is a selfish love. It is called a love of concupiscence. The latter is an unselfish love. It is called a love of benevolence. Now, a friend seeks primarily the welfare, not of himself, but of the one he loves. The love in friendship is an unselfish love, a love of BENEVOLENCE.

Finally, the love in friendship must be reciprocated. It must be a MUTUAL love. A mother may have a most unselfish love for her wayward child, she may pray most fervently for him, offer Mass and Communion for him, and suffer terribly for him, but, if he does not RETURN her love, there is no friendship between her and him. The love in friendship must be returned. For FRIENDSHIP is a MUTUAL, UNSELFISH LOVE, a MUTUAL LOVE OF BENEVOLENCE.

You sometimes hear people say: "I can adore God. I can reverence, obey and serve Him. But I can never be His friend. The gap between us is too great. It makes true friendship impossible." Such persons are thinking only of the NATURAL order. And, of course, they would be right if we had not been raised to the supernatural order by grace. If there cannot be friendship between man and a brick on account of the inequality that exists between them, there cannot be friendship between man and God, since the difference here is infinite. But God bridges this gap by grace. It raises us to the SUPERNATURAL order, and so gives us a certain proportion to God. And by the supernatural CHARITY that it brings with it into the soul it makes us friends of God in the strict sense of that lovely term. For charity, as we shall later see, is nothing else than a MUTUAL LOVE OF BENEVOLENCE existing between the soul and God.

That is why Our Divine Lord can say to each of us, if we are in a state of grace: "I will not now call you servants, but FRIENDS." (John 15:15).

Again, what an ineffable privilege it is for us to have God Himself as our friend. He is infinitely powerful, so He can always help us. He is infinitely good and loving. Hence He is always most anxious to help us. He is infinitely merciful. So, even our miseries and sins can move Him to do us good. Was there ever such a friend? His is the one friendship that can never fail. It is the one friendship that can never do us any harm. It must, on the contrary, do us the greatest good. He is our only perfect Friend, for He alone is infinitely lovable for His own sake, since He alone is infinitely good. Let us treasure His friendship, and increase it at an ever-quickenning rate from day to day, so that at death He may judge us, not as an inexorable Judge, but as an intimate and most loving Friend.

8. IT BRINGS INTO THE SOUL ALL THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST.

If we are to live a vigorous, healthy life in the natural order, it is not enough for us to have a human nature and faculties that correspond to it. These faculties must have certain DISPOSITIONS. They must be fit, and in good order.

It is the same in the supernatural order. Besides a new nature, which is sanctifying grace, and besides supernatural faculties, which are the infused virtues, these need supernatural dispositions. These are the GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST. There are seven of them: FEAR, FORTITUDE, PIETY, COUNSEL, KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING and WISDOM.

All day God's ACTUAL GRACES are offered to us, just as all day radio waves are vibrating in and around us. And, just as we need a special machine to grasp these waves and so enable them to be of use to us, so, too, we need the Gifts of the Holy Ghost to grasp God's actual graces so that we can profit by them here and in eternity. The Gifts make us exquisitely docile to actual graces. They let none of them pass unused. They thus enable us to live our faith in all its fullness, and to enjoy as a consequence the presence of the Trinity in our soul in a sweet companionship which is inferior only to the Vision of heaven. So important are these Gifts that we shall have to devote a special chapter to them later on. For the present it is enough to realise that they are all present in our soul with grace, and that, if we make our charity intense enough, they will give us infused contemplation and the heroic sanctity proper to the saints.

9. IT DOES AWAY WITH SIN.

Sanctifying grace and MORTAL sin are incompatible. Both cannot exist together in a soul. A soul in grace must, therefore, be free from grievous sin. Grace can, of course, exist in a soul with VENIAL sin; but it does forgive all venial sins for which we have contrition.

In Chapter 13 we saw that formal sin is the only evil really worthy of the name. We saw the dreadful effects it has for us in this world and in the next. Go back to this Chapter, and think quietly on these effects. Then you will appreciate the value of sanctifying grace which forgives sin, and frees us from its intolerable miseries in time and in eternity.

10. IT SAVES US FROM HELL, AND DESTINES US FOR HEAVEN.

Heaven is a place in which there is love and no suffering. Purgatory is a place in which there is both love and suffering. Hell is a place in which there is suffering, but no love.

Try to realise the misery of a soul that is lost. Repelled by the omnipotence of God, it feels itself on the verge of annihilation. This is the greatest suffering a soul can endure; for, as a spiritual being, it is by nature immortal. It has a most firm grip on existence. It has about it something of the stability and permanence of God. It is destined to endure for ever. The constant sense of annihilation is thus directly opposed to its nature. Hence, it is the source of its greatest misery. This is the PAIN OF LOSS which follows from God's "DEPART FROM ME" (Mat. 25:41) as a terrifying witness to His goodness; for, unless He were infinitely good, He would not have an inalienable right to be loved and preferred before everything else.

What a cry of anguish it wrung from the lips of the dying Christ when, in making reparation for sin, He wished to experience in His own soul something of the ghastly loneliness, the intolerable aloneness, of a soul separated forever from the friendship of God. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Mat. 27:46). On the Cross our loving Saviour realised the pain of loss. Ask for light to realise it, too.

Then there are the other sufferings in hell: the REMORSE that torments the soul with the thought that it could so easily have been otherwise; the DESPAIR or realisation that it can never be otherwise; and the FIRE that was made, as Scripture assures us, not to be a comfort and consolation to us on earth, but to be a cause of suffering to spiritual beings – the devil and his angels.

Worst feature of all is hell's eternity – that unimaginable PRESENT which never shifts and into which the past and the future are, as it were, compressed, an unchanging and therefore unending instant of suffering which is as much beyond our comprehension as is its counterpart in heaven.

It is from this that grace saves us. And in doing so, it opens to us the Beatific Vision which is a real sharing in the infinite light and

love and happiness of God in His own home in eternity. Hell and heaven should bring home to us the value of grace.

4. The Excellence of Grace.

A baby just baptised is far more dignified in God's sight than an angel is in its natural state, because grace gives it a share in the dignity of God.

In raising the dead to life, one gives back a natural life in a supernatural way. Only the way in which the thing is done is supernatural. But grace is something supernatural in ITSELF. It is ESSENTIALLY supernatural, since it is a sharing in the nature of God. Hence, to be in a state of grace is a far greater thing than to raise the dead.

How we should cherish sanctifying grace, therefore. How we should treasure it! And what care we should take never to lose it by formal mortal sin! We should often ponder on these words of a great Pope: "O Christian, acknowledge thy dignity, and as thou hast received a share in the divine nature, take care never to return by any unworthy conduct to that base origin from which thou didst come."

Well, indeed, may St. Leo the Great thus warn us against deliberate mortal sin. The Christian who sins mortally is worse than a creature misled. He is a DEGENERATE – a being in whom the supernatural nature which God gave him is corrupted, a being who has lost his divine strength and with it his God-given inheritance in eternity. He has cast away his title to nobility as God's adopted son, a joint-heir with Christ to the beatific vision, and has become instead an enemy of God, fit only for the unending shame and misery of hell.

Truly, formal mortal sin is a sort of voluntary madness for which the sinner is responsible.

5. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should often ask God for light to appreciate the value of grace.
2. I should hate deliberate mortal sin as I hate hell itself.
3. I should treasure sanctifying grace as I treasure heaven.

4. I should have the greatest respect for all my fellowmen, since they are, or at least can be, God's adopted sons.
5. I should try to increase my grace and charity daily so that I may experience in this life through contemplation a foretaste of heaven.

SUMMARY

1. Man's Last End.

- (a). The beatific vision - a supernatural end.
- (b). Hence we need supernatural means to gain it.
- (c). A comparison between the natural and the supernatural order.

Natural Order	Supernatural Order
Human nature	Sanctifying grace
Faculties	Supernatural virtues
Movers	Actual graces
Dispositions	Gifts of the Holy Ghost

2. What Sanctifying Grace Is: A SUPERNATURAL QUALITY EXISTING IN THE SOUL. Cf. health and knowledge.

3. What It Does:

1. It gives us a real share in the nature of God.
2. It makes us His adopted children.
3. It makes us brothers of Christ.
4. It makes us living temples of the Trinity.
5. It makes our free, un sinful acts merit heaven.
6. It brings into the soul all the supernatural virtues.
7. It makes us friends of God through charity.

8. It brings into the soul all the gifts of the Holy Ghost.
9. It does away with sin.
10. It saves us from hell, and destines us for heaven.

4. Its Excellence.

- (a). A child in grace, and the highest angel in a natural state.
- (b). The miracle of raising the dead.
- (c). The dignity of a soul in grace.
- (d). The indignity of formal mortal sin.

5. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. Grace (presupposes) (destroys) nature. 2. Sanctifying grace is a supernatural (...) existing in our (faculties) (soul). 3. It gives us a real share in the (...) of God. 4. It does this by enabling us to perform acts that merit (...). 5. Hence it is said to be "the (...) of glory." 6. Our life on earth in grace (is) (is not) essentially the same as that of the blessed in heaven. 7. St. Peter says that by grace we are made "partakers of the (...) nature." 8. St. Paul says that grace makes us "Heirs indeed of (...) and joint-heirs with (...)." 9. It makes

us God's (...) children. 10. Hence it makes us also (...) of Christ. 11. St. Paul says: "Know you not that you are the (...) of God, and that the (...) of God dwelleth in you?" 12. Our Lord says: "If (...) will love Me, he shall keep My word, and My (...) will love him; and (...) will come to him and make our (...) with him." 13. The special presence of God in a soul in grace is called the (...) of the Trinity. 14. Grace makes each of our (...), (...) acts merit heaven. 15. One in a state of grace (has) (has not) necessarily the virtues of faith, hope and charity. 16. One in a state of grace has all the gifts of (...). 17. It is by the virtue of (...) that we are made the friends of God. 18. It is by means of (...) that we come to enjoy infused contemplation. 19. Sanctifying grace and formal mortal sin (can) (cannot) exist together in a soul. 20. It (is) (is not) a greater thing to be in grace than to raise the dead to life.

(B). Answer each of the following as fully as you can: -

1. Give what corresponds in the supernatural order to: our nature, faculties, movers and dispositions.
2. Give a definition of sanctifying grace. Show how you arrive at it.
3. Grace gives us a share in the Divine Nature. Explain how.
4. Show how God's adoption of us differs from natural adoption.
5. In what special way is God present in a soul in grace?
6. How can we come to experience and enjoy His presence there?
7. Why is a baptised infant more noble than an angel in its natural state?
8. Explain why it is a greater thing to be in a state of grace than it is to raise the dead to life.

Chapter 34

ACTUAL GRACE

1. What It Is.

In making a box you do not produce ALL the reality in it. You do not make it from nothing. You do not CREATE it. Instead, you construct it from materials that exist already.

When, however, God CREATES a thing, He does give it all the reality that is in it. He does not use any previous material to make it from. He produces it from nothing. He gives it its whole being.

That is why He must CONTINUE to create it, if it is to go on existing. He must MAINTAIN it in existence. If, for an instant, He ceased to give it ALL the reality that is in it, it would obviously lose ALL its reality. It would go back to nothing. It would be annihilated.

What a mysterious thing a creature is, whether it be a grain of sand, a cabbage, a monkey or an angel! It is not God, for it is not self-existing. At the same time it is not nothing, since it really exists. It is a being. Yet its whole being is RECEIVED unceasingly from God, who alone is self-existing.

And, just as every creature is a real being, it is also a real CAUSE of everything it does. But, like its being, its CAUSALITY is a RECEIVED one. It, too, comes from God.

Now, you can see why God must not keep us in existence at every moment, but also CO-OPERATE in whatever good we do.

He does not co-operate in our sins, of course. Why not? Because when we sin, our will freely FAILS to use God's grace, hence, to make its free act agree with His law. This FAILURE is the sin. It is the ABSENCE of a perfection that OUGHT be present, just as lack of sight is in a man, or deafness in a cat. God cannot co-operate in a failure or absence of being, any more than He can create by producing nothing. He co-operates by GIVING being to the one He helps.

Even in the NATURAL order, then, God co-operates in all that is REAL and POSITIVE in everything we do. We can no more wiggle our finger or bat an eyelid unless He helps us to do these things, than we can go on existing unless He prolongs, as it were, the act by which He creates us. This is what St. Paul realised when he said: "In Him we live and move and are." (Acts 17:28). Do we realise that He is more intimately present to us than we are to ourselves, even in the natural order? Do we thank Him for His co-operation in all that is good in our acts? Do we think often enough of our total dependence on God?

But His co-operation is especially necessary in the SUPERNATURAL order. By its very nature a supernatural act is above the natural powers not only of man, but of the highest angel God could create. It is natural only to God. It is obvious, then, that we need God's supernatural co-operation and help to do the least supernatural act – the least act worthy of heaven.

How, then, does God CO-OPERATE with us in the SUPERNATURAL order? How does He help our INTELLECT and WILL to perform acts that are proportionate to the beatific vision? He does this by His ACTUAL GRACE.

ACTUAL GRACE, therefore, is a SUPERNATURAL IMPULSE given by GOD to our INTELLECT and WILL, to move them to perform acts that can help us to gain HEAVEN.

2. How It Differs From Sanctifying Grace.

(a). What each is.

SANCTIFYING grace is a supernatural QUALITY, a HABIT. Hence, it is something PERMANENT. It is meant to remain always in our soul, from the cradle to the grave, and even beyond it in eternity.

ACTUAL grace, on the contrary, is a supernatural IMPULSE – a sort of spiritual push or urge given to our intellect and will to help them to perform a particular ACT. It lasts only as long as the act does. A new actual grace is required for the next act. It is, therefore, just a PASSING help.

(b). Where each is.

SANCTIFYING grace is in the SOUL. ACTUAL grace is in our two spiritual FACULTIES, our intellect and will.

(c). What each does.

SANCTIFYING grace enables us to BE in a supernatural way - to BE God's adopted children; hence brothers of His only-begotten Son and joint heirs with Him to heaven. ACTUAL grace, on the other hand, enables us to DO supernatural things, and so win for ourselves the beatific vision.

3. How It Works.

When you want a person to do something, how do you go about it? You speak to him. You give him reasons. You try to persuade him. You cannot get at his intellect itself or at his will itself directly. You can influence them only indirectly, through words. That is why you may easily fail.

God, however, does not have to take this round-about way of influencing our intellect and will. He can influence them from WITHIN themselves, since He gives them their being, and co-operates most intimately in everything good that they do. He can act on them IMMEDIATELY, DIRECTLY. He can increase the LIGHT in our intellect, and the STRENGTH of our will, and direct it on to what He wants us to do. And He does this in the supernatural order by means of His ACTUAL grace.

Actual grace, then, is a supernatural LIGHT given by God to our INTELLECT and a supernatural STRENGTH given to our will. By it He moves these two faculties in such a way that we can perform supernatural acts that merit heaven.

Thus, when St. Paul was one day preaching to a group of women, God "opened the heart," as Scripture puts it, of one of them called Lydia, enabling her to appreciate the Apostle's teaching, and be converted to the faith. (Acts 16:14-15). "Heart" here means both intellect and will. And God "opened" these by the LIGHT and the LOVE He gave them.

St. Paul also reminds his converts at Corinth that God "Hath shone in our hearts to give us a knowledge of the glory of God." (2 Cor. 4:6). Notice how he uses the word "heart" again for our intellect

and will, or for knowledge loved and carried out in practice. Again it is a question of supernatural LIGHT and LOVE.

These and similar texts from Scripture show us that God's ACTUAL grace is a supernatural ILLUMINATION given to our intellect, and a supernatural INSPIRATION given to our will, to enable us to DO supernatural things that can merit heaven.

You have only to look about you to see how it works. A Catholic mother loses her little child in death. She is tempted to rail against Providence. "How can God be so cruel?" she cries. Actual graces come to her. They make her realise that her child, thanks to baptism, is enjoying the beatific vision, whereas if it lived it might fall into mortal sin some day and die in that state and be lost forever. She is consoled by a consolation that only God can give. She is resigned to His will. She offers up her suffering in union with Our Lord at Mass, and thus wins further graces for herself in this life and merit in eternity.

A Catholic is tempted to commit a formal mortal sin. He feels his own weakness. He gets grace to pray for help. His prayer brings further graces. These make him see in a practical manner what a horribly selfish and foolish thing sin really is. They fill his will with a loathing for sin, and with a love of Our Divine Lord who died to save us from hell. Thus supernaturally enlightened and strengthened, he overcomes the temptation, and thereby increases his grace and his love of God.

In these and countless other ways, God's actual grace brings light to our intellect and strength to our will, to enable us to win heaven.

4. Sufficient And Efficacious Grace.

Actual grace comes to us BEFORE we do a supernatural act, inciting us to do it. It also helps us WHILE we are doing it. And it continues to help us AFTERWARDS, by preventing us from giving way to vanity or pride. Moreover, actual graces differ as regards their effects. So there are several different KINDS of actual grace. We cannot deal with them all; but we must say a word about SUFFICIENT and EFFICACIOUS grace.

It is clear from Scripture that sometimes grace offered by God is fruitless. Such grace gives a real POWER to do what God demands,

but not the actual DOING of the good act itself. It is without effect, owing to the fact that it is freely RESISTED by the one to whom it is offered.

Think, for example, of Our Divine Lord's warning to the Holy City. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem," He said, "how often would I have gathered together thy children, as a hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and THOU WOULDST NOT." He had obviously offered them a grace which gave them the real POWER to be converted to Him, but which they had freely RESISTED. Hence, their sin, and their punishment: "Behold, your house shall be left desolate." (Mat. 23:37-38).

The grace that thus gives us the POWER to resist temptation and do what God demands is called SUFFICIENT grace.

If this grace is not resisted, it is inevitably followed by another which gives us the actual DOING of the good act, the actual victory over sin. This is called EFFICACIOUS grace.

EFFICACIOUS grace is contained in SUFFICIENT grace in the same way as the fruit is contained in the flower. Unless the flower is prevented, it will inevitably bring forth fruit. In a similar way, unless we freely RESIST sufficient grace, it will be followed by efficacious grace and we shall not only have the power to do what God asks, but we shall actually do it. His grace will be fruitful in us. If, however, we resist sufficient grace, efficacious grace will be refused us as a PUNISHMENT, and we shall fall into sin freely and through our own fault.

Hence, it has been well said that SUFFICIENT grace leaves our will without excuse in God's sight, and EFFICACIOUS grace does not allow it to glory in itself. If we sin, the fault is ours alone. It is in no way God's, for in offering us sufficient grace, He gives us a real power of keeping His commandments. But, if we do good, we cannot attribute this to our will alone. We must attribute it also to God's efficacious grace. A good act comes WHOLLY from God's grace and at the same time WHOLLY from our free will as moved by His grace, just as the writing comes wholly from you and wholly from the pen you write with. However, you must remember that your will is FREE, whereas the pen is not; and that God moves your will FREELY, according to the nature that He unceasingly gives to it. Since grace actualises our free will, it cannot possibly rob us of

freedom. To make it destroy our freedom is to make it do something that is a contradiction in terms, like a square circle; hence infinitely impossible.

We must try to realise, then, that in our acts everything that is good comes both from God and from our free will as moved by His grace; whereas every defect is from our will alone. God Himself tells us this when He says through the mouth of Osee His prophet: "DESTRUCTION is thy own, O Israel; thy HELP is only in Me." (Osee 13:9). If we realise our complete dependence on God in the supernatural order, we shall never fall into PRIDE, which is the root of all sin. Instead, we shall practise that true HUMILITY which was so dear to Our Saviour's Heart, and it will bring us great blessings from God; for, as Scripture says, "God resisteth the proud, but to the humble He giveth grace." (1 Pet. 5:5).

God detests pride, because it is so fundamental an error, so fundamental a lie. In committing it, we forget that we are but creatures. We ignore our dependence on God. We, as it were, regard ourselves as self-existing. We look upon ourselves as God. No wonder, therefore, God punishes this sin severely. Think of the fate of Herod, Scripture says of him: "Upon a day appointed, Herod, arrayed in kingly apparel, sat in the judgment seat, and made an oration to them. And the people made acclamation, saying: It is the voice of a god, not of a man. And forthwith an angel of the Lord struck him, because he had not given the honour to God; and, being eaten up by worms, he gave up the ghost." (Acts 12:21-23). What a contrast! And what a death! And why? Because "HE HAD NOT GIVEN THE HONOUR TO GOD." Again, think of Our Saviour's words to His Apostles warning them against the sin of pride: "I saw Satan, like lightning, falling from heaven." (Luke 10:18). What a picture! And how unforgettable!

5. Our Need Of Grace.

Many pages could be filled with texts from Scripture showing our absolute need of grace if we are to save our immortal souls.

St. Paul, for instance, says so profoundly: "What hath thou that thou hast not RECEIVED? And, if thou hast received, why dost thou GLORY as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:7). Again: "Not

that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from GOD." (2 Cor. 3:5). Our Divine Lord sums it all up in His own inimitable way when, in the parable of the vine and its branches, He says: "WITHOUT ME, YOU CAN DO NOTHING." (John 15:5). This is true in two ways. First, "Without Me you can DO nothing" i.e. you can FAIL to do something you OUGHT do; you can FAIL to co-operate with my grace; you can fall into SIN. The second is: "Without Me you CANNOT DO ANY THING GOOD" - especially anything SUPERNATURAL and therefore worthy of heaven. This text shows our utter dependence on God. Of ourselves we can FAIL and SIN, just as of ourselves we can go out of existence altogether; but when we do do good we need the help of God.

To bring home to ourselves our need of grace, let us ask ourselves a few questions.

- (a). Can we do any morally good acts in the NATURAL order without God's grace?

Yes, of course we can. A man who is in mortal sin, and hence without sanctifying grace can, without the help of any actual grace, clean his teeth, work out a problem in mathematics, be kind to his neighbour, pay his bills, and do many other morally good natural acts from a worthy motive. Luther and Calvin taught that everything a person does when he is in mortal sin is itself a mortal sin. The Church condemns this infallibly. Can we wonder? It denies man's free will. It is absolutely opposed to Scripture. It is a horrible doctrine.

- (b). Can we keep all the precepts of the natural law and for a long time without grace?

This time, we answer No. You can fool some of the people all the time, and all the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time. In somewhat the same way a person can keep some of the Commandments all the time, and all of them some of the time, but not all of them all the time, without the help of grace. This is because of concupiscence and the wounds left in our faculties by original sin.

There is, of course, no need to be alarmed at this, because God's grace is always there for us to use, just like the air we breathe; and

by co-operating with it we can keep all the Commandments and so save our soul. Still, the thought of our weakness ought make us prudently distrust our own natural powers on their own, and pray humbly and constantly to God for grace to enable us to obey His laws and win heaven.

- (c). Can we without grace perform acts that can merit heaven?

Here it is no longer question of the natural order. It is question of supernaturalised acts that have a proportion to heaven. And the answer is obviously No. The MEANS must always be proportionate to the END they are to achieve. Heaven is a SUPERNATURAL end. So the means by which we win it must be also supernatural. That is self-evident. And it is sanctifying grace which raises us to the supernatural order and makes us heirs to heaven. And actual grace is equally necessary since it is by our acts that we merit. That is why St. Paul can assure us that it is GOD who worketh in us "both to will and to accomplish" the acts by which we are saved. (Ephes. 2:13).

- (d). Can we by merely natural good acts merit the grace of conversion?

Again, No. There is no proportion between a naturally good act, no matter how heroic it may be, and the grace of conversion. Hence, one cannot merit the other.

Of course, to one who does what he can to get into a state of grace, God never denies the grace of conversion, since God sincerely desires all to be saved. But this is not a matter of MERIT. It is a matter of the infinite MERCY of God.

- (e). If we are in a state of grace, do we require actual grace for each act that merits heaven?

Yes. Sanctifying grace supernaturalises our SOUL. From it flow the supernatural virtues which act as supernatural FACULTIES. But they have to be MOVED to their acts, just as our faculty of sight has to be moved to its act by light waves, if we are to see the things round about us.

- (f). Do we need grace to persevere in grace till death?

Yes. Though we are free to will or not to will a thing, we cannot by willing make our will unite itself IMMOVABLY to what it wills. But this is required for perseverance. Only God's will which is one with the good it wills is thus of itself immovably fixed in goodness. The wills of the blessed in heaven are also fixed in good; but this is only because through the beatific vision they share in the stability of the will of God. It is one of the great thrills of heaven that it is a happiness which can never be lost.

Often think of these things. The thought of them will help you to pray daily for God's grace, and to use the many other means of grace He has left us especially in the Sacraments and in the Mass, so that, sharing His life in this world, you may share it with Him in a manner immeasurably more intimate in the next.

6. Merit.

In Chapter 18 we saw that MERIT is a RIGHT to a REWARD in heaven. We saw also the six conditions an act must have in order to merit: it must be (i). a morally good act, (ii). freely done, (iii). done when we are in a state of grace, (iv). done for God, (v). done during this life, and (vi). be ordained to a reward by God. We saw, finally, that the AMOUNT of reward we get for an act depends mainly on the INTENSITY of our CHARITY or supernatural FRIENDSHIP with God.

Let us look now at the KINDS of merit we can have, and at the THINGS which we can merit.

First, there is a merit based on JUSTICE.

With us it is not a question of justice in the STRICT sense, as it is in the case of Our Lord. Why not? Because with us there is no absolute equality between those who merit and Him who rewards us; nor is there absolute equality between the value of our acts and the beatific vision. None of us is a Divine Person as Christ is, nor are our acts of INFINITE value as His were.

Still, they can merit heaven in justice used in a wide sense - in what we have elsewhere called DISTRIBUTIVE justice as opposed to COMMUTATIVE justice - thanks to God's ordination and promise and to His grace which gives our acts a certain PROPORTION to heaven.

Then there is a merit based, not on justice, but on FRIENDSHIP. Like that based on justice, it presupposes a state of grace, because it is founded on supernatural CHARITY which comes into the soul with grace, and which is a true friendship between the soul and God.

So we have two kinds of merit, one based on JUSTICE; the other, on FRIENDSHIP. But WHAT can we merit? Let us see.

(a). Can one in a state of grace merit the conversion of another?

Obviously, a person cannot merit his OWN conversion. He must be in a state of grace to merit. But, if he is in grace, can he merit the conversion of ANOTHER person? Yes. He can do this by a merit based not on justice, but on FRIENDSHIP. Thus Monica merited the conversion of her wayward son, Augustine, who became one of the greatest saints in the Church. Thus, too, did Our Lady merit for us on the score of friendship all the graces that her Divine Son merited in justice, and win for herself the glorious title of CO-REDEMPTRIX of the world.

The power of our merit is here proportionate to the intensity of our supernatural charity or friendship with God. Hence, if we want to make sure of another's conversion, we must increase daily the intensity of our love for God, especially by making ever more and more fervent Holy Communions, till our friendship with Christ is so deep and intimate that He can refuse us nothing.

(b). Can one in a state of grace merit an increase in sanctity in another? Yes. He can do this by the same kind of merit as that by which he can merit another's conversion.

(c). Can a person who is at present in a state of grace merit for himself the grace of conversion that he will need if at some future time he has the misfortune to fall into sin?

No. Once he falls into mortal sin, he loses all the merits he has so far gained, and in that condition he cannot merit his own conversion. He can appeal not to God's justice, nor to His friendship, but only to His mercy by humble, confident, sincere prayer.

(d). Can a person in grace merit an increase of grace and charity for himself?

Yes. He can do this by a merit based on justice, in the same way as he can merit heaven. In a glorious text, St. Paul exhorts us to advance in sanctity by this kind of merit, so that "By DOING THE TRUTH IN CHARITY, we may in all things GROW UP in Him who is the head, even Christ." (Ephes. 4:15).

If we do a good act when we are in a state of grace, do we get an increase in grace and charity straight away? It depends. If the intensity of the charity with which we do the act is greater than that of our habit of charity, we receive the increase immediately. If, however, our charity in the act is less intense, we have to wait till we have the required intensity – at the next Holy Communion, for instance, or at least at death. It is very consoling for us to know that even these remiss acts, as they are called, eventually bring to us the increase that they never fail to merit. We read in books that in the supernatural life NON PROGREDI EST REGREDI (not to go ahead is to go back); but it is equally true to say NON REGREDI EST PROGREDI (not to go back is to go ahead) for the slightest act done even with the slightest charity must some day bring its reward. If, consequently, a person stays in a state of grace for a year, he must have made progress during that time.

However, one who realises the shortness of life and the value of infused contemplation will not be content with acts of charity of little intensity. He will strive to increase the intensity of this virtue every day, so that the Gifts of the Holy Ghost may enable him to taste and see that God is sweet, even in our exile here on earth.

(e). Can a person merit final perseverance?

Final perseverance or death in a state of grace is not the term of a meritorious act, as heaven is or an increase in grace; instead, it is a CONTINUATION of the PRODUCTION of grace, just as conservation of creatures in the natural order is a continuation of creation. And, as we have seen, no one can merit the production of grace.

This is why Scripture warns us that we can all fall. "He that thinketh himself to stand," says the Apostles of the Gentiles, "let him take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10:12). And he warns us to work

out our salvation in "fear and trembling." (Philip. 2:12). He is referring not to a slavish fear that dreads punishment but to a filial fear based on love, such as a good child has of offending a good father.

Though we cannot MERIT final perseverance, we can obtain it by sincere, humble, confident and persevering prayer. We should daily pray for it, and from time to time get a Mass said for it, since the Mass is the most perfect prayer because it is that of Christ's Himself. Moreover, Our Lady can get this great grace for us. And we ask her to do this in every Hail Mary when we say: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death."

7. The Distribution of God's Graces.

God distributes His graces in accordance with His infinite WISDOM. Just because this is infinite and one with God Himself, we cannot hope in this life to understand it fully. It must at times appear mysterious to us. On the LAST DAY, He will justify His ways to men. In the meantime, we are absolutely certain of the following facts: -

- (a). God wills the salvation of all, since Christ died for all.
- (b). God never commands the impossible.
- (c). God gives sufficient grace to all who come to the use of reason.
- (d). God never abandons a sinner, i.e. refuses efficacious grace, unless the sinner first abandons Him, i.e. resists sufficient grace.
- (e). To anyone who does what he can by the help of actual grace, God never denies sanctifying grace.
- (f). No one can go to hell except through his own fault.
- (g). Everyone must be happy in eternity unless he deliberately chooses to be otherwise.

Apart from these facts, which are quite clear to us, the way in which God distributes His grace is quite beyond our grasp. However, we are certain that it is in accord with His infinite goodness, mercy and love, as well as with His justice. So we can only exclaim with St. Paul: "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how

unsearchable His ways!" (Roms. 11:33). His judgments are incomprehensible to us and His ways unsearchable just because they are those of a WISDOM which is INFINITE.

8. True Liberty.

After original sin, we have to fight hard and unceasingly against CONCUPISCENCE, which is the revolt of our lower nature against our reason. This bitter struggle is made all the more difficult for us by the WOUNDS left in our powers by this same sin, especially the wound of IGNORANCE in our INTELLECT, and that of WEAKNESS in our WILL.

These wounds, aggravated by our personal sins, challenge our FREEDOM at its very roots. For our freedom is rooted in our intellect, and exercised by our will.

Now, God's grace is a wonderfully efficacious remedy here. St. Paul realised this when, tortured almost beyond endurance by the war he had to wage against the forces of evil, he cried out in his misery: "Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and then gave as his answer: "The GRACE of God, by Jesus Christ, Our Lord." (Roms. 7:24-25).

Why is grace so apt a remedy? Because it gets at the very source of the trouble. It gives a supernatural LIGHT to our intellect, to counteract its ignorance, and a supernatural STRENGTH to our will to counteract its weakness. LIGHT and STRENGTH - these are the very things needed for freedom. They give the rightness of judgment and that self-mastery without which true freedom is impoverished and shackled. They make us free, then, in the fullest sense of this noble term; for they restore to us the full freedom not merely of the children of men but of the children of God, the glorious supernatural freedom by which Christ Himself has set us free.

This consists, remember, not in thinking, saying and doing what we LIKE, but in thinking, saying and doing what we OUGHT, not merely as rational beings made in God's image, but as His adopted sons, joint heirs with Christ to His infinite riches in eternity.

9. Practical Conclusions.

ACTUAL GRACE

1. I should practise constantly the great virtue of humility.
2. I should make an effort as if all depended on me, and at the same time pray as if all depended on God's grace.
3. I should be deeply devoted to Our Lady.
4. I should pray daily for the grace of a happy death.
5. I should from time to time have Mass said for this same grace.

SUMMARY

1. What Actual Grace Is.

A supernatural impulse given by God to our intellect and will to move them to perform acts that can help us to gain heaven.

2. How It Differs From Sanctifying Grace.

Sanctifying Grace.	Actual Grace.
(a). Permanent	(a). Passing.
(b). In the soul.	(b). In our intellect and will.
(c). Enables us to BE in a supernatural manner.	(c). Enables us to ACT in a supernatural manner.

3. How It Works.

It gives supernatural LIGHT to our intellect, and STRENGTH to our will.

4. Sufficient And Efficacious Grace.

- (a). Sufficient grace gives the POWER to do good; efficacious grace, the actual DOING of the good.
- (b). Efficacious grace is contained in sufficient grace, as the fruit is in the flower.
- (c). God never refuses efficacious grace except as a punishment for our having resisted sufficient grace.
- (d). Sufficient grace leaves our will without excuse in God's sight, yet does not allow it to glory in itself.

5. Our Need Of Grace.

- (a). To do naturally good acts.
- (b). To do supernaturally good acts.

6. Merit.

- (a). What it is.
- (b). Conditions for merit.
- (c). Amount of merit.
- (d). Kinds of merit: (i). based on justice, (ii). based on friendship.
- (e). What we can merit.

7. Distribution Of God's Graces.

- (i). Why mysterious.
- (ii). Facts we are quite sure of: -
 - (a). God wills the salvation of all; Christ died for all.
 - (b). God never commands the impossible.
 - (c). God gives sufficient grace to all who come to the use of reason.
 - (d). God never abandons a sinner, i.e. refuses efficacious grace, unless the sinner first abandons God, i.e. resists sufficient grace.
 - (e). To anyone who does what he can with the help of actual grace, God never denies sanctifying grace.
 - (f). No one can go to hell except through his own fault.
 - (g). Everyone must be happy in eternity unless he deliberately chooses to be otherwise.

8. True Liberty.

- (a). Evil effects of original sin: (i). concupiscence, (ii). wounds.
- (b). How grace remedies these: by LIGHT to our intellect and STRENGTH to our will.
- (c). Hence, right judgments, and mastery over self.
- (d). True liberty consists not in thinking, saying and doing what we LIKE, but in thinking, saying and doing what we OUGHT, as rational beings and adopted children of God.

9. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. God co-operates in all that is (...) and (...) in every act we perform. 2. He does not co-operate in our sins because in sinning our will freely fails to use the (...) He offers, and so fails to make its act agree with His (...). 3. Speaking of our total dependence on God, St. Paul says: "In Him we (...), and (...), and (...)." 4. Sanctifying grace is a (permanent) (passing) gift, whereas actual grace is a (permanent) (passing) one. 5. Sanctifying grace is in our (...), whereas actual grace is in our (...). 6. God never refuses (...) grace, except as a punishment for our resistance to His (...) grace. 7. Any supernatural act we perform is (from God alone, and in no way from our will) (from our will alone and in no way from God) (wholly from God and wholly from our will) (partly from God and partly from our will). 8. Sin as such is solely from our (...), and in no way from (...). 9. God said to the Jews of old: "(...) is thy own, O Israel; thy help is wholly from (...)." 10. It is the vice of (...) which urges us to consider ourselves to be independent of God. The opposite virtue is that of (...). 11. Christ warned His Apostles against pride when He said: "I saw (...) falling like lightning from heaven." 12. St. Paul says: "What hast thou that thou hast not (...)" 13. He also tells us that "our sufficiency is from (...)." 14. Our Lord says: "Without Me, you can do (...)." 15. Without grace we (can do some) (cannot do any) morally good acts in the natural order. 16. Without grace we (can) (cannot) keep all the natural law for a long time. 17. If a person in grace tells a lie to shield his friend, he (can) (cannot) merit by this act. 18. An heroic good act performed by one in mortal sin (does) (does not) merit a reward in heaven. 19. If we are in grace, we can merit an increase of grace for ourselves by a merit based on (justice) (friendship). 20. We can merit the conversion of another, by a merit based on (justice) (friendship). 21. Monica merited the conversion of (...) who became one of the greatest of the saints. 22. Our Lady merited on the score of (...) all the graces that Christ merited on the score of (...), and so won for herself the glorious title of (...). 23. A remiss act (does) (does not) give us an increase of grace and charity straight away. 24. St. Paul exhorts us to advance in sanctity by "Doing the (...) in (...)." 25. He also says: "He that thinketh himself to (...) let him take heed lest he (...)." 26. In every Hail Mary we ask for the grace of (...). 27. God (sometimes) (never) commands the impossible. 28. God gives (sufficient) (efficacious) grace to all who come to the use of reason. 29. We should make an effort as if all depended on (...); and at the same time pray for grace as if all

depended on (...). 30. Every human being must be happy in eternity, unless he deliberately chooses to be otherwise. This (is) (is not) a true statement.

(B). Answer the following as fully as you can: -

1. Show how actual grace differs from sanctifying grace; and how it is a remedy for the wounds left in our faculties by original sin.
2. Explain how actual grace works. Show why it does not destroy freedom.
3. "Destruction is thy own, O Israel; thy help is wholly from Me." Explain.
4. "Sufficient grace leaves our will without excuse in God's sight, efficacious grace does not allow it to glory in itself." Explain.
5. What is merit? What conditions are required for it? On what does the amount of merit mainly depend? What kinds of merit can we have? What things can we merit?
6. To what extent do we need grace for: (i). naturally good acts; (ii). supernaturally good acts?
7. Give seven facts we are sure of in regard to the distribution of grace.
8. Show why we cannot merit final perseverance, and how we can obtain this priceless gift.

Chapter 35

THE SUPERNATURAL VIRTUES

1. What They Are.

We have seen that sanctifying grace is like a new, supernatural NATURE given us by God. Now, every nature other than God's requires FACULTIES through which it acts. Hence, corresponding to grace, we have the SUPERNATURAL VIRTUES. These are the supernatural FACULTIES by which we are able to perform acts that are proportionate to heaven.

Just as, in the natural order, it is WE who see and remember and think, but we do these things through our faculties of sight, memory and understanding, so, too, in the supernatural order, it is WE who perform supernatural acts, but we do them through our supernatural VIRTUES. Hence, these virtues are the PROXIMATE principles of our supernatural acts, just as sanctifying grace is their RADICAL principle.

2. How They Originate, Increase, And Are Lost.

Our NATURAL virtues originate through REPETITION of their acts, as when we gradually learn to play tennis well, or to read fluently. Moreover, we have to acquire each natural virtue separately. Practice at tennis does not make us fluent readers, nor does fluency in reading make us better at tennis. The fact that we have one good natural habit is no guarantee that we have all the others as well. We must acquire each on its own, if we want to have them all.

The SUPERNATURAL virtues, however, are not acquired by REPETITION of their acts. They come instantly with SANCTIFYING grace. They are properties of grace. Hence, wherever it is, they must be present also. And, unlike the natural virtues again, they are ALL there from the start.

Since they all arise together in the soul with sanctifying grace, they are called the INFUSED virtues, to distinguish them from the natural virtues which are said to be ACQUIRED.

How do they INCREASE? They increase in the same manner as do the natural virtues: by acts that are MORE INTENSE than the habit.

If one's habit of faith, for example, or humility is not very intense, it is easy to make acts of greater intensity. But, if one keeps on making such acts, a time comes when it is very difficult to make them, just as it gets harder and harder to jump over a bar, if it is raised even a little, after each successful jump.

This is where the marvellous sanctity of the saints comes in. In spite of all difficulties, they keep on making acts of virtue that are more and more fervent. Hence, they receive an increase in grace and charity STRAIGHT AWAY, without having to wait for it for years or perhaps till death. Progressing constantly in this manner, they arrive sooner or later at HEROIC sanctity. Then, they can be CANONISED by the Church.

How are the supernatural virtues LOST? They are lost by the loss of SANCTIFYING GRACE. Appearing with grace, they disappear with it when it goes. They are lost, consequently, by FORMAL MORTAL SIN, since this causes the withdrawal of grace from the soul.

However, there are two remarkable exceptions. These are the supernatural virtues of FAITH and HOPE. They remain after grace has been lost by mortal sin, PROVIDED the sin is not expressly opposed to them. If a person commits a formal mortal sin of despair, for example, he loses the virtue of HOPE; and if he commits a formal mortal sin of heresy, he loses the virtue of FAITH. But, if a person commits a mortal sin of gluttony or of theft, he still keeps the supernatural virtues of faith and hope. These make it easier for him to regain a state of grace. How merciful it is on God's part to keep these virtues in us, even after the sanctifying grace from which they flow has been lost. It shows how much He yearns to save our souls.

3. Kinds.

Some of the supernatural virtues have GOD Himself for their object. They are concerned, consequently, with our END. Hence, they are called the THEOLOGICAL virtues, from the Greek word "Theos" which means God. There are three of them: FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY. As we shall later give a chapter to each, we need say no more about them at present.

The other supernatural virtues are concerned, not with our END which is God, but with the supernatural MEANS by which we attain our end. They are called the infused MORAL virtues. We shall devote the remainder of this chapter to them.

4. The Infused Moral Virtues.

(a). What they are.

They are supernatural HABITS which enable us to perform supernatural acts of the four great cardinal virtues of PRUDENCE, JUSTICE, FORTITUDE and TEMPERANCE, and of the many other virtues we have seen to be connected with these.

These supernatural virtues, you will have noticed, have the same names as the natural virtues corresponding to them. Do not on this account think that there is no difference between them. They are as distinct as the supernatural is from the natural, or as heaven is from limbo. The NATURAL moral virtues enable us to live in a manner befitting our dignity as RATIONAL beings. The corresponding supernatural virtues enable us to live in a manner befitting our immeasurably higher dignity as God's adopted children, and heirs to heaven. Just because they are supernatural, their acts have a certain proportion to the beatific vision, whereas even the most perfect acts of the natural virtues have not.

(b). The Golden Mean.

We saw that the natural virtues follow the GOLDEN MEAN between two vices. Courage, for instance, comes in between cowardice on the one hand, and rashness on the other, and thus enables us to avoid these two extremes.

The supernatural moral virtues follow the GOLDEN MEAN also. In their case, however, the golden mean is more exalted, more excellent than it is for the natural virtues. Why? Because the natural virtues urge us to act in accordance with RIGHT REASON alone,

whereas the supernatural virtues urge us to act in accordance with right reason enlightened by divine FAITH. Hence, the STANDARD in the case of the infused virtues is much higher, and so too is the MOTIVE.

The natural virtue of TEMPERANCE, for example, moves us to avoid extremes in eating and drinking which injure our health or impair the use of our reason. It stops us from getting dead drunk, or from starving ourselves to death. The infused virtue of temperance offers a far higher ideal, and a far higher motive. It takes into account all that our divine FAITH teaches concerning original sin, and the supernatural nature of our last end, as well as our duty as Christians to imitate our Crucified Saviour.

This is why St. Paul is not content with the amount of self-denial demanded by natural temperance, but practices one that will make him a worthy citizen, not just of this world, but of heaven. "I CHASTISE my body," he says, "and bring it into subjection." (1 Cor. 9:27). Both the standard to be attained, and the motive or reason for attaining it are here derived, not from unaided reason, but from FAITH.

Take the virtue of POVERTY. As a natural virtue, this inclines us to acquire and use material goods in a way that does not offend against right reason. The old pagan philosopher, Crates, taught and practised such poverty. But that practised and taught by Christ is far superior. It is as superior, in fact, as supernatural faith is to unaided reason.

Consider HUMILITY. The humility practised and taught by Our Divine Lord is immeasurably more profound and genuine than is the modesty taught by Aristotle. Why? Because Our Saviour knew two great truths that Aristotle did not know: the CREATION of all creatures from nothing, and the absolute necessity of God's GRACE for any supernatural act. This is why Christ can say: "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart." (Mat. 11:29). Perfect humility can be learnt only from Christ; for He alone knows the infinite difference that separates the creature from God; and He alone realises fully the absolute dependence of all creatures upon Him.

Lastly, compare the natural virtue of RELIGION with the supernatural virtue of the same name. The ACQUIRED virtue

considers Him as the author of nature. The INFUSED virtue considers Him as the Author of grace. It offers Him not just a natural worship of adoration, thanksgiving, reparation and petition, but a supernatural one, and it does this through the MASS, which is an essentially supernatural sacrifice, because it perpetuates in substance the great Sacrifice of the Cross. Thus, the infused virtue of religion is of a different ORDER altogether from the acquired virtue. The spirit animating the former is no longer that of unaided reason, but that of faith which comes with grace and is proportionate to the vision of heaven.

The infused moral virtues follow, therefore, a GOLDEN MEAN; but it is much superior to that of the corresponding acquired virtues in both the standard it sets, and the MOTIVE behind its acts. These are SUPERNATURAL. Hence, they are as elevated above the natural as faith is above unaided reason, and heaven is above limbo.

(c). How they co-operate.

Think of a world-famous pianist giving a concert. Those who can appreciate him are thrilled beyond words. His playing is almost perfect. Why? Because he has acquired the ART. This good natural habit is in his practical INTELLECT. He knows how to play. In addition to this spiritual habit, however, he has also acquired in his hands and fingers a marvellous skill or agility without which he could not execute his art. This agility is in his nervous system, so it is quite distinct from his art. But his art USES it to express itself. If this pianist met with an accident which deprived him of the use of his fingers, he would still know how to play most skilfully, but he would not be able to put his knowledge into practice. He could no longer give a concert.

Now, just as a pianist's art makes use of the skill or good disposition that exists in his fingers, so, too, do the infused virtues make use of the natural virtues that correspond to them. Both are exercised together. When, therefore, a person performs an act of supernatural temperance he performs at the same time an act of acquired temperance. Both virtues function simultaneously; but the natural is subordinated to the supernatural, just as the pianist's agility is subordinated to his art.

(d). The Facility given by the Infused Virtues.

Every virtue, since it is a habit, makes its acts easier for us to perform. An experienced typist finds it easy to type fast, whereas a beginner does not. Every virtue gives a certain FACILITY in action. So the infused virtues give this; but they give it in a different way from that of the acquired virtues.

The infused virtues give an INTRINSIC facility, without, however, excluding EXTRINSIC obstacles. The acquired virtues, on the contrary, exclude these obstacles.

A man who has the vice of drunkenness can go to confession and receive from it the supernatural virtue of temperance. But his natural bad habit remains. He will have to make a great effort to avoid the sin of drunkenness in future. It is very easy for him to fall again, and so lose his supernatural virtue by losing sanctifying grace. The supernatural virtue of temperance gives him an INTRINSIC facility in exercising its act, but it does not remove the EXTRINSIC obstacle, the natural vice of temperance, which makes the practice of the infused virtue so difficult for him. This vice is done away with normally by the gradual development of the opposite habit.

From this you can see how the acquired moral virtues greatly facilitate the exercise of the infused virtues of the same name. And how necessary it is for the young to develop good habits if they want to preserve and increase the supernatural virtues that correspond to them. Grace, remember, does not destroy nature. It presupposes it instead.

(e). The Harmonious Development of the Virtues.

How rarely in the highest class in the school do you get a pupil who is good at ALL subjects. Some are brilliant in mathematics, but just ordinary at French or history. Others are excellent in languages, but poor in science. Now, it is much the same with the virtues. Rarely do you find a person who has ALL of them harmoniously developed. Some are honest towards their neighbours, but fail to practise temperance. Some are temperate, but lack humility. Some practise the natural virtues, but neglect the supernatural. And so on.

This is very disturbing. Why? Because real virtues, worthy of the name, are connected together. Where one is, there also are all the

others. The virtues should grow harmoniously, all of them, in the way your fingers do or your toes. Otherwise, they are not worthy to be called virtues in the full sense of that glorious term.

Try, therefore, to be really virtuous. Do not be content with practising those virtues which you find easy because they suit your temperament. Practise ALL of them, difficult as well as easy, supernatural as well as natural. Be an ALL-ROUNDER in virtue. Otherwise, your failings in one virtue will rob you of a great deal of the success you would otherwise have. How sad it is to see a zealous Catholic undo much of his good work by his bad manners or ungoverned temper! Only by practising ALL the virtues can we make our light shine before men, and bring souls to God. Only thus can we make real progress in sanctity. The perfect ALL-ROUNDER in the realm of the virtues is a SAINT.

(f). They Act in a Human Way.

Though supernatural, the infused moral virtues act in a HUMAN way. When, for example, we are exercising the infused virtue of prudence, we have to think things out for ourselves, weigh the pros and cons, and judge what is best for us to do in the circumstances, just as we do when practising natural prudence. The infused virtue supernaturalises our act, and gives it a proportion to heaven. This is its glory. But its mode of acting is HUMAN. This is its weakness.

This weakness, which is found in all the infused virtues, is remedied by the GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST, which act, not in a human, but in a DIVINE way. But they belong to a later chapter.

5. Naturalism.

Protestantism denies that grace is a supernatural reality. It teaches that grace means merely that God no longer imputes our sins to us. Grace does not wipe away our sins, nor does it supernaturalise us in any way. Can we wonder that the Church condemns this error infallibly? It destroys the whole of the supernatural order upon which Christianity is founded. It teaches a horrible naturalism, which makes it impossible for us to gain heaven, since there is no proportion between our nature and the beatific vision.

Living as we do with non-Catholics, it is easy for us to become tainted with this naturalism, and to neglect consequently the

practice of the supernatural virtues. We must be on our guard against this. While not ignoring the natural virtues, we must at the same time live by divine faith. We must live our faith. We must become not merely virtuous citizens of human society on earth, but, as St. Paul so gloriously puts it, "fellow citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God." (Ephes. 2.19) – nay, His adopted sons and heirs to His supernatural riches in heaven.

SUMMARY

1. The Supernatural Virtues.

- (a). Supernatural faculties.
- (b). Proximate principles of supernatural acts. Cf. Grace.

2. Origin, Growth, Loss.

- (a). They originate with sanctifying grace.
- (b). They increase by the doing of more intense acts.
- (c). They are lost with grace, but Faith and Hope are lost only if the sin is expressly against them.

3. Kinds.

- (a). THEOLOGICAL: concerned with our END, which is GOD. Faith, Hope and Charity.
- (b). MORAL: concerned with the MEANS to our end. Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, Temperance, etc.

4. The Infused Moral Virtues.

- (a). What they are: Supernatural virtues corresponding to the natural virtues of
the same name.
- (b). Golden Mean: Higher standard and motive than that of the natural virtues.
- (c). Co-operation: They function simultaneously with the natural virtues. Cf. A pianist's art and dexterity.

- (d). Facility: They give an intrinsic facility, but not an extrinsic one.
- (e). Development: All should develop together, as do one's fingers and toes.
- (f). Mode of acting: They act in a human way. Cf. Gifts of the Holy Ghost which act in a Divine way.

5. Naturalism.

- (a). Protestant denial of the supernatural order.
- (b). Danger of lapsing into naturalism.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. The supernatural virtues are (proximate) (radical) principles of supernatural acts. 2. Sanctifying grace is a (...) principle of these acts. 3. The supernatural virtues are like new (natures) (faculties) given us by God. 4. They all arise together in the soul with the coming of (...). 5. They increase when we perform acts that are more (...) than the habit. 6. They are lost by the loss of (...); though two of them, namely (...) and (...) remain after mortal sin provided the sin is not against them. 7. The sanctity of the saints is called (...) sanctity. 8. The supernatural virtues that have God for their object are called the (...) virtues. 9. There are three of them: (...), (...) and (...). 10. The supernatural cardinal virtues are (...), (...), (...) and (...). 11. These are (theological) (moral) virtues. 12. The supernatural virtues are also known as the (...) virtues. 13. The supernatural moral virtues act simultaneously with the (...) moral virtues of the same name. 14. In regard to the golden mean, the supernatural moral virtues have a higher (...) and a higher (...) than the acquired virtues. 15. St. Paul says: "I (...) my body and bring it into subjection." 16. Our Lord says: "Learn of Me, because I am meek and (...)." 17. The infused virtue of religion gives God the worship due to Him as the Author of (nature) (grace). 18. The infused moral virtues give an (intrinsic) (extrinsic) facility. 19. The supernatural

THE SUPERNATURAL VIRTUES

virtues act in a (human) (divine) way. 20. They are complemented and perfected by the Gifts of (...).

(B). Answer as fully as you can the following questions: -

1. What do you mean by a supernatural virtue?
2. How do the supernatural virtues originate and increase; and how are they lost?
3. How do the theological virtues differ from the infused moral virtues?
4. How do the infused moral virtues differ from the acquired virtues as regards the golden mean which they observe?
5. How do these virtues differ in regard to the facility they give?
6. Why should we practise all the virtues, and not just the ones we find easy?
7. The infused virtues act in a human manner. Explain this.
8. What is naturalism in religion? Why should we avoid it, and how?

Chapter 36

FAITH

1. An Act Of Faith.

When we accept a statement as true, we are said to ASSENT to it. Now, there are two ways in which we can assent to truth. Let us look briefly at each.

In the first place, we can accept a statement as true, simply because we BELIEVE the one who makes it. In this case, we accept a truth on the AUTHORITY of another. And by another's authority we mean his RIGHT to be believed, on account of his KNOWLEDGE and TRUTHFULNESS.

If a man knows a great deal about history, for example, but is extremely prejudiced and a notorious liar, he is not a reliable authority. He has the knowledge, but not the truthfulness. If he is as honest as the day, but woefully ignorant, he is not an authority either. He has the truthfulness, but not the knowledge. Both are necessary.

Now, when we accept a truth on the AUTHORITY of another, we are said to make an act of FAITH.

Think of your birthday. When is it? How do you know? You cannot remember the day you were born. No. But your parents can. They tell you. You believe them. You accept the date on their authority. You make an act of faith. To refuse to do so would be unreasonable. It would be an insult.

So, by an act of faith we mean the ACCEPTANCE OF A TRUTH, ON THE AUTHORITY OF ANOTHER.

It is obviously one of the ways in which we acquire truth. All truths we assent to in history are accepted by acts of faith. So are the many things we believe when we hear them on the radio or read them in the paper – the score of a test match, for instance, or the death of the King. So are countless others which we accept on the

authority of physicists, astronomers, doctors, lawyers and the like. We could not live in society without making acts of faith.

But there is another way in which we can assent to truth. It is by an act of SCIENCE. Consider an example.

A boy reads in his geometry book that the angles of a triangle are together equal to two right angles. At first he accepts this as true by an act of faith. He believes the man who wrote the book. Then, he studies the proof. He understands it thoroughly. He again assents to the truth. But this time, he does it for a wholly different reason. His motive is not the same. What moves him now to assent is the intellectual INSIGHT that he has into the truth itself. It is, consequently, something that comes from INSIDE the truth itself. It is something INTRINSIC to the truth, not something EXTRINSIC to it, as is the authority of the writer upon which his act of faith was based. His assent is now an act of SCIENCE.

From the above example you can see how an act of faith differs from the act of science.

In an act of faith, we assent solely because of the authority of another. This authority makes it quite reasonable for us to assent, indeed, but it does not give us any INSIGHT into the truth which we accept. It does not make us UNDERSTAND this truth. Why not? Because this authority is something quite distinct from the truth. It is something exterior or EXTRINSIC to it. In an act of science, on the contrary, we have real INSIGHT into the truth assented to. We UNDERSTAND the truth. And this understanding of it is the motive or the reason why we assent. We SEE the truth for ourselves. We assent to it on INTERNAL or INTRINSIC evidence.

Consider this statement: the whole of an apple is greater than half of it. Do you accept it as true? Of course. Why? Is it because your mother tells you? No. You would accept it as true if you were the only human being in existence. Adam did before Eve was created. Why? Because you have merely to UNDERSTAND what "whole" means, and what "half" means, and your intellect immediately assents to the statement that the whole of a thing is greater than half of it. It is moved to this assent by light or evidence that comes to it from WITHIN the truth itself. It assents on INTRINSIC evidence. It assents by an act of SCIENCE.

Let us sum up what we have learnt. We can accept a truth in two ways: by an act of FAITH, or by an act of SCIENCE. An act of faith is based on EXTRINSIC evidence; an act of science, on INTRINSIC evidence. The former does not give us any INSIGHT into the truth assented to; the latter, does. Most truths we have to take on faith, for we can have intrinsic evidence for comparatively few.

2. Kinds Of Faith.

There are as many kinds of faith as there are kinds of AUTHORITY. So we distinguish three: -

(a). HUMAN faith.

Here, the authority is that of a HUMAN BEING. You make an act of human faith when you believe your parents telling you the date of your baptism.

(b). ECCLESIASTICAL faith.

By this we accept a truth on the authority of the CHURCH, as when we believe that St. Thomas Aquinas or St. John of the Cross is a saint.

(c). DIVINE faith.

This time the authority is that of GOD revealing truth to us. It is by divine faith that we believe that the Word of God became Man and died to redeem us, that Our Lady is the Mother of God, that there are seven sacraments, or that heaven is our supernatural last end.

Since we are concerned with divine faith in this chapter, we must study it more fully. We shall speak first of divine faith as a virtue. Then, as an act.

3. The Virtue Of Divine Faith.

As a virtue, it is a supernatural HABIT which enables us to BELIEVE all God's REVEALED TRUTHS on the AUTHORITY of GOD revealing them, and in such a way that our faith is of value for heaven.

As we have seen in previous chapters, any educated person can, by the natural power of his REASON, prove that God exists as an infinitely perfect Being who knows everything and who cannot tell us a lie. He can then prove from HISTORY that Christ came on earth and claimed that God sent Him to teach religious truths; and that He worked miracles which were God's own signature to His claim. Finally, he can prove from HISTORY that Christ established an everlasting and infallible Church, to guard His truths and interpret them for us without even the possibility of error, right to the end of the world. Such a man can then assent to truths taught by Christ, on the authority of God who sent Him.

In doing this, he is of course making an act of faith. But it is an act of NATURAL faith. It is based on the authority of God, but inasmuch as this is known by the natural powers of human reason. It takes Him as the Author of nature, not as the Author of the supernatural order. It is not an act which is essentially supernatural. Hence, it is different from the supernatural act of faith made by a little child who has the infused virtue of faith. The child's act is as superior to it as grace is to nature, or heaven is to Limbo. It belongs to a different order altogether.

The infused virtue of divine faith is not a product of our reasoning. It is a supernatural GIFT, immeasurably superior to reason. It is a glorious dowry of LIGHT and GOOD WILL which puts our intellect and will on a level with the most profound truths of God's inner life, which He reveals to us as a FATHER speaking to His sons. It makes us feel quite at home even with the deepest mysteries which surpass the natural power not only of man's intellect but of that of the highest angel God could create.

Coming from God as a permanent gift of ILLUMINATION and GOOD WILL, the supernatural virtue of faith enables a little child who has as yet no thought-out proofs of the existence of God or the fact of revelation, to assent with the utmost ease and confidence to all God's revealed truths.

Tell such a child that there is a fully grown man living in the match box that you show him, and he will smile incredulously and say: "Go on! You're only fooling!" But take him into the Church and remind him that Our Lord is present in the tabernacle. He will immediately kneel in adoration, and feel as much at home with the Son of God made Man, as he does with his own brother. Because his faith is

supernatural, it makes even the most stupendous of revealed truths seem natural to him. He accepts them all eagerly and wholeheartedly, as if they were perfectly familiar to him. And why shouldn't he? Is he not God's adopted son, and a joint-heir with Christ to his Father's riches in the beatific vision?

Infused faith is thus an abiding supernatural gift of LIGHT and GOOD WILL, which moves us to accept all God's revealed truths with filial confidence and gratitude, inasmuch as they are made known to us by an infinitely perfect Father whom we believe without having ever seen, but whom we shall see after death in the unending glory of heaven.

4. The Act Of Divine Faith.

(a). How it is made.

In making an act of divine faith, we accept a truth on the authority of God revealing it, as when we recite the Creed.

Which faculty performs this act? Our INTELLECT, of course, for it alone can grasp TRUTH. It is made for knowing truth, just as the faculty of sight is made for knowing coloured things, and that of hearing for knowing things that sound. Truth is the food of our intellect, its spiritual nourishment. Without truth, it cannot develop. It cannot grow. It cannot fully live.

But has not the WILL also some say in our act of faith? Yes, it has. Though our will is made, not for knowing truth but for LOVING what is GOOD, it still plays a most important part in our act of divine faith.

Even when we assent to a self-evident truth – two and two are four, for instance – our will has a job to do. It has to make our intellect fix its attention on two and two, instead of on square roots, say, or the middle of next week. But once the will has done this, its job is finished. It does not have to COMMAND the intellect to assent to the truth that two and two make four. Here, the INTRINSIC evidence is so clear that the intellect assents without any further help from the will. So the will's part in such an assent is a very minor one. Still, it has something to do with it.

In an act of faith, however, its job is a most important one. Why? Because here the assent is given, not on INTRINSIC evidence, but on the AUTHORITY of the one who makes the truth known to us. No INSIGHT is had into the truth believed. Consequently, the will must intervene, not just to fix the intellect's attention on a particular truth, but also to COMMAND the intellect to assent to it. Here, it MAKES the intellect assent, on the authority of the revealer of the truth. This is why our act of divine faith is a FREE act, and able therefore to merit a reward in heaven.

One more consideration. In an act of divine faith, not only does the intellect have to be ordered to assent by the will, but BOTH intellect and will need to be helped by GRACE. This, of course, is because the act of faith is a SUPERNATURAL act; and no one can ever perform such an act without grace.

So we can sum up by saying that our act of divine faith is PERFORMED by our INTELLECT, but under a COMMAND from our WILL, both faculties being helped by the GRACE of God.

(b). Its Motive.

In an act of divine faith the MOTIVE or reason WHY we believe is simply and solely the AUTHORITY of GOD revealing truth to us. It is that, and nothing else.

And by God's AUTHORITY we mean His RIGHT TO BE BELIEVED, on account of His infinite KNOWLEDGE and TRUTHFULNESS.

If, consequently, you ask yourself: "WHY do I believe, say, the Trinity?" there is one answer and only one to your question. It is this: "I believe the Trinity simply and solely on the AUTHORITY of God revealing it." In other words, "I believe the Trinity simply and solely because GOD TELLS ME that the Trinity is a fact."

Try to realise that this answer is absolutely final. No further questions along this line can be asked. Why not? Because God IS Knowledge and Truth Itself. It is therefore infinitely impossible for Him to be ignorant of anything, or to tell us a lie. When He speaks, we are absolutely certain that what He says is true. We can have no greater certitude outside the beatific vision.

It is the same, of course, for ALL our revealed truths; for we accept all of them on the infinite reliable AUTHORITY OF GOD.

But what about SCRIPTURE and TRADITION? Do they not play a part here? Yes, of course. In them are RECORDED the truths revealed by God. They CONTAIN them. But we do not believe these truths BECAUSE we find them in Scripture and in Tradition. Scripture and Tradition are, after all, created things. And the motive in our act of divine faith is not something created. It is, on the contrary, something UNCREATED. It is the AUTHORITY OF GOD, which is one with Himself.

What about the CHURCH? She, too, has an important job to do in regard to our act of divine faith. She tells us INFALLIBLY whether God has revealed this truth or that. But She is not the motive in the act of our divine faith, as She is in our act of ecclesiastical faith. True, we believe that Thomas Aquinas is a saint, on the infallibility of the Church, since She has canonised him. But we believe the Trinity on the authority of God, which is not something created as is the infallibility of the Church, but something infinite, since, as we have just said it is one with Himself.

If, then, a person asks you: "Why do you believe there is a heaven?" The only answer is: "Because GOD tells me that there is."

If he then asks you a wholly different question: "How do you know that God has revealed to us the existence of heaven?" The answer is: "I am absolutely certain, because the CHURCH assures me infallibly that He has."

If, finally, he asks: "Where does the Church get her information in making this infallible decision?" the answer is: "She gets it from SCRIPTURE and TRADITION." She interprets these not as you or I interpret them - with possibility of error, but INFALLIBLY, for Christ promised to be with Her all days in Her teaching, and He assured Her that the Holy Ghost would abide with Her forever, and guide Her into all Truth.

From this you can see how our act of divine faith is protected from error on every side. Not a single loophole is left through which error might creep in. But in itself it is a simple act, not something which is made up of many parts as is a reasoning process; for its

motive is nothing other than the uncreated, and infinitely reliable authority of God.

(c). Its Characteristics

(i). It is FREE.

Since the assent given by our intellect in the act of faith is commanded by the WILL, it is a FREE assent.

This is why Our Divine Lord can say to His Apostles: "Go ye into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that BELIEVES shall be SAVED; He that BELIEVES NOT shall be CONDEMNED." (Mark 16:15-16). Reward and punishment can be given only for acts which are freely done.

St John, too, says; "This is His COMMANDMENT that we should BELIEVE in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ." (1 John 3:23). A command obviously presupposes freedom.

So our act of divine faith is free. That is why it can merit a reward in heaven.

(ii). It is most TRUE.

Our act of divine faith is absolutely true, because it is in an assent to what is said by Him who is sovereign Truth Itself, and who cannot possibly be false either to Himself or to us.

"But," you may object, "what about a person who thinks something is revealed when it is really not, and makes an act of faith in it? Is this act of faith not false?" It may be. But it is not an act of divine faith. Why not? Because one can make an act of divine faith only with the help of God's grace, since it is a supernatural act. And grace cannot urge us to accept something which is not true. Such a person, then, makes a NATURAL act of faith, which happens to be wrong. If an act of faith is really an act of divine faith, it cannot possibly be wrong, for it is the acceptance of a truth on the authority of God, the First Truth, and with the help of His illumination and inspiration. It can no more be wrong than God Himself can. It is infallibly true.

(iii). It is most CERTAIN.

In any act of faith the certitude is proportionate to the value of the AUTHORITY upon which our assent is based. In the act of divine faith this authority is GOD'S. Hence, it is infinitely reliable. Hence the certitude in our act of divine faith is much greater than any natural certitude we can ever have. It is a supernatural certitude; and it is a sharing in God's.

Have I greater certitude of, say, the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, or of the existence of heaven, than I have of my own existence? Yes. I am absolutely certain about my own existence, but my certitude here is a natural one. My certitude in regard to the Eucharist or heaven is, on the contrary, something far superior to nature, for it is in some way proportionate to the infinite certitude of God.

To bring home to us its unique certitude, our Divine Lord says to each of us: "Heaven and earth shall pass, but My words shall not pass." (Mat. 24:35). St. Paul, too, realised how absolutely certain our faith is, for he said to his Galatian converts: "Though an angel from heaven preach a Gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema." (Galat. 1:8).

Since our divine faith is infallibly true and certain, there can never be any clash between it and science. If these seem to clash, it is because something is given as belonging to faith which has not really been revealed, or something is said to be taught by science when science does not really teach it at all. Truth is one. It all comes from God, the First Truth, and He can never contradict Himself.

5. Obligation To Profess The Faith.

We are obliged by divine law to profess our faith externally.

There are dozens of ways in which we do this. Being present at Mass, receiving Holy Communion, going to confession, having our children baptised and educated as Catholics, marrying Catholics in preference to non-Catholics, reciting the Creed, saying our night and morning prayers, making our morning offering, making the sign of the Cross – these are some of the ways in which we profess our faith openly in the sight of others.

It is never lawful for us to DENY our faith. Our Lord Himself warns us against this when He says: "Whosoever shall deny Me before men, him shall I deny before My Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 10:33). To deny the faith is a mortal sin.

To protect us from ever being a traitor to Him, Our Lord gives us the sacrament of CONFIRMATION. With the supernatural LIGHT and STRENGTH which this great sacrament gives, we are able to stand up for our faith against all its enemies, and defend it as valiant soldiers of Christ, and even die for it, if necessary, as He died for us.

6. Sins Against Faith.

Here are the main ways in which we sin against faith:

(a). By denying it.

A Catholic, for instance, who denies the Assumption of Our Lady into heaven sins grievously against faith, since this truth is revealed by God, and defined by His Church. His sin is that of HERESY. He is a HERETIC. One who denies ALL God's revealed truths is called an APOSTATE. His sin is called APOSTASY. It is, of course, a very grievous sin.

(b). By taking an active part in non-Catholic services.

Non-Catholic services are all right for non-Catholics. They sincerely think them to be the way in which Our Lord wants us to worship God. They are in good faith, as we say. So God rewards them accordingly.

But it would be obviously wrong for a Catholic to ask an Anglican to hear his confession. Equally wrong for him to go to Communion in an Anglican church. Why? Because Anglican clergymen are not validly ordained as priests. Hence they have no power from God to forgive sin or to consecrate the Eucharist. And the Catholic knows this.

In the same way it is wrong for a Catholic to act as best man at a non-Catholic wedding, or to play the organ at a non-Catholic

religious service, or to act as sponsor at a non-Catholic baptism, and so on. Such an action would lead people to think that ONE RELIGION IS JUST AS GOOD AS ANOTHER. It would lead, in other words, to the spread of what is called INDIFFERENTISM in religion.

This puts all false religions on a level with Christ's one true religion. It ignores or denies the distinction between truth and error. Hence, it destroys truth completely. That is why it is so hateful in the sight of God.

Kind and compassionate as Christ was to the erring, He was at the same time vigorously intolerant of error itself, and absolutely uncompromising in His teaching. How could He be otherwise? "I am the way, and the TRUTH, and the Life," He says. (John 14:6). He is TRUTH ITSELF. Moreover, He came on earth, as He told Pilate, for the very purpose of giving "Testimony to the truth." (John 18:37). And He made His everlasting Church infallible in order that it might never stray from truth. Hearing it, men in all ages would be hearing Him, the Sovereign Truth.

Hence, to say that one religion is as good as another, to put man-made, fallible, religions on a level with Christ's infallible one, is an insult to Christ. It is to attribute error and contradiction to Him who is TRUTH ITSELF, and who alone can say: "I am the LIGHT of the world; he that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12). It is, in fact, to destroy His glorious truths from the face of the earth, and to put in their place only diabolical doubt, darkness and despair. Can we wonder that Christ detests INDIFFERENTISM, and warns us so forcibly against it?

(c). By failing to learn what we should about our religion.

Our education in religion is not complete when we have learnt the little catechism by heart. It has, on the contrary, hardly even begun. A Catholic child should make a real effort to learn more and more about his faith as he gets older, and to understand it more deeply as his mind develops. Why? In order to be able to LIVE it more completely; and to be able to EXPLAIN it to others. As a Catholic, you should be "ready always to satisfy everyone that asketh you a reason of that hope which is in you." (1 Pet. 3:15). From this text you can see that St. Peter thinks so, anyway. And so too does God, who inspired him.

After leaving school, then, take a deep interest in your faith. Try to understand it better and better, by listening attentively to sermons at Mass and Benediction, by reading good Catholic books, magazines and papers, by joining Catholic study groups, debating clubs and the like, and especially by LIVING your faith in its fullness, and experiencing the peace and certitude and happiness it can give.

(d). By exposing oneself to the danger of losing the faith.

The things that lead Catholics to give up their faith are: pride, worldliness, impurity, ignorance and levity of mind.

PRIDE urges us to be independent of God; hence to ignore Him. It makes us think that we are self-sufficient. It resents any command or enlightenment, even from the Infinite. This is why true humility is necessary both for receiving and for keeping the faith. Not without reason does Our Saviour say to His Father: "I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. Yea, Father, for so it hath seemed good in Thy sight." (Mat. 11:25-26). And He says to everyone today, as He said to His Apostles of old, "Amen, I say to you, unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Mat. 18:3). Pride is of the devil, not of God. That is why it is such an enemy of faith.

WORLDLINESS or an excessive care and anxiety for the things of this life is likewise an enemy of the faith. Our Saviour warns us often against it; and in the parable of the Sower He tells how the light of faith is quenched by temporal cares and worries, just as the young corn shoots are choked to death by weeds. St. James, too, warns us that "Whosoever will be a friend of this world is the enemy of God." (James 4:4). St. Paul is no less emphatic. He tells how the light of faith is hidden from those "in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of unbelievers that the light of the Gospel should not shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4:4). Worldliness is clearly a formidable obstacle and danger to our faith.

IMPURITY, too, as we have seen in a previous chapter, has the horrible effect of blinding its victims to everything spiritual and supernatural. "The sensual man," says St. Paul, "perceiveth not those things that are of the Spirit of God, for it is foolishness to him

and he cannot understand it." (1 Cor. 2:14), This is why Our Saviour numbered purity of heart amongst the beatitudes: "Blessed are the clean of heart," He said, "for they shall SEE GOD." (Mat. 5:8). Yes. They shall see Him, and see Him in this life, as well as in the next.

We spend millions on education. Most of it, however, goes into teaching children how to be good doctors, lawyers, farmers, chemists and the like, but not how to be good human beings, much less good followers of Christ. The result? An appalling amount of IGNORANCE concerning the truths Christ brought us. How often do you hear persons sneering at or belittling such things as infallibility, the Mass, miracles, or the Assumption, though they have not the foggiest idea of what is meant by any of them. Ignorance is indeed a very serious obstacle to those who have not the faith, and a real danger to those who have. Catholics should realise that they are obliged to have a knowledge of their religion in keeping with their opportunity and station in life. Ignorance does not always excuse in the sight of God. It can be culpable.

Another obstacle and danger to the faith is LEVITY OF MIND. It is also called superficiality. Many today seem quite incapable of thinking deeply on philosophical or religious questions. They are held captive by their senses, and by what appeals to their imagination. Their sense of values is consequently dreadfully warped. They worry about tiny matters that do not count, and forget about the really big things in life. They seem not to have grown up mentally. A moving picture means far more to them than the Mass; a party, than Calvary; external apparel, than grace; and a moment of pleasure, than an eternity of pain. They care a great deal about what others, as superficial as themselves, think about them; but not what God thinks. They squander life away on trivialities, utterly oblivious of death and judgment, and of the eternity that waits for them beyond the grave. To them Scripture refers when it says: "With desolation is the whole land made desolate, because there is none that considereth in his heart." (Jer. 12:11). Levity of mind and the Catholic faith are not good partners. Our Saviour was never superficial. He saw into the very depths of things – even into the infinitely deep things of God.

A Catholic who reads all he can find written against the faith, and nothing in its favour, is unfair to his faith and to himself. He is poisoning his mind against the truth. He is sinning against the light.

It is not wrong for us to consider objections which unbelievers put against our faith. In his mighty work called the SUMMA, St. Thomas Aquinas gives more than ten thousand of these objections. Every one of them is set down with perfect honesty, and its full value is acknowledged. But every one of them is also answered most completely. And what saint in the long history of the Church had a deeper or firmer faith than did St. Thomas? No. We are not forbidden to consider objections; but we are obliged to study at the same time the answers given to them by Catholic philosophers and theologians. Ordinary honesty and loyalty to truth demands it.

But not every Catholic is as well versed in philosophy and theology as was St. Thomas. Through no fault of their own, many have had little or no time or opportunity to study the defence of their faith. And it is to protect the faith of these that the Church forbids the reading of certain books which were said to be on the INDEX.

Many of these are grossly immoral. Hence they are forbidden even by the natural law which binds everybody, learned and unlearned alike. Others teach a false philosophy - materialism, for instance. Others contain lies or calumnies against the Church. Others are extremely prejudiced against Christianity. And so on.

In forbidding the reading of these books and placing them on the INDEX, the Church was merely carrying out Our Lord's commission to guard and teach the truth. She cannot do otherwise. Just as a mother is obliged to prevent her little child from endangering its life by eating what is poisonous, so, too, the Church is obliged to protect Her children from poisoning their minds and ruining their soul by reading such books. This is not narrow-mindedness on Her part. It is a duty imposed by justice and charity, and by her loyalty to her founder. As a mother, She simply has to protect Her little ones from being led astray intellectually and morally by unscrupulous writers whose outlook on life is so erroneous that it can lead, not to true happiness, but only to abject misery and the ruin of souls.

From what has been said you can see that the things that help us to keep our faith and develop it are as follows: humility, unworldliness, purity, a thorough knowledge of our religion, and the habit of thinking deeply on philosophical and religious questions. Best of all, of course, is the help we get from LIVING our faith as fully as we can. You cannot imagine a saint like St. Thomas

Aquinas or St. Teresa losing the faith. They know by experience that it is a priceless treasure. They cherish it beyond all that this world can ever give. They see it as God sees it – a glorious supernatural gift of light and good will which enables us to enjoy the good things that God has provided for us in this life, as a pledge of the beatific vision which awaits us in the next.

7. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should thank God every day for the gift of divine faith.
2. I should try every day to learn more about it, and understand it better.
3. I should strive every day to live it more completely.
4. I should be most careful to give good example to non-Catholics so that they may be attracted to the faith by my good life.
5. I should often pray for the conversion of non-Catholics – especially for the conversion of Russia.

SUMMARY

1. An Act Of Faith.

- (a). Acceptance of truth on the authority of another i.e. his right to be believed on account of his knowledge and truthfulness.
- (b). Cf. an act of science, based on intrinsic evidence.

2. Kinds Of Faith.

- (a). Human – based on the authority of man. e.g. birthday.
- (b). Ecclesiastical – based on the authority of the Church. e.g. Canonisation.
- (c). Divine – based on the authority of God. e.g. Trinity.

3. Virtue Of Divine Faith.

- (a). A supernatural habit which enables us to accept all God's revealed truths on the authority of God, our Father, revealing them.

- (b). Cf. Natural faith based on proofs of God's existence and the fact of revelation.
- (c). A theological virtue, having God for its object. We believe God.
- (d). A gift of supernatural light and good will.

4. Act Of Divine Faith.

- (a). How made: By our intellect, under a command from the will, both helped by grace.
- (b). Motive: Authority of God revealing. Not Scripture, Tradition or the Church.
- (c). Features:
 - (i). Free: Commanded by the will.
 - (ii). True: Impossible to make a false act of divine faith.
 - (iii). Certain: Certitude is proportionate to God's authority as Author of grace. Hence, supernatural.

5. Obligation To Profess The Faith.

"Whosoever shall deny Me before men, him shall I deny before My Father who is in heaven."

6. Sins Against Faith.

- (a). By denying it. Heresy. Apostasy.
- (b). By taking an active part in non-Catholic services.
- (c). By failing to learn what I ought about my religion.
- (d). By exposing myself to the danger of losing my faith e.g. by pride, worldliness, impurity, ignorance, levity of mind.

The Index. Helped to keep and develop the faith.

7. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. Faith is the acceptance of (...) on the (...) of another. 2. A person's authority is his (...) to be believed on account of his (...) and (...). 3. An act of science is based on (intrinsic) (extrinsic) evidence. 4. Two and two make four. My assent here is an act of (faith) (science). 5. There are three kinds of faith: (...), (...) and (...). 6. It is by an act of (...) faith that I know Teresa is a saint. 7. Assenting to the Trinity, I make an act of (...) faith. 8. My act of divine faith is made by my (...), under a command from my (...). 9. It is a (natural) (supernatural) act. 10. Its certitude is proportionate to God's (...). 11. Its motive is God's (...). 12. I believe in the Trinity because (Scripture and Tradition refer to it) (the Church defines it) (God reveals it). 13. When I want to know if God has revealed a truth, I ask (...). 14. The Church interprets Scripture and Tradition (fallibly) (infallibly). 15. Because my act of faith is free, it can (...) a reward in heaven. 16. My act of divine faith (can) (cannot) be false. 17. The certitude in my act of divine faith is a (natural) (supernatural) one. 18. I (am) (am not) more certain of the existence of heaven than of my own existence. 19. I (am) (am not) obliged to profess my faith externally. 20. I am (sometimes) (never) allowed to deny my faith. 21. A Catholic who denied all God's revealed truths would be called (...).

FAITH

22. Our Lord tells us that "The clean of heart shall see (...)." 23. Another name for levity of mind is (...). 24. The list of forbidden books is called the (...). 25. The virtue of faith is a glorious gift of supernatural light and (...).

(B). Answer each of the following as fully as you can: –

1. Explain how an act of faith differs from an act of science.
2. What are the three kinds of faith? Give an example of each.
3. What is the virtue of divine faith? Why is it a theological virtue?
4. How is the act of divine faith made? What is its motive? What are its characteristics?
5. How can we sin against faith?
6. Explain the nature and the purpose of what was known as the Index.
7. What helps have we to keep and develop our faith?
8. Our divine faith perfects the two faculties that make us human beings. Explain how it does this.

Chapter 37

HOPE

1. What It Is.

Hope, as we saw in a previous chapter, can be an animal PASSION depending on sense knowledge, as when a cat hopes to get a bit of meat you hold in your hand; or it can be an EMOTION in our will, following on our intellectual appreciation of a thing. In this present chapter we are going to treat hope as an emotion.

What do we do when we hope for a thing? We EXPECT to get it. Hence, we can hope only for something yet to come. A school boy who writes home for a cake can hope for it till it arrives. Once it comes, he cannot hope for it any longer, though he can hope for another like it. We can hope only for something FUTURE.

Moreover, it must be something GOOD. If it is something evil like a broken neck or rickets, we cannot hope for it. We can only fear it instead.

Next, it must be a good which is DIFFICULT to gain. A millionaire dwelling in his own mansion may indeed desire his breakfast, but he cannot hope for it. He has no difficulty whatever in getting it. An eskimo, however, can hope for his, when he goes out into a blizzard, trying to catch some fish. There is something virile about hope. It urges us to attain something arduous. It puts us on our mettle. It demands effort and self-denial, for it seeks something hard to get.

Lastly, the good we expect must be a POSSIBLE one. If it is an impossible one, we cannot hope to gain it. We can only despair instead.

Think of a party of mountaineers setting out to scale a difficult peak. The goal is a long way off. The climb is an arduous one. There are hardships and dangers in plenty. But the men know that they CAN get to the top. They also know that when they do arrive there, they will be rewarded with a view that is really worth while. What are they expecting? A good. What sort of good? One that is future,

difficult to attain, but at the same time possible. They are buoyed up and urged on by HOPE.

2. The Virtue Of Hope.

In the natural order, hope is not a virtue. It is, as we have said, a passion or an emotion. In the supernatural order, however, there is a virtue called hope. What do we hope for? Nothing less than GOD Himself, known, loved and enjoyed in the BEATIFIC VISION, which is made possible for us by His omnipotence.

Since hope has God Himself for object, it is a THEOLOGICAL virtue, just as divine faith is, and charity.

God enjoyed in heaven is certainly a good, if ever there was one. It is a future good, too, for it can be experienced only after death. It is a good which is hard to gain, for we must die in grace to gain it. Finally, it is a possible good, thanks to the infinite power of God which He puts at our disposal. And, since heaven is an essentially supernatural end, you can see why we can have, and must have a supernatural virtue called hope, to urge us to attain it.

3. What We Hope For.

What we hope for first and foremost is GOD Himself, known, loved and enjoyed in the BEATIFIC VISION.

Scripture is quite clear about it. St. Paul, for instance, bids us "Glory in the HOPE OF THE GLORY OF THE SONS OF GOD." (Roms. 5:2). He tells us to hope for the glory that God promises to us as His adopted sons. And what is this? St. John tells us when he writes: "Dearly beloved, we are now the sons of God and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like to Him, because we shall SEE HIM AS HE IS. And everyone that hath this HOPE in him sanctifieth himself, as He also is holy." (1 John 3:2-3).

We hope, therefore, to SEE GOD AS HE IS. In other words, to KNOW Him as He knows Himself, to LOVE Him as He loves Himself, and to be happy with a sharing of His HAPPINESS in eternity. But this is nothing other than the beatific vision. No wonder St. John exhorts us to sanctify ourselves as a preparation

for this vision, since nothing defiled can ever enter into such intimate companionship with God.

St. Paul puts it quite explicitly when he tells us that the object of our hope is "LIFE EVERLASTING, which God, who lieth not, hath promised before the times of the world." (Titus. 1:2).

Just because it is absolutely impossible for God to tell us a lie or to be unfaithful to His promises, St. Paul bids us "Hold fast the HOPE before us, which we have as an ANCHOR of the soul, sure and firm" (Heb. 6:18-19). Just as an anchor gives a ship security in a storm by preventing it from being carried on to the rocks, so does our hope in God give us security midst the dangers of the world. And he then goes on to say that our hope is confirmed by the fact that Christ Himself has gone before us to the beatific vision, and that He intercedes for us there, and gives us grace to follow Him.

From these and other texts we see that the first object of our hope is God Himself, known, loved and enjoyed in heaven.

The secondary object includes the glorification of our bodies, graces of all kinds, and even material goods inasmuch as these can help us to save our souls.

4. Why We Hope.

We have seen that the MOTIVE in our act of divine faith is the authority of God revealing. What, now, is the motive in our act of hope? It cannot be God's authority. If it were, hope would not be distinct as a virtue from faith. What is it, then? It is the OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD HELPING US to gain heaven. Like God's authority, this omnipotence is one with Himself. He IS His omnipotence, just as He IS His justice, His mercy and all His other attributes.

While faith considers God from the point of view of His authority or right to be believed, hope considers Him from the point of view of His infinite power inasmuch as this is put at our disposal for gaining heaven. By divine faith we share in His knowledge. By hope, in His omnipotence.

Heaven is indeed a good which is difficult to attain. However, we do not hope for it precisely because it is difficult, but because it is

POSSIBLE. And what makes it possible is the OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD HELPING US to gain it.

It is not on our own natural powers, then, that we rely. They can have no proportion at all to heaven, since it is a supernatural end. We rely instead on God's all-powerful help. But, of course, since it is a help, it demands our co-operation. We must make a good use of the grace He offers us. Like the sacraments, however, grace is only an instrumental cause in our salvation. Its first Cause is God. It is on Him, then, as our omnipotent helper that we rely. With the psalmist of old we cry out: "My God is my helper, and in Him will I put my trust." (Ps. 17:3). Not in anything created do we primarily hope, but in the uncreated power of God.

5. Is It Right For Us To Hope For Heaven?

Some have taught that it is wrong for us to hope for heaven. Why? Because it is a selfish thing to do.

They forget that selfishness is wrong only when it violates the right of another – of God, for instance, or our neighbour. God loves Himself infinitely. Yet He is infinite Sanctity. He also commands us to love ourselves when He orders us to love Him above all things and our neighbour as ourselves for His sake. When we pray for an increase in grace, or for better health, we are seeking to better ourselves. But there is nothing wrong in this. We are not violating another's right. Instead we are fulfilling the will of God.

It is not wrong, then, to work for a reward. God Himself bids us strive for heaven. He says, for instance, through the mouth of St. Paul: "Know you not that they who run in the race all run, indeed, but one receiveth the prize? SO RUN THAT YOU MAY OBTAIN. And everyone that striveth for the mastery refraineth from all things. And they indeed that they may receive a corruptible crown; but we an INCORRUPTIBLE one." (1 Cor. 9:24-25).

Inspired by God, St. Paul here tells us that we should train hard as did the Olympic champions. But what for? To win a race? No. To win for ourselves the incorruptible crown of glory that shall be ours forever in the beatific vision. Obviously, God cannot thus order us to do something which is wrong or sinful or in any way unworthy of man.

St. Paul also tells the Colossians to be firm in hope "Knowing that you shall receive of the Lord the REWARD OF INHERITANCE." (Colos. 3:34). He bids the Romans "Rejoice in hope." (Roms. 12.12), And so on.

And listen to St. Peter: "Blessed be the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ," he says, "who, according to His great mercy hath regenerated us into a lively HOPE, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance INCORRUPTIBLE and UNDEFILED, that CANNOT FADE, reserved for us in HEAVEN." (1 Pet. 1:3-4). What a glorious text this is! It exhorts us to hope for the inheritance which is ours as God's adopted children - an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and one which cannot fade, for it is nothing else than the beatific vision in which we shall share God's knowledge, love and happiness in an unlosable manner forever.

Those who say that it is wrong to hope seem to think that hope is incompatible with charity inasmuch as the love in hope is an interested love while that in charity is wholly unselfish. But these two great virtues are in no way incompatible. Charity, as we shall see, is a true friendship existing between the soul and God. And the most subtle joy we can give our friend is that which he experiences in loving us. In hope, therefore, we give God the joy of loving us, of giving Himself to us in the beatific vision that will seal forever our friendship with Him in the unimaginable intimacy of heaven.

Not to hope, not to seek the good things offered by God - this would be wrong. It would be the sin of ingratitude, or the sin of indifference, or the sin of presumption, or the horrible sin of despair.

6. The Certitude In Hope.

We have seen that the certitude in our faith comes from its MOTIVE, and that it is consequently proportionate to the infinite authority of God. Well, the certitude of hope comes also from its MOTIVE, which is the omnipotence of God helping us to attain Heaven. Like the certitude of faith, then, it is a supernatural

certitude and one which is supreme in its own order, because it is proportionate to God's infinite power upon which alone it is based.

Is the certitude in hope just a sharing, as it were, in the certitude of faith? No. It is quite distinct from the certitude in faith, just as hope is as distinct as a virtue from faith. Here are the main ways in which it differs: -

- (a). The certitude of faith is in our INTELLECT; that of hope is in our WILL.
- (b). The certitude of faith excludes DOUBT; that of hope excludes HESITATION and DESPAIR.
- (c). The certitude of faith is a certitude of JUDGMENT; that of hope is a certitude of ORDER or INCLINATION.

If the certitude of hope were but a sharing in that of faith, these two virtues would not be distinct, since the certitude in each comes from its motive or formal object.

But what is this certitude of order or inclination? Think of the way in which oxygen invariably unites with hydrogen when the required conditions are present. We say that they are SURE to unite. This is a certitude of order or inclination. It follows from the order that God has put in nature. Again, think of the certitude that goes with a habit which is deeply ingrained in us - that of typing, for example. We say of an expert typist that she is CERTAIN to type a passage correctly. This is another case of the certitude of order or inclination - that arising from habit, which, as we saw in a previous chapter, is a sort of second nature.

So every virtue, inasmuch as it is a habit, has this certitude of order or inclination. But hope has a certitude of order or inclination which is special or proper to itself. And it gets it from the fact that, in the supernatural order, God has ordained that the MEANS of salvation offered us are able to attain their END. Why? Because they have behind them the very omnipotence of God. So we are absolutely CERTAIN that we CAN gain heaven, thanks to the infinite HELP that God offers us. And this certainty of being ABLE to save our souls - this is the certitude found in hope. St. Thomas aptly calls it a certitude of divine ordination.

Notice that it is in no way a CONDITIONAL certitude. There is no "if" in it at all. It is an absolute certitude. Nor is it a certitude of

EVENT. It does not assure you and me that we shall, as a matter of fact, save our souls. But it does assure us that we are ABLE to do so, thanks to God's all-powerful help and the ordering of His Providence.

This is why it is perfectly compatible with the Council of Trent's declaration that no one can be absolutely certain that he will be saved, without a special revelation from God. Perfectly compatible also with Scripture's injunction to us to work out our salvation in fear and trembling. (Phil. 2:12). This, too, is why it can exist in a Catholic who is in a state of mortal sin, and in one who is in a state of grace at present but who will ultimately lose his soul. It is as great, in fact, in a person in mortal sin as it is in a person in grace. For its certitude does not depend on conditions in us, but on God's omnipotence which is one with Himself.

Thus St. Paul can assure us that our "Hope confoundeth not." (Roms. 5:4). And then he can go on to give the reason: "For I know whom I have believed, and I AM CERTAIN that HE is ABLE to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day." (Roms. 5:5). He gives as the motive of his hope the infinite power of God which is behind the means of salvation He offers us, and which He ordains infallibly to their end. It is not a question of intellectual certitude like that found in faith. Nor is it question of a certitude of event, which would require a special revelation made to each of us. It is question of a certitude of order or inclination, based on God's providence as Author of grace. It is, as St. Thomas says, a certitude of DIVINE ORDINATION. That is why it is so measureless, so soul-satisfying, so firm.

7. Sins Against Hope.

The main sins against hope are those of DESPAIR and PRESUMPTION.

A person commits a sin of DESPAIR when he thinks that God will not give him the means to save his soul. It is, of course, a very serious sin, a gross insult to God. It denies His infinite mercy, and at the same time, His infinite justice. It denies, too, His infinite goodness and love. It makes a mockery of Calvary.

One commits a sin of PRESUMPTION when one expects to get to heaven without taking any means to do so. Thus, if a person thinks

that God will save him, no matter how many sins he may commit, and no matter how unrepentant he may be at death, he commits a sin of presumption.

Does a Catholic who is in mortal sin, and who makes an act of hope sin by presumption? No. He does not expect to get to heaven without grace or merits. He intends to die in a state of grace. It would be a sin for him not to hope – the horrible sin of despair.

By teaching that grace is not a supernatural reality in us, and that the damned are predestined to hell apart from any free will in them, Protestantism forces its adherents to fall into the sin of presumption or to give way to that of despair. We prefer our freedom and our hope in a God who is infinitely merciful, infinitely good, infinitely lovable, infinitely powerful, infinitely faithful, and infinitely just. Because He is just, He will give us the means to attain the end for which He has created us.

8. The Value Of Hope.

“Lay hold on eternal life.” This is St. Paul’s injunction to his dear friend, Timothy. (1 Tim. 6:12). How forcibly he puts it. “Lay hold on.” The verb means to get a good grip of a thing, and then hang on to it as a bulldog does to a man’s leg. And his words apply to us as much as they applied to Timothy. We, too, must “lay hold on eternal life.” How? By the great virtue of hope. That is why it is so necessary and so precious to us.

Heaven is something distant, spiritual and supernatural. But, by original sin we are inclined to appreciate only what is present, material and natural to man. Hence, we need to be helped by a supernatural gift – the virtue of hope – if we are to aspire to the beatific vision.

Animals though we are, we are asked to rise above the attractions of sense and animal appetite, and seek instead a happiness which lies hidden in the mysterious future, and which is none other than the very happiness of God. It is a happiness for which we have no positive natural aptitude, because it is a supernatural one, above the needs of any nature God could create. Heaven is at present quite beyond our grasp, for we are but travellers on the way thither. We are on the way home, journeying to a home which we have never seen, and one which is beyond the wildest dreams of our

imagination, for it is the home of the Trinity, God's own home in eternity.

The beatific vision is natural only to God. Hence He alone can make it possible to us. He does this by putting His omnipotence at our disposal, and then giving us the virtue of hope by which we can, as it were, grasp His infinite power and make it our very own. Thus, the psalmist, speaking of hope, uses a most appropriate image when he says to God: "Thou hast held me by my right hand." (Ps. 72:24). Just as a father will hold out his hand to be tightly clasped by his little child, whom he will then help to climb to heights unscalable by the child himself, so, too, God holds out His hand to us in order that we may grasp it by the virtue of hope, and, resting our weakness on His omnipotence, rise even to the heights of heaven. It is by hope that we "lay hold on eternal life" - yes, lay hold on it here and now, exiles though we still are, on earth.

9. Hope And Fear.

Intellectual certitude - that of divine faith, for instance - excludes all reasonable fear of error. But the certitude in hope is not an intellectual one. It is a certitude of divine ordination, instead. Hence, it is perfectly compatible with FEAR. In fact, the more our hope increases the more too does our fear.

But what sort of fear is it? It is not a fear of PUNISHMENT. It is instead a FILIAL fear - the sort of fear a good child has lest it offend its loving parents. It is a fear that flows from love and is nourished by love. It is, as we shall later see, one of the GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST. By it we fear lest we foolishly separate ourselves from God by sin. The more we realise how dependent we are on God for salvation, the more we fear to abandon Him by sin, the more we cling to Him, the more we trust in His omnipotent help.

Thus, this filial fear purifies our hope by making it rely more and more on the help of God. This is why those who have advanced far in sanctity have a very pure hope in which there is no inordinate reliance on self. Their hope is so pure, indeed, that it seems no longer a hope, but rather a sort of ANTICIPATED POSSESSION of the good things that God has in store for them. Such persons can say with St. Paul:

"If God be for us, who is against us?"

"He that spared not even His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how hath He not also with Him given us ALL things?...

"Who, then, shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? Or distress? Or famine? Or nakedness? Or danger? Or persecution? Or the sword?

"But in all these things we overcome, because of Him that hath loved us.

"For I AM SURE that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, Our Lord." (Roms. 8:31-39).

This is hope at its very best. It is, as it were, the ecstasy of hope. It is a kind of anticipated possession. It is the hope of those who give all their heart and soul to God. It is hope in all its purity. It is the glorious hope of a saint.

10. Poverty Of Spirit.

Inspired by such a hope, the soul no longer seeks any good other than God. If it seeks created goods, it is only because they lead to Him. "My God and my all!" it exclaims with St. Francis of Assisi, and with the psalmist it says: "Thou art the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion forever... For what have I in heaven? And besides Thee what do I desire upon earth?... It is good for me to adhere to my God, to put my hope in the Lord." (Ps. 72:25-28).

Like St. Paul, it counts all earthly things as mere garbage, that it may be completely rich in Christ. Nor is it attached to God's gifts inordinately for their own sake, but because they help it to be more closely united to Him. It seeks, not consolations and sweetnesses in prayer, but God Himself, and Him alone.

Hence it enjoys that glorious POVERTY OF SPIRIT, that complete detachment from whatever is sinful in creatures, which Christ has numbered amongst the beatitudes, and to which He has attached a reward no less than the Kingdom of Heaven. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mat. 5:3).

Poverty of spirit, then, is the grand effect of hope. LIBERTY OF SPIRIT it is also called, because it frees us from every sinful attachment to creatures and makes us free with the glorious freedom of Christ, which is one with the freedom of God.

Such is the reward of hope in this life. What will be its reward in the next? St. Paul was once favoured with a glimpse of it; but he could find no words to describe it. He could only stammer like a child and admit that "Eye hath not seen, nor hath ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things that God has prepared for those that love Him." (1 Cor. 2:9).

11. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should try to make my hope purer every day.
2. I should do my best to co-operate with God's grace.
3. I should often think of St. Paul's words "Who, then, shall separate us from the love of Christ?"
4. I should try to cultivate true poverty of spirit.
5. I should often say this prayer which the Church offers on the third Sunday after Pentecost:

"Divine Protector of those who place their hope in Thee, beyond whom there is nothing of any worth, nothing holy, show us an abundance of mercy; so that, under Thy guidance and following Thee, we may pass through the goods of time in such a way as not to lose those of eternity."

SUMMARY

1. What Hope Is.

The expectation of:

- (i). A good.
- (ii). Future.
- (iii). Difficult to gain.
- (iv). Possible.

2. By Virtue of Hope.

By it we hope to gain heaven, because of God's help.

3. What We Hope For.

- (i). GOD, known, loved and possessed in heaven.
- (ii). Glorification of our bodies; helps to gain heaven.

4. Why We Hope.

Solely on account of God's all-powerful help.

5. Is It Right to Hope.

- (i). God bids us hope.
- (ii). Hope is perfectly compatible with charity.

6. Certitude In Hope.

- (i). Distinct from that in faith.
- (ii). How they differ.
- (iii). Not a conditional certitude, but an absolute one.
- (iv). Not a certitude of event, but one of divine ordination

7. Sins Against Hope.

- (i). Despair.
- (ii). Presumption.

8. Value Of Hope.

- (i). By it we "lay hold on eternal life."
- (ii). Thanks to God's omnipotent help.

9. Hope and Fear.

- (i). Quite compatible.
- (ii). Fear increases with hope.
- (iii). Filial fear, not fear of punishment.
- (iv). St. Paul's: "Who, then, shall separate us," etc.

10. Poverty of Spirit.

- (i). "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
- (ii). Complete detachment from what is sinful in creatures.
- (iii). True liberty of spirit.

11. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. We can hope only for something which is (evil) (good), (past) (present) (future), (easy) (difficult), and (possible) (impossible). 2. As a virtue, hope is (a passion) (an emotion). 3. Hope is a (natural) (supernatural) virtue. 4. Since it has God for its object, it is a (...) virtue. 5. The primary object of hope is (...) known, loved and enjoyed in (...). 6. The motive in our hope is the (...) of God helping us. 7. Scripture (could) (could not) bid us hope for heaven if it were wrong for us to do so. 8. It (would) (would not) be wrong for us not to hope for the good things God wants to give us. 9. Hope (is) (is not) compatible with charity. 10. The certitude of our hope is in our (intellect) (will). 11. It is proportionate to the (...) of God. 12. It is a certitude of (judgment) (order). 13. St. Thomas calls it a certitude of divine (...). 14. It (is) (is not) compatible with fear. 15. It (is) (is not) a conditional certitude. 16. If I think that God will not give me the means to save my soul, I commit a sin called (...). 17. If I think He will save me no matter how unrepentant I may be at death, I commit a sin called (...). 18. It (is) (is not) a sin of presumption for a person to make an act of hope when he is in a state of mortal sin. 19. St. Paul bids us "Lay hold on (...) life." 20. The certitude in an act of hope made by a person in mortal sin (would be) (would not be) less than if he made it when in a state of grace. 21. St. Paul says: "If (...) be with us, who is against us?" 22. The fear that accompanies hope is (a fear of punishment) (a filial fear). 23. It (diminishes) (increases) as our hope gets purer. 24. Hope leads to true (...) of spirit. 25. Through hope we can enjoy even on this earth a sort of anticipated possession of (...).

(B). Answer the following as fully as you can: -

1. What is meant by the supernatural virtue of Hope?
2. What do we hope for?
3. Why do we hope?
4. Show that it is right for us to hope for heaven.
5. Explain the certitude of hope; show how it differs from that of faith.
6. How does hope enable us to "lay hold on eternal life?"

HOPE

7. What sort of fear accompanies hope? Why?
8. Explain what is meant by poverty of spirit; show how it follows from a lively hope.

Chapter 38

CHARITY IN REGARD TO GOD

1. What It Is.

(a). Introduction.

In this chapter we shall speak of charity in regard to God. In the next, of charity in regard to our neighbour. But do not get from this the idea that these are two distinct virtues. There is only one virtue of charity. It urges us to will the supreme Good first to GOD, for His own sake, then to OURSELVES and to our NEIGHBOUR for the sake of God.

(b). Charity is love.

The theological virtues adapt us to our end, which is GOD known, loved and enjoyed in the beatific vision. Thus FAITH makes this end KNOWN to us. HOPE makes it POSSIBLE. CHARITY makes us LOVE and DESIRE it, and ATTAIN it in practice.

FAITH regards God as REVEALING. HOPE regards Him as HELPING. CHARITY regards Him as GOOD, hence as our END. This is why it alone endures in heaven. There will be no faith there, for faith is incompatible with vision. No hope, either, for it is incompatible with possession. But charity, yes; for it unites us to our end. FAITH, then, is KNOWLEDGE. HOPE is RELIANCE. CHARITY is LOVE.

(c). What sort of love?

Love is the movement of an appetite towards a known good. There are of course many kinds of love. What kind do we get in charity?

Is the love in charity a PASSION? Or is it an EMOTION? It is an EMOTION obviously, for it depends on our intellectual appreciation of God's goodness. It is in our WILL, not in our sense appetite. That is why it cannot be FELT in the way a passion can.

Is it a SELFISH love? Or an UNSELFISH one? It is an UNSELFISH love. It is called a love of BENEVOLENCE, therefore, to distinguish it from selfish love or a love of CONCUPISCENCE.

Is it a NATURAL love? Or a SUPERNATURAL one? It is a SUPERNATURAL love. As loved in charity, God is known by divine faith. He is known as the Trinity, the Author of the supernatural order. It is as His adopted children that we love Him, and as His heirs to heaven. And our act of love flows from an infused virtue, under the influence of grace. It is something essentially supernatural.

Is it a MUTUAL love? Or is it just ONE-SIDED? It is a MUTUAL love. God loves us, and we love Him in return.

From this you can see that the love in charity is a MUTUAL, SUPERNATURAL LOVE OF BENEVOLENCE. In other words, it is a love of FRIENDSHIP, for friendship is nothing else than a mutual, unselfish love.

CHARITY, therefore, is simply a SUPERNATURAL FRIENDSHIP existing between the soul and God.

2. Charity and Reward.

The love in charity is an UNSELFISH love. In what sense must we understand this?

Some have said that it ought be so unselfish as to EXCLUDE any desire of union with God, and any joy we can experience from this union, on earth or in heaven.

This, however, is wrong. Think of what charity is, and you will see why. In the first place, charity is FRIENDSHIP. And friendship demands a return of love, hence a reward. In the second place, charity is a love of God considered as our END. And how can we efficaciously love God as our end, without being united to Him?

How silly it is, therefore, for a person to say: "I would willingly go to hell, provided I could still love God there!" This is the same as saying, "I would hate God in eternity, provided I could love Him at the same time." It just doesn't make sense. It is the absurd error of the QUIETISTS.

Others hold that our desire for union with God belongs, not to charity, but to hope. We do not agree with them. Why not? Because as St. Thomas Aquinas points out so often, hope is essentially an act of RELIANCE or TRUST, not an act of desire. Our desire for God must consequently be found in charity.

It is not, of course, the PRIMARY act in charity. That is a love of BENEVOLENCE. But it is a SECONDARY act - one which is included in the primary act, and hence is inseparable from it. We simply cannot love God with a love of friendship, and as our last end, without desiring to be united to Him here and in eternity. The two acts - love and desire - cannot be separated in reality; but one of them can, and must be, subordinated to the other.

Charity does indeed exclude any desire of a merely temporal reward. But it does not exclude the reward which God Himself is. It does not exclude our union with Him in the beatific vision. Instead, it demands this union by its very nature, since it has for its object our last end, considered precisely as such.

The more we love a human friend, the more we want to be with him, and to enjoy his company. It is the same exactly with our charity, our supernatural friendship with God.

This is why Scripture insists so much on our union with God through charity. "God is charity," says St. John, "and he that abides in charity, abides in GOD, and GOD in HIM." (1 John, 4:16). Again: "If anyone love Me... My Father will love him, and WE WILL COME TO HIM, and WILL MAKE OUR ABODE WITH HIM." (John 14:23). How intimate this union is! And how enduring! It is nothing less than the indwelling of the Trinity in the soul, a privilege that makes it an ante-chamber of heaven. Far from excluding desire of union with God, charity demands it. It feeds on it. And, the greater the charity is, the more ardent is the desire. Do not the saints all yearn to be dissolved by death, that they be with Christ?

3. The Greatness Of Charity.

(a). Charity is the greatest of the virtues.

Protestants say that FAITH, by which they mean a trust that God will not impute our sins to us, is the greatest virtue. But this is wrong, because Scripture says: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God

with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind." Then it adds: "This is the GREATEST and the FIRST Commandment. And the second is like this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Matt. 22:37-39). Since it is by CHARITY that we fulfil the greatest of the Commandments, it must be the greatest of the virtues.

St. Paul says explicitly that it is. He begins by showing how superior charity is to the CHARISMS, the extraordinary gifts given for the sanctification, not of the recipients, but of others. He says:

"If I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

"And, if I should have prophecy, and should know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I should have faith so that I could move mountains, and have not charity I am NOTHING.

"And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profits me NOTHING."

Then he speaks of the way in which charity vivifies the other virtues, and adds:

"And now there remains Faith, hope and charity, these three; but the GREATEST of these is CHARITY." (1 Cor. 13:1-3, 13). Perfectly clear, isn't it?

(b). Charity directs the acts of the other virtues to our Last End.

It does this, because it alone of all the virtues considers our last end precisely as end.

Without charity, the acts of the other virtues are, as it were, dead. They cannot win salvation. They cannot make us gain our end. Faith and hope are not enough at death. We must have charity to be saved. They can, indeed, help us to regain charity. But, without it, they are worth nothing as far as the actual gaining of heaven is concerned. Hence, St. James says: "Even as the body without the

spirit is dead, so also faith without good works is DEAD." (James 2:26). That's one for the Protestants, isn't it?

(c). Charity is the Proximate Principle of Merit.

We have seen that SANCTIFYING GRACE is the RADICAL principle of merit, since it supernaturalises us in the depths of our soul, and thus gives it a certain proportion to heaven. Charity is the PROXIMATE principle of merit. On it, mainly, depends the amount of merit we get for an act. That is why Our Lady's simplest acts at Nazareth merited more than did the sufferings of the martyrs.

(d). Charity is the Bond of Perfection.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy WHOLE heart, and with thy WHOLE soul, and with ALL thy strength, and with ALL thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." This supreme precept obliges ALL Christians, not just priests and religious, to strive after PERFECTION.

To do this, we must, of course, practise ALL the virtues. However, amongst them there is one which dominates the others. It is the virtue of CHARITY.

Hence, St. Paul says: "Put ye on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience.... But above all these have CHARITY, which is the BOND of PERFECTION." (Colos. 3:12-14).

A bond binds persons or things together – a strong family bond, for example, or the bond of authority which binds all Catholics together in the Mystical Body of Christ. Now, charity binds all the other virtues together, by making their acts meritorious for heaven, and by directing them thus to our last end. In this sense, it is the bond of perfection, for a thing is perfect when it attains its end.

Christian perfection, then, implies the practice of all the virtues, but it consists especially in CHARITY.

Does this mean that every soul in a state of grace is perfect? In a very broad sense, yes; inasmuch as anyone in grace must go to heaven at death. But in a more proper sense, no. Much more than freedom from mortal sin is required for Christian perfection. What

a tremendous difference there is between a person who just avoids mortal sin, and a saint with HEROIC sanctity! The latter is immeasurably more intimately united to God and immeasurably more pure in His sight. His soul has been so purified by the Gifts of the Holy Ghost that he has finished his purgatory on this earth, and can go straight to heaven at death.

The main job for all of us, therefore, is to advance daily in the intensity of charity, so that at death we may have no meritless sufferings to undergo in purgatory, but may go straight to heaven. Nothing else really matters in comparison with this.

(e). Charity is Eternal Life begun on Earth.

An acorn could not grow into a giant oak unless it had the nature of an oak. The life in it must be ESSENTIALLY the same as that in the grown tree. In a similar way, we could not get to heaven unless the supernatural life given us by God on earth were ESSENTIALLY the same as that enjoyed by the blessed in the beatific vision.

There are differences, of course. On earth, God is known only by faith; hence by means of ideas that can never express Him fully. In heaven, He will be known immediately, by means of Himself. On earth, too, we can lose our charity by formal mortal sin. In heaven, this will be impossible. All the same, these differences are only ACCIDENTAL ones. They do not affect the essence of charity. That is why it remains in heaven, though faith and hope do not. It is essentially the same as the life in heaven. It is, as Scripture so often says, eternal life begun on earth.

Thus, St. John says: "He that believeth in the Son HATH EVERLASTING LIFE." (John 3:36). He is speaking of one who LIVES his faith, since faith without good works is dead. And notice that he says that such a one already HAS eternal life here on earth. Our Divine Lord says the same: "He that eats My flesh and drinks My blood HATH EVERLASTING LIFE, and I will raise him up on the last day." (John 6:55). The same glorious truth is contained in many other texts.

It is expressed, again, in the Preface in Masses for the dead. With a shout of triumph, this majestic Preface exclaims: VITA MUTATUR, NON TOLLITUR – life is changed by death; but it is not lost. For a person whose soul is united to God by grace and charity, death is

simply a passing from a supernatural life which is imperfect, to one which is perfect. It is a passing from faith to vision. For charity is eternal life begun on earth. We should treasure it, therefore, as we treasure heaven itself.

4. How God Loves Us.

In the first place, God loves by GIVING goodness and perfection to us whom He loves.

He begins by giving us existence as rational beings, capable of being raised to the supernatural order. Then He raises us to this order by giving us the beatific vision as our end. And in this vision, He gives us HIMSELF, to be known, loved and enjoyed in eternity. He gives us the same object of knowledge, love and happiness that He Himself has, forever. After this, He has nothing left to give. For, in giving Himself, He gives all. Yes, He loves by giving, and He gives with a generosity that is infinite.

Secondly, He loves by UNITING HIMSELF to us.

Think of the intimate union effected by GRACE, and the virtues and Gifts that go with it. We have just seen that the life of grace and charity is nothing less than eternal life itself begun here in our exile in the obscurity of the faith.

Consider, too, the INDWELLING OF THE TRINITY in a soul in grace. All three Persons are there, and in such a way that their presence can be, as it were, relished and spiritually tasted by us, through the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, in a supernatural contemplation which is the next best thing to heaven.

Again, think of the INCARNATION. Even after man had rebelled against Him, God was willing to unite Himself to us in a most amazing manner, by sending us His only-begotten Son to be our Redeemer. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us." (John 1:14). He, the Infinite, became as one of us. He took a body and soul like ours, and appeared in our midst in the form of a little Child, born in a stable, the poorest of the poor, that we might come to Him more easily. In this flesh which is ours, He shared our life. He suffered our sufferings. He experienced our fatigues. He wept our tears. Like us in all things save sin and error and ignorance, He

stooped down to our level that He might raise us to His own. Could any union be greater than this?

Think, finally, of HOLY COMMUNION. Hiding Himself this time under the humble appearances of bread, He comes into the depths of our soul as a Saviour and Friend in the homely intimacy of perfect friendship, so that we can entertain Him every day as our Guest, and so act as host to God. Again, could any union with Him be more intimate than this?

Thirdly, God loves by SACRIFICING HIMSELF for us.

You have but to glance at a Crucifix to see that it is so. There you see the Son of God dying in shame and torments, crucified between two thieves. And why? To save us from hell, and to give us a chance again to go to heaven.

Well may St. Paul speak of this as “an excess of love” (Ephes. 2:4), and again as “a folly of love.” (1 Cor. 1:18). For the love of Our dying Saviour surpasses infinitely anything that our poor human reason can conceive. Here, God dies through love of a creature who despises Him and flees from Him, insults and dishonours Him. But this folly of the Cross, infinitely superior to human reason, is the remedy for another folly, inferior to reason, the folly of mortal sin. So sublime is the love shown in Christ's redemptive Sacrifice, that it will be appreciated fully by us only in the beatific vision. For, only there, can we have immediate insight into the essence of God, and into the Divine Personality of His Son who died for love of us.

God loves, then, by GIVING gifts to us, by UNITING Himself to us, and by SACRIFICING Himself for us. But His love is above all else a love of FRIENDSHIP. Hence, it demands a return. This is why St. John says: “Let us love God, since He has first loved us.” (1 John 4:19). How, therefore, should we love Him in return?

5. Our Love For God.

We ought to love God, as far as we can, in the way He loves us; by GIVING, UNITING, SACRIFICING.

What can we GIVE Him? We can give Him back every single gift He has given us. How? By using them all for His greater honour and the salvation of souls.

To do this, we make our morning offering. Then, during the day, we are careful never to do anything from an unworthy motive, and never anything which we cannot offer to God. By thus sanctifying our daily acts and sufferings, we turn each of them into a lovely prayer and an act of homage to God. In this way we can dedicate our whole life to Him – our work, our meals, our recreation and our sufferings, as well as our religious exercises – and thus give all to Him who gives us all.

How can we UNITE ourselves to Him? By increasing daily our sanctifying grace and with it the supernatural virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost; and by receiving Our Saviour every day with ever-growing fervour, in the Sacrament of His love. Let us not forget that even one Holy Communion, made with perfect dispositions, can give us the intimacy and the heroic sanctity of the saints.

Finally, how can we SACRIFICE ourselves for Him? We can do this by getting rid of every sinful attachment to creatures, whether these be outside us, as are the goods of this world, or within ourselves, as are the disorderly movements of our passions and of our will. By thus ridding ourselves of sinful selfishness, we shall be loving God in the way He wants us to love Him. At the same time, we shall be loving ourselves in the way He wants us to love ourselves by gaining for ourselves a sharing of His happiness in this world and in the next. We shall then be true to ourselves, because we are first true to Him.

Try to realise this: there are only TWO LOVES we can ever have, so we are forced to choose between them. One is a love of SELF which ignores, neglects and despises God. It is sinfully selfish, this love. Hence, it leads inevitably to slavery, to mental darkness and to untold misery in this life, and in the next to the unending and unavailing sufferings of hell. The other is a love of GOD, which ignores, neglects and despises all that is sinful in our love of self. It is a noble love of benevolence, and a mutual one. It is a love of friendship existing between the soul and God. It leads inevitably to right order; hence, to peace and happiness in this world, and to the beatific vision in eternity.

We like to think of Christ's words: "I will not now call you servants, but FRIENDS" (John 15:15), and to apply them to ourselves. We

regard our friendship with Him as an ineffable privilege. And so it is. But do we sufficiently realise the responsibility that goes with it?

Friendship, remember, is a SHARING OF LIFE. A friend is another SELF. If I am Our Saviour's friend, He has a right to see in me another Christ, another Self. And I have the obligation of modelling my life on His, and of making it as far as I can an image of His own.

Hence, I should ask myself from time to time a few questions. Have I the same judgments, the same ideals as He? Do I love what He loves, and hate what He hates, and for the same noble motives? Do I share His joys and sorrows? Am I saddened by sin, as He was in Gethsemane? Do I practise His humility, His courage and perseverance? Have I His zeal for His Father's glory, and His thirst for souls. Do I forgive my enemies as He did? Do I pray for them? Is my charity really modelled on His? Is it a real return for the love He has for me? Can He see in me another Self? Questions such as these honestly answered will show me to what extent I am a friend of Christ, a friend of God.

If I really love Him, I shall often think of Him. I shall strive to know Him better every day. I shall obey Him in all things. And I shall try to get others to know and love Him. An ever-deepening friendship will conform my thoughts more and more to His, my will to His, my actions to His, my sufferings to His. And I shall come to realise by a sort of experimental knowledge that God is indeed an infinitely perfect Friend – the one Friend who knows all things and who can do all things, a Friend whom I can never love too much, a Friend who can never fail.

He created me in order that I might KNOW, and LOVE, and LIVE. And, if I am true to Him during life, He will be with me at the end; and I shall be able to exclaim as did a great saint on her death-bed: "I go to LIGHT, to LOVE and to LIFE." For, at the end of life, I shall be judged on LOVE.

6. Practical Conclusions.

1. Since God is infinite Goodness, I must love Him above everything else.
2. As Our Saviour's friend, I must conform my whole life to His.

3. Since I am obliged to strive for perfection, I should increase my charity every day.
4. I should hate sin, especially mortal sin, as I hate hell itself.
5. I should never forget that, at death, I shall be judged on love.

SUMMARY

What Charity Is.

- (a). Charity is one virtue, not two.

It moves us to will God's Goodness first to Himself for His own sake, then to ourselves and our neighbour for the sake of God.

- (b). Charity is love.

Faith is knowledge. Hope is reliance. Charity is love.

- (c). The kind of love in charity.

A mutual, supernatural love of benevolence. A love of friendship. Charity: supernatural friendship between the soul and God.

2. Charity And Reward.

- (a). Charity does not exclude desire of union with God. It includes it instead, because charity is (i). friendship and (ii). love of our end as end.
- (b). The primary act in charity is a love of benevolence; the secondary, a love of desire by which we desire the beatific vision for the sake of God.

3. The Greatness of Charity.

- (a). It is the greatest of the virtues.
- (b). It directs the acts of the other virtues to our last end.
- (c). It is the proximate principle of merit.
- (d). It is the bond of perfection.
- (e). It is eternal life begun on earth.

4. How God Loves Us.

- (a). By giving us goodness and perfection.
- (b). By uniting Himself to us.
- (c). By sacrificing Himself for us.

5. Our Love For God.

- (a). Friendship demands a return of love.
- (b). We should love God as far as possible in the way He loves us.
- (c). Christ should be able to see in me another Self.
- (d). I am obliged to strive for perfection.

6. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks, and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. Our last end is made known to us by the virtue of (...); it is made possible by that of (...); and it is attained by that of (...). 2. Faith regards God as (...); hope, as (...); and charity, as (...). 3. Faith is (knowledge) (desire); hope is (desire) (reliance); charity is (love) (knowledge). 4. The love in charity is (a passion) (an emotion); Hence it (can) (cannot) be felt. 5. It is a (selfish) (an unselfish), a

(natural) (supernatural), a (mutual) (non-mutual) love. 6. A mutual, unselfish love - this is a definition of (...). 7. A selfish love is called a love of (...); an unselfish one is called a love of (...). 8. Charity is a supernatural (...) existing between the soul and God. 9. In charity we (ought) (ought not) exclude every desire of reward. 10. The primary act of charity, is a love of (concupiscence) (benevolence). 11. St. John says: "God is (...), and he that abideth in charity abideth in (...) and (...) in him." 12. He also says: "If anyone love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and (...) will come to him and make our (...) with him." 13. St. Paul says: "If I should have all faith so that I could move mountains, and have not charity, I am (...)." 14. And again: "Now there remaineth faith, hope and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is (...). 15. Charity directs the acts of the other virtues to our (...). 16. St. James says: "Faith without good works is (...). 17. Charity is the (radical) (proximate) principle of merit. 18. Layfolk (are) (are not) obliged to tend to perfection. 19. Perfection implies the practice of all the virtues, but it consists especially in (...). 20. St. Paul calls charity "the (...) of perfection." 21. Charity is (...) begun on earth. 22. God loves us by (...), by (...), and by (...). 23. Four things show God's desire to be united to us. They are (...), (...), (...) and (...). 24. St. Paul speaks of Our Saviour's love on the Cross as "an (...) of love," and also as "a (...) of love." 25. My main job in life is to increase my (...) at an ever-quickenening rate each day, so that I shall have no meritless sufferings to undergo in (...) but at death may go straight to (...).

(B). Answer each of the following as fully as you can.

1. Why is charity one virtue, not two?
2. Show how you find what kind of love is proper to charity.
3. Charity is supernatural friendship between us and God. Explain this.
4. In making an act of charity, we should exclude all desire of reward. Criticise this statement.
5. Account for the greatness of charity.
6. What four things prove God's desire to unite Himself to us?
7. What is Christian perfection? Why must I strive for it, and how?
8. As Our Lord's friend, I have great responsibilities. Explain these.

Chapter 39

CHARITY IN REGARD TO OUR NEIGHBOUR

1. Love Of Our Neighbour.

(a). A Strange Commandment.

That we ought to love God is most reasonable. He is Goodness Itself, and He loves us with “an everlasting love.” (Jer. 31:3). But that we should be obliged to love our neighbour with the same theological love as that by which we love God – this, at first sight, seems strange. For our neighbour is not God. He is, instead, a mere human being. Moreover, he is ANY human being, no matter how degraded or repulsive, or how different from us in culture, race or philosophy of life. He may even be our worst enemy.

Yet our obligation is clear. Scripture says: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, thy whole soul, with all thy mind and with all thy strength; and thy NEIGHBOUR as thyself.” (Luke 10:27).

(b). Not so strange.

When we reflect a little, however, we find that this Commandment is not so strange after all. Why not? There are two reasons.

The first is the fact that our love of God is a true FRIENDSHIP. And friendship demands that our love for a friend extend to all others whom he loves. But God loves ALL men. He wants them all to go to heaven; and He gives to all of them the means to get there. If we love God, then, we cannot separate from Him those whom He loves, those who can still have a place in His Heart, those who are capable of going to heaven.

Now you can see why St. John says: “If any man say ‘I love God,’ and hateth his brother, he is a LIAR.” (1 John 4:20). He is lying to himself, deceiving himself. He is attempting the impossible. One

cannot love God without willing what He wills, any more than one can will what He wills without loving Him. This is why there is but one virtue of charity which urges us to love God for His own sake by willing to Him His own beatifying Goodness, and to love our neighbour as ourself by willing to him what God wills to him and to us – the same object of knowledge, love and happiness as He Himself has in eternity.

The second reason is this: Our Saviour has, in some mysterious way, IDENTIFIED Himself with our neighbour.

Think of His words to Saul: “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME?” (Acts 9:5). He does not say, “My followers,” but “ME.” He makes Himself one with them. Think, too, of His words at the Last judgment: “As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to ME.” (Mat. 24:41). Here, again, He identifies Himself with the poor and the needy, hence, with all men. For, which of us is not poor and needy, if not in this world's goods, then in those of eternity? And who is more poverty-stricken in God's sight than a sinner, blinded by selfishness?

So it comes simply to this: To love our NEIGHBOUR with supernatural charity is to love CHRIST; for Christ has identified Himself with our neighbour. And to love Christ is to love GOD, for Christ is God.

The great difficulty we have in loving God is due mainly to the fact that He is invisible to us. Christ removes this difficulty by identifying Himself with our neighbour. By linking together these three loves – love of our neighbour, love of Christ, and love of God – our Saviour brings the great precept of charity within reach of our poor earth-bound minds and hearts.

At the same time, He gives us a new reason for loving all men. It is in this sense that He speaks of the precept of fraternal charity as a NEW Commandment: “A new Commandment I give unto you, that you love one another as I have loved you.” (John 13:34). He knows, of course, that the Commandment itself is not new. What is new is the foundation He brings to it, by making our neighbour represent Himself, and with Him, God.

Because our love of God is a true FRIENDSHIP, then, and because Christ has IDENTIFIED Himself with our neighbour, we are obliged

to love all our fellowmen with the same theological virtue as that by which we love God.

(c). Who is my Neighbour?

My neighbour is any person who is in heaven, or who is capable of going there. The term embraces the blessed, the souls in purgatory, and all human beings on earth. Christ died for them all. They can all share God's life by grace. They can all save their souls. To all, therefore, I must will the beatific vision, just as God does. I can exclude none from my charity.

Must I love, then, even my worst ENEMIES? Yes. Our Lord's words are perfectly clear: "Love your ENEMIES; do good to them that HATE you; and pray for them that PERSECUTE you." (Mat. 5:44)

I must FORGIVE them, too. How forcibly Our Saviour insists on it! In the Our Father, He makes us admit our willingness to forgive all who trespass against us. And over and over again He warns us that His Father will forgive us to the extent that we forgive our enemies.

He even devotes a special parable to the necessity of forgiving. Recall the occasion. Peter had just asked Our Lord how often we ought forgive our enemy. Peter, remember, was an Oriental and a Jew, so he probably had, like his compatriots, an unlimited capacity for hatred and revenge. He thought he was being very generous, therefore, when he suggested to Christ that we forgive as many as seven times. But Our Lord said, "Not seven times, but seventy times seven times." (Mat. 18:22). This meant, of course, without limit. How amazed poor Peter must have been! And how miserable he must have felt, as he looked forward to a life-long career of insult-swallowing!

Then Our Saviour told the parable of the ungrateful servant. Read it for yourself in the 18th Chapter of St. Matthew. Notice how generous the King is. He forgives his servant a debt of ten thousand talants - more than two million dollars in our money. Notice, too, how uncharitable the servant is. He throttles one of his mates who owes him only a few dollars, and has him put into prison. No wonder the King sees red when he hears about it. He promptly hands him over to the TORTURERS, as Scripture puts it. This is a grim reference to the Roman custom of torturing debtors to make them reveal any hidden treasures they might have, or to move their

friends to pay their debts for them. As this servant does not seem to have had any hidden treasure, or any friends, we can presume that his period of torture would be a lengthy one.

Notice, finally, how Our Lord ends this parable. He says: "It is THUS that My Heavenly Father will deal with YOU, if brother does not FORGIVE brother, WITH ALL HIS HEART." These are rather frightening words, especially the last four. And they apply to you and to me. They mean a lot.

In this matter, as in every other, Christ practised what He preached. How often He forgave sin! And who is more His enemy than a sinner? Think of Mary Magdalen, St. Peter, the repentant thief! Think of Our Saviour's words as He was being nailed to the Cross: "Father, FORGIVE them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 33:34). These words, remember, apply to us as well as to His executioners; for, by our sins, we are just as responsible for His death as they were. If, then, He can so generously forgive us and all others like us, surely we can forgive them too, for His dear sake.

Do we have to love all our fellowmen equally? No. If we had to choose between saving the life of our father and that of a stranger, we should save our father. He is most intimately united to us by blood. Hence, he has a greater right to our love. From this, you can see, too, why, all else being equal, it is more MERITORIOUS for us to love our friends than to love our enemies. Sounds queer, doesn't it? But it's true.

(d). How I should love others.

Well, thank God, I do not have to FEEL love for everyone I meet or read about. Charity is not a matter of our feelings, but of our WILL. It urges us to WILL good to others, especially the supreme good of salvation; and to be ready to DO them a good turn when charity demands it.

FEELINGS of dislike can arise in us of their own accord at the mere sight of some people. Have you ever read "Malachy's Miracle"? Then you will remember how Father Malachy was one day sitting in a carriage, meditating on the love of God, when two very ugly persons came in and sat opposite him. One glance, and his eyes shut with a snap. And he took consolation in the thought that, if

charity obliges us to love our neighbour, it does not oblige us to love him with our eyes open.

Such feelings are not sinful in themselves, for sin is in the will alone. Still, we must control them. We must not let them lead us into willing or doing anything sinful. You may not like your neighbour's face, but that's no reason for trying to bury your fist in it. He may never win a beauty competition, but he still has a solid claim to your love; for this claim is based, not on his face, but on the fact that he is loved by God. As such, you can love him too, in spite of his face, just as God does.

Secondly, we must remember that the love in charity is a SUPERNATURAL, not just a natural one. We must love our neighbour because Christ has died for him, and because he is, or can be, a friend of God, who destines him for heaven. We must love him in God, and for God. The MOTIVE is all-important here. It enables us to love everyone, even our worst enemies, for whom we could have no natural love whatever. It enables our love to be all-embracing as was that of Our Divine Saviour when He gave His life for us all.

Lastly, it is worth noting that concord in a community is a union of WILLS, not necessarily a union of OPINIONS. Fraternal charity in no way implies that we have no opinions of our own, or that we cease to think for ourselves. But it does demand that we be tolerant of the views of others, just as we expect them to be tolerant of our own. A wise tolerance is a great aid to charity.

(e). What Charity forbids.

(i). Envy.

Envy is sadness concerning another's good which is considered as our evil, because it seems to diminish our own excellence or glory. Every sadness arising from the sight of good in another is not envy. It all depends on WHY we are sad.

Someone is given an important office. We know that he is quite unworthy. We are saddened by his appointment. Is this envy? No. It is a righteous INDIGNATION instead.

A militant atheist is elected Premier. We are sorry because of the harm he will do to religion. Envy? No. It is an effect of FEAR, and of a very reasonable one.

I realise that my friend has far more virtue than I. I am sad, not because he has this sanctity, but because I lack it. I strive to imitate him. Any envy here? No. It is EMULATION, and quite good, too. If, however, I regard his sanctity as a sort of slight or insult to myself, inasmuch as I consider that it lessens my own excellence, and wish him to be deprived of it, this is envy. It is a perverted, an unreasonable sadness at another's good, because it seems to overshadow our own.

Envy arises from PRIDE, which is an unreasonable seeking of one's own excellence. It is found mostly amongst equals. Perhaps that is why there is much of it in our so-called democratic age.

How grievous is it as a sin? In itself, it is a MORTAL sin, since it offends against charity. However, it admits of LIGHT MATTER. If the good of which we are envious is a very important one, the sin will be mortal; otherwise, it will be venial. Thus, envy of another's sanctity would be a mortal sin; envy of his reputation as a footballer, a venial sin. Though, of course, for a FORMAL mortal sin, full advertence and freedom are required. In practice, envy is often only a venial sin, on account of light matter, or lack of full realisation of its sinfulness. However, we should do our very best to avoid this sin, because it can so easily lead to other sins which may be very serious.

The OFFSPRINGS OF ENVY are the ugly quintuplets: WHISPERING, which consists in destroying another's good name by talking secretly about them, DETRACTION which is open defamation and which here includes calumny, RESENTMENT at another's good fortune, JOY in another's adversity, and, worst of all, HATRED.

Envy and the hatred that flows from it can be diabolical, as Scripture shows so clearly. Through envy, Satan tempted our first parents and brought untold misery into the world. (Wis. 2:4). Through envy, Cain killed Abel. (Gen. 4:8). Through envy, the sons of Jacob sold Joseph into slavery. (Gen. 37:40). Through envy, the Pharisees delivered up Christ to death. (Mat. 27:18). These facts show how satanic it can be.

How can we get rid of this dangerous vice? What are its REMEDIES? There are three obvious ones: HUMILITY, which roots out pride, the source of envy; CHARITY, which is directly opposed to it; and MEDITATION ON ITS EVIL EFFECTS. These are the sins that flow from it – the quintuplets. And to them we can add the fact that envy injures even a man's physical health. Scripture says that it “consumes” its victim. (Wis. 6:25). It gnaws his heart away. It is the rat of the vices – a most repulsive rodent.

(ii). Hatred.

Charity is love. Hatred is the very opposite of love. Hence, it is a sin against charity.

We can hate even God, inasmuch as we can regard Him as in some way EVIL – as One who will punish sin, for instance. It is thus that He is hated by the devils in hell, and by their satellites who run anti-God campaigns on earth. Hatred of God is, of course, a most serious sin; and it does not admit any lightness of matter. One can commit a venial sin here only through lack of full advertence and freedom.

Hatred of our neighbour is also a MORTAL sin, in itself, since it is against charity. But it admits of light matter. To hope, for instance, that an officious official strutting about at a public function will slip on the polished floor and wound his vanity is clearly not a grievous sin. It's different, however, if you hope that he will break his neck. The gravity of the sin depends on the gravity of the evil we wish to those we hate. For FORMAL MORTAL sin, it must be a very serious evil, and, of course, there must be full advertence and freedom.

Bilious Billy hopes that Weary Willy will go to hell when he dies. Is this a sin? Yes, and a very big one. Euthanasia desires the death of her uncle, so that she may inherit his wealth. Any sin? Yes. She is inverting the right order of things by preferring riches to a human life. A mother wishes that her son may, in God's providence, meet with an accident in the hope that this will make him return to his religion. Any sin? No. Is it a sin for us to hate another's vices? No. This merely shows our love for him. If he loved himself properly, he would hate them too. No one hates himself more than does a person who commits a formal mortal sin, since by this he wills for himself the greatest of evils – an eternity of misery in hell.

Let us try to root out completely any yielding to the vice of hatred. It is directly opposed to charity. Moreover, it has the dreadful effect of blinding us. Hence, of marring our judgment. "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light," says St. John, "But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes." (1 John 2:10-11). Physical blindness is to be pitied; but mental and moral blindness is far worse. Finally, hatred can lead to other serious sins, even to murder. Think of St. Stephen. His enemies hated him so much that, as Scripture says, they "gnashed with their teeth at him." (Acts. 7:54). Can we wonder that they murdered him?

The REMEDY for hate is obvious. We must get rid of the pride and the envy from which it springs. Then, we must practise fraternal love.

(iii). Quarrelling.

Concord is a union of hearts. Discord is the opposite. It is a warring of wills, and, of course, an inordinate one. It shows itself in contentions or disputes, in quarrelling, squabbling, bickering and the like. It is obviously opposed to charity.

Some take a fiendish delight in fomenting trouble. God does not like such people. The Book of Proverbs mentions six things which He hates. Then it adds a seventh which He detests, and it is "Him that soweth DISCORD among brethren." (Prov. 6:19). Every community, whether it be a school, a family, or a religious institution, should do its utmost to foster a good community spirit. It makes for the health, the happiness, and the success of all.

(iv). Scandal.

The word scandal first meant any obstacle such as a stone over which a person stumbled and fell. Then it came to mean anything that could lead to another's moral downfall. Thus, a filthy book or picture can be a scandal to people. So can a person's words, deeds, or omissions.

One commits a sin of scandal, then, by ENTICING another to sin. It pre-supposes that the other does not already intend to sin. In this, it differs from CO-OPERATION.

Algy asks Bulgy to help him to rob a bank, and promises him half the loot. Is this a sin of scandal? Yes. What if Bulgy refuses? Algy still commits scandal, because he gives Bulgy an enticement to sin, and that is exactly what scandal is.

Sometimes people tempt others just for the sake of getting them to offend God, as the devil did to our first parents. What is principally intended here is the moral ruin of another. Such persons do the work of Satan. So this kind of scandal is called DIABOLICAL scandal. Its name speaks for itself. It is the worst sort of scandal we can commit.

Mostly, however, people entice others to sin, not precisely for the sake of the sin considered as sin, but for the sake of some benefit they hope to derive from it. At the same time, however, they realise that their end cannot be gained without the other's sin. Hence, they intend this sin indirectly.

If a person commits a sin of scandal by intending the other's sin either directly, as in diabolical scandal, or indirectly, as in the case just mentioned, he commits TWO sins: one against charity, and one against the particular virtue which the other person is enticed to violate.

It happens at times that a person gives scandal, but he does not intend another's sin either directly or indirectly. You have an example of this in the case where a prominent Catholic who has a dispensation for abstinence does not tell anyone about it, and eats meat publicly on Good Friday. Another Catholic is scandalised. How many sins does the scandal-giver commit here? Only one. It is a sin against charity.

Finally, there is what is called PHARISAICAL scandal. The Pharisees were scandalised by the good things Christ did, as when He cured the sick on the Sabbath, or forgave sins by His own power. This sort of scandal arises from the ill will of those who take it. Normally, we take no notice of it.

Apart from this, however, we should be most careful never to give scandal, especially to the innocent. This seems particularly detestable in God's sight. Of such a scandal-monger Our Lord says: "It were better for him that a millstone should be hung about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depths of the sea."

(Mat. 18:6). How careful we should be, then, in our speech and acts, when in the presence of His little ones! How careful, too, to fulfil well all our duties, lest we give scandal by neglect!

From this you can see what dreadful sin it is for people to write books that destroy faith and morals, or to produce dances or pictures or plays or anything else that can entice others to sin. Such people do the devil's work on earth; and, at death, he will claim them as his own. Siding with him in this world, they run the terrible risk of being with him forever in the next. Let us hate scandal, then, as we hate hell itself.

(v). Co-operation.

We co-operate with another when we help him to do something. If it is something sinful, we are said to co-operate in sin. Here, we do not entice another to sin, as we do in scandal. We assist him instead. He already intends to do wrong.

We are never allowed to help another in such a way that we INTEND the sin he is committing. This is called FORMAL co-operation. It is always a sin. Jackie, we'll suppose, is going to raid an orchard. He tells Jimmie about it, Jimmie says: "I'll come too. I'll fill sacks while you throw down the apples." Is this a case of co-operation? Yes, obviously. Is it formal co-operation? Yes. Jimmie freely decides to commit the same sin as Jackie. So he intends this sin. Such formal co-operation is always forbidden.

A gangster threatens to shoot you if you do not help him to carry a safe to his car. You help him. Is this co-operation? Yes. Is it formal co-operation? No. You have no intention of committing any sin. You are not a thief. Left to yourself, you would never walk off with someone else's safe. So it is a case of MATERIAL co-operation.

Is MATERIAL co-operation a sin? It may be, or it may not be. It depends on whether we have SUFFICIENT EXCUSE for co-operating, or not. In the case just given, it would not be a sin for you to help the gangster. You have a sufficient reason for doing so. You can rightly prefer your life to another person's property.

Does a person have to give up making razors just because some one may commit suicide some day with one of them? No. The co-operation here is only material, and extremely remote. If a man

asks you for your razor so that he can commit suicide with it, are you allowed to give it to him? No. The co-operation is much more immediate here; and you have no excuse for it.

We must never be guilty of FORMAL co-operation in sin, and we must avoid MATERIAL co-operation as much as we can. We should be particularly careful about co-operation in non-Catholic religious ceremonies, as this helps the spread of indifferentism, as we saw in a previous chapter, and it may give grave scandal. We have enough sins of our own to worry about without helping others to offend God.

2. The Effects Of Charity.

(a). Peace.

Charity causes RIGHT ORDER to exist between us and our neighbour, and between all men and God. From this, PEACE must result, for it is nothing else than the harmony of right order.

Peace! What a magical word this is! How sweetly and tranquilly it announces one of the most precious, yet one of the most elusive of goods! For lack of it, man wanders restlessly on from object to object, letting go one good thing to snatch at another, draining one pleasure to the dregs to try the next, yet experiencing all the time a horrible void that refuses to be filled. This vain quest for peace is a sort of madness that fails even to enjoy the passing pleasure for greed of the one that is to come. It is but a cruel mockery of the true peace brought to us by Christ – the supernatural peace of a soul in which there is right order, on account of its union with God.

(b). Joy.

Envy and hate bring a cancerous sadness into the soul. Charity fills the heart with joy.

Our Saviour came that we might be happy. He says: "These things have I spoken to you that MY joy may be in YOU, and your joy may be filled." (John 15:11). Our joy is to be nothing less than a sharing in His own; and it is to be a complete joy. "Ask, and you shall receive," He says again, "that your joy may be full." (John 17:13). No half measures here, are there?

The joy given by charity is as deep-seated as is the peace it gives. It is in the very depths of our soul. Hence, it is quite compatible with a daily carrying of His Cross. In fact, it is experienced most profoundly when that Cross weighs most heavily upon us, for we are then most united to Him.

The happiest persons are the saints, for they are the most charitable. They make their happiness consist in making others happy. They live for God, and for their neighbour. So He rewards them with a happiness which, even in this world, is a sharing in His own.

(c). Mercy.

The third effect of charity is MERCY. Unlike peace and joy, it is a virtue. It regulates sentiments of compassion according to the rule of right reason.

A woman sees in the paper the picture of a criminal who has been condemned to death for several murders. She feels angry with the judge, because the condemned man has such gentle eyes. Is this mercy? No. It is mere sentimentality. Nothing reasonable about it; hence, nothing virtuous. It is the same for many a tear shed in our movie theatres today.

Mercy is a virile, a manly thing. Of all the virtues, it is in a sense the most God-like. For mercy is the special prerogative of the Infinite.

3. Charity In Deed.

Love cannot be idle. It must be doing things for those it loves. Hence, charity shows itself in good deeds of every kind, but especially in what are called the CORPORAL and the SPIRITUAL works of mercy.

Man can suffer from countless deficiencies. On the PHYSICAL side, there are deficiencies in food, drink, clothing and housing. Then there are such evils as sickness, which flows from an intrinsic cause, and captivity, which flows from an extrinsic one. And even when life is ended, there is the dishonour of the unburied corpse. To minister to these needs we have the seven CORPORAL works of mercy: to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the

naked, to harbour the harbourless, to visit the sick, to visit the imprisoned, and to bury the dead.

On the SPIRITUAL side, the worst deficiency is that of sin. Then there are ignorance, doubt and sorrow. Again, others may do us a wrong, or they may injure us. Finally, they may be in need of our prayers. To remedy these evils, we have the seven SPIRITUAL works of mercy: to convert the sinner, to instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubtful, to comfort the sorrowful, to bear wrongs patiently, to forgive injuries, and to pray for the living and the dead.

These noble, Christ-like works flow immediately from mercy; but they are commanded by charity. You see them exercised daily by the Sisters of Compassion, the Sisters of the Poor, the Good Shepherd Sisters, the Sisters of Mercy, the St. Vincent de Paul Society, the Apostleship of the Sea, and by other organisations too numerous to mention. Through them, Our Lord carries on His work of mercy in the world. Through them, He still cures, comforts and consoles the sick, the aged, and the homeless, and brings them safely through the gateway of death to His Father's home in heaven.

Today, many are moved by the sight of physical misery, but spiritual misery leaves them cold. While recognising the greatness of the corporal works of mercy, let us not neglect the spiritual ones. They are more necessary, more excellent, and more meritorious. Let us imitate Christ, who had compassion for the body, but especially for the soul. For He, of all men, realised the value of the human soul. It was for it He died on Calvary.

Finally, charity shows itself in FRATERNAL CORRECTION. This consists in giving advice by which others can correct their faults. It is a duty which is sadly neglected today. Yet it is demanded by charity.

We do not need to be saints to exercise fraternal correction. What we need is a sane judgment, plenty of prudence, and true charity. For the monition must be a wise one; it must be given at the right time, in the right place, and in the right way; and it must be given through love, not to annoy another, nor to humiliate him, nor to impress him with our superiority, but to HELP him to live better, hence to be happier in this world and in the next.

4. The Value Of Fraternal Charity.

We have seen that fraternal charity makes it easy for us to love God, since He is made present to us, as it were, in our neighbour. It brings the Infinite within our reach.

It has another great value, too. It is a sign of the genuineness of our love of God. "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples," Our Lord says, "if you have love one for another." (John 13:35).

A precious sign, this. For we need to know whether we are God's friends or not. And it is a sign that does not deceive, because, as we have seen, it is impossible for us to love our neighbour with true charity without loving God. A Christ-like love of our neighbour is thus the crucial test of genuine sanctity, and it is the measure of the depth and the sincerity of our love for God.

5. A Few Don't's.

In his delightful book, "As We Ought," Father McCorry, S.J., gives twenty-five "Don't's" which help to foster charity in any community. Here are a dozen of them.

1. Don't omit that little word of honest praise for work well done.
2. Don't omit that little word of thanks.
3. Don't omit that little word of apology.
4. Don't contradict; express disagreement courteously.
5. Don't make a practice of interrupting others.
6. Don't raise your voice in an argument.
7. Don't cultivate speech mannerisms such as "Y' know," "D' you get me?"
8. Don't lecture under pretence of conversing.
9. Don't forget to help spontaneously in little jobs.
10. Don't forget to pass things at table.
11. Don't treat the house radio or the newspaper as private possessions.
12. Don't underestimate the value of courtesy or good manners.

These are little things, yes; but do not forget the wee mite which the widow cast into the collection box in the Temple. Of her, Our Saviour said: "She hath cast in more than all the rest." (Luke 21:3). These little deeds of courtesy and kindness may be like the widow's mite. They may win great praise from Christ. And in performing them through genuine charity, we may be promoting the peace, the happiness and the success of our community more than all the rest.

6. Love Or Hate?

You can share spiritual things with others - your knowledge, for instance - without losing them yourself. But you cannot do this with material things. This is why materialism leads to envy, hatred, quarrelling and even war itself. Today, materialism is helped by atheistic communism, a doctrine based on class hatred.

Hence, the problem that faces the world today is this: Will the human heart be full or empty? Will it harbour love, or hate? Are we to have full hearts, overflowing with love and good deeds, or shrivelled hearts, eaten up with pride and selfishness? Are we to have the rich joy of true charity, or the crushing sorrow of envy and resentment? Are we to practise love's eager mercy, or experience instead the inhuman tyranny of cruelty? Shall there be the spiritual correction of others, or their spiritual seduction for selfish and degrading ends? Is there to be union on earth, or chaos? It depends on us. It depends on the extent to which we practise charity, and get others to practise it as well. It depends on our love, and on our zeal. Our obligation is clear. And woe to us if we neglect it!

6. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should practise daily as many acts of kindness as I can.
2. I should never scandalise others by word, deed, or omission.
3. I should control feelings of envy and hate.
4. I should avoid any co-operation which is sinful.
5. I should measure my love for God by my love for my neighbour.

SUMMARY

1. Love Of Our Neighbour.

- (a). A strange Commandment. To love men with the same virtue as that by which we love God.
- (b). Not so strange. Love of God is a true friendship. Christ has identified Himself with our neighbour.
- (c). Who is my neighbour? Anyone in heaven, or able to go there. Enemies.
- (d). How I should love. Not a question of feelings, but of my will. Not a merely natural love. A union of wills, not of opinions.
- (e). What charity forbids. Envy. Hatred. Quarrelling. Scandal. Co-operation in sin.

2. Effects Of Charity.

Peace. Joy. Mercy.

3. Charity In Deed.

Corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

Fraternal correction.

4. Value Of Charity.

Brings God within our reach, in our neighbour.

A sign of the genuineness of my love of God.

5. A Few Don't's.

6. Love Or Hate?

7. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

- 1. St. John says: "If any man say 'I love God' and hateth his brother, he is a (...)." 2. Christ will say: "As often as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to (...)." 3. To love our neighbour with charity is to love (...) who has identified Himself with our neighbour.
- 4. Christ says: "Love your (...); do good to them that (...) you; pray for them that (...) you." 5. In the parable of the (...) Our Lord shows that we must forgive others. 6. The love in fraternal charity (is) (is

not) a feeling. 7. It is a (natural) (supernatural) love. 8. It is a union of (opinions) (wills). 9. Envy arises from (...). 10. Envy (admits) (does not admit) light matter. 11. It (is) (is not) possible for us to hate God. 12. Hatred of God (admits) (does not admit) light matter. 13. St. John says: "He that hateth his brother walketh in (...)." 14. Scripture says that God detests "him that soweth (...) among brethren." 15. Christ says that it would be better for a man to have a millstone tied about his neck and to be "(...) in the depths of the sea" rather than to give scandal. 16. To entice another to commit sin is the sin of (...). 17. Formal co-operation in sin is (sometimes) (never) allowed. 18. From right order arises (...). 19. The three effects of fraternal charity are: (...), (...) and (...). 20. Charity shows itself in the seven (...) and (...) works of mercy; and in fraternal (...).

(B). Answer each of the following as fully as you can: -

1. Show why charity for our neighbour and for God is one virtue.
2. What kind of love must we have for our neighbour?
3. Explain who our neighbour is.
4. Explain: envy, hatred, scandal, co-operation.
5. What are the three great effects of fraternal charity? Explain each.
6. What are the corporal and the spiritual works of mercy?
7. Give ten "Don't's" that foster charity in any community.
8. Why is fraternal charity the sign and the measure of our love of God?

Chapter 40

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST

1. What They Are.

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST are supernatural QUALITIES or HABITS. Hence, they are permanent things, like sanctifying grace and the infused virtues, not just passing helps like actual graces.

How many are there? Seven. They are: FEAR OF THE LORD, FORTITUDE, PIETY, COUNSEL, KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING and WISDOM.

Where are they? They are in our FACULTIES, not in the soul itself. The first three are in our WILL; the last four, in our INTELLECT.

How do they come to us? They come with SANCTIFYING GRACE. Normally, therefore, they are brought first by baptism. Later, if grace is lost, they are restored with it by penance.

Can we increase them? Yes. They are increased by CONFIRMATION, and by any increase in the intensity of our CHARITY.

How are they lost? They are lost by any FORMAL MORTAL sin. By this we lose grace, and with it the Gifts. All of them? Yes.

2. How They Function.

To see how they function, let us compare, say, the Gift of COUNSEL with the supernatural virtue of PRUDENCE which it complements.

Supernatural prudence is indeed vastly superior to natural prudence, since its acts can merit heaven. This is quite beyond anything that our human nature can do on its own. All the same, it has something human about it. It acts in a HUMAN way. With it, we still have to think out for ourselves what we ought do in the particular circumstances in which we are placed. And, in doing this, we can easily make a mistake, on account of ignorance, prejudice,

undue haste, rationalisation of motives, the influence of our passions, and so on. This is the human side of supernatural prudence; and, like most things human, it can fail.

With the Gift of Counsel, however, it is quite different. Here, there is no weighing of arguments for and against. Instead, a ready-made answer is given instantly. And it is given by the Holy Ghost who cannot make a mistake. By the supernatural light which He gives through His Gift, He makes it quite clear to us what God wants us to do; and at the same time, He gives us the strength and the courage to do it. Read a life of the Curé of Ars, and you will see how he was once given a number of moral problems to solve, as a sort of examination. The answers he gave were right; but the reasons he gave for them were almost all wrong. Why? Because the answers were an effect of the Gift of Counsel. They came from the Holy Ghost. The reasons, on the contrary, came from himself. They were his own.

VIRTUES, then, even the supernatural ones, function in a HUMAN way. This is their weakness. The GIFTS function in a DIVINE way. This is their strength, their special excellence. It is why they are so reliable. It is why they are infallible in producing their effects.

3. Their Purpose.

All day long, radio waves are coming to us from stations far and near. But we cannot grasp them and profit by them, unless we have a radio. In a somewhat similar way, God's ACTUAL GRACES are given us all day long. But most of them go unheeded, unless we have some special means of grasping them, and profiting by them. We have such a means in the GIFTS.

Their job, then, is to tune us in, as it were, to the graces of light and strength which God constantly sends to us. They make us exquisitely SENSITIVE and DOCILE to the ILLUMINATIONS and INSPIRATIONS of the Holy Ghost so that we let none of them go unused. In a word, they SUBJECT us completely to the sanctifying influence of the Spirit of Love and of Truth.

Since the Gifts act in a DIVINE manner, they lead us to the highest sanctity in an infallible way, without even the possibility of error or illusion. They are, consequently, a perfectly safe and sure road to Christian perfection. And they are at the beck and call of everyone.

Even the most illiterate peasant can increase daily the intensity of his CHARITY, and with it the functioning of the GIFTS. And these can lead him to the heroic sanctity of the saints.

4. The Beatitudes.

At the very beginning of His public ministry, in the sermon on the mount, Our Lord taught the eight BEATITUDES. He began each with the word “blessed,” which means “happy.” Why did He begin each that way? Because the beatitudes are excellent ACTIONS which we must perform if we want to be genuinely happy in this life and in the next.

Why do we mention them here with the Gifts? Because these excellent actions are performed with the special help of the Gifts, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. Through them, the soul detaches itself more and more from whatever is sinful in creatures, and unites itself more and more to God. As a result, it enjoys, even in this life, a real sharing in the infinite happiness which God Himself enjoys in eternity. The beatitudes, then, solve for us the problem of happiness. And theirs is the only solution.

5. The Fruits Of The Holy Ghost.

Helped by the Gifts, we can of course perform numberless different good acts. Because of His infinite Wisdom, Our Lord could reduce all these to eight, just as He could reduce all the Commandments to one. St. Paul did not have this power of summarising things. When, consequently, he came to give a list of the good things we can do under inspiration from the Holy Ghost, he mentioned twelve. He called them the FRUITS of the Holy Spirit. Here they are: charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith (i.e. fidelity), modesty, continence and chastity. He could have given a dozen others without any trouble. They form a striking contrast to the degrading actions which he has just previously mentioned, and which he has called the fruits of the FLESH.

6. What Each Of The Gifts Does For Us.

FEAR

There is a fear which makes people COMMIT sin – that which made Peter deny Christ, for instance. Then, there is a fear which makes

us AVOID sin on account of the punishment attached to it. This is a good fear, but it is a SERVILE fear – the sort that a slave has of his master. Neither of these is the fear found in the Gift. Finally, there is a FILIAL fear – the fear a good child has of offending its father whom it loves. It is based on reverence, and it flows from love. This is the kind of fear that is in the Gift, though of course it is not a natural fear as is the child's, but a supernatural one, caused by the Holy Ghost. Here is what it does for us: –

1. It makes us throw ourselves into Our Saviour's arms so that He may hold us close to His Heart, lest we separate ourselves from Him by sin.
2. It sharpens our sense of sin. It gives us, not a scrupulous conscience, for that is an evil, but a true conscience, keenly alive to the possibility and the hatefulness of sin.
3. It fills the soul with a loathing for sin. It makes occasions of sin appear in their true light, not as something alluring, but as something disgusting and repulsive.
4. By the very complete control which it gives us over our passions, it brings right order within us, and with it a deep peace of soul.
5. In its advanced stages, it fills the soul with reverence for God's majesty, like the reverential fear which the angels experience in the beatific vision. "Tremunt potestates," as the Preface says.
6. It complements the virtue of temperance, especially in humility, meekness and chastity. Thus, it helps to detach us completely from what is sinful in creatures, and to give us true poverty of spirit.
7. Hence, the beatitude it makes us practise is this: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Wealth, honour, power and pleasure – how easy it is for us to prefer these to God! Hence, to seek happiness in them, instead of in Him. But this is to seek something they can never give. It is to seek the impossible; hence to fail utterly in our quest for happiness.

We are happy when we have no desires unsatisfied. Therefore, a thing can make us happy to the extent that it is good, for goodness is that which all desire. From this it follows that God alone can make us perfectly happy, since He alone, as Infinite Goodness, can satisfy all our desires fully and forever.

Our Lord knows that we can be truly and completely happy only when we are united to God. He knows, too, that sinful attachments to creatures can mar this union, and even destroy it altogether. So He says to us in this first beatitude: "Give up all sinful desires for creatures. Practise perfect poverty of spirit. Then unite yourself most intimately to God. And your reward even in this life will be a sharing in God's own happiness, and a foretaste, therefore, of the peace and the joy of heaven." How simple it is! And how logical! Yet how opposed to the so-called wisdom of the world!

PIETY

As a VIRTUE, PIETY makes us act towards our parents with the reverence, honour and obedience due to them. As a GIFT, it makes us act rightly towards God, by seeing in Him our infinitely perfect FATHER. Hence: -

1. It makes us realise in a very practical way that God is our Father, so that we act towards Him with the utmost reverence, love and trust.
2. It makes us realise, too, that all other human beings are our brothers (in the supernatural order), since all have the same father in heaven; and that we must treat them, not as rivals to be supplanted, nor as enemies to be crushed, but as joint-heirs with us to heaven.
3. Hence, it helps to root out from our soul all envy, hatred, anger and resentment, and with these all quarrelling and bitterness.
4. It gives us also a special tenderness towards Mary, our Mother, and towards the Church, for She too is our mother inasmuch as she generates us anew into the supernatural order by baptism, and fosters our spiritual life by the Mass and the other Sacraments.

5. By establishing right order between us and our neighbour, and again between us and God, this Gift enhances greatly our peace of soul.
6. It complements the virtue of religion, for it makes us fulfil all our religious exercises in the spirit of the Our Father.
7. The beatitude that it enables us to fulfil is therefore the following: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land."

We can easily hinder or destroy our union with God by failing to conduct ourselves rightly towards our neighbour. But, to treat others with a Christ-like meekness, kindness and courtesy is the surest way of winning their good will; hence, of promoting fraternal charity.

This is why Our Lord says to us in the second beatitude: "If you want to be happy, be meek." The excellent act to be performed here is that of practising meekness, the flower of Christian charity. The reward in this life is a deeper sharing in the happiness proper to the kingdom of God, which is heaven.

FORTITUDE

Saints simply have to be heroes, because their sanctity is truly heroic – a miracle in the moral order, in fact. Hence, they must practise the virtue of fortitude, but this on its own is not enough. It must be helped by the GIFT, which acts in a divine way, and therefore cannot fail. Here are some of the good things it does for us: –

1. It gives us courage to overcome all obstacles to sanctity, and to bear with patience all sufferings God may permit for our good.
2. It thus enables us to persevere in well-doing, even during the most dreary and trying stages of our ascent to perfection.
3. It gives an unlimited confidence in God's omnipotence which we know, by a sort of experience, to be helping us. With St.

Paul we can say: "I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me," (Phil. 4:13).

4. Hence, it complements the virtue of fortitude. It gives us, in fact, a sharing in the fortitude shown by Christ in His Passion.
5. It makes us share in the magnanimity of Christ. By it we become truly great souls, willing to undertake great things for God.
6. It fills us with a yearning for sanctity, incomparably greater than that with which a starving man longs for food, or a drug-fiend for his drugs.
7. Hence, the beatitude that corresponds to it is this: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill."

It is not enough to be detached from creatures. We must also be attached to God. But intimate union with Him demands heroism. Well, just as a man dying from thirst will make every effort to reach water, so, too, a man who thirsts for sanctity under an inspiration of the Holy Ghost will let no obstacle stop Him from uniting himself to God. This is why Our Lord gives us the third beatitude. It demands an excellent act - that of yearning for sanctity. And it brings with it a great reward - the fulfilment of this yearning here on earth by a deeper sharing in the happiness of God.

COUNSEL

Counsel means advice. Thus we are said to give another counsel when we advise him what to do. The Gift of COUNSEL does the same; but the advice or light it gives comes from the Holy Ghost. It can never be false or imprudent. Nor can it ever fail. Here is how it helps us: -

1. By it the Holy Ghost makes known to us instantly what we ought say or do in the particular circumstances in which we are placed. Thus, it perfects the practical judgment which we must make before we act.

2. It makes us choose with unerring certainty the right means to perfection, which is our end on earth, and it makes us put these into practice.
3. It complements the virtue of prudence. Instead of our having to think things out in a human way that can easily make a mistake, we are given the answer ready-made, and it is from God.
4. It makes us merciful to all our fellow-men, because we realise that if we show mercy to others, God will show it to us, and we shall save our souls and gain our last end, which is heaven.
5. It fills us with a Christ-like kindness towards sinners, and thus enables us to imitate most closely one of the loveliest characteristics of the Son of God.
6. It roots out from our soul all Pharisaical pride, which is the bane of the supernatural life.
7. Hence, the beatitude it makes us practice is this: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

All God's attributes are equal, since all are infinite and each is Himself. But, from our point of view, His mercy comes first. He must first exercise it in creating us, before He can exercise any of the rest. By exercising mercy, then, we are imitating God in what is most characteristic of Him. Hence, we are uniting ourselves to Him most intimately.

This is why Our Saviour gives us the fourth beatitude. The excellent work it demands of us is that of showing mercy. The reward it gives is God's infinite mercy exercised towards us, with a divine generosity, to which is proportioned our union with Him, and hence our sharing in His bliss.

The four Gifts we have seen so far do not give infused contemplation. But they prepare the way for it by bringing RIGHT ORDER into our lives. With this comes PEACE – peace within ourselves, peace with our neighbour, peace with God. Only into such a soul suffused with the peace of heaven, can contemplation come. And it is given in varying degrees by the next three Gifts.

KNOWLEDGE

We are said to have knowledge of things when we form universal ideas of them. But our knowledge is not complete till we JUDGE rightly about them. Knowledge is made perfect in the judgment. This is why we have a Gift called KNOWLEDGE. It enables us to JUDGE rightly concerning CREATURES. Here is what it does for us:-

1. It makes us judge creatures as God judges them; hence value them as He does.
2. It makes us realise that, apart from God, creatures are nothing, since they get all their reality unceasingly from Him.
3. By making us realise our own nothingness as creatures, it makes us rely, not on ourselves, but on God for the salvation of our souls. Hence, it perfects the virtue of hope.
4. At the same time, it makes us realise that whatever is good, beautiful and attractive in creatures comes from God. Hence, instead of separating us from Him, they unite us to Him in adoration, gratitude and love.
5. It makes us appreciate the madness of sin, which consists in preferring a creature to God. It fills the soul, therefore, with a deep, life-long contrition or sorrow for having offended God.
6. By making us see creatures precisely as creatures, absolutely dependent on God, this Gift makes us look through them to Him, just as a mother looks beyond her son's photo to the child she loves. Seeing them, we see Him from whom they come. This tranquil awareness of God is obviously a form of contemplation.
7. The beatitude that goes with this Gift is this: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

It asks of us an excellent act – that of deep and most sincere contrition for our sins, since sin alone can separate us from God.

And the reward it promises is a deeper sharing in His happiness through the union that contrition gives with Him.

UNDERSTANDING

It is easy for us to read Scripture in a superficial way, so that even the greatest realities revealed in it leave us cold. Our faith enables us to accept these truths on God's authority. But it does not give us any INSIGHT into them, since, like the other virtues, it acts in a human way. But we must do more than merely accept God's truths if they are to have a profound influence on our life. We must SEE into their depths. We must REALISE them. It is the Gift of UNDERSTANDING that helps us here. And this is how it does it: –

1. It makes us realise God's revealed truths in a very practical way, not by pondering on them as we do in meditation, but by a supernatural insight into their depths, through light given by the Holy Ghost.
2. Thus, it makes us relish these truths, and as it were taste them spiritually, and enjoy their divine sweetness and their charm.
3. It saves us from errors that arise from a too materialistic interpretation of Scripture, and from the habit of trying to depict in our imagination spiritual realities that are forever beyond its scope.
4. Hence, this Gift complements the virtue of faith. It makes us see into the deep things of God.
5. It gives a wonderful sense of reality and of security to our faith, and a deep peace, for it enables us to experience, as it were, the great realities in which we believe.
6. It makes us love to think of the good things God has revealed, and to gaze quietly and lovingly at them, just as a mother contemplates with tranquil happiness the child she loves. This, obviously, is another and a higher form of infused contemplation. "I look at Him, and He looks at me," as the peasant said to the Curé of Ars.

7. The beatitude it makes us practise is therefore this:
"Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God."

Here Christ exhorts us to practise absolute purity of heart; and He promises as our reward the unspeakable happiness that comes from an infused contemplation which is in very truth a foretaste of the vision of God.

WISDOM

There is a human wisdom which consists in knowing things from the point of view of their ultimate causes. It is that part of philosophy which is called metaphysics. It is the noblest of the natural sciences. But beyond it there is a supernatural wisdom. It is the greatest of the Gifts. Here is what it does for us:-

1. It makes us judge divine things in the way God judges them; hence, to value them as He does.
2. It makes us aware of the Trinity dwelling in our soul. It knows the three Divine Persons, not by direct vision as do the souls in heaven, but through the effects of love which they produce in the soul.
3. It fills the soul with adoration, which is the only attitude befitting a creature, in the presence of God.
4. It gives the soul the most profound happiness that it can enjoy on earth. Beyond this, there is only the bliss of heaven.
5. It raises us to the most sublime heights of prayer possible to man in this life; for it gives the highest form of contemplation.
6. It complements the virtue of charity by making us know, through a sort of experimental knowledge, that God is love. With it, we can fulfil perfectly the great Commandment of love.
7. The beatitude that corresponds to it is this: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

Enjoying a heavenly peace through the Gift of Wisdom, we can give peace to others, as Christ did from the Cross. It is a great thing for us to be happy ourselves. But it is a greater thing to be able to communicate this happiness to others. Yet an important part of our happiness on this earth consists in making others happy by helping them to know and love God, and thus attain a happiness that can resist the assaults of time and even those of death itself, and reach its climax in eternity.

So far, we have mentioned seven beatitudes. What about the eighth? It is a summary of the acts and the rewards contained in the other seven. This is why it does not correspond to any particular Gift. It is seen at its best in martyrdom, for it says: "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Martyrdom lifts man to the greatest possible heights of human activity aided by God. It lifts him, in a sense, even to the heights of Calvary, because it configures him to Christ crucified. It is an act in which are contained all other good acts. This is why it is rewarded instantly by the vision of God, in which are contained all other rewards.

7. The Price Of Loyalty.

The beatitudes give us a sure road to the greatest happiness we can have on earth. But there is no false optimism about them, no divorce from reality. There is a price to be paid for this happiness. The last beatitude makes it quite clear. It is the price of suffering. The shadow of the Cross falls over the very first pages of the Gospel. Our Saviour reminds us that we, like Him, shall meet with hostility and hate; for so it must be till earthly power submits itself to God.

It was no tragic accident, no mere chance that led to the Crucifixion. Christ's death was the inevitable outcome of the opposition between good and evil. His sanctity and goodness must cause either love or hate in the human heart. If men refuse to accept His love, they must rebel instead. Man's pride cannot endure the selflessness of Christ. So disturbing an object of reproach must be removed at any cost. Men are ready to pay tribute to virtue when it does not affect their own selfish interests. But when it demands their personal surrender, all is changed. The satanic "I will not serve" which is the motto of unregenerate human nature has for its inevitable result the final repudiation: "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

And, as it was with Christ, so shall it be with His followers to the end. To be happy with Him, we must suffer with Him. Suffering is the price of our loyalty.

Note, finally, that the beatitudes teach us that the New Testament is not primarily a code of Commandments, a series of "Thou shalt not's". We are not driven from behind. We are led forward, instead, in the light of a vision of what is noblest and best. Our eyes are opened to the lovely ideal of Christian sanctity. For Our Lord knows that if our eyes are opened by the illuminations of the Holy Ghost, and our hearts are set on fire by His inspirations, we shall not fail to act in a way befitting the members of His Mystical Body, joint-heirs with Him to heaven.

In the eyes of worldlings we shall seem to die; but in God's eyes we shall be seen to live. And the age-old paradox will be accomplished in us; for, with St. Paul, we shall be able to say: "As dying, and behold we live; as chastised, and not killed! as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as needy, yet enriching many; as having nothing, and possessing all things." (2 Cor. 6:9-10). For we shall have God, and to have Him is to have all.

8. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should often meditate on the beatitudes.
2. I should practise them in daily life.
3. I should increase constantly the intensity of my charity, so that I may increase with it the functioning of the Gifts.
4. I should practise all the virtues as perfectly as I can.
5. I should aim at enjoying some day the contemplation given by the Gifts.

SUMMARY

1. The Gifts Of The Holy Ghost.

- (a). What they are: Supernatural qualities or habits.
- (b). How many? Seven: Fear, Piety, Fortitude, Counsel, Knowledge, Understanding, Wisdom.

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST

- (c). Where they are: The first three are in our will; the last four, in our intellect.
- (d). How they come: With sanctifying grace.
- (e). How increased: By Confirmation (as well as all the other sacraments), and by increasing the intensity of our charity.
- (f). How lost: By any formal mortal sin.

2. How They Function.

- (a). Virtues function in a human manner.
- (b). The Gifts function in a divine manner.

3. Their Purpose.

- (a). They make us exquisitely sensitive and docile to the illuminations and inspirations of the Holy Ghost; hence completely submissive to Him. They are thus a sure road to the highest sanctity.
- (b). Cf. A radio.

4. The Beatitudes.

- (a). They are the only road to true happiness here and in eternity.
- (b). Each gives an excellent act to be done, and then its reward.
- (c). These acts can be performed only with the help of the Gifts.

5. The Fruits Of The Holy Ghost.

- (a). Twelve excellent acts done with the help of the Holy Ghost.
- (b). A striking contrast to what St. Paul calls the fruits of the flesh.

6. What Each Of The Gifts Does For Us.

Gift	Virtue it Complements	Corresponding Beatitude
Fear	Temperance	Blessed are the poor in spirit
Piety	Religion (Justice)	Blessed are the meek
Fortitude	Fortitude	Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice
Counsel	Prudence	Blessed are the merciful
Knowledge	Hope	Blessed are they that mourn

Gift	Virtue it Complements	Corresponding Beatitude
Understanding	Faith	Blessed are the pure of heart
Wisdom	Charity	Blessed are the peace-makers

7. The Price Of Loyalty.**8. Practical Conclusions.****EXERCISES**

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out the wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. The Gifts of the Holy Ghost are (permanent) (passing) helps. 2. There are (...) of them, and their names are (...) (...) (...) (...) (...) and (...). 3. They are found in our (soul) (spiritual faculties). 4. They come with (...). 5. They are increased by the Sacrament of (...); and by any increase in the intensity of our (...). 6. They are lost by (...). 7. They function in a (human) (divine) way. 8. They make us exquisitely (...) and (...) to the (...) and the (...) of the Holy Ghost. 9. They are an absolutely safe road to Christian (...), and the (...) sanctity of the saints. 10. The beatitudes are so called because they show us how to be truly (...) in this life and in the next. 11. St. Paul mentions (...) fruits of the Holy Ghost; and he contrasts them to the fruits of the (...). 12. The beatitudes are excellent (actions) (habits). 13. The least excellent of the Gifts is that called (...); the most excellent, that called (...). 14. Prudence is complemented by the Gift of (...). 15. It is the Gift of (...) which makes us judge rightly of creatures. 16. Hence this Gift helps the virtue of (...). 17. It is the Gift of (...) which gives us supernatural insight into God's revealed truths. 18. Therefore it assists the virtue of (...). 19. Which are the Gifts which give infused contemplation? These are (...), (...) and (...). 20. Which give the highest form of contemplation? (...). 21. Which of the virtues does the Gift of Piety complement? 22. To be truly happy, we must separate ourselves from what is sinful in (...) and unite ourselves to (...). 23. We can be loyal to Christ only at the expense of (...). 24. St. Paul speaks of us as "Having nothing, and possessing (...)." 25. When we have (...), we have all.

(B). Answer each of the following as fully as you can: -

1. Explain what we mean by the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.
2. Contrast their manner of functioning with that of the virtues.

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST

3. What purpose do the Gifts serve in our supernatural life?
4. Give the eight beatitudes and explain each.
5. What are the fruits of the Holy Ghost?
6. Explain briefly what each of the Gifts does for us.
7. What price must we pay in being loyal to Christ? Why?
8. What is meant by infused contemplation? Which of the Gifts give it? How should you go about attaining it?

Chapter 41

PRAYER

1. Why We Must Pray.

God is our Creator, Conserver, and Last End. Hence, we are obliged to ADORE Him, to THANK Him for His gifts, to BEG PARDON for our sins, and to ASK for what we need to save our souls. But to do this is to PRAY.

Prayer, therefore, is founded on the fact that God alone is self-existing, and that we are totally dependent on Him. We owe Him a debt of homage from which we can never escape. For He can never cease to be our Creator; and we can never cease to be His rational creatures. Prayer is one way in which we can pay this debt. In praying, then, we are exercising the virtue of RELIGION which urges us to be HONEST towards God by giving Him the worship due to Him.

Adoration, thanksgiving, reparation for sin, petition – these are the ends fulfilled by prayer.

We are inclined, perhaps, to restrict our prayers too much to petition. This is a mistake. Our main duty is to give glory to God; and we can do this better by adoring, praising and thanking Him, and by making reparation for sin, than by asking Him for things. And, even in our prayers of petition, we are inclined to ask mostly for material benefits. This, too, is a mistake. We give more glory to God by sanctifying our souls and the souls of others than by acquiring temporal goods.

In our prayers, then, we should show a sense of right values. We should put first things first. This is what Our Lord does in the Our Father, which He gave as a MODEL for all our prayers.

Notice how He begins it by giving the right ATMOSPHERE for prayer – one of respect and confidence. He addresses God as our FATHER. And He adds: WHO ART IN HEAVEN, as if to remind Him that He is infinitely well-off in His own home in the bosom of the

PRAYER

Trinity, whereas we are still in exile on earth. He has all. We need all. At the same time He is our Father. He yearns to help us. Hence we should go to Him with reverence indeed, but also with unlimited confidence. Such is the spirit that ought animate all our prayers.

Our Saviour next mentions what we ought pray for. And how wise He is! He keeps right order. He puts the most important things first.

Before all else comes the GLORY OF GOD. Why? Because our desire always falls first upon the END. Only then can it settle upon the MEANS. And the supreme end or purpose of our life is to promote the glory of God. So the first petition is this: HALLOWED BE THY NAME. In it we ask that God's name may be known and blessed, and thus glorified by all.

Our Lord knows that, since God creates us for His glory, and since He can do nothing in vain, we shall inevitably give Him glory in eternity. But He also knows that we are given a CHOICE as to the WAY in which we shall do this: either by witnessing to His goodness in heaven, or witnessing to it in hell. He knows, finally, that God wants us to choose the former way. Hence, the next petition is: THY KINGDOM COME. It shows us HOW we ought glorify our Father in eternity: by sharing His own life in His kingdom of light, love and happiness in heaven.

God's glory, attained by the salvation of souls - this is our END. That is why it comes first in this model prayer.

After the END come the MEANS that enable us to gain it. These are of two kinds: DIRECT and INDIRECT. The former unite us immediately to the end. The latter remove obstacles to it.

Our Lord mentions first the DIRECT means of gaining heaven. THY WILL BE DONE, He says, for we can win heaven only by doing God's will, by obeying His laws with reverence and love. But to do this, we need help from God. Hence the next plea is: GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD. In it we ask God for all things natural and supernatural which we need in order to live and to do God's will, since of ourselves we can only fail and cease to be.

Then come the INDIRECT means which remove obstacles to salvation. The worst obstacle is sin. So we implore God to FORGIVE

US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE THEM THAT TRESPASS AGAINST US. Note well the second part of this petition. We easily forget it. Yet Christ warns us over and over again that His Father will forgive us to the extent that we forgive our fellowmen.

After sin, there are temptations. These can be valuable. They give us an opportunity of proving our loyalty and of winning merit for heaven. So we do not ask to be completely free from them. We ask, instead, for grace to conquer them. Hence, victory, not exemption, is the burden of our plea: LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION. It is a manly petition for help to strive, to fight, to conquer.

Finally, there are many other miseries, such as sickness, fatigue, and darkness of mind, which weigh heavily upon us as the result of Adam's sin. We have them all in mind when we ask our Father to DELIVER US FROM EVIL, according to the judgment of His infinite wisdom and the plan of His all-loving providence.

One thing more. In this prayer God is addressed as OUR Father, not as MY Father. He is asked to give US our daily bread, not just to give ME mine. And so on. It is, you see, a SOCIAL prayer. In it we pray for ALL who can benefit by it. We exclude no one. Think of the millions of saintly persons on earth and in purgatory who say this lovely prayer each day. Each is praying for us. How consoling! No isolation here, is there? No loneliness. Instead, the wondrous unity and co-operation which flows from the Mystical Body of Christ and the Communion of its Saints!

Such is the Our Father, the noblest appeal for divine help that ever fell from human lips. In every line it breathes a supernatural spirit of filial PIETY towards God. At the same time, it expresses our absolute dependence upon our Father in heaven, from whom we receive all. It shows the essentially RELIGIOUS nature of prayer, for every petition is concerned directly or indirectly with the honour and glory of God. It gives the perfect atmosphere for prayer. It puts first things first. It excludes no one in its pleas. It is indeed a MODEL prayer. It is the prayer of prayers, the best of all.

2. The Value of Prayer.

- (a). Prayer is most reasonable.

The Latin word for prayer is "oratio." It comes from "oris" and "ratio" which mean "spoken reason" or "reason uttering itself in speech." How apt it is. For what could be more reasonable than that our reason should express itself in speech? And to whom can it better express itself than to God, especially when it does this to adore Him, to thank Him, to make reparation for sin, and to ask Him for the good things we need, to sanctify and save our souls?

How inhuman a child would be who would refuse ever to speak to his father on earth! Yet far more inhuman is anyone who refuses to speak to His Father in heaven! If it is reasonable for us to express our thoughts, desires and sentiments to an earthly father and benefactor, it is immeasurably more reasonable for us to express them to God.

It is very foolish, then, for people to think that prayer is fit only for weaklings. It is not as weaklings that we need to pray, but as human beings. The obligation to pray flows from the very depths of our nature as RATIONAL beings who owe a debt of worship to God. Not to pray is to deny our rationality. It is to be untrue to our nature. It is to reduce ourselves to the level of the beasts. Of all things, prayer is surely one of the most reasonable.

(b). Prayer is most necessary.

Even in the natural order, we are obliged to adore God, to thank Him, to express sorrow for sin, and to ask for what we need to gain our end. How can we be honest towards Him otherwise? In the supernatural order prayer is even more necessary. Here, our homage must be supernatural, proportionate to heaven. Grace alone can give it this proportion. And one of the best means we have of getting grace is prayer.

This is why Scripture insists that we pray, as when it says: "Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times." (Luke 21:36). Or again: "Be instant in prayer" (Colos. 4:2); "Pray without ceasing" (1 Tim. 5:7); "I will, therefore, that men may pray in every place" (1 Tim. 2:8), and so on for many other texts. At the same time, it gives examples of the way in which Christ prayed; and it shows how the early Church prayed for all, especially for those who were sick or in prison or about to die as martyrs for the faith. Of all things, then, prayer is one of the most necessary.

(c). Prayer is most dignified.

To realise this, you have merely to think of what prayer is. It is defined as the RAISING OF OUR INTELLECT AND WILL TO GOD'S.

From eternity God determines to give us this or that gift as a reward for our having prayed for it. When the time comes, He sends His actual grace which urges us to pray. We freely co-operate. We say the prayer. Then God gives us the reward He has intended to give us from eternity, just as He gives us flowers or vegetables as a reward for our having prepared the ground and planted the seeds. How simple! Yet, how sublime!

In prayer, then, we do not want God to change His mind. Instead, we bring our mind into line with His. We do not expect him to alter the plan of His providence. Instead, we freely co-operate with Him in fulfilling this plan. We do not ask Him to go against His infinite Wisdom to suit our shortsighted desires. Instead, we conform our desires to His wisdom. We do not seek to bend His intellect and will down to ours. Instead, we raise ours to His.

But thus to unite our intellect and will to God's, and thus to co-operate freely with Him in executing His providence is obviously one of the most noble and dignified acts that we can perform. It is to live with the very wisdom of God.

From this you can see how childish it is for people to say: "You cannot make God change His mind; so, what's the use of praying to Him?" Such people do not know what they are talking about. They do not know that prayer, by its very definition, is the raising of our intellect and will to God's. If they did, they could never make the objection.

From this, too, you can see how wise it is for us to say prayers that we feel urged to say by grace. The fact that God urges us to say them is already a guarantee that He will answer them.

3. Kinds of Prayer.

Prayer can be VOCAL or MENTAL. A VOCAL prayer is one in which we use a set form of words, as in the Our Father and the Creed. In MENTAL prayer no set form is used. It is, instead, a heart to heart conversation with God whom We regard as our Friend.

The special value of VOCAL prayer lies in the fact that it is a COMMUNITY prayer. By it the community pays its debt of worship to God. This is why night and morning prayers said in common, the family rosary, the Mass and the Divine Office are so important. Nothing can replace them, for every society is obliged to honour God.

Vocal prayers should be said with the lips. If, for instance, you are given a decade of the rosary as penance, you should pronounce the words softly to yourself in the way the priest says his Office. Of course our intellect and will must also come into it. Otherwise, our vocal prayers are just like those said by a parrot, or those said by the Pharisees who honoured God with their lips, though their hearts were far from Him. (Mat. 15:18).

Though mental prayer cannot take the place of vocal prayer, it also is an excellent method of praying. How we all love to chat with an intimate friend! We say just what comes into our mind. We tell each other secrets. We ask questions. We discuss events past, present, and future. We solve problems. We listen to what the other has to say. Often we lapse into silence. Well, it should be the same with Our Divine Lord. He is our Infinite Friend. During the day, therefore, we should often talk with Him. Anything can start a chat: a lovely garden, a kind deed done to us by another, a remark that hurts, the difficulty of our work, and so on, endlessly. And in chatting with Him we must be careful not to do all the talking. We must learn to listen. He will speak to us, not by human words, but by the graces of light and strength which He will give to our intellect and will. It is a great privilege for us thus to be able to converse with Our Lord. And it is a habit well worth cultivating. It can take all the boredom out of journeys, work and leisure, and fill our life instead with gladness, light, and love. By increasing daily our union with God, it can change our exile on earth into a sort of ante-chamber of heaven, and thus solve for us the problem of happiness. For, when are we happier than when we are with our friends? And what friend can compare with Christ?

4. What We Can Pray For.

We can rightly pray for anything that we can lawfully desire. Hence, it is right for us to ask for such things as a win at football, success in an examination, a rise in wages, and good health. But, as we have

said before, we ought not restrict our petitions to temporal goods and thus forget those of eternity.

5. How We Should Pray.

Here are five qualities which our prayers should have: –

(a). Humility.

How can we adore God, thank Him, beg pardon for sin, and ask Him for new gifts, unless we first realise that He is infinitely superior to us, and that we are wholly dependent on Him? Humility makes us realise these things. Hence, it is very necessary for prayer.

Think of the Centurion's humility: "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed." (Mat. 8:8). Or of that of the publican: "O God, be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18:13). No wonder their prayers were granted. Does not Scripture assure us that "The prayer of him that humbleth himself shall pierce the clouds"? (Ecclesiasticus 35:21).

(b). Sincerity.

We must also be sincere. We must mean what we say. If a person prays for grace to overcome a sin, yet keeps on going into a dangerous occasion of sin without necessity, he is not sincere. He is not really praying at all, but merely indulging in day-dreaming or wishful thinking. He does not mean what he says.

(c). Confidence.

St. James says: "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." (James 1:6). And why should we not have the utmost confidence in prayer? Is not God the Father our Father also? Is not Our Lord our Brother? Is not the Holy Ghost our Comforter? Is not Our Lady our Mother? And is not any saint a dear friend, ever anxious to help us, because of the charity that burns in his soul?

Can you think of a single case in Scripture where Our Saviour refused to grant a request even when He had to work a miracle to grant it? Sometimes a mere hint was enough. "They have no wine," Our Lady said, and the result was the miracle at Cana. (John 2:3).

"Lord, if Thou hadst been here," Martha hinted so delicately, "my brother had not died." And the result was the resurrection of Lazarus. (John 11:32). At other times, Christ worked miracles of mercy without any request or hint at all, as when he raised from the dead the widow's only son. (Luke 7:12-15). Such was Our Divine Saviour when He was on earth; and such He is today. Such, too, is His Father. And such, the Holy Ghost. Surely, then, we should have confidence in prayer.

(d). Perseverance.

God promises to hear prayers that are in line with His will; but He does not promise to hear them straight away. He has a right to test our perseverance. But it must win in the end.

Recall the perseverance shown by the Chanaanite woman. She asked Our Lord to free her daughter from a devil. He ignored her request. She kept on asking. His disciples begged Him to send her away – she was such a nuisance. She refused to go. She pleaded all the more. He then told her that He had been sent primarily, not to her people, but to the Jews. Still she asked. Finally, He said: "It is not fit to take the bread of the children and cast it to the dogs." Another woman would surely have been insulted. She would have gone off with a call-me-a-dog look on her face, her nose pointing skywards. Not so the Chanaanite. Instead, she cleverly turned Our Lord's words to her own profit by saying: "Yea, Lord, even the pups also eat of the crumbs that fall from the tables of their masters." (Mat. 15:22-28). What perseverance! And what a grand reward! for, as Scripture says, her daughter was cured from that hour.

Our Lord tells the story of a man who refuses at first to get out of bed to give a caller three loaves, but who finally grants the latter's request just to stop him from banging on the door. Our Saviour then tells us to practise a similar perseverance in prayer. "Ask, and it shall be given you," He says, "seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you." (Luke 11:5-10). Let us never give in, therefore. If necessary, let death itself find us still knocking.

(e). Resignation.

When a wee child stretches out his hand for a loaded revolver to play with, his father does not give it to him. He knows that he will only hurt himself with it. He gives him something better instead.

Well, we are often like this little child in the requests we make to God. We ask for things which He knows will be injurious to us. So He refuses to give them. He gives us something better, instead.

In praying for things that can never be harmful to us, such as our salvation or that of another, there is no need for us to put any "if's" into our prayer. When, however, we pray for things that may turn out to be bad for us, such as health or success in this world, we must always imply the condition: if it be God's will. And we must be wholly resigned to His ruling. We must remember that He sees all things in the light of eternity, and so knows best. We must remember, too, that He has our eternal welfare far more at heart than we can ever have it ourselves. So, what He wills is best. His ways are not our ways, precisely because He is infinitely wiser than we. Let us therefore leave all to Him. We are never safer or better off than when we are in His loving hands.

The mothers of the Holy Innocents were doubtless tempted to rail against providence, because they looked at things from the point of view of time instead of from that of eternity. If seen, however, in the light of eternity, the death of these little ones would have been a source of joy and consolation. For they were all saved, these tiny tots. And, greater still, they will be made splendid in eternity with special aureola, for they were the first martyrs of the Church. From their martyrdom we can learn how wise it is for us to be always resigned to the most holy will of God.

6. Distractions.

Distractions are VOLUNTARY when we realise that we are being distracted. Otherwise, they are INVOLUNTARY.

We should, of course, avoid unwarranted VOLUNTARY distractions, because they are venial sins. But, if we start our prayer without any distractions and later find that we have fallen into INVOLUNTARY ones, we should not become angry with ourselves, or say: "It's no use my trying to pray; I can't avoid distractions; I'd better give it up."

Prayer can have these three effects: the MERIT it can gain for heaven; the GRANTING of our request; and CONSOLATION OF SOUL. Now, INVOLUNTARY distractions do away with the last effect; but they do not lessen in any way the first two. And these,

after all, are the ones that matter most. Hence, we should not be unduly disturbed by involuntary distractions. Once we realise that we are being distracted, we should bring our mind quietly but resolutely back to our prayer. Moreover, we should train ourselves to avoid distractions. How? Here are three ways: -

- (i). We should get the habit of CONCENTRATING on what we are doing.

Age quod agis - do what you do - is an old saying, and a wise one. If you are doing your French homework, do it well. Keep your mind on it. Do not go mooning about football, or pictures, or the holidays. And turn off the radio. Do not get the bad habit of a divided attention. It can be disastrous. It can destroy your power of concentration. In class, pay attention. Don't day-dream. In games, too, *age quod agis* should be the rule. A winger who usually tackled like a demon once let an opposing wing run past him, not two feet away, and score in the corner. Why? He was gazing at an aeroplane doing stunts. At half-time, the coach told him to concentrate. He did not put it that way; but that's what he meant, and the offender knew it. Get the HABIT of concentration by practising it constantly. It will stand you in good stead when you come to pray.

- (ii). Make an ally of your IMAGINATION.

Your intelligence fashions its ideas from the images in your imagination. Your will follows your intelligence. If, therefore, you want to avoid distractions, you must get at the root of the trouble. You must control your imagination. How? By making it picture things connected with your prayer.

Take, for instance, the second sorrowful mystery of the rosary. How easy it is to depict the scene. You can SEE Our Lord scourged at the pillar. You can HEAR the blows. You can FEEL the pain. You can MARVEL at His resignation, patience, and love. Then you can stir up in your WILL a sincere hatred of sin, and a deep desire to make reparation to Christ. In this way, you can RE-LIVE the event. You can pray as fervently as if you were really present at the scourging. Thus controlled by your will, your imagination becomes an ally instead of an enemy. It helps you to avoid distractions. It makes your prayer a vital thing. It causes you to re-live an event in the life

of our Divine Saviour. Hence, it fills your soul with contrition, gratitude and love, and a desire to imitate the selflessness of Christ.

(iii). Before prayer, RECOLLECT yourself.

If you were given a private audience with the Pope, you would not spend the time looking at the furniture in his room. You would pay attention to HIM. Why? You would realise the dignity of him to whom you were privileged to speak. It is the same with prayer. Before prayer, then, we should ask ourselves: To whom am I going to speak? Then try to realise that we are going to speak to God the Father, His Son, the Holy Ghost, Our Lady or another saint. If any of these appeared to us in a vision, would we be distracted? Not for a second. Why not? Because we would realise to whom we were speaking.

While praying, we can pay attention to the PRONOUNCING OF THE WORDS, or to their MEANING, or to the OBJECT WE ARE ASKING FOR, or to the PERSON to whom we are speaking. Which is the best? The last one. If it is present, the others will be there, too. In praying to Our Lord, therefore, let us look lovingly into His adorable Face, and speak to Him as our infinite Friend. Such a prayer can be a sheer delight, a sort of ecstasy, and one of the greatest joys and consolations we can experience on earth.

7. Intentions.

Here are examples of intentions we can have in our prayers. On Sundays, we can offer them for our parents and other relatives. On Mondays, for the souls in purgatory. On Tuesdays, for benefactors, friends and fellow-pupils. On Wednesdays, for the Pope, Bishops, Priests, Brothers and Nuns. On Thursdays, for the conversion of sinners. On Fridays, for the sick, especially the dying. On Saturdays, for the spread of devotion to Our Lady, and for the conversion of Russia. Those nearest and dearest to us have the first claim upon our prayers; but we ought to exclude no one, and often pray for the whole Church. And, to make our prayers more fruitful, we ought to unite them all, as She does, with those of Christ and Our Lady.

8. Are Our Prayers Answered?

First, consider prayers said for things that can never turn out to be harmful to us – our own or another's sanctification and salvation, for instance. If a person in a state of sanctifying GRACE prays humbly, sincerely and confidently for his OWN salvation, and keeps on doing this till death, his prayer is INFALLIBLY answered. How consoling! But, remember, we must be really sincere, and we must persevere till death. That is the hard part. Suppose, now, that a person in a state of GRACE prays with these same dispositions for the salvation of ANOTHER. Well, he can win this, not on the score of justice, of course, but on the score of friendship, as St. Monica did for her son, Augustine; or as St. Teresa of Lisieux did for the criminal who was about to be put to death.

Consider, now, the prayer of one who is in MORTAL SIN. He cannot merit anything either on the score of justice or on that of friendship, since there is no sanctifying grace and no charity in his soul. Is his prayer quite useless, then? No. If, with the help of actual grace, he prays humbly and sincerely for his OWN salvation, his prayer is always heard by God, since it appeals to His limitless MERCY. From this, you can see the unique power of prayer, especially that of a sinner begging pardon from God. It is, in a true sense, as infinite as is the mercy to which it appeals. Think of the repentant thief's plea to Christ on the Cross: "Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom." It is a selfish request, but a humble one, and a sincere one, since it wells up from the very depths of an agonising soul. Above all, it appeals to a mercy that is infinite. And not in vain. "This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise." (Luke 23:42-43).

So much for prayers said for things that can never harm us. What, now, of prayers for temporal goods such as health or worldly success? Here, as we have already said, God does not always grant such prayers by giving the things we ask for; but He grants them by giving us something better that will not be an obstacle to our sanctification or salvation. He may not give us health, for example, but He will give us resignation and patience which are more valuable still. Real prayer, therefore, is never wasted. It always gets something from God. In this sense all our prayers are answered.

Two Catholic teams are playing each other. Each prays for victory. Is God in a fix here? No. Since each is asking for a temporal good, each has the condition, "if it be God's will." Each is praying that His will may be done. So He is in no fix at all. Are the prayers said by the losers useless? No. Like the winners, the losers are conforming

their intellects and wills to God's. Nothing more useful! Nothing more beneficial! Nothing more noble! Nothing more worthy of man!

9. The Intercession of the Saints.

We pray FOR the souls in purgatory, not TO them. We pray TO the saints in heaven, not FOR them. We do not expect that they themselves can give us what we ask for; but we know that they can INTERCEDE for us to God. They can ask HIM to help us.

It is right for us thus to ask the saints to intercede on our behalf. In the first place, we pray to give homage to God. And when a saint's prayer is added to our own, this homage is greatly increased. In the second place, a saint's prayers are far more efficacious than ours, since his charity is far more intense. It is wise for us to have an expert lawyer to plead our cause on earth. Wise, too, to have a saint to plead it in heaven.

On what does a saint's power of intercession depend? On two things: the degree of the beatific vision enjoyed by the saint, and his interest in us and in what we are asking for. So it's not much good to pray to St. Thomas Aquinas for a win at football. He's a great saint, no doubt, with plenty of power. But he will not be very interested. He did not play football. Ask him, however, to help you to understand philosophy and theology. Then you'll see what he can do; for he is the patron of studies. Ask St. Anthony to get you a win at the races. The horse you back comes in last. Ask him to find something for you. In no time you'll have your foot on it. You must pick your saint when you ask him to intercede for you. And you must be truly devoted to him.

Now you can see why Our Lady's power of intercession is incomparably greater than that of any other saint. She has a far greater degree of the beatific vision, and she is intensely interested in everyone of us and in everything we ask for. Why? Because she is our Mother, and a perfect one. And remember this: she can not only intercede for us with a power which the Church does not hesitate to call "omnipotent", but she can also, like her Divine Son, teach us the way to pray. Often ask her to do this by saying to her:

Lovely Lady, dressed in blue,
Teach me how to pray;
God was once your little Boy,

So you know the way.

10. The Rosary.

The rosary is a religious practice by which we show devotion to Our Lady and her Divine Son, and through them, to the Trinity. In it we MEDITATE on the lives of Jesus and Mary as portrayed in the fifteen mysteries of their joy, sorrow and glory.¹ At the same time, we say one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, and one Glory be to the Father, for each mystery.

MEDITATION and VOCAL PRAYERS are combined here. But MEDITATION is by far the more important. It is the very soul of the rosary. Just as our soul gives life to our body, so, too, the meditation in the rosary gives life to its vocal prayers by imparting to them its own thoughts and affections, and thus filling them with the SPIRIT of the rosary. It is their life-giving element. Without it, they are a mere corpse compared with what they should be.

The rosary is a DEVOTION. How does it rank as such? Well, a devotion is excellent to the extent that it GLORIFIES GOD, and SANCTIFIES SOULS. To what extent does the rosary do this. Think a little, and you will see.

The rosary obviously gives great GLORY TO GOD. It does this both by the MYSTERIES it contains, and by the PRAYERS that are said.

Its MYSTERIES. It begins by reminding us of the Incarnation of the Son of God, through the power of the Holy Ghost. And, for the rest of the Joyful Mysteries, it makes us meditate upon His hidden life on earth.² In the Sorrowful Mysteries it brings before us His Passion and Death, and shows Him to us as the Redeemer, the Saviour of the world. In the Glorious Mysteries it makes us contemplate the triumph of His redemption in the glory of Jesus and Mary, sharing the life of the Trinity in heaven, which they have merited also for us. Through these meditations the whole life of Christ, together with that of His Mother, is daily made the object of the loving contemplation of millions of souls, who are thus led to realise the infinite goodness, mercy and love of all three Persons of

¹ [Editor's Note]. In 2002/2003 Pope John Paul II introduced to the recitation of the Rosary the *Mysteries of Light*. They consist of: 1. The Baptism of Christ. 2. The Wedding at Cana. 3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom. 4. The Transfiguration. 5. The Institution of the Eucharist.

² In the Mysteries of Light the Public Ministry of Christ is presented.

the Trinity, and to give them glory for the part each plays in redeeming and saving our souls.

Its PRAYERS. First, there is the Our Father, every petition of which, as we have seen, is concerned directly or indirectly with the glory of God. Then come the Hail Marys. In them we greet Our Lady as full of grace, because she is the Mother of God. From that flows her unique excellence. And it all comes ultimately from God. So, the glory we give her is handed on to Him. Moreover, we ask her to obtain for us two priceless graces: that of using well the present moment to give as much glory to God as we can, and that of final perseverance which will ensure our giving Him glory in the way He wants us to give it, in eternity. Lastly, there is the lovely doxology: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen." The prayers of the rosary, then, as well as its mysteries, give great glory to God.

The rosary also SANCTIFIES SOULS. Here are five ways in which it does this:-

(i). It makes us IMITATE the lives of Jesus and Mary. It presents them to us as models. And it invites us to reproduce in our own lives, as far as we can, all their mysteries from the Incarnation to the Coronation of Our Lady in heaven. All the grades of our supernatural life, from its beginning in baptism to its consummation in glory, are vividly represented by these mysteries. And by re-living them and making them our own, we necessarily conform our heart first to that of Mary, and then through it to the Heart of her Son, by consecration, imitation and love. And to do this is to sanctify our souls.

(ii). It is, at the same time, a very powerful means of GRACE. It disposes us for grace by making us hate sin above every other evil. It makes us appreciate the value of grace, by showing us the means taken by God to restore it to us. Thus, it arouses in us a yearning for grace. It fulfils this yearning by uniting our souls to Christ, the Source of all grace, and to Our Lady, through whom all His graces come to us. Moreover, it obtains grace by faith and love. Lastly, it asks for the two graces that really matter: that of using well the present moment, and that of a happy death. "Pray for us sinners NOW, AT THE HOUR OF OUR DEATH." It is indeed a very efficacious means of grace; and one that is within reach of all.

(iii). It increases the THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES of faith, hope and charity, by which we share in the divine activity, by participating in His knowledge, power, and love. It increases our faith, because it is an admirable summary of revealed truths which it proposes for our devout consideration and whole-hearted acceptance. At the same time, it urges us to imitate them, to receive every day, and so put our faith into practice. It is thus the light of our daily life, in its ideals and hopes, struggles and triumphs. It teaches us how to make our joys divine, how to convert our sorrows into merit, and how to look to eternity for true glory, by imitating the lives of Jesus and Mary as these are presented to us in the joyful, sorrowful and glorious mysteries of this lovely devotion. It fosters our hope, too, by holding out to us the ineffable reward of possessing God in heaven, and by guaranteeing for us the help of His omnipotence through the all-powerful intercession of Mary and her Son. Thus it stirs up in us a hope like that which Our Lady had on earth. And it, remember, was limitless on account of the incomparable purity of its motive. God was with her. And He was her Son. Lastly, the rosary increases our charity. It increases our charity towards God by showing us how Good He must be in Himself, since He has been so infinitely good to us in the Incarnation, the Redemption, and the sending of the Holy Ghost. Then it increases our charity towards our neighbour by making us realise that we are all children of the same Father in heaven, with the same incomparable Mother, all brothers of the Redeemer, all destined for the same vision in eternity. It also puts before us the example of the heroic love for men shown by Christ and by His Mother. And it makes us pray for all, by begging for all the grace that will enable them to turn the present moment into profit for eternity, and die a happy death.

(iv). It fosters also the supernatural MORAL VIRTUES: prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance, together with the many other virtues we have seen to be connected with these. It does this especially by urging us to imitate the lives of Christ and His Mother, and by obtaining for us the graces necessary for this. The rosary is such a powerful influence for true Christian living that Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical, *Laetitia Sanctae*, advocated the saying of the rosary as a remedy for the social evils which he foresaw would otherwise bring terrible misery and suffering on the world. Pope Pius XI in his encyclical, *Ingravescentibus Malis*, offers the same remedy. And think of the events at Fatima! If said devoutly every day, by a sufficient number of people, the rosary

may yet avert disaster from our sin-stricken world. For it is a marvellous synthesis of Christian morals; and, if lived, it can change the face of the earth.

(v). Finally, it teaches us how to PRAY, and prayer, remember, is the most powerful means we have of disposing ourselves to co-operate in the designs of God. Here are some reasons why the rosary is so efficacious as a prayer. You can easily think of many others.

1. It is very suited to our nature, since it combines mental and vocal prayer.
2. It employs all the faculties that we specially use in prayer. It occupies our imagination with the Gospel scenes, our intellect with divine truths, and our will with God's goodness.
3. It includes all the elements in prayer: adoration, thanksgiving, reparation for sin, and petition, since they all flow spontaneously from its meditations.
4. It asks for what we ought ask for, and in the right order, especially for the grace to use well the present moment as it comes along, and to die a happy death.
5. It offers the most efficacious claim for obtaining favours, by appealing to the merits of Jesus and His Mother, and to the power of their intercession, which is infinite.
6. It urges us to imitate their lives by reproducing in ourselves as far as we can the mysteries that portray them.
7. It is a most efficacious means of giving glory to God, and of sanctifying souls; hence, invaluable as a prayer.
8. It increases all the supernatural virtues, and is thus a remedy for the social evils that threaten us today.
9. It is a social prayer. In it we pray for all, even our enemies.
10. It is within the reach of all. No one can reject it as too difficult, for it is most simple. No one can reject it as too

simple, for it is most sublime. The uneducated know how to recite it. The educated will never say it with sufficient wisdom. The sinner recites it as a plea for pardon. The saint, as a hymn of love.

So much for prayer. We wish we could say more about it, but our space is all used up. It is not only our obligation, remember; it is our glorious privilege as well. And when our own feeble efforts are helped by grace and especially by the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, prayer can rise to heights of infused contemplation, and give us here on earth a foretaste of heaven, with its light and joy and love.

SUMMARY

1. Why We Must Pray:

- (a). Debt of adoration, thanks, reparation, petition.
- (b). Exercise of the virtue of religion.

Cf. The Our Father – atmosphere – order.

2. Value of Prayer:

- (a). Most reasonable.
- (b). Most necessary.
- (c). Most dignified.

3. Kinds of Prayer:

- (a). Vocal and Mental.
- (b). Value of each.

4. What We Can Pray For:

- (a). Anything we can lawfully desire.
- (b). Need of putting first things first.

5. How We Should Pray:

- (a). Humility.

- (b). Sincerity.

- (c). Confidence.
- (d). Perseverance.
- (e). Resignation.

6. Distractions:

- (a). Kinds: voluntary and involuntary.
- (b). Effects.
- (c). How to avoid distractions.

7. Intentions:

- (a). Examples for each day of the week.
- (b). Need to offer prayers through Jesus and Mary.

8. Answers to Prayer:

- (a). For salvation – our own or another's.
- (b). For temporal goods.

9. Prayers to Saints:

- (a). Why valuable.

(b). Our Lady's unique power
of intercession.

10. The Rosary:

(a). What it is.

(b). How it gives glory to
God.

(c). How it sanctifies souls.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. God is our (.....), (.....) and (.....); hence we owe Him a debt of adoration, (.....), (.....) and (.....). 2. In praying, we exercise the virtue of (.....). 3. In the Our Father, Christ gives us the right (.....) for prayer by addressing God as our Father. 4. In it, God's (.....) comes first; then the (.....) and the (.....) means of promoting this. 5. The Latin word for prayer means "spoken (.....)." 6. Scripture says: "Watch ye, praying (.....)." 7. St. Paul tells us to "Pray without (.....)"; and to "Be (.....) in prayer." 8. Prayer is the raising of our (.....) and (.....) to (.....). 9. In it we seek to (alter) (fulfil) God's providence. 10. Inasmuch as vocal prayer is a (.....) one, it is superior to (.....) prayer. 11. We should get the habit of saying (.....) prayers during the day. 12. Mental prayer is a heart-to-heart (.....) with God, whom we regard as our (.....). 13. We can rightly pray for whatever we can lawfully (.....). 14. We should pray with humility, (.....), (.....), (.....) and (.....). 15. Unwarranted voluntary distractions are (.....) sins. 16. Involuntary distractions do away with our (merit) (chance of getting what we ask for) (spiritual consolation). 17. To avoid distractions, we should (.....), (.....) and (.....). 18. While praying, it is best for us to pay attention to (the pronunciation of the words) (their meaning) (what we are asking for) (the person to whom we are speaking). 19. Prayers said with the proper dispositions for our own salvation till death are (sometimes) (often) (infallibly) answered. 20. We can gain the salvation of another on the score of (justice) (friendship). 21. A sinner's plea for mercy is (sometimes) (often) (always) heard. 22. A saint's power of intercession depends on (.....) and on (.....). 23. The Church says that Our Lady's power of intercession is (.....). 24. The rosary gives glory to God both by its (.....) and its (.....). 25. It sanctifies us in five ways, namely (.....), (.....), (.....), (.....), and (.....).

(B) Answer each of these questions as fully as you can: -

1. Prayer is the raising of our intellect and will to God's. Explain.

PRAYER

2. Show that prayer is most reasonable, necessary and dignified.
3. How many kinds of prayer are there? What is the value of each? Give and explain all the qualities our prayer should have.
4. What two kinds of distractions are there? What are the effects of each? How should we deal with distractions? How can we avoid them?
5. Give examples of intentions we can have in praying.
6. A true prayer never goes unanswered. Explain this.
7. Show why it is good for us to pray to the saints. Explain why Our Lady's power of intercession is far greater than that of any other saint.
8. Explain the value of the rosary.

Chapter 42

THE SACRAMENTS

1. What They Are.

A SACRAMENT is an EFFICACIOUS SIGN OF GRACE, INSTITUTED BY CHRIST.

A SIGN is something which, when known, leads to a knowledge of something else. Thus, smoke is a sign of fire. A guard's whistle is a sign that the train is about to start. The tabernacle veil is a sign of the Real Presence. A high temperature, a racing pulse, tears, laughter, groans, gestures, words, traffic lights - these things and countless others like them are signs. Our daily life is full of them. We could not live without them; for they are the means by which we communicate to others our thoughts and sentiments. They are demanded by our nature as composite beings, made of body and soul.

Well, the sacraments are signs. But they have something special about them. Why? Because they are EFFICACIOUS signs. This means that they CAUSE what they signify. Smoke is a sign of fire; but it does not CAUSE the fire. The tabernacle veil is a sign of the Real Presence; but it does not CAUSE that Presence. The sacraments, on the contrary, do CAUSE what they signify.

And what do they SIGNIFY? Something sacred, connected with our sanctification and salvation. For the sacraments produce in the recipient a supernatural reality which demands SANCTIFYING GRACE, and which instantly causes this grace, unless it is prevented from doing so by some obstacle. Hence, we can say simply that the Sacraments signify sanctifying grace, which implies the supernatural virtues, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and the actual graces we need to live as God's adopted sons and heirs to heaven. They are, consequently, EFFICACIOUS SIGNS OF GRACE.

Lastly, they are signs which have been INSTITUTED BY CHRIST. The Church has no power to add to them, or to abolish any of them.

Her mission is to GUARD them intact, and to ADMINISTER them worthily and faithfully to the end of the world.

2. Their Fittingness.

It is most fitting that God should take such homely things as bread, water, oil and simple every-day words, and use these to cause grace in our souls. Why? Think a little, and you will see.

In the first place, grace is a SPIRITUAL reality. Hence, it cannot be seen, or heard, or felt, or tasted or smelt in any way. It is quite beyond the grasp of our sense faculties. Moreover, it is a SUPERNATURAL reality. Hence, it is beyond the grasp of our consciousness as well. We cannot be aware of it in the way that we can be aware of the fact that we are thinking of Christmas or the next dance. So, with infinite thoughtfulness, God has connected it INSEPARABLY with things that we can grasp by our external senses, and hence be absolutely sure of, since these faculties cannot err.

Any normal person can see a priest pour water on the head of an infant, and hear the words: "I baptise thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." He can be absolutely certain that this simple little ceremony has taken place. Absolutely certain, too, that GRACE has been given to the child's soul. Why? Because God has connected grace inseparably with baptism. It simply MUST give grace to one who does not place an obstacle. It has behind it the omnipotence of God. And this can never fail.

How consoling it is for a Catholic mother to know that her little child was baptised before death, and that it is now enjoying the happiness of heaven. Why is she so certain of its salvation? Because she knows on God's authority that the sacraments are efficacious signs of grace which INFALLIBLY produce what they signify in those who place no obstacle.

How consoling, again, it is for a person who has committed a mortal sin to hear the priest's words of absolution in the confessional, and to know that they have from God the power of forgiving sin. It is the same for all the other sacraments. They are a striking witness to God's thoughtfulness in connecting grace inseparably with material

things which we can know so easily and with such peace-giving certitude.

Secondly, the sacraments are most fitting inasmuch as they unite the spiritual and the supernatural to the material and the natural, and are consequently perfectly fitted to our nature as human beings, made up of body and soul. If we were angels, we would not need them. If mere animals, we could not use them. But, as rational animals called to be God's adopted children, we do need them, and we must use them, if we wish to live with grace on earth, and so win for ourselves the reward of heaven.

Thirdly, it is easy for us to be separated from God by material things which lead us into sin. Hence, it is fitting that He should take these same things and make them instruments of an ever deepening union with Himself. What could be more in accord with His infinite wisdom?

Our Lord told the Samaritan woman that in His religion God would be worshipped "in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24). Some take this to mean that our worship of God should be wholly interior, a hidden worship not shown externally in any way. But they forget that Our Lord was here contrasting the truth of His religion with the falsity of that practised by the Samaritans. They forget, too, that Christ Himself submitted to external rites, by allowing Himself to be baptised, for instance. They forget, finally, that Christ Himself instituted the sacraments. Think of the Last Supper. Our Saviour took bread into His hands, and said: "This is My Body." Then He took wine and said: "This is My Blood." And He immediately added: "Do this in commemoration of Me." He thus instituted the sacrament of the Eucharist, which is the central sacrament, and the end of all the others. Yet who would dare maintain that He did not worship God in spirit and in truth?

The whole man, body as well as soul, owes a debt of worship to God. And the worthy reception of the sacraments is one of the main ways in which man can pay this debt. Catholics often forget this. They know quite well that the sacraments sanctify us by bringing us something from God. But they fail to realise that the sacraments also take something from us to God. Through them we offer Him the homage of our worship. In receiving them with the proper reverence and dispositions, we are worshipping God, and worshipping Him in spirit and in truth; for we are worshipping Him

by the very means Christ has given us. We are, as a matter of fact, participating in the priesthood of Christ, by which infinite worship is given to God.

3. How They Are Constituted.

If asked how MAN is constituted, we say that he is made up of a body and a soul, united as MATTER and FORM, to make one human being. If asked how a SACRAMENT is constituted, we say that it is made up of MATTER and FORM, to make one efficacious sign of grace.

In man, the FORM or soul is the DETERMINING element. It makes the matter in our body be that of a human body, instead of mere dust. The MATTER, on the contrary, is the DETERMINED element. It is made THIS KIND of matter, by the soul. In a sacrament, it is the same. There is a DETERMINING or formal element which consists usually in words, such as those used in baptism. And there is the DETERMINED or material element, which consists usually in things, such as bread or wine, water or oil.

Take the Eucharist, which is the supreme, the model sacrament. The MATTER here is bread and wine. These signify nourishment. But the FORM which consists in the words of consecration, make this signification far more precise. They show that the nourishment given by the Eucharist is a supernatural one, for this sacrament contains the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ.

Similarly, in baptism the washing with water signifies a cleansing. But the words make this signification more precise, since they show that it is a cleansing wrought in the name of the three Persons of the Trinity, and by the power of God. Hence, a supernatural cleansing which consists in the removal of all sin from the soul.

The sacraments, then, are made up of two elements: MATTER and FORM. The matter usually consists in THINGS; the form, in WORDS. And, as with us who are also composed of matter and form, the form determines the matter. It does this by making its signification more clear and more precise.

Are we allowed to pick and choose the matter and the form for ourselves? Of course not. We must follow the ruling of the Church here. She tells us what is required for the proper administration of

the sacraments. To change either the matter or the form of any sacrament SUBSTANTIALLY, so that either would have a wholly new SIGNIFICATION, is to destroy the sacrament altogether. It is to render it null and void. It is to make it invalid.

Thus, a Salvation Army captain may think that he is baptising a person by waving a flag over him. But his good intention cannot make this a valid sacrament. It has neither the matter nor the form necessary for validity. There is simply no sacrament there at all. It is not a baptism. Similarly, if a person poured water on the head of an infant, and said: "I hope that does the trick, you squirming little chimpanzee," he would not baptise the child. He has altered the form substantially. He has rendered the baptism invalid. He must use the form given by Christ, and preserved for us by His Church.

4. How They Cause Grace.

How can water, which is something material and natural, cause grace which is something spiritual and supernatural?

It cannot do it by its own power – that is obvious. But it can do as an instrument in the hands of God. It can be the INSTRUMENTAL efficient cause of grace, if GOD is its PRINCIPAL Cause.

A pen cannot write a poem on its own, but it can write one when a man uses it as an instrument. He is the principal cause of the poem; the pen is its instrumental cause. The man makes use of the natural power that the pen has of making marks on paper; he MOVES, ELEVATES and DIRECTS this power, and thus enables it to produce an effect which it can never produce on its own.

In a similar way God uses the natural power that water has of washing things; He MOVES, ELEVATES and DIRECTS this natural power, and thus enables it to produce an effect it could never produce if left to itself. He makes it the INSTRUMENTAL cause of grace, just as He makes the water at Lourdes an instrumental cause of the cures that take place there.

The skill of a human being can be hampered by a defect in the instrument he uses. Even the world's best violinist cannot play a tune on a violin that has all its strings broken, any more than a great poet can write a poem with a pen that has no nib. But God is not thus hampered by the creatures He uses as His instruments,

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since all creatures are wholly dependent on Him. Hence, they simply have to obey Him. They must do what He wants. They must produce the effects He intends to produce through them. As creatures, they cannot possibly do otherwise. Thus, God can produce the most momentous effects through the simplest and most commonplace things, provided He uses these as His INSTRUMENTS and conveys to them a power which is equivalent to His omnipotence. This He does from time to time when He works miracles at Lourdes by means of the water. This He does daily in the Sacraments He has entrusted to His Church. Here, He is the PRINCIPAL CAUSE of the grace that they produce. They are its INSTRUMENTAL causes.

The sacraments, then, produce grace as instrumental causes in the hands of God. They also produce it BY THEIR VERY USAGE.

This has been infallibly defined by the Church against the Protestants. According to them, the sacraments do not CAUSE grace. They merely help us to stir up good DISPOSITIONS such as faith, in our soul. These good dispositions then win grace from God.

This teaching is true of the Sacraments of the Old Law - circumcision, for instance, or the eating of the Pascal Lamb, or the various purifications prescribed. But it is not true of the sacraments of the New Law. The early Protestants thus failed to see the difference between the Old Testament and the New.

They did not realise that when Christ said such things as: "Be thou cured," "Thy sins are forgiven thee," "Lazarus, arise!" "This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise," His words caused what they signified. Nor did they realise that when He said: "This is My Body," "This is My Blood," and again: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven," these words also accomplished what they signified, for they had behind them the omnipotence of God. It is a grave error thus to confuse the sacraments of the New Law with those of the Old. It is to ignore the Incarnation of the Son of God and His death upon the Cross. The Old Testament sacraments stirred up dispositions of faith in the Redeemer who was to come; but those of the New actually cause in us the grace He won by His redemption. And they do this by their very usage.

This does not mean, however, that good DISPOSITIONS do not matter in those who are supposed to have them. They matter very

much. Why? Because there is no limit to the AMOUNT of grace the sacraments can give us. But WE can limit the amount we receive from them, through lack of proper dispositions. We can even prevent them from giving any grace at all, as does a person who deliberately makes a sacrilegious Communion. Dispositions count, therefore, in those who have come to the use of reason. But it is one thing to say that they count; another, to say that they CAUSE the grace which we receive.

A comparison may make this clear. Think of a room which is completely dark at noon, because the blinds are drawn. Make a tiny hole in one of the blinds. This lets in a little light. Make a hole as big as an orange. This lets in much more. Make a hole almost as big as the window. This lets in more still. Now, the holes do not CAUSE the light which comes through them. It is caused by the sun. They merely do not stop it from entering. Well, our good dispositions in receiving the sacraments are something like that. The better they are, the less they hinder the sacraments from giving grace. Hence, the more grace we get. But they do not CAUSE this grace, any more than the holes cause the light. It is caused by God, and by the sacraments which He uses as His instruments.

Now you can see why we need to prepare well for confession and Holy Communion. Each of these sacraments can give an unlimited amount of grace. But the amount we actually receive depends on our good dispositions, especially on the sincerity of our faith and the intensity of our love.

We can sum up by saying that the sacraments cause grace as INSTRUMENTAL causes, God being its PRINCIPAL Cause; and that they produce it by their very usage. This, however, does not exempt us from preparing well for their reception, in order to gain as much grace as we can. For life is short, and grace is infinitely valuable.

5. Stages in the Production of Grace.

When a sacrament is valid, there are three stages in the production of its full effect. Consider baptism, for instance.

The first stage consists in the pouring of the water, and the saying of the words. This ceremony is called the SIGN ONLY. It is obviously a SIGN; but why do we add the word "only"? Because it itself is not SIGNIFIED in any way.

Then comes the second stage. For this ceremony, if valid, must produce IMMEDIATELY some supernatural effect in the soul, because a sacrament is an efficacious sign of our sanctification, and it produces its effect by its very usage. This effect is called the THING AND SIGN of the sacrament. Why? Because it is at once the thing signified by the external ceremony, and the sign of grace which it is intended to produce.

What sort of reality is it? It is a supernatural reality which is distinct from grace, but which DEMANDS grace. In baptism, it is the CHARACTER given by this sacrament. It is the character, too, in confirmation and in Holy Orders. In the Eucharist, it is the Body and Blood of Christ, under the appearances of bread and wine. In penance, it is the sorrow for sin, which is a sharing in Christ's sorrow in the garden of Gethsemane. In matrimony, it is the marriage bond, which is an image of the union existing between Christ and the Church. In Extreme Unction, it is a spiritual anointing, which is a sharing in the power that went forth from Christ, healing all.

It demands grace, as we have said; and it always produces it immediately, unless it is prevented from doing so by some OBSTACLE, such as the absence of contrition in one who has been guilty of mortal sin.

Finally, there is the third stage. It is the actual production of GRACE in the soul. This grace is called the THING ONLY. Why? Because, though SIGNIFIED, it does not itself SIGNIFY anything further, since the process of producing grace is completed by it.

At the beginning of this process, therefore, there is the SIGN ONLY - the external ceremony. At the end, there is the THING ONLY - the grace produced. And, in between these, there is the THING AND SIGN, which shares in the nature of each.

Normally, all three stages are gone through at the moment the sacrament is received. But in some cases there may be, as we have said, an OBSTACLE to grace; and this at least postpones its production till such time as the obstacle is removed.

6. How They Can be Received.

From what has been said, you can see that a sacrament can be (i) INVALID; or (ii) VALID, BUT NOT FRUITFUL; or (iii) VALID AND FRUITFUL.

(i). A sacrament is said to be INVALID when there is no sacrament there at all. Consider a few examples.

You try to baptise a child with cylinder oil. Is this a real baptism? No. The necessary matter of the sacrament is missing. No sacrament is administered. It is invalid. Another time, you use water; but, instead of the right words, you say to the child: "It's high time Old Nick was out of you, anyway." Valid? No. You have not used the prescribed form. Next time, you use water and say the right words, but the infant happens to be validly baptised already. Is your baptism valid? No. This sacrament cannot be repeated.

Again: a man and a woman go through the ceremony of marriage, but their consent is not freely given. Is the marriage valid? No. Lack of freedom invalidates it. They are not husband and wife. There is no marriage there at all, any more than there would be if they joined hands and sang "Auld Lang Syne". It would be the same if there was an invalidating impediment in one of them, such as an already-existing marriage bond.

If a sacrament is INVALID, it does not produce any supernatural reality in the recipient. It can have no good effect whatever, but only a bad one, since it is a mortal sin to receive a sacrament invalidly.

(ii). A sacrament is said to be VALID, BUT NOT FRUITFUL when, though validly received, it is prevented from producing GRACE by some obstacle.

Here is an example. A man who has committed a formal mortal sin wants to be baptised. He goes through the ceremony, and it is valid. But he refuses to make an act of contrition for his sin. Can this sacrament give him grace at the time it is received? No. He puts an obstacle to grace by refusing to have contrition. No personal sin can ever be forgiven without contrition. Is the sacrament useless, then? No. Since it is valid, it must put some supernatural reality in his soul. It puts what we have called the THING AND SIGN of the sacrament, which in this case is the character given by baptism. This lasts forever; and, right to the end of the man's life, it will keep

on DEMANDING grace. And it will actually give grace, as soon as he removes the obstacle by making an act of perfect contrition for his sin.

Is baptism the only sacrament that acts in this way? No. All the others, except the Eucharist, if received validly but unfruitfully, demand grace by the THING AND SIGN which they produce, even after the administration of the sacrament. But they do not all keep on demanding it till death. Confirmation and Holy Orders do, of course; for, like baptism, they give a character which endures for ever. Matrimony keeps on demanding grace till the death of one of the parties. Penance, as long as the contrition required for its validity endures. Extreme Unction, during the same illness. From this you can see what marvellous means of salvation the sacraments are; and what striking witnesses they are to God's desire to save our souls.

(iii). A sacrament is said to be VALID AND FRUITFUL when it causes grace at the moment it is received; and, through the character which it produces, or its equivalent, continues to demand new graces all through life, or at least as long as the THING AND SIGN endures. From this again, you can see that the sacraments are indeed efficacious signs of our sanctification; and that they leave absolutely nothing undone to sanctify and save our souls.

7. The Character.

This is an indelible MARK or SEAL imprinted on our soul by Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders. Since it is indelible, these sacraments cannot ever be repeated. It is, as we have said, their THING AND SIGN. It demands grace, and gives it instantly, if it can. If prevented from doing this, it keeps on demanding it, and actually gives it as soon as the obstacle is removed. It also gives all through life a title to new graces and helps from God. Finally, it deposes us to a special office in the church. Thus the character in baptism enables us to RECEIVE divine things; that in confirmation, to DEFEND them; and that in Holy Orders, to ADMINISTER them. Hence, just as a brand shows that a sheep belongs to such and such an owner, the characters given by these three sacraments show that we belong to Christ, and that we are in some way dedicated and consecrated to Him. We shall have more to say about the character, when we come to study the sacraments that give it.

8. The Number of the Sacraments.

The Church has defined that there are seven sacraments. They are baptism, confirmation, penance, the Eucharist and extreme unction¹ which sanctify us as individuals; and Holy Orders and matrimony which promote the supernatural welfare of the community as well.

They provide grace in every special need that we can have for it, either as individuals or as social beings, from the cradle to the grave.

By baptism, we are born into the supernatural order, and given a share in the life of God. If, after this, we have the misfortune to lose this divine life, we are raised from the dead by penance, which is God's remedy for sin, the supreme malady of the soul. The Eucharist provides us daily with a supernatural nourishment which is none other than the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ. Confirmation gives us strength and courage for battle, making us supernatural adults and fearless soldiers of God's Incarnate Son. Matrimony provides the graces required for the generation and education of children through the life-long, happy union of husband and wife, which is an image of the indissoluble union that exists between Christ and the Church. Holy Orders affords a divine remedy for social selfishness by enabling priests to carry on Christ's mission as His representatives on earth. Finally, extreme unction counteracts the weakness caused by the approach of death, and enables us to meet it with a resignation, a courage and peace of mind not unlike those with which Christ met it on the Cross. Hence, no important event in life is left uncared for. Every emergency has its special help. What more can God do to sanctify and save our souls?

9. The Central Sacrament.

The EUCHARIST is, of course, the central sacrament, since it contains Christ Himself, who is the Author and the End of all the rest. Hence they all exist for it.

Thus, a person is baptised to be able to receive the Eucharist. He is confirmed, to defend it. His sins are forgiven by penance, in order that he may receive it worthily. He is married in order to bring into the world children who can nourish their souls with this heavenly

¹ Editor's Note: Extreme Unction is now commonly known as 'Anointing of the Sick.'

Food. He is ordained to consecrate bread and wine into it. And at death, he receives extreme unction in order to have the most perfect dispositions possible for welcoming Christ in His last visit in the Sacrament of His love. It is THE sacrament. All the others help to unite us to Christ. But the Eucharist IS Christ. So it is the centre and the end of all the rest.

10. The Sacramentals.

These are THINGS and ACTIONS which the CHURCH establishes and uses, to gain benefits for men, through the power of her PRAYER.

They are things, such as holy water, a rosary, a scapular, an Agnus Dei, and so on. And actions such as the sign of the Cross, the sprinkling of holy water, the saying of the Our Father, and the many blessings given by the Church.

Here is how they differ from the sacraments: -

- (i). They are not instituted by Christ, as are the sacraments, but by the Church, especially the Pope.
- (ii). Many of them may be given to the unbaptised, as when a pagan is exorcised or given a blessing.
- (iii). They do not cause grace as efficient causes, as do the sacraments, but only by the power of the prayer of the Church.
- (iv). They do not give any power over sacred things, as the sacraments do.
- (v). Nor are they a remedy for the weaknesses left in us by original sin, as are the sacraments.

All the same, they are valuable means of grace and also of temporal benefits. We should not despise or neglect them. Behind them is the mighty efficacy of the prayer of the Church.

Let us end this short treatment of the sacraments with an extract from a modern convert to Catholicism. He says:-

"The worship of the Church is not merely a filial remembrance of Christ, but a continual participation by visible mysterious signs in Jesus and His redemptive might, a refreshing touching of the hem of His garments, a liberating handling of His sacred wounds. That is the deepest purpose of the liturgy, namely, to make the redeeming grace of Christ present, visible and fruitful, as a sacred and powerful reality that fills the whole life of the Christian. In the sacrament of baptism, the sacrificial Blood of Christ flows into the soul, purifies it from the infirmity of original sin, and permeates it with His own sacred strength, in order that a new man may be born, the re-born man, the man who is an adopted son of God. In the sacrament of confirmation, Jesus sends His Comforter, the Spirit of constancy and divine faith, to the awakening religious consciousness, in order to form a child of God into a soldier of God. In the sacrament of penance, Jesus, as the merciful Saviour, consoles the afflicted soul with the words of peace: "Go thy way; thy sins are forgiven thee." In the sacrament of the last anointing, the compassionate Samaritan approaches the sick bed and pours new courage and resignation into the sore heart. In the sacrament of marriage, Christ engrafts the love of man and wife on His own profound love for His people, for the community, for the Church, on His own faithfulness unto death. And in the priestly consecration, by the imposition of hands, He transmits His Messianic might, the power of His mission, to the disciples whom He calls, in order that He may, by their means, pursue without interruption His work of raising the new men, the children of God, out of the kingdom of death.

"But the sacraments which we have so far enumerated are not the deepest and holiest facts of all. For, so completely does Jesus disclose Himself to His disciples, so profound is the action of His grace, that He gives HIMSELF to them, and enters into them as a PERSONAL source of grace. Jesus shares with His disciples His most intimate possession, the most precious thing He has, HIS OWN SELF, His PERSONALITY, as the GOD-MAN. We can eat His Flesh and drink His Blood. We are not left orphans in this world. Under the forms of bread and wine, the Master lives amid His disciples, the Bridegroom with His Bride, the Lord in the midst of His community, until that day when He shall return in visible majesty on the clouds of heaven.

"The sacraments are naught else than a visible guarantee that Jesus is working in the midst of us. At all the important stages of our little

life, in its heights and in its depths, at the marriage altar and the cradle, at the sick bed, in all the crises and shocks that may befall us, Jesus stands by us under the veils of the grace-giving sacraments, as our Friend and Consoler, as the Physician of soul and body, as our Saviour. The sacraments breathe the very spirit of primitive Christianity. They are the truest expression and result of that original and central Christian belief that the Christian should be inseparably united with Christ, and should live in Christ."

This lovely passage surely shows us what a privilege it is for us to belong to Christ's true Church, since to belong to it is to belong to Him. It is to share His life by grace in this world, as a pledge of our never-ending union with Him in the next.

SUMMARY

1. Sacraments are:

- (a). Efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ.
- (b). They cause what they signify.

2. Fittingness:

- (a). As visible signs of invisible grace.
- (b). As means of worshipping God.

3. How Constituted:

- (a). Matter – usually things.
- (b). Form – usually words.
- (c). United to form one sign.

4. How They Cause Grace:

- (a). As efficient, instrumental causes. Cf. God.
- (b). By their very usage.
- (c). Need for good dispositions.

5. Stages in Giving it:

- (a). The sign only.
- (b). The thing and sign.
- (c). The thing only.

6. How Received:

- (a). Invalid.
- (b). Valid, but not fruitful.
- (c). Valid and fruitful.

7. The Character:

- (a). What it is.

(b). What it does.

(a). Eucharist.

8. Number:

(b). Why?

(a). Seven. Defined by the Church.

10. Sacramentals:

(b). One for every special need in life.

(a). What they are.

(b). How they differ from the sacraments.

9. Central Sacrament:

EXERCISES

(A) Fill in blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following:

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1. A sacrament is an (....) sign of (....), instituted by (....). 2. The Church (can) (cannot) make a new sacrament. 3. In the sacraments, grace which is invisible is (....) connected with material things which we can see and hear. 4. A sacrament is made up of matter and (....), united to make one efficacious (....) of grace. 5. We (are) (are not) allowed to alter these substantially. 6. God is the (....) Cause of the grace produced by the sacraments; they are its (....) causes. 7. They cause grace by (their use) (dispositions they arouse in us). 8. The external ceremony is called the (sign only) (thing and sign) (thing only). 9. If valid, it must produce in the soul a supernatural reality called the (sign only) (thing and sign) (thing only). 10. This then produces the (sign only) (thing and sign) (thing only), which is (....) grace, provided there is no (....). 11. In baptism, confirmation and holy orders, the thing and sign corresponds to the (....) given by these sacraments. 12. One who receives baptism

THE SACRAMENTS

validly but unfruitfully (can) (cannot) get grace from it later in life. 13. If there is no sacrament at all, it is said to be (invalid) (valid, but not fruitful) (valid and fruitful). 14. A man gets married validly, but in mortal sin. Next day he makes an act of perfect contrition. Does this marriage then give him grace? (Yes) (No). 15. In the Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Christ are the (sign only) (thing and sign) (thing only) of the sacrament. 16. In marriage, the thing and sign is the (....). 17. In penance, it is (....) which is a sharing in that experienced by Christ in Gethsemane. 18. The sacramentals are instituted by (Christ) (the Church). 19. They cause grace as efficient causes. (True) (False). 20. Their efficacy depends on the power of the (....) of the Church.

(B) Answer each of the following as fully as you can: -

1. What is a sacrament of the New Law? How does it differ from one of the Old Law?
2. A sacrament is made up of matter and form, united to make one sign of grace. Explain this.
3. The sacraments cause grace (a) as instrumental causes, and (b) by their very usage. Explain this. Explain also why good dispositions are needed all the same.
4. Explain the following: Sign Only; Thing and Sign; Thing Only. Illustrate from baptism.
5. A sacrament can be invalid; valid but not fruitful; valid and fruitful. Explain each, and give examples.
6. Show how the sacraments give grace for every special need in life.
7. What is the character? What sacraments give one? What does it do?
8. What are the sacramentals? How do they differ from the sacraments? Why should we respect them, and use them in daily life?

Chapter 43

BAPTISM

1. What It Is.

BAPTISM is a sacrament by which we are BORN again SUPERNATURALLY, by the WASHING OF WATER, and the INVOCATION of the three PERSONS OF THE TRINITY.

It is a BIRTH. In this, it differs from PENANCE, which is a RESURRECTION. When Our Lord raised Lazarus from the dead, He did not give him a new soul. He merely restored the one that Lazarus had before he died. So, too, PENANCE restores to us the supernatural life lost by personal mortal sin. Baptism, on the contrary, BEGINS this life in us. It is a new BIRTH, not a rising from the dead. Hence, a distinct sacrament from penance.

By it, we are born into the SUPERNATURAL ORDER, and into the CHURCH. We become Christians, members of the Mystical Body. As such, we can offer to God the worship given by Christ.

Since the whole man is to become a member of Christ, in baptism Christ takes possession of soul and body together, snatching both from the power of the devil. The exorcism shows this. It does not mean that a baby before baptism is possessed by the devil, but that the body, not yet given over to God, is normally the prey of sin, and through sin, the prey of Satan. By baptism all is changed. Anointed and signed with the Cross, the body is consecrated to God, as a worthy instrument and fit companion of the soul, which has itself been cleansed from sin.

Ancient rituals make this clear. One of them, for instance, says: "I sign thy forehead, that thou mayst be Christian; I sign thine eyes, that they may behold the light of God; I sign thine ears, that thou mayst hear the voice of the Lord; thy nostrils, that thou mayst breathe the sweetness of Christ; thy lips, that thou mayst utter the words of life; I sign thee on the breast, that thou mayst believe in the undivided Trinity; I sign thee wholly, in the name of the Father

and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, that thou mayst come to life eternal, and live forever and ever."

How joyous it all is! How triumphant! How full of promise! And, so real is the consecration it speaks of that, to sully the body by impurity, was considered by the early Christians to be a special profanation. He who commits it, sins against his own body - this body which is no longer for uncleanness, but "for the Lord," as St. Paul puts it (1 Cor. 6:13); because he is a member of Christ.

The Christian's body is thus a redeemed body, one bought back by Christ. It has been transferred to another Master. It has returned to God's ownership. It is no longer a thing profane, but something sacred. It is consecrated to Christ. And it is baptism that effects this consecration.

2. Baptism as a Sacrament.

This is clear from Scripture. Recall Our Lord's words to Nicodemus: "Unless a man be BORN again of WATER and the HOLY GHOST, he cannot enter the KINGDOM OF GOD." (John 3:5). Here Christ tells us that baptism is a new, supernatural birth, and that it admits the baptised to the kingdom of God. He also mentions the MATTER of this sacrament - natural water.

He himself gives us its FORM, too, when He says: "Going, therefore, teach ALL nations, BAPTISING them in name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." (Mat. 28:19). And, by immediately adding: "Behold I am with you ALL DAYS, even to the consummation of the world," He shows that this sacrament is to remain in His Church down through all the centuries, to sanctify and save souls, till He comes again in judgment at the end.

Moreover, the practice of the Church from the beginning shows that baptism is a sacrament. Read the *Acts of the Apostles*, and you will see how often it mentions that the Apostles baptised the converts they made. The early Fathers, too, are unanimous on the point. So are the earliest documents, such as the *Didache*, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and the writings of *Pastor Hermes*. Can we wonder, then, that the Council of Trent defined that baptism is one of the seven sacraments, when this was denied by the first Protestants?

Baptism was instituted by Christ before His Passion – probably when He Himself was baptised in the Jordan. But it did not begin to oblige till after His resurrection; for it was then that He made it public as a law, by ordering His Apostles to baptise all in the name of the Trinity.

It has, obviously, the three elements found in every sacrament: the SIGN ONLY, which is the external ceremony; the THING AND SIGN, which is the character given; and the THING ONLY, which is the grace caused in the soul.

3. The Matter and Form.

(a). The Matter.

The REMOTE matter is TRUE and NATURAL WATER. This is required for the validity of the sacrament, as the Council of Trent teaches, and as Our Lord's words to Nicodemus clearly show.

And how fitting water is as the matter of baptism! It washes our body, as every grubby youngster so well knows; and this washing can be elevated by God to become a cleansing of the soul. Again, how pellucid water is! How exquisitely it allows light to pass through it! What more fitting then, as matter of baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, the light of God Himself! Finally, water is so easy to procure. Man cannot live without it. Wherever he is, there it is also. There, too, is the matter of baptism, the most necessary of all the sacraments.

Water from a river, a spring, a well, a tank, the radiator of a car, a ditch, a pool, a lake, the sea, melted snow or ice, dew and rain – all these are CERTAINLY VALID matter for baptism. So is muddy water and even putrid water, provided these can still be reckoned true water in the common estimation of men. All can be used in case of necessity.

What about liquids such as water pressed from flowers or plants, and water exuded by trees? These are DOUBTFULLY VALID matter; as are also such things as thin soup, light beer, or rose water.

Then, there are liquids such as milk, blood, saliva, perspiration, tears, ink, and the sap of flowers and plants, which are clearly NOT natural water. Hence they are CERTAINLY INVALID matter for baptism.

If CERTAINLY VALID matter cannot be procured, one should use DOUBTFULLY VALID matter. Baptism should then be given CONDITIONALLY; and, if the child lives, the Sacrament should be given again CONDITIONALLY, as soon as certainly valid matter is available.

In SOLEMN baptism, the water used is that which has been blessed on Holy Saturday, or on the Vigil of Pentecost. However, ordinary holy water is used for the solemn baptism of converts.

The PROXIMATE matter is the WASHING of the skin of the person baptised. It represents the IMMERSION used in the early Church, which signified the death and the resurrection of Christ.

The water must physically TOUCH the body – the head or some other important member if possible. And it must FLOW. It does this when it is poured on the FOREHEAD, provided the skin is not covered with oil at the time. A wet cloth drawn across the forehead – not just placed there – would also wash the skin. But a little water poured on the top of a man's head could easily flow off without having touched the skin, especially when the hair is very thick and plastered with grease. If he were as bald as an egg, of course, the ceremony would be safe enough.

There are three ways of “washing” a candidate in baptism: IMMERSION, which is a sort of dipping; SPRINKLING, in the way the priest sprinkles the congregation before a High Mass; and POURING, which is the usual method now-a-days. All are valid; but sprinkling is obviously a dangerous method when there are several to be baptised. One or more may be missed. Immersion is a safe method, but not very convenient today when there are so many baptisms to give. Moreover, the Church is universal; and climates vary from place to place. So the best way is by pouring. It is easy. It is safe. And no one will get pneumonia from it.

(b). The Form.

The form is that given by Our Lord: "I baptise thee, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." How simple! How easy to remember! Yet how unspeakably sublime in its effects!

We may say these words immediately before, or immediately after we pour the water; but the best way is to say them WHILE pouring it.

It would not be right to pour the water, then take a holiday for a fortnight, then return and say the words prescribed for baptism. Nor would it be right for one person to do the pouring, while another says the words. In both these cases the sacrament would be invalid. Why? Because, as we said in the last chapter, the matter and form must be so UNITED as to make one sign of grace. Here, the required union is missing.

Queer children sometimes ask whether a fireman could baptise a child that happened to poke its head out of the window on the fifth storey of a burning building, if he turned his hose on the said head. The answer is, Yes; provided he intended to baptise the child, and said the right words. So could anyone else who helped him to direct the hose by putting his hand on it.

Can a person baptise himself? No. He can make an act of perfect contrition instead. This is baptism of DESIRE. It suffices, when baptism by water cannot be had.

4. Repetition.

Trent has defined that baptism cannot be repeated. The reasons are obvious. In the first place, it is a supernatural birth; and no person can be born twice supernaturally, any more than he can be born twice in the natural order. Secondly, baptism likens us to Christ in His death and resurrection; and He died and rose but once. Lastly, it imprints a character which is indelible. This makes its repetition unnecessary as well as impossible.

5. Kinds of Baptism.

There are three kinds: baptism by WATER, baptism of DESIRE, and baptism of BLOOD.

(a). Baptism by Water.

This alone is a sacrament. It alone gives a character. It alone makes us belong officially and publicly to the Mystical Body of the Church.

(b). Baptism of Desire.

This is the same as an act of perfect contrition or an act of supernatural charity, plus the desire of receiving the sacrament. Even a person who has never heard of baptism as a sacrament can have such a desire by wishing to do all that God wants him to do to save his soul.

That this kind of baptism forgives original as well as personal sin is clear from the teaching of the Church, and from Christ's words: "If any man will love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him." (John 14:23). To be loved by the Father, and to be a temple of the Trinity, is to be free from mortal sin, original and personal. Moreover, baptism of desire is the only way that millions of pagans have of saving their souls.

(c). Baptism of Blood.

This is MARTYRDOM. It means death, or its equivalent as when St. John was thrown into boiling oil but saved from death by a miracle, inflicted through hatred of Christ or of His religion. Thus, a person can be a martyr for the priesthood, or the seal of confession, or any of the virtues taught by Christ. If a missionary in the Islands is slain by the natives just because they want his radio or his straw hat, he is not a martyr in the proper sense of the term. He is not put to death through hatred of Our Lord.

Martyrdom represents the Passion of Christ, from which it draws its efficacy. Our Lord assures us that "He that loseth his life for Me, shall find it." (Mat. 10:39). And His promise is quite general. It applies to all, infants as well as adults. Think of the Holy Innocents, the first martyrs of the Church.

All three forms of baptism are, of course, not equally efficacious. In the first place, baptism of desire justifies only adults, whereas the other two justify even babies. Secondly, baptism of desire justifies only by its dispositions; the other two justify by their very

operation. Thirdly, baptism of desire requires perfect contrition; for the other two, imperfect contrition suffices. Lastly, baptism of desire does not necessarily forgive all venial sins, since a person may not have contrition for them all. Nor does it necessarily do away with all temporal punishment. Baptism of water and baptism of blood, on the contrary, wipe away all sins and abolish all temporal punishment. Hence, both are immediate doorways to heaven. And which of them is the better? Baptism of blood, of course, since it makes us more like Christ in His Passion than baptism by water does. Hence it gives more grace. Moreover, it carries with it the greatest of all graces - that of FINAL PERSEVERANCE. A man can be baptised with water, and still lose his soul; but a martyr goes straight to heaven. It is impossible for him to be lost.

6. The Persons Concerned.

(a). The Minister.

Baptism by water may be SOLEMN, or it may be PRIVATE. It is SOLEMN when performed with all the ceremonies prescribed by the RITUAL. It is PRIVATE when only the essential parts - the washing and the words - are administered.

For SOLEMN baptism, the ORDINARY minister is a priest. He can consecrate bread into Christ's Body; hence he can also admit a person to His Mystical Body by baptism. The EXTRAORDINARY minister is a DEACON. He can give Holy Communion; hence he can also administer solemn baptism. However, to do this lawfully, he must get permission from the priest.

For PRIVATE baptism, anyone can be the minister. Though here, of course, a priest is to be preferred to a deacon; a deacon to a sub-deacon; a cleric to a layman; a man to a woman; a Catholic to a non-Catholic; an outsider to a father or mother. But there may be exceptions to this order. A nurse who is an expert at baptising would naturally be preferred to a man who had never baptised before; a sober female to a semi-intoxicated male; and so on. Is it right for a Catholic mother to ask a doctor to baptise her infant in case of necessity, though she knows that the doctor is an atheist who hates the Catholic religion? Yes. As long as this doctor intends to do what the Church does, and as long as he pours the water correctly and uses the prescribed words, the baptism is valid, in

spite of his own unbelief. The sacraments, remember, cause grace by their very usage.

(b). The Subject.

Who can be baptised? Any human being who is ALIVE, and who has NOT been BAPTISED already. To try to baptise one who is certainly dead, or one who has certainly been baptised before would be a serious sin, since the baptism would be invalid. Where there is serious doubt, baptism should be given conditionally: If thou art alive, I baptise thee... or, If thou art unbaptised, I baptise thee ... This will save the sacrament from being invalidly administered.

Needless to say, you are not allowed to go round practising baptism on all the children of Jews and pagans you can find in your neighbourhood. These children come under the control of their parents, by the natural law. It is different if a child is at the point of death and is sure to die. Such a child can, and should be baptised, even against the express wish of its parents. Since it is the last chance the child has of gaining heaven, the supernatural law intervenes here. It is the same with unbaptised adults who are on the point of death, and who have given some signs of wanting to be Catholics before they die.

(c). The God-parents.

Not so long ago it was a custom in some parts of the Church to have a plentiful supply of god-parents – twenty, for instance, or even a hundred, or a corporate body such as the municipal council. Now, however, Canon Law restricts the number to TWO, a god-father and a god-mother; but even ONE suffices.

Still, no one should receive solemn baptism without a god-parent, if it is possible to have one. And, even in private baptism there should be one, where this is easily possible. God-parents should, of course, be good Catholics, as they are obliged to help the child to grow up a Catholic if its parents die or fail to fulfil their duty in this regard.

A certain SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP arises between the baptised on the one hand, and the minister and the sponsor, on the other; and it is an impediment to marriage. And why not? Does not a child

call the priest who baptised him, “father”? Does he not refer to his sponsor as his god-father or god-mother? And what father or mother would ever dream of marrying his or her own child?

7. Baptism of Infants.

Many non-Catholics are opposed to infant baptism. They say that children should be allowed to grow up without it, so that later on in life when they are able to judge for themselves, they can choose whether they will be baptised or not.

This teaching is condemned by the Church. Does not Our Lord say: “suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not”? (Mat. 19:14). And did He not command His Apostles to baptise all?

Moreover, parents have from God the grave obligation of educating their children. But complete education is impossible without the supernatural life of grace, since man is destined for heaven.

Again, the child has a right to be protected from evil, moral as well as physical. Parents have the corresponding obligation of protecting him. Just as they are obliged to stop him from chewing phosphorus, so, too, they are obliged to do what they can to prevent him from developing habits of selfishness and sin. This means that they are obliged to have him baptised soon after birth, so that his soul may be turned to God as his last end by sanctifying grace and the virtues that accompany it. Otherwise, on account of original sin, the child will inevitably develop bad habits. These will deepen as he grows older; and they will make it very difficult for him to make a prudent judgment about spiritual and supernatural things such as the benefits conferred by baptism. Is such a young man likely to worry about baptism? Is he likely even to think of it? Read again Chapter 30 which deals with prudence. Then judge for yourself.

8. Effects of Baptism.

If INVALID, it can have no supernatural effect whatever, since there is no sacrament there to produce it. Its effects can be only evil ones.

If VALID, BUT NOT FRUITFUL, it produces a character, the THING AND SIGN of the sacrament. This keeps on demanding grace right to the end of life; and actually produces it as soon as the obstacle has been removed.

BAPTISM

If VALID AND FRUITFUL, it produces its full effect. This is what it does for our soul:-

- (a). It removes all GUILT of ALL SIN, original and personal, mortal and venial.
- (b). It does away with ALL TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT due to sin. Hence, if a person dies immediately after it, he must go straight to heaven.
- (c). It gives SANCTIFYING GRACE to the soul, and with it the SUPERNATURAL VIRTUES and the GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST.
- (d). To this it adds its special SACRAMENTAL GRACES of UNION, LIGHT and FRUITFULNESS in the worship of God.
- (e). It imprints a CHARACTER indelibly on the soul. This, in its turn : -
 - 1. Incorporates us into the MYSTICAL BODY of Christ, making us VISIBLY and OFFICIALLY members of His Church.
 - 2. Enables us to RECEIVE the OTHER SACRAMENTS. Without it, they are INVALID.
 - 3. Enables us to benefit by the PRAYERS and CEREMONIES of the CHURCH.
 - 4. Gives us the right to be OFFERED AT MASS in union with the Mystical Body.
 - 5. Enables us to be MINISTERS of the sacrament of MARRIAGE.
 - 6. Enables us to take an ACTIVE part in the PRAYERS and CEREMONIES of the Church; hence to unite ourselves to the offering of Christ which the priest makes at MASS, together with the other members of the Mystical Body united to Him.
 - 7. Gives a share in the VIRTUES displayed by Christ as a CHILD: obedience, humility, and filial confidence in His Heavenly Father.

Christ gave His Church three mighty powers: to TEACH, to SANCTIFY and to GOVERN all men, in His name and with His authority. By baptism, we are given the privilege of being taught,

sanctified and directed by a Church that can never err and never fail. By being loyal to it, we can grow daily in light and love, and so enjoy in this life a happiness which is at once a pledge and a foretaste of that which we shall enjoy with Him in eternity.

9. Obligations Flowing From Baptism.

By the CHARACTER given in baptism, we are made forever the SUBJECT of CHRIST, the KING OF KINGS. Hence, we must obey and imitate Him in our daily life.

St. Paul insists on this in the sixth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. Read it. It is a glorious sermon on the dignity and the obligations of the baptised. He makes it his theme in some of his other Epistles, too, that to the Galatians, for instance, and that to the Ephesians.

Even apart from such texts, however, we know that Christ is KING of all men. As we saw in Chapter 26, He is King on two titles: as Creator, and as Redeemer. Hence, He has the right to unite all men to Himself, and to place in them the character of baptism, which is a sign of His authority over them.

Nor can we ever rightly DISCLAIM or REPUDIATE the obligations we have incurred by baptism.

These obligations flow from the CHARACTER; hence they are as enduring as it is.

No one can rightly say that this is unfair in the case of infants. In that case, one would have to say the same of many other obligations such as those of the natural law, or those of the civil society into which a child is born.

Moreover, when it is a question of a great good, both the natural and the civil law teach that parents can, in the name of their children, enter contracts which the children may not repudiate when they grow up. For a still greater reason, parents can do the same by baptism, since the goods it gives are far more important than any temporal goods can ever be, and far more necessary.

Finally, children are obliged by baptism to do only that which all men are obliged to do to gain salvation. An essential condition for

salvation is subjection to Christ. A child that has been baptised is on the way to saving his soul. If he dies before he comes to the use of reason, his salvation is assured. If he comes to the use of reason, his will is turned by grace towards God his last end, not towards self as it would be without baptism. He is given to Christ, and to His Church; and, with the help of further graces, he can go right through life without any serious sin, and so make certain of saving his soul.

10. Necessity of Baptism.

Baptism is the most necessary of all the sacraments. Unless it is had in some form, it is impossible to get to heaven. Moreover, unless a person has already received baptism by water, all the other sacraments are invalid.

This is why everyone should know how to baptise. Catholic doctors and nurses do untold good to dying children by baptising them, thus changing their eternal happiness from a merely natural one in Limbo to a supernatural one in heaven. What a privilege and what a joy it is to have been instrumental in thus giving the beatific vision even to one child, forever.

11. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should often thank God for my baptism.
2. I should know how to baptise in case of necessity.
3. I should try to realise the obligations that flow from my baptism.
4. I should renew from time to time the promises made at baptism.
5. I should try to fulfil them as fully as I possibly can.

SUMMARY

1. Baptism.

- (a). What it is.
- (b). How it is distinct from Penance.

(a). Christ's words to Nicodemus, and to His Apostles.

(b). Practice of the Church from the beginning.

2. It Is a Sacrament.

- (c). Testimony of Fathers and early documents.
- (d). Definition of Council of Trent.

3. The Matter and Form.

- (a). Remote Matter. Natural water.
- (b). Proximate Matter. The washing.
- (c). Form. The words.

4. Repetition.

- (a). A birth.
- (b). Christ died and rose but once.
- (c). The character is indelible.

5. Kinds.

- (a). Baptism by water, baptism of desire, baptism of blood.
- (b). The efficacy of each.

6. Persons Concerned.

- (a). Minister for solemn and private baptism.
- (b). Subject.
- (c). God-parents.

7. Baptism of Infants.

- (a). Christ's teaching.
- (b). The teaching of His Church.
- (c). Right reason.

8. Effects of Baptism.

- (a). If invalid.
- (b). If valid, but not fruitful.
- (c). If valid and fruitful.

9. Obligations Arising From Baptism.

- (a). What they are.
- (b). Why they cannot rightly be repudiated.

10. Necessity of Baptism.

- (a). To gain heaven.
- (b). To receive the other sacraments.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. Baptism is a new supernatural (...); penance is a (...) from the dead. 2. St. Paul says that after baptism our body is not for uncleanness, but "for the (...)." It is in fact consecrated to (...). 3. Christ said to Nicodemus: "Unless a man be (...) again of (...) and the (...), he cannot enter the (...)." 4. He said to His Apostles: "Going, therefore, teach all nations, (...) them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." 5. It was the Council of (...) that defined baptism as one of the sacraments. 6. The remote

matter of baptism is (...) and (...) water. 7. The proximate matter is the (...) of the (...) on a person to be baptised. 8. This washing may be done by (...), or by (...), or by (...). 9. The form in baptism is: (...). 10. If one man poured the water and another said the words, this baptism (would) (would not) be invalid. 11. One (can) (cannot) baptise oneself. 12. Baptism cannot be repeated because it is a supernatural (...); moreover, Christ (...) and (...) only once; finally, it imprints a (...) which is (...). 13. There are three kinds of baptism, namely (...), (...) and (...). 14. Of these (...) alone is a sacrament. 15. Which form of baptism carries with it the grace of final perseverance? (...). 16. Baptism may also be solemn or it may be (...). 17. The ordinary minister for solemn baptism is (...); the extraordinary, is (...). 18. Can a doctor who is an atheist administer baptism validly? (Yes) (No). 19. How many god-parents should be present at a baptism where possible? Not more than (...); and at least (...). 20. Baptism sets up between the baptised and both the minister and the sponsor a spiritual relationship which is an impediment to (...). 21. Christ says: "Suffer little (...) to come unto Me, and forbid them not." From this, does it seem that He was opposed to infant baptism? (Yes) (No). 22. Complete education is impossible without grace, for man is destined for (...). 23. Children have a right to be protected by their parents from all evils, (...) as well as physical. 24. When received validly and fruitfully, baptism by water removes (all) (some) guilt of (all) (some) sins. 25. It also removes (all) (some) of the temporal punishment due to sin. 26. It also gives (...) grace to the soul; and with it all the (...) virtues and all the (...) of the Holy Ghost. 27. Its special sacramental graces are those of union, (...), and (...). 28. The character it gives incorporates into the (...) Body of Christ. 29. It also enables layfolk to be ministers of the sacrament of (...). 30. It gives us, too, a share in the virtues displayed by Christ as a (...), namely, in His (...), His (...) and His (...). 31. By it, again, we are made subjects of Christ, the (...); hence we are obliged to be utterly loyal to Him and to His Church.

(B). Answer the following as fully as you can : -

1. What is baptism? How does it differ from Penance? Why do we believe that it is a sacrament?
2. What do you know about its remote matter, its proximate matter, and its form?
3. Give three reasons why a valid baptism cannot be repeated.
4. Explain the three kinds of baptism, and the efficacy of each.

5. Write notes on the minister in baptism; its subject; and the god-parents.
6. Why is it right to baptise infants? Can they rightly repudiate their obligations later in life?
7. What are the effects produced by baptism, when it is (a) invalid; (b) valid, but not fruitful; (c) valid and fruitful
8. What obligations flow from baptism? How can we best fulfil them?

Chapter 44

PENANCE

1. Christ Had the Power to Forgive Sins.

Christ once worked a MIRACLE, just to prove that He could forgive sins. It was the cure of the man afflicted with palsy.

He began by saying to this sick man: "THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN THEE." The Scribes, of course, were shocked at His words. "Who can forgive sins but GOD?" they said to themselves. Knowing their thoughts, Our Lord said to them: "Which is easier to say: 'Thy sins are forgiven thee', or 'Arise, take up thy bed, and walk?' But, THAT YOU MAY KNOW THAT THE SON OF MAN HATH POWER ON EARTH TO FORGIVE SINS (He said to the sick of the palsy), I say to thee: Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house." And the man did. (Mark 2:5-12).

The Scribes could not see the sins being forgiven, since grace is invisible. But they could see that the man was cured. And, since this visible miracle was worked FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE of proving that Christ could forgive sin, it was God's own seal, His very signature, to the truth of Our Lord's claim. Clearly, then, Our Lord had the power of forgiving sins when He was on earth.

2. Christ Gave This Power to His Apostles.

It is equally clear that Christ gave this same power to His Apostles. After His resurrection, He breathed upon them, and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. WHOSE SINS YOU SHALL FORGIVE, THEY ARE FORGIVEN them; and WHOSE SINS YOU SHALL RETAIN, THEY ARE RETAINED." (John 20:22-23).

Here, now, are some things you cannot help noticing about this text:

(i). It gives the power of FORGIVING sins. It is not just a mission to PREACH repentance, in the way John the Baptist preached it. Nor is it just a power of declaring that God has

forgiven someone his sins, in the way the prophet told David that God had forgiven him. It is a power of actually FORGIVING sin, of wiping it right out of the soul, of annihilating it; and it is to be EXERCISED BY THE APOSTLES. "Whose sins YOU shall FORGIVE," it says; and it must mean what it says. Otherwise, Our Lord would be deceiving us.

(ii). No limit at all is put to it. It gives a power to forgive ALL sins, no matter how numerous or how serious they may be.

(iii). It is a power that is to be exercised after the manner of a JUDGEMENT. How do we know this? Because it is a TWOFOLD power: one of FORGIVING, and one of RETAINING or refusing to forgive. It implies, therefore, a JUDGEMENT on the part of the person exercising it. He must JUDGE whether the penitent is worthy of being forgiven or not.

(iv). Hence, it implies the CONFESSION of sins. The Apostles were never meant to go round giving absolution to all and sundry whom they met on the roads or in the market places, any more than a judge today is expected to impose sentences on everyone he meets in a tram or on a bus. Why not? Because no judge can ever exercise his power justly, until he first knows the case he is called upon to judge.

The guilt of sin is known only to God and to the sinner. So also is the latter's resolution to avoid sin in future, and his willingness to make satisfaction. Hence, a penitent must MAKE KNOWN his sin and his contrition to a priest, if the latter is to judge his case with the prudence and the equity expected in a minister of Christ. Otherwise, how can a priest possibly judge whether a penitent is to be forgiven or refused forgiveness? How can he possibly exercise the power given him by Christ?

(v). Notice, finally, that whatever the judgment of the priest may be, whether it be one that forgives or one that retains, it is APPROVED or RATIFIED by GOD. "Whose sins you shall forgive, THEY ARE FORGIVEN: whose sins you shall retain, THEY ARE RETAINED." Forgiven by whom? Retained by whom? By GOD, of course, since He alone can be the Principal Agent here. An offence can be forgiven only by the person against whom it is committed; and sin is an offence against God.

From Our Lord's words, then, it is clear that He gave His Apostles the power of forgiving sin; that this power is unlimited; that it is to be exercised after the manner of a judgment so that its use implies confession; and that the judge's decision will always be ratified by God.

3. Penance is a Sacrament.

In giving His Apostles this power, Christ instituted the sacrament of PENANCE. For here we have an external sign in the penitent's confession of sin and in his act of contrition, and in the priest's giving of absolution. And it is a sign which produces grace; for no sin can ever be forgiven unless grace is given to the soul. Finally, it is a sign instituted by Christ. So it is an efficacious sign of grace instituted by Christ. And what is this but a sacrament?

Some, while admitting that it is sacrament, have said that it is not distinct from baptism. The two sacraments, however, are really quite distinct. Baptism is for those over whom the Church has as yet no jurisdiction; penance, for those who are already her members. Baptism is a new birth; penance, a resurrection from the dead. Baptism is not administered after the manner of a judgment; penance is. Baptism gives a character; penance does not. Baptism can be given by a lay person; penance can be administered only by one who has been ordained a priest. And so on. These two sacraments are so clearly different from the point of view of their nature and purpose, subject and minister, that it is inexcusable to confuse them.

Others say that Christ gave the power of forgiving sin to His Apostles in such a way that it was meant only for them, not for their successors. But this is obviously wrong. Christ gave this power to His Apostles AS APOSTLES, not as private persons; so it was to be handed on. Moreover, penance is a sacrament. Hence, it must last as long as the Church, since she can never lose any of the means of sanctification left her by her Founder. Finally, men will need this great sacrament of God's mercy right to the end of time, just as much as they needed it in the days of the Apostles.

TRADITION, too, shows that the Church exercised from the beginning the power of forgiving sin by the sacrament of penance. Many extracts from the Fathers could be given to show this; but they would take up too much of our very limited space. Suffice it to

PENANCE

say that the evidence is so clear from Tradition as well as from Scripture that the Council of Trent did not hesitate for a moment to define that penance is one of the seven sacraments. So we accept it as such on the authority of God.

In this sacrament, the SIGN ONLY consists in the external confession, contrition and absolution. The THING AND SIGN is the spiritual reality which is put into the soul whenever the sacrament is validly received, and which gives a title to grace. The THING ONLY is the grace ultimately given.

Hence this sacrament can be received INVALIDLY, as when a person in confession knows that he has no contrition and that he does not want to have it, or VALIDLY, BUT NOT FRUITFULLY, as when a person's contrition is true and sincere, but not supreme; or VALIDLY AND FRUITFULLY, as when all the conditions required for the immediate giving of grace are present.

4. The Matter and the Form.

(a). THE MATTER.

The REMOTE MATTER of penance comprises ALL FORMAL SINS, COMMITTED AFTER BAPTISM.

To understand this, you need to know what sin is, and how it differs from an imperfection; how formal sin differs from material sin; how mortal sin differs from venial sin; the conditions required for formal mortal sin, and for formal venial sin; and the effects of sin. All these matters were explained fully in Chapter 23. If you do not understand them thoroughly, study this chapter again. We cannot repeat its explanations here.

Notice well that confession is for FORMAL sins only – not for merely material sins, nor for imperfections. Notice too that it is a question of formal sins committed AFTER BAPTISM. You may meet a person who says: "I'd love to be baptised and to become a Catholic; but I dread having to tell my horrible past in confession." You can show such a one that his dread is wholly unfounded, since sins committed BEFORE baptism are NOT matter for confession, any more than original sin is. All he has to do is to have CONTRITION for them, when he is being baptised. No human being

other than himself need ever know them. Baptism will annihilate them forever.

The PROXIMATE matter is made up by the three acts of the penitent: CONTRITION, CONFESSION, and SATISFACTION. We shall have more to say about them in a minute.

(b). THE FORM.

The FORM is contained in the words of absolution: "I ABSOLVE YOU OF YOUR SINS, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

5. The Three Acts of the Penitent.

(A). CONTRITION.

(a). What it is.

CONTRITION is SORROW and DETESTATION of sin, plus the RESOLUTION to avoid it in future.

Detestation is the turning away from an evil, even when it is not actually present. We all detest leprosy, for instance, though we are not actually lepers. Sorrow is sadness arising from an evil which is present. Thus we are sorry when we are being plagued by a violent toothache. The saints in heaven detest sin; but they have not sorrow for sin, since there is no such evil present to them in heaven.

Contrition is not just ANY sorrow arising from sin. It is sorrow for sin AS SIN; hence, as an offence against GOD. He must come into it. If a man is sorry for having become intoxicated, solely because he has lost his job through this act, his sorrow is not contrition. He is sorry, not for having offended God, but only for having lost his job. He is not sorry for his sin, AS A SIN. Quite different is the case of a man who is sorry for drunkenness because by it he has lost sanctifying grace and with this his right to heaven. He regards this loss as a punishment inflicted by GOD, whom he has offended by his sin. He is sorry for sin AS SIN, as a violation of GOD'S LAW, as an offence to the Creator. This sorrow is genuine contrition.

No merely NATURAL motive, then, will suffice in contrition. Why not? Because contrition is a SUPERNATURAL sorrow for sin.

Hence, it must flow from a SUPERNATURAL MOTIVE – one known by divine faith, such as the loss of heaven, the fear of hell, or the infinite goodness of God who is our Friend.

Needless to say, every act of genuine contrition implies the RESOLUTION to avoid sin in future. If an opponent poked you violently in the ribs with his elbow, as you jumped for the ball in the line-out, you would first give him the credit of being sincere when he said: "I'm sorry." But if he kept up his elbow-jolting in every line-out after that, you would soon begin to doubt his sincerity, and take means to show him that you did. Why? Because true sorrow necessarily includes the determination to avoid the offence in future. It is just the same when it is question of contrition or sorrow for sin.

(b). Where it is.

Contrition is in our WILL, and in it alone. When we sin, we fix our will on some creature which is forbidden by the law of God. By contrition we take it off this creature, and fix it again on God.

Since the will is a SPIRITUAL faculty, we cannot FEEL it acting, any more than we can feel our intellect adding up two and two to make four. We cannot feel contrition, then, in the way we can feel a pin prick or the heat of a fire. So we judge our contrition, not by feelings of sorrow, but by our SINCERITY and our WILLINGNESS to take the MEANS of avoiding sin in future. The more contrition detaches our will from what is sinful, and the more firmly it fixes our will on God, the more intense it is. Not feelings, but SINCERITY is what matters here.

(c). Kinds of Contrition.

There are two kinds: PERFECT and IMPERFECT.

These are ALIKE, in that each is genuine contrition: a true detestation and sorrow for sin with a resolution to avoid it in future.

They DIFFER in their (i) MOTIVES, and in their (ii) EFFECTS.

(i). Motives.

PERFECT contrition proceeds from CHARITY, which is a supernatural FRIENDSHIP existing between the soul and God. If we are sorry for sin because it offends God who is our infinitely perfect FRIEND, we have perfect contrition. We may have other motives as well; but we must have this one. We must be sorry for sin, not just as OUR supreme evil, but as THE supreme evil, inasmuch as it is an insult to God who is infinitely good and lovable in Himself.

IMPERFECT contrition proceeds from some supernatural motive OTHER than charity. Fear of hell, the loss of heaven, the ingratitude of sin, God's goodness to us – these are some of the motives from which it can arise. In it we regard sin as OUR supreme evil. The motive is a selfish one, not an unselfish one as it is in PERFECT contrition.

Notice well that what makes contrition to be PERFECT, as opposed to IMPERFECT, is not the INTENSITY of our sorrow; but the MOTIVE or REASON WHY we are sorry. In perfect contrition, this comes from CHARITY. In imperfect contrition it does not. That is the difference.

Let us suppose, for instance, that John has committed a mortal sin by eating meat on Good Friday, and that his brother, Peter, has also committed one by missing Mass on Sunday. John may be intensely sorry for his sin. Peter may have the minimum degree of sorrow for his. But, if John is sorry because he has lost his right to heaven, whereas Peter is sorry because he has offended God, his Friend, infinitely good and lovable in Himself, John's contrition is imperfect contrition, while Peter's is perfect. It is the MOTIVE, not the intensity, that matters here, since it distinguishes one kind of contrition from the other.

(ii). Effects.

PERFECT contrition forgives sin even apart from the actual reception of a sacrament, though, of course, it implies some sort of intention of going to confession. IMPERFECT contrition, on the contrary, forgives sin only when a sacrament is actually received, as when one goes to confession.

This shows how wise it is for us to develop the HABIT of saying acts of PERFECT, rather than of IMPERFECT, contrition. In a sudden danger of death, we are likely to do what we are in the habit of

doing. If we are used to making acts of perfect contrition, we shall be likely to make one then. And it will forgive sin immediately even though we may be killed instantly after it, and be never able to receive any sacrament.

(d). Qualities it must have.

Our contrition must have certain qualities. Here they are:

(i). It must be Internal.

Merely to recite the words of an act of contrition, without having any sorrow in our will, would be sheer hypocrisy. We must mean what we say. We must be sincere. A purely external display of contrition may deceive men, but it cannot deceive God. Sincerity is absolutely necessary here.

(ii). It must be Supernatural.

A merely natural sorrow is not enough, as when a man is sorry for having become intoxicated, because he has disgraced himself. Our contrition must be supernatural both by reason of its PRINCIPLE, which is God's grace, and by reason of its MOTIVE, which is some truth known by divine faith, such as God's friendship, the loss of heaven, or the punishment of hell.

(iii). It must be Universal, as far as Mortal Sins are concerned.

If a person has committed three mortal sins, he must be sorry for them ALL. A man may say: "I'm sorry that I ate meat on Good Friday and that I missed Mass on Sunday; but I'm not sorry that I did so-and-so a grave injustice, since he is my enemy." In this case, his sorrow for the first two sins is not contrition. If it were, it would include also the third, since the reason for sorrow is the same for it as for them. True contrition is, by its very nature, universal as far as mortal sins are concerned.

However, we need not be sorry for ALL our VENIAL sins, because venial sin does not cause grace to be removed from our soul, nor does it turn us from our last end. This is why we can have true

contrition for some venial sins, even though we are not in the least sorry for others, and why some venial sins can be forgiven, while others are not, whereas with mortal sins, it is a question of all or none.

(iv). It must be Supreme.

Contrition is detestation of sin. But before we can detest a thing, we must first KNOW that it is an EVIL. And, of course, the more it is realised to be evil, the more we shall detest it. Thus, we detest cancer more than a broken arm, since cancer deprives us of a far greater good. And any evil is as great as the good it robs us of.

Now, when it is question of SIN, we must detest it as the GREATEST of all evils, since it robs us of GOD, the greatest of all goods. Hence, we must first judge by our INTELLECT that sin is really the greatest possible evil; and then detest it as such by our WILL. In other words, our WILL must be more opposed to mortal sin than it is to any other evil. If it is, our contrition is said to be SUPREME, since by it we hate mortal sins as the supreme evil, the greatest of them all.

This does not mean that we should torment ourselves by making comparisons between physical evils and sin, by asking ourselves, for example, "Would I face torture in a concentration camp rather than deny my faith?" It is not only unnecessary, but also wholly unreasonable to make such comparisons; for, if we are ever called on to meet with such evils, God will give us the grace to face up to them.

Nor does it mean that we should FEEL more sorrow for a mortal sin than for the death of our father or mother. Contrition is not a question of FEELINGS. It is something spiritual, even supernatural, in our WILL. Hence, it cannot be compared with feelings of sorrow, any more than the smell of cheese can be compared with the noise made by the bagpipes.

We have said that our contrition must be supreme. What happens, now, when a person goes to confession with contrition which is true and sincere, indeed, but not supreme, though he is not aware of this at the time? Is his confession invalid? Is it a sacrilege? No. It is quite valid; but it is not fruitful. It does not give sanctifying grace at the moment when absolution is uttered, because there is an

obstacle to grace. But it does give a supernatural reality, the **THING AND SIGN** of the sacrament. This gives the penitent the proximate power of making an act of contrition which will be supreme. Moreover, it is a title to grace. It demands grace and will actually produce it, the moment the penitent makes an act of contrition which is supreme - one made after he has just gone to Holy Communion, for instance. And this **THING AND SIGN** will keep on demanding grace and trying to produce it, as long as he does not banish it from his soul by committing another mortal sin.

This does not mean that we can afford to be careless in our preparation for confession. Anyone who realises what confession is and what an act of contrition is, will be careful to make a reasonable preparation for this sacrament. But it does mean this: if a person prepares reasonably well for confession, and makes his act of contrition quite sincerely, he need not have any undue anxiety or worry about the validity of his confession. It will most certainly be a good confession, not a sacrilegious one.

God does not want us to torture ourselves with doubts concerning the validity of our contrition. He wants us simply to be **SINCERE**. He gave us the sacrament of penance as a sacrament of infinite mercy, one that produces what it signifies by its very usage, and one, therefore, that is intended to **ABOLISH** all worry and anxiety from our soul, and to give us instead a deep, supernatural peace like that experienced by Mary Magdalen or the repentant thief, when Our Saviour assured them that their sins were forgiven. Habitual self-torture in one going to confession is not a sign of sanctity. It is, instead, a sign of a disorderly love of self. A saint's contrition is always ineffably deep and sincere, but his mind is fixed on God rather than on himself, and it is filled, not with tormenting doubts, but with sentiments of peace, gratitude and love.

(e). How to gain Contrition.

Since contrition is something **SUPERNATURAL**, we can never produce it by our own natural effort. It must come from God's **GRACE**. So the first thing we do to gain it, is to **PRAY** for it humbly, sincerely and confidently. Such a prayer will always be heard.

But contrition is also a **DETESTATION**. So, since we can detest only what we know to be an evil, we must **CONVINCE OURSELVES THAT SIN IS AN EVIL**, in fact, the **GREATEST** evil of all. How can

we do this? By MEDITATING on the dreadful EFFECTS of sin, as these have been made known to us by GOD.

Thus, we can think of the unutterable misery of HELL, with its fire, its remorse, its despair, and especially its pain of loss, and, worst of all, its ETERNITY. After this, we can go in spirit to HEAVEN, and try to realise the never-ending happiness of the blessed. Then, to Gethsemane, so that we may follow Our Saviour through all the sufferings of His PASSION, from the agony in the garden to His last cry upon the Cross. Finally, we can try to realise that God is infinitely good to us, only because He is infinitely good in HIMSELF; hence, also, infinitely LOVABLE for His OWN SAKE, as our incomparable FRIEND. In all these thoughts God's grace will be with us. With its help we shall be able to see sin as He sees it, and to detest it above every other evil, and this from a motive of CHARITY or FRIENDSHIP with God. In other words, we shall have perfect contrition for our sins.

It is by PRAYING and MEDITATING in this way that we should occupy most of the time we spend preparing for confession. What counts above all else is CONTRITION. And we should try to make our contrition PERFECT, and at the same time very INTENSE, because the more intense it is the more GRACE it will bring, the more TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT it will wipe out, and the greater guarantee it will be against future falls. If we devote, say, a quarter of an hour to our preparation for confession, a couple of minutes should be given to our examination of conscience. The rest of the time should be spent on gaining and increasing our contrition. For, without it, no personal sin can ever be forgiven.

(B). THE CONFESSING OF OUR SINS.

What sins are we OBLIGED to tell in confession? ALL FORMAL MORTAL sins, committed after BAPTISM, and not yet told in a GOOD CONFESSION.

And HOW are we obliged to tell these? According to their KIND and their NUMBER. It is not enough for a person to say: "I have committed mortal sins." He must tell the KIND of sins - missing Mass on Sunday, for instance, or eating meat on Good Friday. And he must also tell the NUMBER OF TIMES - once, twice and so on. What about details? In some cases, details are such that they ADD ANOTHER MORTAL sin. If a penitent realised at the moment he

committed a mortal sin that the details connected with it added another mortal sin, he would be guilty of both sins; hence he would have to mention both. If, for example, a man realised that, in committing a serious theft, he was also committing a serious sacrilege, he would have to mention both sins in confession. Unnecessary and irrelevant details, on the other hand, should never be mentioned in confession.

If a person has had his mortal sin already forgiven by an act of perfect contrition, is he still obliged to tell it in confession? Yes. It must be submitted to the power of the keys. What if a person has knowingly and deliberately made a SACRILEGIOUS confession in which he mentioned mortal sins, is he obliged to tell these sins again in a good confession? Yes. Suppose that a person has a SERIOUS DOUBT whether a sin was mortal or not. Is he obliged to tell it? No. As we saw in Chapter 23, a person must have FULL ADVERTENCE to commit a formal mortal sin. He must REALISE quite clearly at the moment that he is committing a mortal sin. Hence, there will be no doubt about it. What if a person who has not been to confession for years cannot remember all his mortal sins, or the number of times he has committed them? In this case he has to give some approximate estimation of them, as far as he reasonably can. That suffices. If a man FORGETS to tell a mortal sin, should he go back and tell it? No. He can wait till next confession.

What sins, now, are we FREE to tell in confession? ALL FORMAL VENIAL sins, and ALL MORTAL sins that have been already mentioned in a GOOD confession. These we may mention, or omit to mention, as we please.

In the case of VENIAL sins, it is better to mention one or two for which we have true sorrow, than to mention a number for which we may have none. If we ridded ourselves of attachment to one venial sin in every confession, we would soon be saints. After confessing venial sins, it is wise for us to say: "I include also as a sin of my PAST life that of..." and then mention some past sin for which we are certainly sorry. This ensures the fruitfulness of our confession - the immediate giving of grace.

The telling of our sins may at times be an unpleasant task, a real test of humility and courage. But it is a small price to pay for the heavenly peace that comes into our soul as we hear the priest

pronouncing the words of absolution, which must produce what they signify, since they have behind them the omnipotence of God.

(C). SATISFACTION.

This is the performing of the PENANCE imposed by the priest. If it consists in vocal prayers, these should be said by our lips. We are not obliged to say our penance before the next confession; but it is wise to say it as soon as we can, because it is an integral part of the sacrament.

What should we do if we forget what it was? Ask someone else what penance he got? No. Make one up for ourselves? No. We should mention the fact in our next confession, and ask for another penance to make up for the one we forgot. May we ourselves change our penance? No. But a priest can change it for us.

As part of the sacrament, our penance has a special power of doing away with temporal punishment. Other things being equal, ten Hail Marys said as penance will abolish more temporal punishment than ten said as night prayers. It pays, therefore, to say our penance well.

6. How to Go to Confession.

1. Prepare seriously by PRAYING for grace, and by MEDITATING on the evil effects of sin, such as hell, the loss of heaven, and the Passion.
2. Make a short but honest examination of conscience.
3. Say the "I confess..." before going into the box.
4. Begin by saying: "Bless me, father, for I have sinned." This begs a blessing. It also lets the priest know that you are there.
5. Mention how long it is since your last confession.
6. Tell your sins clearly, simply and modestly.
7. Let the priest know that you have finished telling your sins by saying: "For these and all other sins which I cannot now remember, I beg pardon of God, and of you, Father, penance and the advice I stand in need of."
8. Listen attentively to the advice and penance given you.

9. Make an act of contrition loud enough to be heard by the priest.
10. At the end, say: "Thank you, Father."
11. Before leaving the church, say your penance; and thank God for the graces you have received.

Here are two ACTS OF CONTRITION:

O my God, I am sorry and beg pardon for all my sins, and detest them above all things, because they deserve Thy dreadful punishments, because they have crucified my loving Saviour, Jesus Christ, and, most of all, because they offend Thine infinite Goodness; and I firmly resolve, by the help of Thy grace, never to offend Thee again, and carefully to avoid the occasions of sin. Amen.

O my God, I am very sorry that I have sinned against Thee, because Thou art so good, and with Thy help I will not sin again.

7. The Seal of Confession.

The priest is obliged to keep secret the sins he has heard in confession, even though this may mean death for him. In the long history of the Church, there has not been one recorded case of the direct violation of the seal.¹ Many priests have died as martyrs to preserve it. These facts speak for themselves.

8. The Value of Confession.

Confession is of the utmost value to the INDIVIDUAL. It gives grace to his soul. It helps him to avoid sin in future. It does away with temporal punishment. It gives peace of mind; hence it prevents all sorts of mental troubles that arise from a subconscious fear of death and judgment. A Venetian psychiatrist of great reputation tells us that he has never had amongst his patients a Catholic who went regularly to confession. An American expert in this same line says that 99 per cent of his patients suffer from mental troubles arising from fear of the consequences of sin. Confession saves us from these. Finally, it is often a means of getting excellent advice from one trained to direct souls.

¹ [Editor's note] In point of fact, there have been some unfortunate cases within the history of the Church where a priest has violated the seal of confession. The cases are so rare that they are practically negligible.

It is equally valuable to the COMMUNITY. If everyone made a fervent confession once a fortnight, what a revolution in morals would be wrought in the world! What justice would reign everywhere! What charity! And from the practice of these great social virtues, what benefits would come to men! The world would then, indeed, be a sort of paradise.

9. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should often thank God for this sacrament of mercy.
2. I should go to confession once a week or once a fortnight.
3. I should always prepare well by prayer and meditation.
4. I should make my contrition as intense as I can.
5. After confession, I should not forget to say my penance and to thank God for the mercy He has shown me.

SUMMARY

1. Christ Had the Power to Forgive Sin: The cure of the palsied man.

2. He Gave This Power to His Apostles: “ Whose sins you shall forgive....”

- (a). Power to forgive sin.
- (b). No limit to it.
- (c). Exercised as a judgment.
- (d). Hence demands the confession of sins.
- (e). Judgment ratified by God in heaven.

3. Penance is a Sacrament: An efficacious sign of grace, instituted by Christ.

- (a). Sign Only: External confession, contrition, and absolution.
- (b). Thing and Sign: Title to grace given by a valid confession.
- (c). Thing Only: Sanctifying grace given.

4. Matter and Form:

- (a). Proximate Matter: The three acts of the penitent.

(b). Remote Matter: Formal sins committed after baptism.

(c). Form: The words of absolution.

5. Three Acts of the Penitent.

(A). CONTRITION: What? Where? Kinds? Qualities? How to get?

(B). CONFESSION: Necessary matter. Free matter. How told?

(C). SATISFACTION: What it is. Its purpose. Its value. How to fulfil it.

6. How to Go to Confession.

(a). Before.

(b). During.

(c). After.

7. The Seal of Confession.

(a). Obligation.

(b). History.

(c). Martyrs.

8. Value of Confession: To the Individual. To Society.

9. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following:-

1. Christ worked a special (...) to prove He could forgive sins. 2. He gave this power to His Apostles when He said to them: "Whose sins (...)." 3. This power (is) (is not) universal; it is to be exercised after the manner of a (...); hence, it implies the (...) of our sins; and this judgment is ratified by (...). 4. Penance is a distinct sacrament from baptism since it differs from it in these five ways: (...) (...), (...), (...), (.), (.). 5. In penance the Sign Only is (...); the Thing and Sign is (...); and Thing Only is (...). 6. The remote matter is all (...) sins committed after (...); the proximate matter is (...). 7. The motive is a (natural) (supernatural) one. 8. It (is) (is not) possible to have true sorrow without having with it the resolution to avoid sin in future. 9. Contrition is in our (feelings) (will) (intellect) (imagination). 10. What makes contrition perfect, as opposed to imperfect, is its (sincerity) (intensity) (motive). 11. In perfect contrition the motive flows from supernatural (...), which is a true friendship between the

soul and (...). 12. If I am sorry for sin because Our Lord has been so good to me, my contrition is (perfect) (imperfect). 13. If I am sorry for sin because I fear hell, my contrition is (...). 14. If I am sorry for sin because God is infinitely good and lovable in Himself, my contrition is (...). 15. (Perfect) (Imperfect) contrition forgives sin even apart from the actual reception of a sacrament. 16. Contrition should have these four qualities: it should be (...), (...), (...) and (...). 17. If I am firmly determined to take the (...) to avoid sin in future, my contrition is sure to be supreme. 18. If a person's contrition is true but not supreme, his confession is (invalid) (valid but not fruitful) (valid and fruitful). 19. We should prepare for confession by praying for grace and by (...). 20. We should spend most of the time (examining our conscience) (trying to gain and increase our contrition). 21. The more intense my act of contrition is, the more (...) I will get; the more (...) it will abolish, and the more it will guarantee me against (...). 22. I am (free) (obliged) to tell formal mortal sins committed after baptism and not yet mentioned in a good confession. 23. I must tell them according to their (...) and their (...). 24. I (am) (am not) obliged to say my penance before my next confession. 25. If I forget to tell a mortal sin in confession I should (go straight back and tell it) (tell it the next time I normally go to confession). 26. If I forget what my penance was I should (ask another penitent what his was) (make up one for myself) (say the one I got last time) (mention it at the next confession and ask for one to take its place). 27. Confession benefits the individual in these five ways: it (...), (...), (...), (...), (...), 28. It benefits society also by promoting the practice of the two great social virtues of (...) and (...).

(B). Answer each of the following as fully as you can:-

1. Show that Christ had power to forgive sins and that He gave this power to His Apostles.
2. Show that Penance is a sacrament, distinct from baptism.
3. Explain its proximate matter, its remote matter, and its form.
4. What is contrition? Where is it found? How many kinds are there? What are its four qualities? How do we go about gaining and increasing it?
5. What sins are we obliged to tell in confession? What sins are we free to tell?
6. Explain how we should go to confession: before, during, and after.

PENANCE

7. What is the value of this sacrament to the individual and to society?
8. How would you answer a man who says -
 - (a). "Confession is nothing else than an encouragement to sin."
 - (b). "I could never bring myself to tell my sins to a fellow human being; he might mention them to others."
 - (c). "Catholics cannot be sincere in going to confession; if they were, they would all be saints."

Chapter 45

CONFIRMATION

1. What It Is.

CONFIRMATION is a sacrament which gives us LIGHT and STRENGTH to be perfect SOLDIERS OF CHRIST.

Sublime as are the effects of baptism, it is still a BIRTH. And at birth, we are all INFANTS, in the supernatural as well as in the natural order. If the inhabitants of a country were all infants, how helpless they would be! How powerless to defend themselves against enemies! It would be the same for the Church. It could never survive. In every age, it is surrounded by bitter enemies who do their utmost to destroy it. These are not only cunning human beings, full of hatred, but also fallen angels who are far more cunning and powerful than men. Of course, Our Lord has promised that even the gates of hell shall never prevail against His Church. But, to fulfil this promise, He has to provide in every age vast numbers of loyal Catholics who will FIGHT as His soldiers against the enemies of the Church. He does this by means of the sacrament of CONFIRMATION.

2. How Christ Established It.

In confirmation we receive the HOLY GHOST, in somewhat the same way as the Apostles received Him at Pentecost.

Now, Our Lord could not thus send the Holy Ghost, until He had first ascended to heaven. He made this clear to His Apostles when He said: "It is expedient to you that I go (i.e. ascend to heaven); for, if I go, I WILL SEND HIM TO YOU." (John 16:7).

From this you can see that Our Lord could not establish this sacrament by ADMINISTERING it Himself, in the way He established the Eucharist, for example. But He could and did establish it while He was still on earth by PROMISING it. This He did in the words just quoted, when He promised to send us the Holy Ghost. Confirmation gives us the special help of the Holy Ghost by

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giving us or increasing in us His seven great Gifts of Fear, Piety, Fortitude, Counsel, Knowledge, Understanding and Wisdom.

This is why many texts of the New Testament tell us that the Apostles administered this sacrament by imposing hands on the baptised, and giving them the Holy Ghost.

Tradition is equally clear in its teaching that confirmation is a sacrament. Pages of quotations from the early Fathers could be given; but we have space for only one. It is from Pope Melchiades, who died in the year 314. He says:

“By baptism, we are purified. By confirmation, we are fortified. By baptism, we are saved from death. After baptism, we are confirmed in life. Baptism makes us enter into the peace of Christ. Confirmation arms and equips us for the fight. The baptised is inscribed in the civil condition of the Christian society, from which one must take the recruits for the army of Christ. The confirmed enters into the service of this army. In brief, baptism refers us to Christ as subjects; confirmation, as His soldiers.” What could be clearer? What more authoritative? In denying that confirmation is a sacrament, the Protestants simply ignored Scripture and Tradition. No wonder their error was condemned infallibly by the Council of Trent.

The SIGN ONLY of confirmation is the external ceremony. The THING AND SIGN is the character given. The THING ONLY is the grace bestowed on the recipient.

3. The Matter and the Form.

(a). MATTER.

The REMOTE matter is CHRISM. This is OLIVE OIL mixed with BALM, blessed by a bishop. This blessing is required because Christ did not Himself sanctify chrism by His touch, as He did bread and wine for the Eucharist. The oil signifies LIGHT, since it was used in lamps; and also STRENGTH, since it was used by athletes competing in the games. The balm symbolises the sweet odour of sanctity that should accompany a worthy soldier of Christ. The chrism is placed on the forehead, which is a living mirror of fear and shame, in order to show that we must never blush in shame at our faith, or manifest the least fear on account of its enemies.

The PROXIMATE matter is the IMPOSITION OF HANDS by the one confirming, and the ANOINTING with chrism, in the form of a Cross.

The Cross is the banner of Christ, the King of Kings, whose soldiers we become by confirmation. It is a sign of ultimate victory; for Christ is omnipotent, and all His enemies will be defeated in the end. He, not they, will reign in eternity. The one being confirmed also receives a tap on the cheek. This represents the accolade given of old to knights. It reminds him that he is a knight of Christ, and that his allegiance should be life-long and complete.

(b). FORM.

This is found in the words: "I sign thee with the sign of the Cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

4. The Persons Concerned.

(a). The Subject.

In some countries such as Spain and South America, confirmation is given straight after baptism. But we usually wait till a child is eleven.¹ For validity, the person being confirmed must be baptised, not yet confirmed, and have the intention of receiving the sacrament, if he is an adult. For licity, he must be in a state of grace; and, if an adult, he must have a sufficient knowledge of the faith. Adults who are dying and have not yet been confirmed should receive this sacrament in order that they may have a more glorious resurrection as soldiers of Christ.

(b). The Minister.

The ORDINARY minister is a Bishop. The EXTRAORDINARY, a priest. It is well to bear in mind the fact that a parish priest can

¹ [Editor's note] "The sacrament of confirmation is to be conferred on the faithful at about the age of discretion unless the conference of bishops determines another age or there is danger of death or in the judgement of the minister a grave cause urges otherwise." Can. 891.

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administer confirmation in case of necessity – to a dying adult, for instance, when the Bishop cannot be had.

(c). The Sponsor.

Each candidate for confirmation should have a sponsor when possible. The sponsor should be a good Catholic, and one already confirmed. May the sponsor be father, mother, or spouse of the person being confirmed? No. Who chooses the sponsor? The parents or guardians or the priest. The sponsor must personally or by proxy touch the candidate during the ceremony. This is done by placing the right hand on the right shoulder of the subject. So much for validity in a sponsor. Now, for licity. A sponsor must be different from the one who acted as sponsor in baptism;² of the same sex as the subject; and at least fourteen years of age.

SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP arises from confirmation between the subject and the sponsor; and it obliges the latter to do what he or she can to educate the subject in a Catholic way, if the parents fail in their obligation.

5. The Effects of Confirmation.

(a). The Immediate Effect.

The immediate effect of confirmation is the CHARACTER it gives. Here is what it does for us: –

1. It likens us to Christ fighting in His public life against the enemies of His divine mission.
2. It gives us the power of confessing publicly and officially the faith of Christ, and of fighting for it as His soldiers.
3. It makes us adults in the supernatural order, as distinct from infants just born by baptism.
4. It gives all through life a right to graces of light and strength necessary for professing and defending our faith.
5. If we are called up to die as martyrs, it will enable us to act as God's instrumental causes, He being the

² [Editor's Note]. Can. 893 §2. "It is desirable that the one who undertook the role of sponsor at baptism be sponsor for confirmation."

Principal Cause of our steadfastness at death. Hence, martyrdom need have no fear for us.

6. Through it Christ fulfils His promise to be with His Church all days to the end of the world; for it enables her subjects to profess, live, and even die for the faith.

(b). The Ultimate Effect.

This is the GRACE that confirmation gives. It is one of LIGHT and STRENGTH, such as the Apostles received at Pentecost.

The chrism shining on the forehead of a child will soon disappear; but the character given will remain forever; and, all during life, it will give a right to the graces necessary in a worthy soldier of Christ.

6. Confirmation and Catholic Action.

Catholics readily realise the need of baptism, penance, matrimony and extreme unction. They realise, too, the beauty of the Eucharist and of Holy Orders. But few realise as they ought the need of confirmation.

Why? Because the purpose of confirmation is to make us APOSTLES; and comparatively few Catholics realise their obligation to act as Christ's apostles. Supernaturally, they are not like SOLDIERS at all. They are like mere CHILDREN.

Children live almost solely for THEMSELVES. They rarely busy themselves with anything that lies beyond their individual needs. They spend their time, not in giving, but in receiving. Now, too many adult Catholics act in this self-centred way. They apply themselves to their OWN supernatural welfare – and, of course, in doing this they act rightly. But they do little to SPREAD the faith to others. They are not sufficiently SOCIALLY-MINDED in the supernatural order. They do not seem to have grown up SUPERNATURALLY.

What distinguishes a grown-up person from a child? Surely it is, as St. Thomas points out, a certain BREADTH OF OUTLOOK, a true SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY, and ACTION FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

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Now a SOLDIER – especially a soldier of Christ – must be such a man. He must think, not just of his OWN good, but also of the good of others, the good of the community, the good of his country. He must have breadth of outlook. Again, he must realise his obligation to protect his country, and even to die for it if necessary, in virtue of his office as soldier. He must have a sense of responsibility. Finally, he must not be content merely to think these things. He must put them into practice. He must live and act for the common good.

Confirmation lifts us suddenly out of the INFANT stage of the supernatural life, and makes us ADULTS, fighting, virile adults, soldiers of the faith. Pope Pius XII says: "By the chrism of confirmation, the faithful are given added strength to PROTECT and DEFEND the Church, their mother, and the faith She has given them." What would you think of a healthy man who would not lift a finger to protect his mother against enemies? What a coward he would be! How lacking in virility! Yet how many otherwise good Catholics are like that when it comes to fighting for the Church, though She is indeed their mother, since She generates them anew into the supernatural order by baptism, and makes them adopted sons of God and heirs to heaven!

Over and over again recent Popes have begged the faithful to realise their obligation to live and act as soldiers and apostles of Christ. Leo XIII, Pius X, Pius XI and Pius XII have all insisted on this. They have reminded the faithful that the Church is a MILITANT body, ready to fight unto death. This battling for the protection and the spreading of the faith is a glorious part of CATHOLIC ACTION, which Pope Pius XI describes as "A PARTICIPATION OF THE LAITY IN THE APOSTOLATE OF THE CHURCH'S HIERARCHY."

What a privilege it is for the laity thus to be able to co-operate with the successors of the Apostles in the noblest of all works: the sanctifying and saving of souls! How devoted they should be, to such a worthy cause! And how loyal and obedient to their bishops, since these, as a body with the Pope as their head, are infallible in faith and morals! If communists can display, as they do, amazing enthusiasm for their degrading materialism, which can lead only to man's misery and enslavement in time and in eternity, surely Catholics can show an even greater zeal for the spread of their God-given religion, since it alone can enable man to develop all his

powers to the full, and become a worthy citizen not only of this world but also of the next!

"What can I do?" a Catholic may say, "I'm only one in millions." Well, it is astounding what even one human being can do, if he has courage and perseverance and an unlimited love of souls. Think of the incalculable good that Maritain has done by his writings! Think of the good done by Salazar in Portugal! Or that done by that marvellous woman, Catherine de Hueck, in America! If one man, such as Karl Marx, can set the whole world on fire with his ardour for change, surely a good Catholic can do far more, since he has a true idea of man's real nature and end. Moreover, he has the help of God. He has, through confirmation, an increase in the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. At Pentecost, these Gifts changed the Apostles from cowards into heroes. They gave them light and strength to tackle their tremendous task of converting the world. And history shows the extent to which they succeeded in this task. What the Gifts did at the beginning of the Church they can still do today, provided we cultivate them and render them more and more active by increasing our love for God and for our fellowmen. With them, we cannot fail.

Let us therefore try daily to understand our divine faith better, so that we may be able to explain it to others. Let us love it with all our heart, and live it in all its glorious fullness. Let us train ourselves to argue with others with a true sympathy for their shortcomings, a real insight into their difficulties, and a love of truth which is irresistible. Let us follow the ruling of the Church in all things, as this is made known to us by the Pope and the bishops. let us put ourselves with all confidence into God's hands, that He may use us as His pliable instruments. Let us above all increase our supernatural charity daily, and with it the functioning of the Gifts; for the spirit in which we fight for Christ is not one based on hatred, as is that of atheistic communism, but one based on love.

If we do these things, we need have no fear concerning the success of our mission. The little Cross by which the Bishop enrolled us publicly and officially as soldiers of Christ at confirmation may have long since disappeared from our forehead; but the indelible character it imprinted on our soul is with us still. And it gives us daily a title to all the light and strength we need to be a first-class soldier of Christ, even to the point of dying for Him in the way He died for us. Living and fighting for Him, we shall serve Him well and loyally to the very end; we shall do incalculable good to our

fellowmen; and we shall be truly happy in this life with a happiness which is but a prelude to the everlasting, unimaginable happiness that will be waiting for us in the next.

SUMMARY

1. What Confirmation Is.

- (a). A sacrament that gives us light and strength to live as perfect soldiers of Christ.
- (b). It makes us adults in the supernatural order. Cf. Baptism.

2. How Christ Established It.

- (a). Not by administering it, but by promising it.
- (b). His promise to send the Holy Ghost after His ascension.
- (c). Its elements as a sacrament: i. Sign only: the external ceremony; ii. Thing and Sign: the character; iii. Thing Only: the grace given.

3. Matter and Form.

- (a). Remote Matter: Chrism, i.e. olive oil and balm.
Blessed by the Bishop.
- (b). Proximate Matter: Imposition of hands.
The anointing.
- (c). Form: "I sign thee with the sign of the Cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

4. Persons Concerned.

- (a). Minister: Ordinary.
Extraordinary.
- (b). Subject: Baptised.
Not already confirmed.
- (c). Sponsors: i. Need; ii. Number; iii. Qualifications; iv. Obligations.

5. Effects.

(a). Immediate: The Character.

What it does for us.

(b). Ultimate: Graces of light and strength.

Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

6. Confirmation and Catholic Action.

(a). This sacrament makes us Apostles, soldiers of Christ.

(b). With breadth of outlook, a sense of responsibility, and a willingness to act for the common good.

(c). Scope given in Catholic Action.

What it is.

Exhortations of the Popes.

Need for it today.

Requirements.

Greatness of the work.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. Confirmation gives us light and (...) to be worthy (...) of Christ, 2. He instituted it by (administering) (promising) it. 3. In it we receive the (...) as the Apostles did at Pentecost. 4. Scripture often speaks of the Apostles imposing hands on persons already baptised, and giving them the (...). 5. By baptism we are (...) in the supernatural order; but by confirmation we are true (...). 6. The Sign Only of confirmation is the (...); the Thing and the Sign is the (...); the Thing Only is the (...). 7. The remote matter is (...), which is made up of (...) and (...), and is blessed by (...). 8. The proximate matter is (...). 9. The form is (...). 10. The subject of confirmation is (...). 11. The immediate effect of confirmation is (...). 12. The ultimate effect is (...). 13. The character given makes us like to Christ in His (private) (public) life. 14. It gives us (at the moment of reception only) (all through life) a right to graces necessary to profess, live and defend our (...). 15. It gives or increases in us the seven Gifts of the (...). 16. In martyrdom, it enables the recipient to act as (principal) (instrumental) cause of the steadfastness required. 17. It is through the character given by (baptism) (confirmation) (Holy Orders) that Christ provides for His Church in every century members who are willing to fight and die for the faith. 18. The character (disappears)

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(does not disappear) as soon as the chrism disappears from our forehead. 19. An adult and especially a soldier should be characterised by breadth of (...), a sense of (...), and action for the (...). 20. The following Popes have strongly advocated Catholic Action in recent times: (...), (...), (...) and (...). 21. Pius XI describes Catholic Action as "A participation of the (...) in the (...) of the Church's (...)." 22. Catholic Action is based on (love) (hatred); atheistic communism is based on (love) (hatred). 23. In practising Catholic Action I must obey the Pope and the (...). 24. Here are five things I must do if I want to be successful as a Catholic Actionist: I must (...), (...), (...), (...) and (...). 25. If I live and fight for Christ on earth, I shall reign with Him in (...).

(B). Answer these questions as fully as you can: -

1. What is confirmation? How does it differ from baptism?
2. How did Christ institute it?
3. What is its: (i). Remote matter; (ii). Proximate Matter; (iii). Form?
4. Who is its minister? Its subject? The Sponsor?
5. Explain all that the character given by it does for us.
6. What graces does this sacrament give?
7. What is Catholic Action? What has confirmation to do with it?
8. What must I do to make myself a great Catholic Actionist?

Chapter 46

THE EUCHARIST

1. Christ's Promise.

Just as Our Lord made it easier for the people to believe in His resurrection by raising the dead to life, so, too, He made it easier for them to believe in the Eucharist by changing water into wine, and by multiplying the loaves and fishes. One with such complete control over nature could surely change bread into His own body and wine into His blood, and so give us Himself in the sacrament of His love.

After multiplying the loaves and fishes, He reminded the Jews of the marvellous bread, the MANNA, that God had once given them. He then promised them a bread that would be far more marvellous, because it would benefit not just their natural health as the manna did, but the supernatural life of their souls. Why? Because it would be HIMSELF.

"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE," He said. Then He added these momentous words: "THE BREAD THAT I WILL GIVE IS MY FLESH, FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD." (John 6: 48; 52).

Notice that He is here PROMISING something. What? A BREAD. Of what kind? One that IS His FLESH, His, BODY, HIMSELF. And why? To nourish the life, the SUPERNATURAL life, of the world.

Did His hearers understand Him to be making such a promise? Yes. This is clear from the fact that they were SCANDALISED at His words. HOW CAN THIS MAN GIVE US HIS FLESH TO EAT?" they murmured. (John 6:53).

Now, it is important to see how Christ reacted to their murmuring. Why? Here is the reason.

Whenever His hearers gave a WRONG meaning to His words, He always CORRECTED it immediately by explaining clearly what He meant. For instance, He told Nicodemus how one could be born

again supernaturally by baptism. (John 3:3-6). He explained to His hearers that the "sleep" of Lazarus meant "death." (John 11:14). And that the "leaven" of the Pharisees meant their "hypocrisy."

When, on the other hand, His hearers understood Him RIGHTLY, but were UNWILLING to believe what He said, He always REPEATED His statement, and STRESSED it. For instance, when He claimed that He could forgive sins, and the Jews murmured at His claim, He INSISTED on it all the more, and even worked a miracle to prove it. (Mat. 9:2-7). Again, when the Jews sneered at Him for claiming to be greater than Abraham, He backed up His claim by insisting on His eternal existence as God. "Before Abraham was made," He said, "I AM." (John 8:56-58).

In which of these two ways, now, did Christ act when His hearers understood Him to be promising Himself as the supernatural food of our souls? Did He regard this as a wrong interpretation, and correct it by saying something like this: "No, I am not promising Myself to be your food in the literal sense of the term. I am speaking figuratively. I am merely asking for FAITH in My mission as Redeemer." Had He meant to be thus understood, He was OBLIGED by the laws of truth to make this clear to His hearers. But He did nothing like this. On the contrary, He APPROVED of the interpretation they had put on His words, and He INSISTED that they ACCEPT HIS PROMISE in its literal or proper sense. He REPEATED His words six times, and even confirmed them with what was equivalent to an OATH.

"AMEN, AMEN, I SAY UNTO YOU," He said "EXCEPT YOU EAT THE FLESH OF THE SON OF MAN AND DRINK HIS BLOOD, YOU SHALL NOT HAVE LIFE IN YOU.

"HE THAT EATETH MY FLESH AND DRINKETH MY BLOOD HATH EVERLASTING LIFE; AND I WILL RAISE HIM UP ON THE LAST DAY.

"FOR MY FLESH IS MEAT INDEED (i.e. in literal truth) AND MY BLOOD IS DRINK INDEED (i.e. in literal truth).

"HE THAT EATETH MY FLESH AND DRINKETH MY BLOOD ABIDETH IN ME, AND I IN HIM.

"AS THE LIVING FATHER HATH SENT ME, AND I LIVE BY THE FATHER, SO HE THAT EATETH ME THE SAME ALSO SHALL LIVE BY ME.

"THIS IS THE BREAD THAT CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN. NOT AS YOUR FATHERS DID EAT MANNA AND ARE DEAD. HE THAT EATETH THIS BREAD SHALL LIVE FOREVER." (John 6:54-59).

How insistent He is that we must EAT His FLESH and DRINK His BLOOD, if we are to live SUPERNATURALLY by a life which is a sharing in His and in His Father's. He could not have been more emphatic.

And how did the Jews take all this? Scripture says that many of His disciples still found His promise too difficult to believe. "THIS IS A HARD SAYING," they said, "AND WHO CAN HEAR IT?" (John 6:61).

Doubtless they imagined that we would have to eat Our Lord's Body and drink His Blood in the crude way in which we take ordinary food and drink; for Our Lord went on to assure them that He would continue to come to us to nourish our souls even after He had risen in glory to heaven. (John 6:23). He as much as told them that He would find a way of coming to us that would not be in the least repulsive, since He would hide Himself under the appearances of ordinary bread and wine.

In spite of this, however, many of His disciples "WENT BACK," as Scripture puts it, "AND WALKED NO MORE WITH HIM." (John 6:67). And what could He do but let them go? They had understood His promise rightly, but they were unwilling to accept it. They lacked the faith that He had appealed for so ardently before He made it.

Finally, turning to His Apostles, He said: "WILL YOU ALSO GO AWAY?" (John 6:68). What a question! How grief stricken it must have been! Think of it. Our Saviour has just promised to give us HIMSELF in the Eucharist that He may be our companion in our exile on this earth, and may come into our hearts in Person as our divine Friend in the most intimate of unions; and He has to ask His Apostles whether they, like the rest, will leave Him on account of this incomparable proof of His love!

Replying for the other Apostles as well as for himself, and for countless generations of believers yet unborn, Peter gives the only answer man can ever give: "LORD, TO WHOM SHALL WE GO? THOU HAST THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE. AND WE HAVE BELIEVED AND HAVE KNOWN THAT THOU ART THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD." (John 6:69-70).

As yet, Peter knew nothing about TRANSUBSTANTIATION, but he had faith in Christ's omnipotence. He believed His promise because it had behind it the AUTHORITY OF GOD. Millions of sincere souls have accepted it for the same reason since his day. Millions will so accept it to the end.

What a touching scene all this makes! Think of it again. It opens with Divinity begging in advance to be accepted as nourishment for the supernatural life of His creature. No forcing of the will. No browbeating. Just a quiet insistence which runs into repetitions of the same idea, lest any doubt cling to its meaning. Only that, and a look that must have stung to sadness the poor self-cheating unfortunates who, catching the full import of the Saviour's promise, decided that it was too hard to be fulfilled, though it was the answer to man's deepest need in life. "It cannot be done," they as much as said.

When will man learn not to measure God by the finite littleness of his own mind? A youth in love would pull the universe to pieces, drag the stars from the firmament, compel flowers to sing and the earth to turn to gold, if it pleased his beloved, and - IF HE COULD. But what can stop a God in love from working miracles? By what logic does man's puny intellect dare think that he cannot?

Stupidity of pride! What tragedies has history recorded because of it! "After this, many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him." So runs the sad story of human folly. No wonder the Saviour had to view His beloved Jerusalem from the hillside through a mist of tears. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not?" (Mat. 23:37). No wonder! When, standing in the synagogue at Capharnaum, the sacred beauty of His promise scarcely spoken, He had to watch His disciples one after another slinking off in the strange silence.

How consoling to His Sacred Heart must Peter's reply have been! And how often since has this same cry echoed from hearts broken by sorrow and the darkness of life! "To whom shall we go?" The question answers itself, for it simply asks who can be preferred to God.

2. How Christ Fulfilled This Promise.

St. Matthew (26:26-28), St. Mark (24:22-24), St. Luke (22:19-20) and St. Paul (1 Cor. 10: 14-21) tell how Christ fulfilled His promise. They all relate how, at the last supper, Christ said over the bread that He held in His hands: "THIS IS MY BODY," and over the wine: "THIS IS MY BLOOD"; and how He then commanded His Apostles to do what He had done: "DO THIS IN COMMEMORATION OF ME."

Protestants maintain that the bread and the wine are mere SYMBOLS of Christ's Body and Blood. They say that He had no verb meaning "is the symbol of;" so He used "is" instead. But Our Lord had over forty verbs He could have used to say "is a symbol of"; and He was OBLIGED to use one of them, if that was what He meant. Yet, He used none of them. He said simply and plainly "is."

Why? Because this verb in a judgment expresses a real IDENTITY between the subject and the predicate. In a speculative judgment it MANIFESTS this identity, as when we say that man is a rational animal. In a PRACTICAL judgment, it EFFECTS it. And this is what it does here.

When Christ said to the corpse of Lazarus: "Arise!" His word accomplished what it signified. The dead rose to life. Similarly, when He says over the bread: "This IS My Body" and over the wine: "This IS my Blood" His words effect what they signify. They must. Otherwise, He is not uttering the truth. What was bread must become the Body of Christ, and what was wine must become His Blood. There is no question here of a mere SYMBOL. Instead, there is the dread REALITY, the real BODY and BLOOD of Christ under the appearance of bread and wine.

This is all the more evident when we remember that Our Lord was here making His LAST WILL, just before His death.

What would you think of a man who, at death, told his son that he was leaving him his property, but meant merely a photograph of it? Could he be said to be sincere? Surely not. In making a will, a person uses the clearest possible words, and in their literal sense. He avoids vague figures of speech that may be given different meanings. And this is what Our Lord did at the Last Supper.

At death, an earthly father longs to say a few last words to his children. Often he cannot find words to express his sentiments. Our Lord found words that were not only most expressive, but also able to accomplish what they signified, so that in His last will he left us, not money, nor property, nor costly jewels such as an ordinary father might leave his children, but HIMSELF.

Moreover, at the Last Supper Our Lord put a serious OBLIGATION on His Apostles to do what He had done. He made a LAW for them. And laws, like wills, are framed in the simplest language, the most direct, the least able to be misunderstood.

Finally, no sincere person deliberately exposes others to error, especially when the error is a very serious one. Now, if Christ did not mean what He said when He uttered the words: "This is My Body" and "This is My Blood," we are forced to hold that He has deceived millions of sincere souls for nearly two thousand years and led them into the dreadful sin of idolatry. But this is impossible. Christ is not a deceiver. He is the Son of God.

The scriptural account of the Last Supper, therefore, shows us most clearly that Our Lord there fulfilled the promise He had previously made at Capharnaum. He promised to give us HIMSELF, under the form of FOOD and DRINK, to nourish our SUPERNATURAL LIFE. In the cenacle, He gave us HIMSELF, under the form of BREAD and WINE, as the SUPERNATURAL FOOD of our souls. He fulfilled His promise in every detail. He fulfilled it perfectly.

3. St. Paul's Testimony.

Writing about the Eucharist to his converts at Corinth, St. Paul says: "Whosoever shall eat this bread and drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the BODY and of the BLOOD OF THE LORD. But let a man prove himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh

unworthily eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, NOT DISCERNING THE BODY OF THE LORD." (1 Cor. 11:27-29).

Now, if the Eucharist were but a SYMBOL of Christ's Body, St. Paul might well blame the Corinthians for not using it with the reverence due to its symbolism; but he could not blame them, as he does, for NOT DISCERNING in it the BODY OF THE LORD. His words make sense only if the Eucharist contains the real Body and Blood of Christ.

In this same Epistle, St. Paul says: "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the BLOOD OF CHRIST? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the BODY OF THE LORD?" (1 cor. 10:16). He is here showing his converts the great difference between the worship we give to the Eucharist and that given by pagans to their idols. Ours is lawful, he says, because the Eucharist contains Christ, and He is God. Theirs is idolatry, since it is given to mere creatures. Again, admit the Real Presence, and St. Paul's words make perfect sense. Deny it, and you reduce them to nonsense.

St. Paul's testimony is indisputable, because it is the inspired word of God. Moreover, it is particularly valuable from a purely historical point of view, because the first Epistle to the Corinthians was written within the years 52-54 A.D. Hence it shows the universality of the Church's teaching concerning the Real Presence even in those very early years.

From what has been said so far, you can see that it is quite clear from SCRIPTURE that the Real Presence is a truth revealed by God. Let us turn now to uninspired TRADITION.

4. Tradition.

In this matter we must keep in mind the persecutions which broke out in the year 64 and continued for a period of some two hundred and fifty years. During this time the Christians had to go underground, as we say today. They had every reason to put into practice Our Lord's injunction: "Give not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine." (Mat. 7:6). They accordingly hid the sacred things Christ had given them. They worshipped Him in secret. They avoided public references to His mysteries. This practice was called "The Discipline of the Secret." It

was exercised especially in regard to the Eucharist, since it was easy for Christ's enemies to desecrate this sacrament. Yet in spite of this, Tradition is rich in evidence for the universal belief of the faithful in the Real Presence. To do justice to it would demand not a chapter, but a book. At present, we must restrict ourselves to a few samples.

(a). Early Documents.

Take, for example, the DIDACHE, a precious document written about the year 80. It is also called the *Doctrine of the Apostles*, because it gives regulations made by the Apostles concerning the sacraments, fasts, prayers, the election of bishops, and so on. Speaking of the Eucharist, it bids the faithful assemble for Mass on Sundays, and it warns them to make a fitting thanksgiving after Communion, and never to receive Our Lord when they are in mortal sin. It is thus a very early and very authoritative witness to their belief in the Real Presence.

(b). The Fathers.

These also show the universality of this same belief. For instance, St. Ignatius of Antioch tells us that as early as his day the word "Eucharist" was used of the Body and Blood of Christ really present under the appearances of bread and wine after the consecration. And he warns the faithful that only a bishop or a priest can validly consecrate. His testimony is of special value, because he was a disciple of St. John the Evangelist.

Again, consider St. Justin's evidence. Writing to the Emperor in the middle of the second century, he refutes calumnies that were being spread concerning the Mass. He explains how the priest there takes bread and wine with which a little water has been mixed, and consecrates them. Then he adds: "The food which Christians call the Eucharist is not an ordinary bread nor an ordinary drink, but the BODY and BLOOD OF CHRIST." Perfectly clear, isn't it? No mere symbol, but the Real Presence of Our Saviour Himself in the sacrament of His love.

Many other early Fathers could be cited. St. Irenaeus, for instance, has left passages of great beauty concerning the Eucharist. So have

Tertullian and St. Cyprian. Later Fathers such as St. Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Jerusalem, Chrysostom, Hilary, Ambrose and Augustine have written whole treatises about the Real Presence and the Mass. They leave no possible doubt concerning the teaching of the Church.

(c). Drawings in the Catacombs.

In the catacombs you can still see numerous drawings that depict the Eucharist under various symbols such as the manna, the multiplying of the loaves, a banquet, the miracle at Cana, a vine, and so on. There are others of bishops and priests saying Mass.

Just as the admirable paintings found in certain caves in Spain and France show the caveman's ability to paint, so, too, the pictures in the catacombs testify to the belief of the early Christians in the Real Presence and in the Mass.

(d). Inscriptions.

We have space for only one. It is that found on the tomb of Abercius, Bishop of Hieropolis, in Phrygia. He lived in the second century. It tells how he once journeyed from his own city in the East to Rome in the West, and how all along the way he was able to receive Our Lord in the Eucharist, which he calls IKTHOS.

Ikthos is a Greek word, obviously, but it is not a synonym for Eucharist which means thanksgiving. Why, then, did the Greeks use it for the Eucharist? Because they knew very well that the Eucharist is Our Divine Lord, and they always spoke of Him as CHRIST, SON OF GOD, SAVIOUR. Then, to comply with the Discipline of the Secret, they took the first letter in each of these words just as we do today when we speak of U.N.R.A. or the S.P.C.A., and they got IKTHOS which happens to be the Greek for a fish. This is why the fish figures so prominently in the drawings in the catacombs as a symbol of the Eucharist.

When, consequently, Abercius assures us that in his long journey from Hieropolis to Rome he was able EVERYWHERE to receive the IKTHOS, he shows that all the Christians of his day, both in the East and in the West, believed that the Eucharist is no mere symbol of

Christ, but His very SELF, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, Christ the Son of God and Saviour of the world.

(e). Heretics.

Heretics who separated from the Church during the first thousand years of her history took with them their belief in the Real Presence. There were the Nestorians, for example, and the Monophysites who left Her in the fifth century, and the Greeks who broke away in the ninth. They would never have retained the doctrine of the Real Presence, had it not been part of the universal teaching of the Church at the time they left Her. So they are valuable witnesses to the universality of this belief.

Like Scripture, then, Tradition tells us that the Real Presence is a truth revealed by God. For over a thousand years ALL Christians accepted it as such. When, consequently, the Reformers came to deny it, the burden of proving their case was on them. Did they offer any proof that Christ is not really present in the Eucharist? Not a jot. Instead, they gave a meaning unheard of till their day to Christ's words. They made Him say one thing and mean another. They distorted Scripture. They ignored Tradition. And their private interpretation soon led to as many fantastic notions about the Eucharist as there were reformers to manufacture them. Can we wonder, then, that the Church condemned their errors at the Council of Trent, and infallibly defined the dogma of the Real Presence? With the overwhelming evidence afforded by Scripture and Tradition, how could She do otherwise?

We cannot hope to understand the Eucharist fully in this life, since it is a supernatural mystery. But we can accept it gratefully and lovingly on the AUTHORITY OF GOD who has revealed it. Making our own the words of a very ancient liturgy - that of St. Mark - we can exclaim from the depths of our heart: "Credo, credo, credo et confiteor usque ad ultimum spiritum quod Eucharistica sit ipsa caro vivifica Unigeniti dei." "I believe, I believe and I confess to my last breath that the Eucharist is the very life giving flesh of the only begotten Son of God." How intense this faith is! How whole hearted! How full of joy! You can see the same faith manifested today at a Eucharistic Congress when as many as a million people from almost all parts of the world kneel in adoration before Our Divine Lord who, as Trent assures us, is REALLY and TRULY and SUBSTANTIALY present in the sacrament of His love.

5. How Christ Becomes Present.

At the Last Supper Our Lord took bread and said over it: "This is My Body." Then, wine over which he said: "This is My Blood."

Now, just as devils fled pell-mell from the possessed at His bidding, and eyes that had been blind from birth began to see at a mere word from Him, so, too, the bread instantly became His Body and the wine His Blood. The fact that every creature must obey God since it is wholly dependent on Him for its being, made this change inevitable. His words effected what they signified. They would have been a lie otherwise. But to understand exactly what they did, we must first consider the difference between what is called SUBSTANCE and what is called an ACCIDENT.

If we study created realities from the point of view of HOW THEY EXIST, we find that some have a natural aptitude for existing ON THEIR OWN or IN THEIR OWN RIGHT (given, of course, God's conserving influence); whereas others have a natural aptitude for existing ONLY IN ANOTHER. The former are said to be SUBSTANCES. The latter, ACCIDENTS. Accidents are also sometimes called SPECIES or APPEARANCES, since it is through them that a substance appears or makes its presence known to us.

Consider a piece of bread. It has certain colour, shape, size, weight, temperature and taste. Now, its colour is obviously the colours OF something, namely, the bread. Its shape is the shape OF something - again, the bread. It is the same for all its other ACCIDENTS. An accident, then, is not a being in the full sense of the term. We cannot say of it that it simply IS. We have to say that it IS the colour, shape, size etc., of something else, IN WHICH it is found in nature. The bread, on the contrary, is not bread OF something else. It is simply bread. It exists ON ITS OWN, not IN ANOTHER. It is a SUBSTANCE.

A SUBSTANCE, then, is THAT WHICH IS, whether it be the infinite substance we call God, or a created substance that gets all its being unceasingly from Him. An ACCIDENT is THAT BY WHICH a substance is SUCH AND SUCH - white or black, heavy or light, large or small, clever or dull, virtuous or sinful, and so on for the countless other accidents found in created substances.

Since the substance of a thing cannot be known as such by our sense faculties, some deny that there is any such reality. For them, accidents alone exist. But what happens then? Since these accidents have no substance IN which they can exist, they cannot exist IN anything. Hence, each must exist ON ITS OWN. In other words, it must be a SUBSTANCE. So these people begin by saying that there are no substances but only accidents, and they end by saying that there are no accidents but only substances. The substances which they throw out through the window come back through the door, more numerous than ever. Thus does our intellect avenge itself on those who deny its power to know what is beyond the grasp of our sense knowledge. Thus does it assert man's rationality in the face of those who would reduce him to the level of the beasts.

Return now to the Last Supper. There, Christ did not say: "The COLOUR of this bread is My Body," or "The SHAPE of this bread is My Body," or "The QUANTITY of this bread is My Body." He said nothing whatever about the ACCIDENTS of the bread. He said instead, "THIS is My Body." And the "this" was the bread itself, the SUBSTANCE, not its colour, nor its shape, nor its quantity, nor any of its other accidents. It was not THEY He changed. It was the SUBSTANCE, and it alone.

AND into what did He change it? Into the SUBSTANCE of His BODY. Into what did He change the substance of the wine? Into that of His BLOOD. A prodigious change, this. One SUBSTANCE is completely changed into another SUBSTANCE, while its ACCIDENTS remain unchanged. Now, you see why it is called TRANSUBSTANTIATION. Try to realise, now, how complete a change it is.

We can easily change the ACCIDENTS of a thing - an apple, for example - by heating it, or cutting it in two, or shifting it from a box to a fruit-bowl. These changes affect only its QUALITIES, or its QUANTITY, or its POSITION in place. In other words, its ACCIDENTS. The SUBSTANCE remains unchanged. It is still that of an apple. The change is just an ACCIDENTAL one.

Can we go further and change the apple SUBSTANTIALLY? Yes. We can eat it and digest it. It then ceases to be an apple, and becomes part of our body. Here the SUBSTANCE as well as the accidents of

the apple is changed. ALL of it? No. Only that part of it known as the substantial FORM. The MATTER remains.

Now, transubstantiation is a far more complete change than this. It is so complete, in fact, that no creature can ever accomplish it by its natural power. Only God can do it. Why? Because in it not only the substantial FORM of a thing is changed, but also the MATTER. The COMPLETE substance, MATTER and FORM, is changed into another substance so that nothing remains of it except its accidents. Is the substance into which it is changed itself altered in any way? No. And the fact that it isn't is part of the glorious mystery of transubstantiation.

We can sum this up by saying that TRANSUBSTANTIATION is a CHANGE, hence not a CREATION, nor an ANNIHILATION. And what is changed? The WHOLE SUBSTANCE of the bread and of the wine. Into what is each changed? The bread is changed into the BODY of Christ; the wine, into His BLOOD. And what happens to the ACCIDENTS of the bread and of the wine? These remain wholly UNCHANGED. Does this imply any change in CHRIST? No, none whatever. He Himself is in no way changed, not even by an accidental change in place.

Here, now, are some questions. Could God change a grain of dust instantly into a rose? Yes. A rose into a monkey? Yes. A man into an angel? Yes. An angel into God? No. He can change any creature into any other creature, but He cannot change a creature into God, or Himself into a creature. Why not? Because He would then be DEPENDENT on a creature. As the SELF- EXISTING Being, He can never be dependent on another. That would involve a contradiction, like a square rhombus or an angel with false teeth. It would be an absurdity. In the Eucharist, bread is changed, not into God, but into the BODY OF CHRIST, which belongs indeed to the Second Person of the Trinity, but which is a created reality like your own.

Is the substance of the bread annihilated? No. What is changed into another does not lapse into nothingness. Does it cease to be the substance of bread? Yes. It becomes that of Christ's Body. Does it add anything to Him? No. Are new Bodies of Christ produced when many hosts are consecrated? No. They are all consecrated into the one Body of Christ which already exists and which is itself unchanged. What an astonishing change transubstantiation is! What power lies behind the priest's words that accomplish it daily in the

Mass. They are weak instruments, indeed, but they have behind them the omnipotence of God. By accomplishing what they signify, they show us how our Divine Saviour becomes present to us daily in the sacrament of His love.

6. Consequences.

(a). The Accidents of Bread and Wine remain.

The words of consecration affect the substance only, not the accidents. Hence, the latter must remain what they were before the change – the accidents of bread and wine.

By doing this they enable us to know, on God's authority, the PRESENCE of Christ. They tell us, too, how long His presence ENDURES; for He ceases to be present only when the accidents under which He hides Himself are no longer those of bread and wine.

How do they remain? God keeps the QUANTITY of the bread and wine in being, and the other accidents exist in it. Does this mean that the quantity itself becomes a substance? No. It retains its natural APTITUDE to exist in another. So it remains an accident.

(b). Body and Blood are separated sacramentally in the Mass.

The words: "This is My Body" accomplish ALL that they signify, but ONLY that. They change the bread into Christ's Body, but not into His Blood, nor into His Soul considered precisely not as form but as something spiritual, nor into His Divinity. Similarly, the words: "This is My Blood" change the wine into His Blood, but nothing else.

Hence, as far as the efficacy of the words themselves is concerned, there is manifested a SEPARATION of Christ's Body and Blood on the altar, the Body alone being present under the appearances of the bread, and the Blood alone, under those of the wine. It is very necessary to take this into account when trying to understand the Mass, as we shall see in the next chapter.

(c). The Whole Christ is present under the Appearance of the Bread, and also under those of the Wine.

When you receive Holy Communion, you receive not only Our Lord's Body, but also His Blood, His Soul and His Divinity. Why? Because, although only His Body is present in the Host by the power of the words of consecration, the rest of Him is there by what is called CONCOMITANCE.

This word comes from a Latin verb meaning "to accompany as a companion." It means simply this: Wherever Christ's Body now is, there also are His Blood and His Soul, since the natural connection between these and His Body has been restored by the resurrection. There, too, is his Divinity, since this has never for a moment been separated from His Humanity, and never can be. The Hypostatic Union will endure forever.

Hence, Our Lord can say: "He that eateth ME, the same also shall live by Me." (John 6:58). The "Me" shows that the whole Christ is present in the Host. This, too, is why the Church can sing to the Host: "Jesu quem velatum nunc aspicio." It is Jesus Himself, not just His Body, which is veiled under the appearances of the bread. And again: "Deus qui nobis sub sacramento mirabili passionis tuae memoriam reliquisti." Here, Christ in the Host exposed at Benediction is addressed as God; so it is the whole Christ who is there, not just His Body.

(d). Christ is present with His Actual Dimensions or Natural Stature.

A material thing as normally present in a place by reason of its QUANTITY or DIMENSIONS - the book on your desk, for instance. Hence, it is said to be present CIRCUMSCRIPTIVELY, inasmuch as it is circumscribed or surrounded by material things with which it has PHYSICAL CONTACT. This is the way in which Christ is present in heaven. His SUBSTANCE is present by reason of the QUANTITY in His Body.

Now, in the Eucharist this is REVERSED. There, the QUANTITY in Christ's Body is present by reason of the SUBSTANCE, since He becomes present by transubstantiation. Hence the quantity has to take on the MODE OF PRESENCE proper to a SUBSTANCE. But, since a substance as such has NO DIMENSIONS, it is superior to all the laws of SPACE and DISTANCE. It is right OUTSIDE them. They cannot APPLY to it in any way.

This is why Our Lord can be present in many Hosts in different parts of the world at the same time. This is why He does not have to become tiny in order to fit into the little Host. He does not fit into it, since He is present in such a way that He has NO PHYSICAL CONTACT whatever with the material things about Him. This, again, is why He cannot be said to COME DOWN from heaven to the altar; and why it is nonsense to speak of the DISTANCE between Christ in a Host at Timaru and Christ in one in any other part of the world.

Present in a way in which a SUBSTANCE is present, He is FREED entirely from the limits imposed by SPACE, and by TIME too, for that matter; since these are imposed only on things that are present by reason of their QUANTITY or DIMENSIONS. Hence, while Our Divine Lord can be present only in one place at a time in heaven, He can be present in countless places at the same time on earth in consecrated Hosts and Chalices. Thus can he fill His yearning to be with us in Person, in all places and at all times, even to the end of the world.

(e). Christ is present in every Part of the Host.

Since Our Lord is present in the Eucharist in the way in which a substance is present, He must be WHOLLY present in the WHOLE Host, and also in every PART of it, just as the substance of the book is on your desk.

If, therefore a Host is divided and you are given a portion of it, you receive Our Lord just as completely as if you had received the entire Host.

"But," you may object, "Christ is God. God is everywhere. Therefore Christ too is everywhere. Why, then, all this insistence on His presence in the Eucharist?" Christ is God, indeed; and God is truly everywhere. But does it follow that wherever God is, there too is Christ? No. A comparison may help you to see why. Wherever your toe is, there also is your soul; but it does not follow that wherever your soul is, there too is your toe. Your soul, after all, is also in your head, but your toe is not there with it. Similarly, it is right to say that wherever the sacred Humanity is, there also is the Divinity. Why? Because the Human Nature in Christ is utterly dependent on His Divinity for its very being, just as your toe is on your soul. But it is false to say that wherever the Divinity is, there too is Christ's

Humanity. Why Because His Divinity is in no way dependent on His Humanity, any more than your soul is on your toe. So, in spite of the fact that God is everywhere, we still have to study the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

7. The Eucharist is a Sacrament.

The Eucharist is obviously an efficacious sign of grace, instituted by Christ alone. Hence, it is a sacrament. It is in fact the central Sacrament, the one for which all the others exist. Remember the infallible definition of Trent.

The MATTER is the bread and the wine. The FORM is found in the words of consecration. The SIGN ONLY is seen in the accidents of the bread and wine. The THING AND SIGN is the Real Body and Blood of Christ hidden under them. The THING ONLY is the special grace given by this sacrament.

8. Conditions for Receiving Holy Communion.

To receive Communion one must be BAPTISED, in a state of GRACE, and FASTING from midnight.¹

Why baptised? Because baptism is necessary for the valid reception of any of the other sacraments. Why in grace? Because food is given to the living, not to the dead; and the Eucharist is the food of our souls. Why fasting? Because of the respect due to Our Lord, who should have first place in our hearts.

To fast here means to abstain from all FOOD AND DRINK. To break the fast, a thing must in the first place be DIGESTIBLE, not something that cannot be digested such as a toothbrush bristle or a bit of cotton. Secondly, it must be taken into the mouth from the OUTSIDE, and it must be swallowed. Thus, water used in cleaning the teeth does not break the fast provided it is ejected. Nor does blood from one's nose provided it does not pass through the mouth. Thirdly, it must be taken in the normal way in which we take food, not just swallowed accidentally in the way a person might swallow a butterfly while talking too much on the way to church.

¹ [Editor's note]. Canon Law now prescribes that "One who is to receive the Most Holy Eucharist is to abstain from any food or drink, with the exception only of water and medicine, for at least a period of one hour before Holy Communion." (Can. 919).

There are, naturally, exceptions to this law of fast. Anyone in danger of death, for instance, may receive Communion even when not fasting. Invalids who have been in bed for a month and who have no certain hope of a quick recovery may receive Communion once or twice a week, though they have taken some LIQUID as medicine or nourishment beforehand.

9. Effects of Holy Communion.

1. It unites us intimately to Christ, who comes to us in Person.
2. It unites us also to our fellowmen. It is the bond of the Mystical Body.
3. It gives abundant graces, since it contains the Author of grace.
4. It increases especially the intensity of our charity.
5. It increases with it the functioning of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost which give infused contemplation.
6. It does in the supernatural order all that our food does in the natural; it sustains, strengthens, repairs, and delights us.
7. It gradually makes our body like that of Our Lord.
8. It thus gives us ever more and more control over our passions, and so restores to a certain extent the integrity enjoyed by Adam.
9. It enables us to act as host to our Divine Lord who is our Guest.
10. It gives us a title to a specially glorious resurrection.

One Communion received with perfect dispositions would make each of us a saint. We should therefore prepare well for this great sacrament. During Mass, we can do this best by following the prayers in the Missal intelligently and devoutly. We should also make a suitable thanksgiving after Communion, since Our Lord remains for about a quarter of an hour in our soul. It is best to speak to Him as our infinitely lovable Friend, in prayers that well up spontaneously from the depths of our heart. But if we find this difficult, we can think of the word ALTAR. The A will remind us to ADORE Him; the L, to LOVE Him; the T, to THANK Him; the second A, to ASK Him for good things for ourselves and others; and the R, to RESOLVE to love Him better in future. Or we can read suitable prayers to Him. Some excellent prayers were written by the saints.

The best preparation and the best thanksgiving we can make, however, is that made by conforming our will all day and every day to the will of God, so that everything we do or suffer is an act of loving homage to His adorable majesty, and a thanksgiving for His gifts.

We should also love to visit the Blessed Sacrament as often as we can. We should visit our Lord especially at Benediction and at other times when He is exposed on the altar for our adoration and love. Finally, we should practise some devotion to the Eucharist – that of the Eucharistic Heart, for example, since countless graces can be obtained from His Real Presence, just as they could when He was visibly present on earth. He is the same now as He was then.

Above all, let us try to realise that the Eucharist together with the Mass is our greatest treasure. Let us be always on our guard lest custom mar our appreciation of its wonder. Instead, let us marvel daily more and more at this infinitely precious Gift, as did St. Thomas Aquinas who wrote: “O res mirabilis, manducat Dominum pauper, servus et humilis.”

10. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should receive Communion very often – daily if I can.
2. I should make a good preparation and thanksgiving.
3. I should try to visit Our Lord in the Eucharist every day.
4. I should never miss Benediction when I can be present at it.
5. I should practise the devotion to the Eucharistic Heart of Christ.

SUMMARY

1. Christ's Promise:

- (a). What it was.
- (b). How the Jews understood it.
- (c). How Christ approved of their interpretation.

- (d). How He re-acted to their refusal to accept it.

2. Its Fulfilment:

- (a). Christ's words at the Last Supper.
- (b). Why they must be taken in their proper sense.

3. St. Paul's Testimony:

- (a). In regard to unworthy Communions.
- (b). In regard to idolatry.

4. Tradition:

- i. Early Documents. ii. The Fathers. iii. Drawings. iv. Inscriptions. v. Heretics.

5. How He Becomes Present:

- (a). Substance and accident.
- (b). Kinds of change:
Accidental; substantial;
transubstantiation.
- (c). Why transubstantiation is unique.

6. Consequences:

- (a). The accidents of bread and wine remain.
- (b). Body and Blood separated sacramentally.
- (c). Whole Christ under either species.

(d). Christ present with His natural dimensions.

(e). Christ present in every part of the Host.

7. A Sacrament:

- (a). Its matter and form.
- (b). Sign Only; Thing and Sign. Thing Only.
- (c). Definition of Trent.

8. Its Worthy Reception:

- i. Baptised. ii. Grace. iii. Fasting. iv. Exceptions to the Fast.

9. Its Effects:

- i. Union with Christ. ii. Union with fellowmen. iii. Increase of grace. iv. Increase of charity. v. Increase of gifts. vi. Supernatural nourishment. vii. Assimilation to Christ. viii. Integrity. ix. Privilege of acting as host to God. x. Glorious resurrection.

10. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. Christ said "I am the (.....) of life." 2. Again: "The (.....) that I will give is My (.....) for the (.....) of the world." 3. The Jews said: "How can this man give us his flesh to (.....)?" 4. Christ replied: "Amen, amen I say unto you, except you eat the (.....) of the Son of Man and drink His (.....), you shall not have (.....) in you." 5. Again: For My flesh is meat (.....) and My Blood is drink (.....)." 6. Peter said: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of (.....); and we have believed and have known that Thou art the (.....), the (.....)." 7. Christ fulfilled His promise at the (.....). 8. He said over the bread:

"This (.....)," and over the wine: "This (.....)." 9. He was then making His last (.....), and also imposing a (.....). 10. St. Paul blamed his converts for not discerning in the Eucharist "the (.....) of the Lord." 11. The letters in "ikthos" are the initial letters of Our Lord's title, (.....). 12. This word was used to comply with the "Discipline of the (.....). 13. All heretics who broke away during the first thousand years (believed) (rejected) the doctrine of the Real Presence. 14. All realities are either substances or (.....). 15. The words of consecration change the (substance) (accidents) of the bread and wine. 16. This change is called (.....). 17. The words of consecration change the (matter only) (form only) (matter and form) of the bread and wine. 18. God (can) (cannot) change a creature into Himself. 19. God (can) (cannot) instantly change a monkey into an angel. 20. After the consecration, God keeps the (.....) of the bread and wine in being, and the other accidents exist in it. 21. The words of consecration put only (.....) of Christ present under the appearances of the bread; but the rest of Our Lord is also there by (.....). 22. Christ (has) (has not) His natural stature in the Host. 23. He (is) (is not) wholly present in every part of the Host. 24. He (is) (is not) present circumscriptively in the Eucharist. 25. There, He (has) (has not) physical contact with things about Him. 26. It (is) (is not) correct to say that He comes down from heaven to the altar. 27. In the Eucharist He (is) (is not) distant from Himself in heaven. 28. The special effect of the Eucharist is to increase one of the supernatural virtues. Which is it? (.....). 29. With it, it increases the Gifts which give us infused (.....). 30. The Eucharist is an infinitely precious treasure, because it is (.....) under the appearances of bread and wine.

(B). Answer each of the following as fully as you can: -

1. In regard to Christ's promise, explain: What it was; how the Jews interpreted it; how Christ approved of their interpretation; how He re-acted to their refusal to accept it; how the Apostles acted.
2. Show how He fulfilled His promise at the Last Supper; and why His Words must be taken in their literal or proper sense.
3. In what ways does St. Paul testify to the Real Presence?
4. What has Tradition to tell us about the Eucharist?
5. Explain what is meant by an accidental change; a substantial change; transubstantiation.
6. What consequences follow from transubstantiation?

THE EUCHARIST

7. What conditions should we have for receiving Holy Communion?
How can we make a good preparation and a good thanksgiving?
What are the main effects of Holy Communion?
8. In what ways can we show our devotion to Our Lord in the sacraments of His love?

Chapter 47

THE MASS AS A SACRIFICE

1. Our Primary Duty.

In Chapter Seven we saw how reason proves that God exists as a SELF-EXISTING Being; that He is our Creator, Conserver, and Last End; and that we are His creatures wholly dependent on Him. From this, it follows that we are OBLIGED to acknowledge His infinite excellence and to submit ourselves entirely to Him. This is to ADORE Him. Inseparably connected with this is our obligation to THANK Him, since all the reality in us comes unceasingly from Him; to make REPARATION for sin, because it offends His august dignity; and to ASK for whatever can help us to gain heaven, the end for which He has created us.

To do this is simply to be HONEST towards God. It is to practise JUSTICE. It is to exercise the virtue of RELIGION by paying our Creator the debt of homage due to Him. To refuse to pay our homage to God is a far greater crime against reason and against our nature as rational beings than is a child's refusal to acknowledge his relationship to his parents, or a traitor's betrayal of allegiance to his country. It is denial of our condition as creatures, a mad claim to be self-existing, the sin of pride that once hurled Satan like lightning into hell.

Now, adoration, thanksgiving, reparation and petition are SPIRITUAL DISPOSITIONS hidden in our intellect and will, invisible to others. But we all feel the need of MANIFESTING these externally in some way. Why? Because it is the whole man, body as well as soul, that must worship God. Moreover, since we are SOCIAL beings, we must pay homage to our Creator in a public manner, in company with our fellowmen. Finally, sentiments that are not expressed outwardly easily become extinct. For these reasons, then, it is natural for us to worship God by visible actions that manifest externally the good dispositions hidden in our soul.

We can do this by PRAYER, as we saw in Chapter 41. But we can pray to saints as well as to God. And our nature demands an

external act of the virtue of religion which cannot rightly be offered to any being other than God. It demands an act RESERVED to Him since both His excellence and our relationship to Him are unique.

Every day we honour our fellow-men by actions that show reverence and respect. We shake hands, we bow, we raise our hats, we even bend our knee as when we kneel to kiss a bishop's ring. Nor are these marks of honour shown haphazardly. Special offices have their own particular tributes of respect which may not be paid to others. Think of a King, a President, an Ambassador, a Cardinal, a Pope. But, if human beings have thus reserved to them special gestures of respect on account of the office they hold, surely it is infinitely more reasonable for us to reserve to GOD a gesture of homage which may be given to no one else, since He is the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, unique in excellence, infinite in every perfection. What, now, is this act of homage due to God alone?

2. Sacrifice.

The history of mankind from its very beginning to the present day proves that this act of homage is that which we call SACRIFICE.

Not much is told us in Genesis about Adam's children, but in the little that is said there is mention of the fact that Cain and Abel offered sacrifices to God, the former from the fruits of the earth, the latter from his flock. The Bible also tells us that the first thing Noah did on coming out of the Ark was to offer a holocaust to God. All the Patriarchs paid Him this same distinctive mark of homage. And, under the Law of Moses, God Himself gave His People detailed regulations concerning the offering of sacrifice.

Even the pagans worshipped God in the same way, no matter how distorted their ideas of the Divinity might have become, or how low their moral standards might have sunk. Thus Job offered sacrifices for the sins of his children; and Plutarch in his day could write: "You may find cities without walls, mansions, gymnasiums, laws, the use of money, or a knowledge of letters; but a people without God, without prayers, without oaths, without religious rites, without SACRIFICE, no one ever sees." And today, those who devote their lives to this particular branch of study assure us that there never has been a people with any culture worthy of the name who have not offered sacrifice to God.

Sacrifice, then, is natural to man, just as speech is. It is demanded by his very nature. It flows from the very depths of his being as a rational creature.

Why, now, is sacrifice the one act of homage reserved to God? Because by it a creature is offered to God and immolated or destroyed in a way that expresses His supreme DOMINION over us, and our absolute SUBJECTION to Him. Hence, this act honours God precisely inasmuch as He is our CREATOR, CONSERVER and LAST END. And, since God alone is this, it is necessarily reserved to Him. To offer sacrifice to any creature, no matter how noble, would be to honour that creature as God. It would be a grave insult to Him. It would be the heinous sin of idolatry.

From what has been said, you can see that a sacrifice involves in the first place certain DISPOSITIONS of soul in the offerer, especially those of homage and subjection to God. These dispositions are all-important. Without them the external act would be mere hypocrisy; hence, hateful to God. Think of Cain's sacrifice.

These dispositions are then manifested externally in a visible action which consists in the OBLATION and IMMOLATION of a victim. Both are needed. Merely to OFFER a thing to God is not enough to make a sacrifice. The first fruits offered of old by the Jews were not a sacrifice. Neither is money put in the plate by the faithful today. Something must be done TO the object offered - something that expresses our ADORATION. In the Old Testament, for instance, the blood of animals was poured over the altar which represented God. Thus it was given over or made sacred to Him in a way that testified to His supreme dominion over all creatures, and our complete subjection and self-donation to Him. Every sacrifice is an oblation, of course; but not every oblation is a sacrifice, just as every human being is an animal, but not every animal is a human being. In other words, immolation is the FORMAL or determining element in any sacrifice, just as the soul is the formal element in man.

This external action, remember, is by its very nature a SIGN. Its whole purpose is to manifest outwardly the inner dispositions that are hidden in the offerer's soul. It gets all its RELIGIOUS value from them. Without them, it is but an empty, insincere gesture, an insult to God, and quite unworthy of man.

Once we realise that the external action in a sacrifice is a SIGN, we can see that a SACRAMENTAL SACRIFICE can be a true sacrifice in the very strictest sense of the term. For what is a sacrament but an efficacious SIGN? And the Eucharist, as we shall see, is a sign of a SACRIFICE – the great sacrifice of Calvary, Christ's death, which it frees from the limits of time and place, and renders present daily on our altars.

Finally, we should note that a sacrifice is offered by a person specially authorised to offer it; and that he acts, not merely in his own name, but on behalf of the COMMUNITY he represents. Such a person is called a PRIEST. He is a mediator between men and God.

3. The Central Sacrifice.

On Calvary, Christ offered to His Heavenly Father a sacrifice of infinite worth. There, He freely accepted death in obedience to His Father's will. He was at the same time both Priest and Victim of His sacrifice. His dispositions of homage and subjection were the most perfect possible in a human heart. And, because His acts were those of the Second Person of the Trinity, their value was infinite. Hence, His sacrifice could not but be pleasing to His Father, and so accepted by Him. Its acceptance, in fact, was shown in Our Saviour's resurrection from the dead and in His ascension in glory to heaven.

We have called Calvary the CENTRAL Sacrifice because from it every sacrifice previously offered from the days of Adam derived all its efficacy and its power of pleasing God. So has every sacrifice offered since. So will every sacrifice yet to be offered, on to the end of the world. Calvary was the altar of the world. Its sacrifice belonged exclusively neither to the Old Testament nor to the New. It was for all men, from Adam to the last human being who will live on earth. All previous history looked forward to it. All subsequent history looks back to it, and will look back to it to the end. It is the central event in the entire history of man.

In the Sacrifice of the Cross the Victim offered to the Father was in every way worthy of Him. So was the Priest who offered it. So were the dispositions of obedience, subjection and love that filled His heart. For the Priest and Victim was Christ Himself, the Father's only begotten Son who had become Man to die for us. In the immolation of this all holy Victim God's supreme dominion over

creatures was abundantly manifested; and, at the same time, full satisfaction was made for sin. Thus, the Father's honour was restored, and the human race was redeemed by a perfect Sacrifice in which the adoration, thanksgiving and reparation were infinite.

4. The Last Supper.

In Chapter 46. we saw how Our Divine Lord at the Last Supper hid Himself under the appearances of bread and wine. We saw too how, on account of the manner in which He is present in the Eucharist He is there placed beyond the limits of TIME and PLACE. Time and place have to do with QUANTITY. And Christ is present in the Eucharist, not by reason of His quantity, but by reason of His substance which, like any other substance, is right OUTSIDE the order of time and space, quite superior to them, and able consequently to transcend and conquer the limitations they impose. This is why, as we saw, it is false to speak of Christ's coming down from heaven to our altars; and why it is nonsense to talk of His being there distant from Himself in heaven. And, just as distance is eliminated by the manner of His presence in the sacrament of His love, so too is time, since it is equally dependent on quantity.

No sacrament looks solely to the PRESENT. All of them look also to the PAST, to the Cross whence they derive their power of sanctifying us. At the same time they all look to the FUTURE, to the beatific vision which is their goal, since the grace they give is nothing else than eternal life already begun on earth. In this, the Eucharist is no exception. On the contrary, as the most perfect of the sacraments, it conquers time and place more completely than the others, by reason of the manner in which Christ is present under the appearances of bread and wine.

Now, try to realise this. Just as Our Divine Lord freed HIMSELF from the limits of time and place as far as His Eucharistic presence is concerned, so too by the DOUBLE CONSECRATION which He made at the Last Supper, He freed His SACRIFICE from these same limits. He put CALVARY beyond the limitations of time and place, so that it could be present in a sacramental manner, just as He Himself could, on countless altars throughout the world, on to the end of time.

Recall what He did at the Supper. He took bread in His hands and said over it: "This is My Body which is given for you" - given,

obviously, in sacrifice, in death. Then He took wine and said over it: "This is My Blood which is shed for you" – shed, again, in sacrifice, in death. These words must have accomplished what they signified. Otherwise, Our Divine Lord would have uttered a lie. This is infinitely impossible. Hence, they must have changed the substance of the bread into that of His Body, and the substance of the wine into that of His Blood, thus SEPARATING them sacramentally. In doing this, He freed Calvary's sacrifice from the limitations of time and place, so that His DEATH could be made sacramentally present on thousands of altars in every century right to the end of the world.

Then, to make sure that it would be thus rendered present to us, He commanded His Apostles to do what He had done. "Do THIS," He said, "in commemoration of Me."

Have they and their successors been faithful to His command? Think of the Mass you attended this morning, and you will see.

5. The Mass.

Each day at Mass the priest takes bread into His hands and says: "This is My Body." Then he takes wine and says: "This is My Blood." Acting in the name and in the very Person of Christ in virtue of the CHARACTER imprinted indelibly on his soul by ordination, the priest does what Christ did in the Supper room. By the double consecration which he effects as Christ's minister, he renders present the death that Christ underwent on Calvary.

He thus puts present on the altar the great Sacrifice of Calvary, in a hidden manner, indeed, yet just as really as He puts Christ Himself. Moreover, He puts it present in such a way that other priests can do the same on countless other altars throughout the world. Finally, he puts it present in such a way that we can all take an active part in it by offering it in union with Christ to the Father as OUR sacrifice, and thus fulfil perfectly the debt of worship due to Him.

It is impossible that Our loving Saviour should have failed to give His perfect religion a sacrifice. Sacrifice, as we have said, is natural to man. It is demanded by his very nature as a rational creature. It fulfils a profound yearning of his soul. And religion does not stifle or root out such natural yearnings. It fulfils them instead. And it fulfils them in a manner that surpasses our wildest dreams, for it fulfils

them in a supernatural way by ennobling and elevating them to an order which is natural only to God.

This is why Our Divine Saviour gave us a sacrifice. And it is in keeping with His infinite generosity and love, for it is none other than the all-perfect Sacrifice of the Cross, made present to us daily in the Mass, so that it becomes OUR Sacrifice as well as His, and thus enables us to give His Father a worship worthy of Him, a homage of infinite worth.

6. The Mass and Calvary.

The Mass is SUBSTANTIALLY the same sacrifice as that of the Cross. To understand this, let us compare these two sacrifices from the point of view of their four causes. This will show us in what ways they agree and in what ways they differ.

The EFFICIENT cause in any sacrifice is the PRIEST who offers it. From this point of view, the Mass and Calvary are the same inasmuch as Christ was the Priest on Calvary, and He is also the principal Priest in the Mass. There is a difference, however; for on the Cross Christ was the sole Offerer of the Sacrifice, whereas in the Mass He offers it through the ministry of another who can act in His name and as His instrument in virtue of the character he has received at ordination.

What, now, of the MATERIAL cause? This in any sacrifice is the VICTIM. Here, again, the Mass is one with Calvary since the Victim in each Sacrifice is Christ.

When we consider the FORMAL cause, however, there is a difference. Why? Because the formal cause is the IMMOLATION. On the Cross this was one that implied the PHYSICAL separation of Christ's Body and Blood, since He was present there under His OWN appearances and in His natural condition as Man. In the Mass, on the contrary, the immolation is accomplished by the twofold CONSECRATION of the bread and of the wine, so that it is not a physical but a SACRAMENTAL immolation, since Christ is present on the altar under species that are not His own. In the Mass, then, Our Saviour does not die again. Nor is the Mass a mere representation of His death. It is infinitely more than that. It is the very sacrifice He once underwent on the Cross, freed from the

limits of time and place, and made really present under the appearances of bread and wine.

Lastly, there is the FINAL cause which is the END achieved by each sacrifice. In each, the primary purpose is the same: to give God the worship or homage due to His infinite dignity as our Creator, Conserver and Last End. But there is this difference as far as the benefit to US is concerned: on Calvary Our Saviour won merits for us all and made satisfaction for the sins of all mankind, whereas in the Mass He APPLIES these to individual souls.

Thus, the Mass is indeed substantially one with the Cross. It is Calvary made present in the SACRAMENTAL order. It is Christ's great Sacrifice put at OUR disposal, made OURS as well as His, so that by offering it in union with His, we can fulfil perfectly our debt of worship to God.

7. Our Part in the Mass.

The priest at the altar represents Christ, indeed, for he speaks and acts in His name when he utters the words of consecration. At the same time, however, he represents YOU, and with you all other Christians. When you assist at Mass, it is YOUR sacrifice that is offered. The priest reminds you of this when, having washed his hands and said a short prayer to the Trinity begging that the sacrifice he is about to offer may be acceptable to God, he turns towards the people and says: "Pray, brethren, that MY sacrifice and YOURS may become acceptable to God the Father Almighty."

Absolutely nothing, obviously, can be lacking in Our Saviour's sacrifice, inasmuch as it is offered by Him. But the Mass is OUR sacrifice as well as His. And much may be lacking in US who offer it in union with Him. In offering it, remember, we are at the same time offering OURSELVES to God.

Every sacrifice, as we have seen, implies certain DISPOSITIONS in the soul of the offerer, especially those of complete SUBJECTION, complete DONATION OF SELF to God.

What matters most in US, therefore, when we offer the Mass in union with Christ and His priest who represents us at the altar, is the extent to which we IMITATE the dispositions that are in Our Saviour's Heart at this august moment, the dispositions that He had

when He yielded up His soul to His Father from the Cross. Like Our Saviour we must GIVE OURSELVES wholly to God, by subjecting ourselves wholly to Him and conforming every one of our thoughts, words and deeds to His infinitely wise and holy will.

St. Gregory bids us do this when he writes: "During this holy function, we must offer OURSELVES with sorrow of heart as a SACRIFICE; for, when we commemorate the mystery of the Passion of Our Lord, WE MUST IMITATE THAT WHICH WE CELEBRATE. The Mass will be a sacrifice for us, when we have offered OURSELVES to God." This offering of ourselves, remember, involves a great deal. It involves the complete subjection of our WILL to God's.

In his Encyclical on "Reparation" Pope Pius XI gives us the same advice. He says: "With the august sacrifice of the Eucharist must be united the IMMOLATION of the ministers and also the rest of the faithful, so that they too may offer THEMSELVES A LIVING SACRIFICE to God." He then adds: "The more perfectly our oblation and our sacrifice correspond to the sacrifice of Christ - in other words, the more we SACRIFICE SELF-LOVE, OUR PASSIONS, AND CRUCIFY OUR FLESH, the more abundant will be the fruits we receive for ourselves and for others."

And this total subjection of our will to God's, remember, must not be merely a passing disposition present in our soul while we are at Mass. It must be an enduring one, LIVED ALL DAY AND EVERY DAY, through the willing acceptance of crosses and sufferings, and the constant SELF DENIAL entailed in avoiding sin and living wholly for God.

The Mass, then, is not a sort of drama which we have to look at or listen to in a PASSIVE way, as mere spectators. We have to take a very ACTIVE part in it, by offering it in union with Christ to God, and by offering OURSELVES along with Our Saviour, and sacrificing OURSELVES by subjecting our wills ever more and more perfectly to His.

If, for example, we realise that we have offended against charity, let us think of Our Lord's words: "If, therefore, thou offer thy gift at the altar, and there thou remember that thy brother hath anything against thee, leave there thy offering before the altar, and go first and be reconciled to thy brother; and then coming thou shalt offer

thy gift." (Mat. 5:23-24). Similarly, if we retain sinful affections for worldly things, or if we lack patience in trials, or obedience to lawful authority – if we prefer self in any way to God, let us think of St. Paul's words to the Romans: "I beseech you by the mercy of God that you may present your bodies A LIVING SACRIFICE, holy, pleasing unto God." (Roms. 12:1). And let us remedy things, not by ceasing to go to Mass, but by stirring up in our hearts dispositions of self donation that will enable us to profit by this august sacrifice. In a word, let us LIVE the Mass in our daily life, in all our acts and sufferings, by conforming our wills in all things to God's.

8. The Value of the Mass.

The Mass is a sacrifice, and the primary end of a sacrifice is the GIVING of something to GOD, not the RECEIVING of something from Him. The greatest value of the Mass, then, consists in this: it enables us to offer God an adoration, a thanksgiving, a reparation for sin and a petition that are of INFINITE value. Hence it enables us to fulfil perfectly our primary duty of paying Him the homage due to Him as our Creator, Conserver and Last End.

However, it is impossible for us to give to God without His giving something in return. Hence, the Mass brings benefits to us. Here are some of them.

It forgives sin, mortal as well as venial. How? By the ACTUAL GRACES which it offers to the sinner. This does not mean that a person who attends Mass in mortal sin will have this sin forgiven infallibly. But it does mean that he will receive sufficient grace to make an act of perfect contrition. He may, however, refuse to use this grace, and so remain in sin.

It also abolishes temporal punishment. Provided sin has been forgiven, the Mass will do away with at least some of the temporal punishment due to it. It can do away with all of it, if the dispositions in the sinner are such as to allow it to have its full effect. This does not mean that we can buy our way out of purgatory by having Masses said after death. The dead profit by Masses said for them to the extent that they MERITED to benefit by them when they were alive.

It obtains spiritual and temporal goods for us. It can do this because it is a perfect prayer. Thus, it is a good thing for us to have Masses

offered for the grace of a happy death, for our progress in sanctity, for the conversion of others, and so on. God may not give us the particular temporal benefits we ask for, but He will give us something better – peace of mind, for instance, and resignation to His will.

Lastly, at the Mass we are able to receive Holy Communion. It is an integral part of the Mass. In it, God gives us His only begotten Son who comes as our Divine Guest into the depths of our soul, to increase our supernatural charity and with it our union with God.

From what has been said in this Chapter, however inadequate it may be, you can see that the Mass is indeed the crowning act of Our Saviour's religion.

A pulpit from which His words are repeated is not enough to constitute Christianity. Nor is a choir in which sweet Christian sentiments are sung. Christianity is much more than a pulpit, much more than a choir. It is above all else an ALTAR from which there is sent us daily to God a worship worthy of Him, in a sacramental SACRIFICE which is substantially the same as that of the Cross, and which consequently brings down from God the merits and satisfactions won for us by His Son, and distributes them to individual souls. Let us therefore cherish the Mass. Let us love it. Let us try to appreciate its worth more deeply every day. Let not use and custom mar our appreciation of it. Let us treasure it as the supreme gift left us by our loving Saviour. Above all let us LIVE in it our daily life by making our dispositions of subjection and self donation to God ever more and more like those that filled the noble Heart of Christ at the Last Supper and on the Cross.

9. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should never miss Mass when I can reasonably be expected to go.
2. I should take a very active part in the Mass, and not be just a passive spectator.
3. I should always be in time for Mass, and remain there to the end.
4. I should receive Holy Communion, as far as possible, at every Mass I attend.
5. I should strive to live the Mass daily by avoiding sin and conforming my will ever more and more perfectly to God's.

SUMMARY

1. Our Primary Duty.

- (a). To pay our debt of worship to God as our Creator, Conserver and Last End.
- (b). By an external act which expresses our homage.

2. Sacrifice.

- (a). An act of homage due to God alone, since it honours Him precisely as Creator.
- (b). Natural to man. Universally practised even by peoples outside the Chosen Race.
- (c). Implies
 - i. Internal dispositions, especially those of reverence and complete subjection to God.
 - ii. Expressed externally by the oblation and immolation of a victim.
 - iii. Performed by a priest on behalf of the community he represents.

3. The Central Sacrifice.

- (a). The Sacrifice of Calvary.
- (b). Why central.
- (c). Why all perfect and infinitely pleasing to God.

4. The Last Supper.

- (a). The double consecration of bread and wine.
- (b). How this gives us Calvary by freeing it from the limits of time and place.
- (c). Christ's command: "Do this in commemoration of Me."

5. The Mass.

- (a). In virtue of the character given him at ordination the priest today does what Christ did in the Supper Room.
- (b). He puts Christ's death present before us in such a way that we can all take an active part in His Sacrifice by offering it with Him to God.

- (c). By the Mass, then, we are able to give God a worship worthy of Him.

6. The Mass and Calvary.

- (a). The Mass is substantially the same sacrifice as that of the Cross.
- (b). How they are the same, and how they differ: –
 - i. The efficient cause in each.
 - ii. The material cause in each.
 - iii. The formal cause in each.
 - iv. The final cause in each.

7. Our Part in the Mass.

- (a). The Mass is our sacrifice as well as Christ's.
- (b). We should take a very active part in it by offering it in union with Christ and with the priest at the altar who represents us.
- (c). This implies an offering of ourselves to God.
- (d). It implies too, dispositions of subjection, reverence and love like those that filled Christ's soul on Calvary.
- (e). We should strive to live the Mass daily by increasing these good dispositions.

8. The Value of the Mass.

- (a) It enables us to offer to God a sacrifice of infinite worth.
- (b) It brings down God's gifts to us: –
 - i. It forgives sin by the actual graces it offers.
 - ii. It remits temporal punishment.
 - iii. It obtains spiritual and temporal goods for us.
 - iv. At Mass we can receive Holy Communion.
- (c). The Mass is the very centre of Christian worship.
- (d). How we should treasure it as our Saviour's greatest gift.
- (e). How we should live it in our daily life.

9. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Cross out wrong alternatives and fill in the blanks in the following: -

1. Our primary duty is to worship God, since He is our (.....), (.....) and (.....). 2. It (is) (is not) a greater crime against our nature for a person to refuse to acknowledge his relationship to God than it is for a child to refuse to acknowledge his relationship to his parents. 3. In worshipping God we are exercising the virtue of (.....). 4. Our worship is shown in adoration especially, but this implies also (.....), (.....) and (.....). 5. The one act of worship that can be offered to God alone is called (.....). 6. Sacrifice (is) (is not) natural to man. 7. In it, God is honoured precisely inasmuch as He is our (.....), (.....), and (.....). 8. In it we acknowledge God's supreme (.....) over us, and we express our entire (.....) to Him. 9. These inner dispositions are expressed externally in the (.....) and (.....) of a victim. 10. Sacrifice is offered by a (.....) who acts on behalf of the (.....) which he represents. 11. The central Sacrifice was that of (.....). 12. It gave infinite worship to the Father, because it was offered by His only begotten (.....) who was both (.....) and (.....) of His own Sacrifice. 13. The sacrifices of the Old Law derived their efficacy from the Sacrifice of (.....). 14. Christ's acts and sufferings were of infinite worth, because they were those of the (.....). 15. By the double consecration at the Last Supper Christ freed Calvary from the limits of (.....) and (.....). 16. At the Last Supper Christ (did) (did not) offer the first Mass. 17. At the Supper He made sure that Mass would be offered everywhere to the end of the world by saying to His Apostles: "Do (.....) in commemoration of Me." 18. Christ in the Eucharist (is) (is not) distant from Himself in heaven. 19. At the Mass Christ (does) (does not) come down from heaven. 20. A single consecration - that of the bread, for instance - (would) (would not) be enough to constitute a Mass. 21. Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross is put at our disposal by means of the (.....). 22. The Mass is (substantially) (accidentally) the same sacrifice as that of the Cross. 23. The efficient cause in any sacrifice is the (.....). 24. The material cause in any sacrifice is the (.....). 25. The formal cause in any sacrifice is the (.....). 26. The final cause in any sacrifice is the (.....). 27. We (should) (should not dare) offer ourselves with Christ in every Mass. 28. We should strive to have in our hearts the same dispositions as those that were in Christ's Heart at the (.....) and on the (.....). 29. At every Mass we should strive as far as possible to receive (.....). 30. We should strive to live the Mass all day and every day by conforming our (.....) completely to God's.

(B). Answer each of the following as fully as you can: -

1. What is our primary duty towards God? Why?
2. Why has sacrifice been the one act of homage reserved to God?
3. Why was Calvary the central Sacrifice?
4. Why was Calvary a Sacrifice of infinite worth?
5. What did Christ do at the Last Supper?
6. What does the priest do at every Mass today?
7. Show that the Mass is our sacrifice as well as Christ's. Point out how we can all take a very active part in it.
8. Show that the Mass is Christ's greatest gift to us. How can we live the Mass in our daily life?

Chapter 48

THE LITURGY OF THE MASS

1. Vestments.

The first thing you notice when a priest comes out to offer Mass is that he is wearing VESTMENTS. In the early Church these corresponded to the clothes worn by men of high society. When civilians later changed their way of dressing, the Church kept to the old style. This is why Her vestments look so different from ordinary clothes today.

The outer vestment is called the CHASUBLE. This word comes from the Latin "casula," meaning "a little house." It is apt, because the chasuble used to be a cloak shaped like a bell tent with a hole at the top through which the wearer's head protruded. Today our chasuble is not so ample. The sides are cut away to make it easier for the priest to move his arms.

On the left arm you can see a MANIPLE. This used to be a small towel held in the hand when something precious was given or received. Hence its name, from "manus," "a hand." When not in use, it was folded over the arm, where it is still worn today.

Immediately under the chasuble, there is the STOLE. It is a long vestment worn round the neck and crossed in front. It is kept in position by a girdle. Formerly, it was a handkerchief. Later, a scarf.

Under it is the ALB, a long tunic reaching to the ankles. It gets its name from the Latin "alba," which means "white." It used to be an inner garment.

Finally, there is the AMICE, a piece of white cloth with which the priest covers his neck and shoulders. It was originally worn as a protection against the cold, just as we wear a scarf today.

Each vestment is a symbol of a virtue. The alb, for instance, symbolises purity; the girdle, chastity; the chasuble, Christ's yoke; and so on. This is seen in the prayers attached to each.

Vestments are made in five different colours. WHITE signifies purity and joy. Hence it is used on joyful feasts of Our Lord, on feast of Our Lady, and of saints other than martyrs. RED is the colour of fire and of blood. So it is used at Pentecost, on feasts of Our Lord that recall the Passion, on the feasts of the Apostles and martyrs. GREEN symbolises hope. It is used therefore on Sundays after the Epiphany and after Pentecost, since these call to mind our pilgrimage to heaven. VIOLET reminds us of penance. Hence it is used in times like Advent and Lent and on Ember Days and Vigils. Lastly, there is BLACK, a sign of mourning. It is used on Good Friday, and in Masses for the dead.

2. The Chalice.

When the priest comes from the sacristy, he has in his hands a CHALICE. This was originally a cup. It is made of gold or silver. If of silver, it is gilt on the inside.

On top of it there is the PATEN, a small plate on which the host is laid. It is of the same material as the chalice. On it is placed the PALL, which is a stiff square piece of linen used for covering the chalice. Over this is spread the VEIL, on top of which you can see the BURSE that contains the CORPORAL. Like the pall, the corporal is made of linen since it reminds us of the shroud that covered Our Lord's Body when it had been taken from the Cross.

3. The Altar.

Arriving at the foot of the altar, the priest removes his Biretta. He then genuflects to the Blessed Sacrament, or bows to the Cross if there is no Real Presence in the tabernacle, and mounts to the top step to spread out the corporal on which the chalice is placed.

Of what does the ALTAR remind us? Of a table, like that used by Our Lord at the Last Supper. It reminds us also of a tomb, because in the early days Mass was often said over the graves of martyrs in the catacombs. On it, you see a TABERNACLE in which the CIBORIUM containing consecrated Hosts is kept. You see also a CROSS. There are CANDLES, too, in even numbers; two, four, or six. They recall to our minds the darkness of the catacombs. There are, however, no statues on the altar. Why not? Because it represents Our Lord. Notice, finally, that it is covered with three CLOTHS, like those used at the Last Supper.

At the right of the altar you can see a small table on which are two CRUETS, one containing water, the other wine. There is also a little dish into which the priest washes his fingers, and a small towel with which he dries them.

4. Parts of The Mass.

The Mass is usually divided into two main parts. The first extends from the beginning to the Offertory. It is called the Mass of the CATECHUMENS, because intending converts not yet baptised were allowed to be present at it in the early Church. It is also called the PRE-MASS or the FORE-MASS, since it is an excellent preparation for the main part which follows it. This is called the Mass of the FAITHFUL, since it was at first attended only by the baptised. It can be divided into three parts: the Offertory, the Consecration, and the Communion.

(A). THE MASS OF THE CATECHUMENS.

(a). The Sign of the Cross.

It is most fitting that the Mass should begin with the Sign of the Cross, because this calls to our mind the mystery of the Trinity and also that of the death of Christ. And in the Mass we offer this death to the Father in union with Our Lord, the Principal Priest, and thus give Him an adoration, a homage, a worship of infinite worth. The early Christians began it that way, too; but they used the small Sign of the Cross made by the thumb on the forehead, the lips and the heart – the one we use at the Gospel today. Our large Sign came into use in the eleventh century.

(b). Psalm 42.

The antiphon of this beautiful little psalm brings home to us the purpose for which we have come to church: "I will go unto the altar of God," it says. It reminds us that we have come, not to daydream or waste our time, not to look at those about us, not to worry about worldly affairs, but to take a very active part in the most sacred and most solemn ceremony that can be performed on earth; the offering of the Mass.

It first speaks of God as the Source of all blessings, especially those of grace and perfect happiness, worthy therefore of infinite

worship. Then it brings before us our many weaknesses and failings, our lack of perfect subjection to His will. It ends with an expression of great confidence in God who will have mercy on our misery, and render us worthy to offer homage to Him in union with His Son.

(c). The Confiteor.

When we sin, we disobey God. Instead of conforming our will to His, we do the opposite. Instead of subjecting ourselves to Him, we rebel. If, therefore, we want to have the right dispositions for offering the Mass, we must first acknowledge our sins and then be truly sorry for them. This is why the priest next says the Confiteor, and why the server says it after him, in the name of the whole congregation.

In saying it, we should imagine ourselves present at the Last Judgment. Christ is there in all His Majesty. As Judge, He is about to pass on each of us a sentence that can never change. With Him is Our Lady and all the other saints. Acutely conscious of our sins, and of the dreadful punishment they have deserved, we bow our heads in shame and strike our breasts, as we implore our Immaculate Mother and the other saints to intercede for us. Then, realising that personal sin is never forgiven without contrition, we make a very intense and very sincere act of sorrow in which we hate sin above every other evil and resolve never to commit it again.

If we could only see sin now as we shall see it at the Judgment, how wholeheartedly we would join with the priest when he says: "May the Almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, absolution and remission of our sins. Amen." And again when, mounting the altar steps, he says: "Take away from us, O Lord, our iniquities, that we may be worthy to enter with pure souls into the Holy of Holies. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen." The Holy of Holies was the most sacred part of the Temple in the Old Law. Only the High Priest could enter it, and this only once a year. A rope was then fastened to his body so that it could be dragged from the Holy of Holies if he was slain by God on account of his unworthiness. Since the altar at which Mass is said is far more sacred than the Holy of Holies, the priest has every reason to say this prayer as he approaches it to offer this sacrifice. So have we, who have to offer it with him.

Arriving at the altar, he kisses it. Why? In the first place, it represents Our Lord. Secondly, the stone embedded in it just in front of the tabernacle contains the relics of a saint, whose intercession he implores. We, too, should here ask our favourite saints to intercede for us that God may wipe away even the least stain of sin from our soul, and fill it instead with dispositions like those that beautified Our Lord's Soul when He offered His sacrifice on the Cross.

(d). The Introit.

The priest next goes to the missal and says the Introit. This used to be a whole psalm sung while the clergy came in procession from the porch of the church to the altar. Today, it is very short; but it gives the leading thought in the Mass to be offered, just as an overture gives the right atmosphere for a drama. In the Requiem Mass, for example, it begs eternal rest for the souls of the dead.

(e). The Kyrie and the Christe.

"Kyrie eleison" means "Lord, have mercy on us," and "Christe eleison" means "Christ have mercy on us." Priest and server alternate in making this plea. It is made nine times altogether, three in honour of each of the Persons of the Trinity. The words are not Latin, but Greek, for this was at first the language of the liturgy, even in Rome. So they should remind us of the very early days of Christianity, and bring home to us the miraculous unity of the Church which goes back as the one society to the times when the Apostles walked the earth.

Kneeling in spirit at the foot of the Cross on Calvary, where the Son of God hangs in inexpressible agony to atone for our sins, we should utter this nine-fold plea for pardon with the utmost sincerity and fervour. This is demanded by our very appearance at Mass, since our presence there is an external manifestation of our entire subjection to God.

(f). The Gloria.

The main dispositions that we should have in our soul at Mass are those of ADORATION, THANKSGIVING, CONTRITION, which implies a plea for MERCY, and PETITION for graces necessary for

salvation. Now, these are all expressed most magnificently in the Gloria.

It fittingly begins with the angels' song at Bethlehem, because the Son of God became Man to die on Calvary, so that He might restore His Father's honour and at the same time redeem the world. "Glory be to God in the highest," it says, "and on earth peace to men of good will." It then proceeds to pay homage, first to the Father, then to the Son, and lastly to the Holy Ghost.

To the FATHER: "We praise Thee; we bless Thee; we ADORE Thee; we glorify Thee. We give Thee THANKS for Thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty." To the SON: "O Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son, O lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, who takest away the sins of the world, have MERCY on us. Who takest away the sins of the world, RECEIVE OUR PRAYER. Who sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For Thou alone art holy, Thou alone are the Lord. Thou alone art most exalted, O Jesus Christ." To the HOLY GHOST: "Together with the Holy Ghost in the glory of God the Father. Amen."

How majestic this lovely prayer is! Every sentence in it is worth a life-time of meditation. Its sentiments are the most sublime that man can utter, for they express the right relation between the rational creature and God. Put, as it has been, to heavenly music, the Gloria can fill our soul with a keen realisation of His infinite majesty and our own nothingness as creatures, and thus arouse in us the dispositions required for a very fruitful offering of the Mass.

(g). The Collect.

In ancient times it was customary for the people to assemble at a particular church, and then go in procession to another where Mass was to be said. Before setting out, they offered a prayer in the place where they had "collected"; and it was naturally called the "Collect." This prayer was later said during the Mass itself, but it kept its old name, and it has it still today. It is always a short prayer, but beautiful in form, and full of meaning.

Here, for instance, is the Collect for the Epiphany: "O God, who on this day by the guidance of a star didst reveal Thine only begotten Son to the Gentiles, mercifully grant that we who know Thee now

by faith, may be brought to contemplate the beauty of Thy majesty, through Jesus Christ Our Lord, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, forever and ever. Amen."

You can see that it has three parts. There is first the ADDRESS to God. Then, the MOTIVE of the petition. Lastly, the PETITION itself. How brief it is! Yet how fundamental! Nothing trivial. Nothing superfluous. Instead, a humble yet manly plea for the one thing that matters in eternity – the immediate vision of God. And how great hearted it is! It is truly universal, truly Catholic. It includes you and me and everyone else capable of going to heaven. It is as all embracing as were Our Saviour's arms outstretched upon the Cross. It is a model of Catholic Action. We should LIVE it every day in our work and in our recreation, in our relations with our fellowmen, in our sufferings and in our joys.

(h). The Epistle and the Gospel.

So far in the Mass, we have been speaking to God. Now, He speaks to us. He instructs us first in the Epistle, then in the Gospel. We should listen to these with the attention and reverence due to His inspired word. Moreover, they should give us a taste for Sacred Scripture, and arouse in us the desire to read it every day, so that we may be able to model our lives on its infinite wisdom.

Between the Epistle and the Gospel comes the GRADUAL. This is followed by the ALLELUIA, or by the TRACT, or by the SEQUENCE.

The GRADUAL and the TRACT give the main thought contained in the Epistle; whereas the ALLELUIA, which means "Praised be God," is a cry of joy at the good news contained in the Gospel. The SEQUENCE is a superb poem, put to excellent music. Today, there are five sequences – one for each of the following Masses: Easter, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, Our Lady of Sorrow, and the Mass for the dead. The thoughts and sentiments expressed in them are a magnificent preparation for the main part of the Mass.

(i). The Creed.

Next comes the Nicene Creed. It is a majestic profession of faith in the main mysteries of Christianity. In it we submit our INTELLECT to God's by accepting His revealed truths simply and solely because He who is Knowledge and Truth Itself has made them known to us;

and with it we submit also our WILL, since this has to command the intellect's assent. This SUBMISSION of our two highest faculties to God is obviously due to His infinite excellence. At the same time it is, again, an excellent preparation for the sacrifice we are about to offer; for this is so hidden, so sublime, so utterly beyond anything we can ever experience in the natural order, that it can be known only by supernatural faith which is a sharing in the infinite knowledge of God.

It is most fitting, therefore, that the first part of the Mass should end with the soul stirring truths preserved for us in the infallible utterances of the glorious Nicean Creed.

(B). THE MASS OF THE FAITHFUL.

1. THE OFFERTORY.

At this point in the Mass it was customary for the faithful to bring to the altar offerings of bread and wine for the sacrifice. Hence the name OFFERTORY. What was not needed for the Mass was given to the priest for his up-keep, or distributed to the poor. A relic of this ancient custom is seen today at the consecration of a bishop when the one to be consecrated offers two loaves of bread and two small barrels of wine. It is seen, too, in the collection taken up in the church when the priest begins the Offertory part of the Mass.

He does this by removing the veil from the chalice, and then offering to God the host which is soon to be consecrated into the Body of Christ. At the same time, he says a lovely prayer asking God to accept the offering of the Body of His Son, for the salvation of all who are present at Mass, and also for all other Catholics living and dead. No one is forgotten.

He then puts wine into the chalice, and with it a few drops of water. The water represents us. The wine represents Our Lord, since it is about to be turned into His Precious Blood. The union of the two represents the union that should exist between us and Christ by grace. This is why the priest says: "O God, who in a marvellous manner didst create and ennoble man's being, and in a manner still more marvellous didst renew it, grant that by the mystery of this water and wine we may be made partakers of His Divine Nature who hath deigned to share our human nature, Jesus Christ, Thy

Son, Our Lord, who with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost livest and reignest God forever and ever. Amen.”

As the priest puts wine and water into the chalice, let us say this delightful prayer with him; and let us relish every word of it, especially those in which we beg to be made partakers of the Divine Nature by grace merited for us by the death of His Incarnate Son.

Returning to the centre of the altar, the priest offers the wine in a similar way to that in which he offered the host, and with a similar prayer.

We, too, should offer the bread and the wine in an ACTIVE manner by saying the prayers said by the priest; and with them we should also offer OURSELVES to God – our daily life with its joys and sufferings, its work and recreation, so that every act of ours may be sanctified and may acquire a special value in His eyes because of its union with the all-perfect sacrifice offered by His Son. Thus, we shall LIVE the Mass all day and every day; and others, drawn by our example, will come to know Our Lord and to love Him, and so save their souls.

The priest next washes the tips of his fingers at the side of the altar. He then turns to the people and says: “Brethren, pray that MY sacrifice and YOURS may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty.” Inasmuch as the Mass is the offering of Christ's Sacrifice made by Himself to the Father, it cannot but be infinitely pleasing to Him. But it is OUR sacrifice as well as His. We must offer it with Him. And we may easily fail to have in our soul the dispositions necessary. This is why the priest asks us to pray that his sacrifice and ours may be acceptable to God. So, let us comply with his request by saying with the server who represents us: “May the Lord receive the sacrifice from thy hands to the praise and glory of His name, to our benefit, and to that of all His holy Church.” This little prayer is full of adoration, and, again, it omits no one. It is as universal as the Church.

The Offertory ends with the SECRET prayer. As a sample, let us take that said on the last Sunday after Pentecost: “Grant, O Lord, our requests, and while accepting the offerings and prayers of Thy people, convert all hearts to Thyself, that, being freed from earthly desires, we may pass to heavenly longings.” Again, how humble this

little prayer is! Yet how wise! And how unselfish! It remembers everybody.

From what has been said you can see that the Offertory prayers are all framed to fit in perfectly with the sacrifice of the Mass. They all manifest our absolute dependence on God and our primary duty of subjecting ourselves wholly to Him. Adoration is the dominant note throughout.

2. THE CONSECRATION.

(a). The Preface.

The Preface is another excellent prayer - this time one of praise and thanksgiving for all God's gifts, but especially for that of the Mass. It forms, therefore, a most fitting prelude to the Consecration.

There are fifteen different Prefaces, but they have all a similar structure. There is first the opening dialogue between the priest and the server, in which the former calls on us all to lift up our hearts from worldly things, and unite with him in paying homage to God.

Then the Preface proper begins. Here, for example, is that said or sung at a Requiem Mass: "It is truly meet and just, right and availing unto salvation, that at all times and in all places we give thanks to Thee, O holy Lord, Father Almighty, everlasting God, through Christ Our Lord. In whom the hope of a blessed resurrection is shown to us, that they who are saddened by the certain necessity of dying may be comforted by the promise of eternal life to come. For the life of Thy faithful, O Lord, is changed but not destroyed; and, when the home of this earthly life is dissolved, an everlasting dwelling shall be gained in heaven. And, therefore with the angels and archangels, the thrones and dominations, and the whole host of the heavenly army we sing the hymn of Thy Glory, saying again and again Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest."

If you read through the Prefaces in your missal, you will see that each is divided into three parts. There is first of all praise and thanksgiving offered to God in a general way. Then a particular

motive is mentioned. Lastly, our praise is united to that given by the angels in heaven. Try to appreciate the dignity and the rhythm of the sentences in each Preface, and the sublimity of the sentiments expressed. The music is equally sublime. Here, both thought and sound combine magnificently to lift our hearts and souls to heavenly heights, and so prepare them for the Consecration in the Mass.

When the priest comes to the words: "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts" the server rings the bell to warn the congregation that the CANON, which is the most important part of the Mass, is about to begin. "Canon" means "a rule"; hence, something that does not change. It is used of this part of the Mass, because it has remained unchanged for more than fifteen hundred years.

Our limited space will not allow us to set out all the prayers of the Canon. But, as you read them with the priest at Mass, let them bring home to you how mighty is the Church to which you are privileged to belong. She is still one and the same society as that established by Our Lord nearly two thousand years ago, and not even for an instant during that long period has She ceased to save souls for Him. Think, then, of the countless members She must have in heaven. Think, too, of the hosts in purgatory. Think, finally, of the billion Catholics on earth. Try to realise that you are praying in union with all these, whether they belong to the Church triumphant, the Church suffering, or the Church militant; for by baptism and the public profession of your faith, you are a visible member of the great Mystical Body of Christ.

Have, therefore, at this part of the Mass especially, a truly Catholic heart, as wide as the earth, a heart in which all the needs of your fellowmen find an echo. Pray first for those near and dear to you - your parents, relatives and friends. Then for those who, after them, help you most in life - the Pope, your bishop, your priests, your teachers. Pray, too, for all others with whom you associate in daily life - your next-door neighbours, your companions at school or at work. Pray especially for the suffering, the sick, the aged and the dying. Pray, finally, for all non-Catholics that they may share with you the happiness of the true faith. Let the glorious universality of the Canon prayers remind you that you should be full of zeal not only for the welfare of your own home and school, but also for that of the parish, the diocese, your country and, in fact, the whole Catholic World.

The CANON begins with a prayer for the CHURCH and the hierarchy. Then comes a prayer for the LIVING, especially those for whom the Mass is being offered, and those who are present at it. An appeal is next made to all the SAINTS in heaven, especially to Our Lady, the Apostles, and some of the early martyrs that they may intercede for us before God. This prayer should again bring home to us the fact that the Church today is one with that of the catacombs; and that the chief disposition required at Mass is that of complete submission to God's will – an obedience even unto death like that shown by the early martyrs in imitation of Our Saviour's obedience on the Cross.

The priest next spreads his hands over the host and the chalice to show that we are all offering OURSELVES to God in union with the Body and Blood of Christ. The server again rings the bell to warn us that the CONSECRATION is about to take place.

“Do this in commemoration of Me,” Our Lord said nearly two thousand years ago in a supper room in Jerusalem. And today a priest in far-away Australia bends reverently over a piece of bread, and does exactly what Christ did. He says “THIS IS MY BODY.” Then, bending over the chalice, he says: “THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL TESTAMENT, THE MYSTERY OF FAITH, WHICH SHALL BE SHED FOR YOU AND FOR MANY UNTO THE REMISSION OF SINS.” Omnipotence that once created the universe by a mere command, here utters a mightier declaration. And this time He utters it through the lips of His minister, whose priestly character enables him to act in His name and with His power. The words therefore accomplish what they signify. The bread is changed instantly into the Body of Christ, and the wine into His Blood. As at the Last Supper, BODY AND BLOOD ARE SEPARATED SACRAMENTALLY.

This is no mere representation of Christ's death, remember; nor is it a sort of mystical death; nor an equivalent of death; nor a newly-induced state of death. It is the dread reality itself. It is the very Sacrifice Christ underwent on Calvary, but FREED FROM THE LIMITS OF TIME AND PLACE, and made present on our altar, just as it was made present in the cenacle. The Last Supper, Calvary, a Mass offered today – these are ONE in spite of obvious differences, inasmuch as in all three there is the ONE SACRIFICE of Christ DIFFERENTLY MANIFESTED, because DIFFERENTLY SACRIFICED.

At the Supper, Our Lord offered it Himself. Today, He offers it through the ministry of the priest at the altar; and this priest, remember, represents US. Hence we must all offer Christ's death to the Father, AS OUR SACRIFICE, in union with the priest and with Christ Himself, who is the principal Offerer. But, to do this in a worthy manner, we must have as far as we can dispositions of soul similar to those present in the Soul of Our Lord, especially those of absolute subjection and obedience to the will of God. In other words, we have to offer OURSELVES together with Christ.

As we adore Our Divine Saviour at each elevation, therefore, let us offer Him to God as the Victim of Calvary, and with Him our whole self, body, soul and faculties, by consecrating these to God's service and love, and to the service and love of our fellowmen for the sake of God.

After the Consecration, the priest says five beautiful prayers, including one for the dead. We should say them with him, and with the utmost devotion to Our Blessed Lord who is really present before us on the altar.

Then the Canon ends with the doxology: "Through Him (i.e. Christ), and with Him, and in Him is to Thee, God the Father Almighty in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory forever and ever. Amen."

The Father certainly receives from His Divine Son, all the honour and glory due to His own infinite majesty in every Mass. But what about each of us? Does our life give unceasing glory to God? Let us examine our conscience in this matter, and see if there is anything else we can still do to give more glory to God as far as our own daily acts and sufferings are concerned. If there is, let us resolve to do it in order that everything we do may glorify the Father, THROUGH Christ, WITH Christ, and IN Christ, as worthy members of His Mystical Body on earth.

3. THE COMMUNION.

We have offered to God the Body and Blood of Christ, and with Him ourselves. God accepts this offering of ourselves, because it is made in union with that of His Son, which is infinitely pleasing to Him. In return, God now offers us something in keeping with His infinite

generosity. It is the gift of His beloved Son who comes to us in Holy Communion to be the very life of our life and the food of our souls.

To prepare our soul for His coming, we recite the OUR FATHER. Why? Because its seven petitions are a perfect expression of the right relation that should exist between a creature and God. Hence, they not only fit in perfectly with the spirit of the Mass as a sacrifice, but they also give us the right dispositions for receiving our Saviour in the sacrament of His love. Let us say this God-given prayer with the utmost sincerity and fervour, and with a deep sense of our total dependence on God both as His rational creatures and as His adopted children, heirs to His own riches in heaven.

After the Our Father, the priest BREAKS the consecrated Host into two parts, and puts a small portion of one of them into the chalice. As he does so, he says: "May this mingling and hallowing of the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ help us who receive it unto life everlasting." The breaking of the Host obviously represents Christ's death, and the mingling of part of it with the sacred Blood obviously represents the union of His Body and Blood again in the resurrection.

Then comes the AGNUS DEI. "Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us," we say twice, but the third time we ask Him to "grant us peace." At a High Mass the KISS OF PEACE is then given. It signifies the charity that should reign amongst all the members of Christ's Mystical Body; and it reminds us that true supernatural fraternal love is necessary for a worthy reception of Communion.

Just before we go up to receive Our Lord, we say two magnificent prayers to Him. The first is one of complete confidence: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who by the Father's will, with the co-operation of the Holy Ghost, hath given life to the world through Thy own death, deliver me by this Thy most holy Body and Blood from all my sins and from every evil; make me always obedient to Thy commandments, and never permit me to be separated from Thee who with the same God the Father and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest, God, through all eternity. Amen." Here we ask for three mighty and most precious gifts: forgiveness of sin, fidelity to the Commandments, and final perseverance. It is one of the loveliest prayers in the whole Mass.

The second prayer is one of humility and holy fear of the infinite: "Let not the partaking of Thy Body, O Lord Jesus, which I, all unworthy, am about to receive, turn to my condemnation and punishment, but by reason of Thy Fatherly love, may it be to my advantage as a safeguard of both soul and body, like a well-taken remedy. Who livest and reignest with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, through all eternity. Amen." This, again, is a very beautiful prayer. Conscious of St. Paul's warning against an unworthy reception of Our Saviour in the Eucharist, let us say it with the whole-hearted devotion it deserves.

After receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, the priest gives Him to the people. He holds a Host above the ciborium and says: "Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world." Then three times: "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed." This humble and very sincere plea was uttered by the centurion on behalf of his servant, and it won from the Heart of Our Saviour a miracle of kindness and love. It can do the same for us.

As the priest gives us Holy Communion, he says: "May the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul unto life everlasting. Amen." How appropriate these words are, and how full of supernatural charity. They wish for us the greatest of all goods - the vision of heaven, of which the worthy reception of Our Saviour in Holy Communion is already a token and a pledge. "If any man eat this bread, he shall live forever." (John 6:52).

Having given Holy Communion, the priest returns the ciborium to the tabernacle, and purifies the chalice and his fingers, praying at the same time that the purifying and hallowing effects of the Eucharist may continue after the Real Presence has ceased in our soul; and that this great sacrament may be for us during our pilgrimage on earth a pledge of life everlasting.

The Communion Verse follows, and then the Post-communion prayer. This is not precisely a prayer of thanksgiving, but rather a petition that the graces of the Eucharist may be shown forth IN OUR DAILY LIFE. This is not meant to deter us from making a very earnest thanksgiving after Mass while Our Lord is still present in our soul; but it is meant to remind us that the best way to thank Him is to strive to do well our daily work, to fulfil as perfectly as we can the duties of our state, to meet bravely the trials and sufferings

that God allows to come to us – in a word to LIVE THE MASS all day and every day, by subjecting our will in all things to His.

The Mass ends with the *“Ite Missa est.”* On days of penance, *“Benedicamus Domino”* is said instead; and *“Requiescant in pace”* in Masses for the dead. Then, except in Requiem Masses, the priest blesses the people, and says the last Gospel which is usually the superb prologue written by St. John. It reminds us of the Incarnation of the Lord, who is the WAY, the TRUTH and the LIFE.

If we LIVE the Mass every day by conforming our will in all things to His, we, too, shall be for others a WAY that leads to heaven, a TRUTH that liberates from darkness and sin, and a source of LIFE which is nothing less than a sharing in the life of God.

SUMMARY

1. Vestments.

- (a). i: Chasuble. ii: Maniple. iii: Stole. iv: Alb. v. Amice.
- (b). How they originated.
- (c). What they symbolise.
- (d). Colours: white, red, green, violet and black.

2. Chalice.

- (a). A cup.
- (b). Paten; Pall; Veil; Burse; Corporal.

3. Altar.

- (a). Reminds us of a table and also of a tomb.
- (b). Tabernacle; Cross, Candles; Cloths. Altar stone.
- (c). Side table with cruets, dish and finger towel.

4. Parts of the Mass.

(A). Mass of the Catechumens:

- i: Sign of the Cross. ii: Psalm 42. iii: Confiteor. iv: Introit. v: Kyrie. vi: Gloria. vii: Collect. viii: Epistle and Gospel. ix: Gradual, Alleluia, Tract, Sequence. x: Creed.

(B). Mass of the Faithful:

- (a). Offertory.
- (b). Consecration.
- (c). Communion.

5. Necessity of Living The Mass All Day and Every Day.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. The chasuble was originally a kind of (.....); the maniple was (.....); the stole was (.....); the Alb was (.....); the amice was (.....).
2. The vestments are in five colours, namely: (.....). 3. On top of the chalice you find first the (.....); then the (.....) ; then the (.....); then the (.....) which contains the (....). 4. The altar reminds us of a (.....) and of a (.....). 5. Imbedded in it is the (.....) which contains (.....).
6. The safe-like structure in which the Eucharist is kept is called the (....). 7. The sacred vessel in which the Hosts are reserved is called a (.....). 8. The altar is covered with (.....) cloths. 9. The candles remind us of (.....). 10. The Cross over the tabernacle reminds us of (.....). 11. The Mass is usually divided into two main parts; that of the (.....) and that of the (....). 12. We begin Mass with the (small) (large) Sign of the Cross. 13. In psalm 42 we beg that (.....). 14. When saying the Confiteor, we should picture to ourselves the (.....), and make a very fervent act of (.....). 15. The priest kisses the altar because (.....) and because (.....). 16. The (.....) gives the leading thought in the Mass to be offered. 17. Kyrie eleison and Christe eleison mean (.....) and (.....) respectively. 18. The Gloria begins with the song of the (.....). 19. It gives praise and glory first to the (.....); then to the (.....); and lastly, to the (.....). 20. It is a perfect expression of the dispositions we should have in offering a sacrifice, namely, those of (.....), (.....), (.....) and (.....). 21. In the Collect, there is first the (.....) to God; then the (.....) of the petition; and lastly, the (.....) itself. 22. As far as the Collect in the Mass we speak to God; then He speaks to us in the (.....) and the (.....). 23. The Gradual and the Tract look to the (Epistle) (Gospel); the Alleluia looks to the (Epistle) (Gospel). 24. There are (.....) different Sequences today. 25. The first part of the Mass ends with the (.....). 26. The main part of the Mass begins at the (.....). 27. The union of the few drops of water with the wine put into the chalice represents the union that should exist between us and (.....) by (.....). 28. After

washing his fingers the priest says: "Pray brethren, that MY sacrifice and (.....) may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty." 29. This shows that we should offer (.....) as well as Our Lord in the Mass. 30. The Offertory ends with the (.....) prayer. 31. There are (.....) different Prefaces. 32. Each is divided into three parts: in the first, we (.....); in the second, we (.....); in the third, we (.....). 33. The bell is rung at the sanctus to remind us that the (.....) of the Mass is about to begin. 34. The "canon" has remained for over (.....) years. 35. At the consecration the Body and Blood of Christ are separated (.....). 36. His (.....) is thus freed from the limits of time and place and made present before us on the altar; so that we can offer to the Father is our sacrifice. 37. The "canon" ends with the doxology: (.....). 38. The Our Father is said as an immediate preparation for (.....). 39. As the priest gives us Holy Communion, he says: "May the (.....) preserve thy soul unto (.....)." 40. In all the prayers of the ordinary of the Mass, the word "love" does not occur even once. This is because the Mass is a (.....); hence the dominant disposition is not that of charity but that of (.....) by which we acknowledge God's supreme excellence, His dominion over us, and our absolute subjection to Him as our (.....) (.....) and (.....).

(B). Answer as fully as you can each of the following: -

1. "Why does the priest dress like that?" a non-Catholic asks. Tell him.
2. A non-Catholic asks you to explain the altar to him. Do so.
3. Show the significance of the following in the first part of the Mass: the Sign of the Cross; the Psalm said at the foot of the altar; the confiteor; the introit; the Kyrie and the Christe eleison; the gloria; the epistle and the gospel; the gradual alleluia, tract and sequence; the Creed.
4. Explain all that happens at Offertory, and show how we can take an active part in it.
5. Explain what happens at the Consecration; and show in what way the Last Supper, Calvary and our Mass today are one.
6. Show from the prayers of the Mass that it is our sacrifice as well as that of Christ.
7. "The Church devotes only a very short part of the Mass to thanksgiving after Communion; hence there is no need for me to remain after Mass to thank God for coming to me in the

Eucharist.” Criticise this; and show how we can and ought live the Mass all day and every day.

8. What benefits do we derive from the Mass?

Chapter 49

EXTREME UNCTION

1. What It Is.

At death a man realises most keenly what it is to be a PERSON, a SELF, distinct from everyone and everything else. He feels utterly ALONE. Friends can gather round his bed. They can pray for him. They can offer their sympathy and love. But they cannot prevent his death. They cannot go through it for him. It is he who must die. And must die alone. Moreover, this bitter sense of being alone comes to him at a time when he feels most helpless, hence most in need of others. Memories of his many sins and discouraging failures crowd in upon him. With them comes a terror of the judgment, so near, so inevitable, so unpredictable in its sentence, and – worst of all – so final, so irrevocable. And to all this is added so often the assault of Satan, making the most of his last chance to bring eternal misery to a soul.

As a loving mother, the Church has watched over the dying man every moment since he was born supernaturally to Her in baptism. Can we imagine Her now deserting him in his hour of greatest need? The thought is monstrous. No. She is there in the person of Her priest who represents the Divine Physician by the character which ordination has indelibly printed on his soul, and who is able consequently, as another Christ, to aid the dying man in a way which is truly SUPERNATURAL, hence quite beyond the power of any creature and proportionate to that of God.

He does this by administering the sacrament of Extreme Unction. Through this great sacrament of God's limitless mercy, the priest is able to influence the soul of the dying man directly, and fill it with a supernatural courage, a divine peace, and a holy resignation which no physician of this world, however eminent his skill, can ever give; and thus enable the recipient to meet death with glorious dispositions of victory like those which Our Divine Saviour summoned it on the Cross. This sacrament may even restore the dying man to bodily health, warding off death for a time, if God sees this to be ultimately beneficial to his soul.

Extreme Unction, then, is a sacrament by which, through the anointing with holy oil and the prayer of the priest, there is given to a Christian who is dangerously ill, health of soul and even of body, if this is beneficial to the soul.

2. It Is a Sacrament.

(a). Scripture.

In the Epistle of St. James we read: "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man; and the Lord shall raise him up; and, if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." (James 5:14-15).

Consider first the meaning of this text. The word "sick" here means "seriously sick," and "sick man" means "one in danger of death." (Cf. Heb. 12:3). The use of "priests" in the plural does not mean that more than one must be present to administer this sacrament. It merely indicates the class to which the minister must belong. Notice that the priest is to anoint the dying "in the name of the Lord," i.e. with the authority and command of Christ. It is a question, therefore, of an anointing instituted by Christ, and having its efficacy from Him.

At the same time, the priest is to pray over the sick man, with a prayer which is said to be "of faith," because it is commanded by faith in the revelation of God. This will "save" the sick man. This word, as used by St. James, applies to the saving of the body as well as of the soul; but he uses it mainly in reference to the soul. Hence, it means that Extreme Unction will most certainly procure the spiritual welfare of the one who receives it, if he allows it to do so; and that it may also restore him to bodily health. The words "shall raise him up" mean much the same thing as "shall save." Finally, the text assures us that, if he be in sins, mortal or venial, they shall be forgiven, provided, of course, that he has at least imperfect contrition in his soul.

From what St. James says, you can see that Extreme Unction is a sacrament. In the first place, it is a sensible SIGN, made up of an anointing and prayer. Secondly, it is an EFFICACIOUS sign of

GRACE, because it brings supernatural solace and strength to the dying man, and forgives whatever sins may be on his soul. And it does this by its very use, since the promise is absolute and fulfilled infallibly. Lastly, it is a sign instituted by Christ, because it is administered in His name and with His authority. It is, obviously, an efficacious sign of grace instituted by Christ. In other words, a sacrament.

(b). Tradition.

Naturally there are not as many references to Extreme Unction in early tradition as there are for the other sacraments, because it is not a public ceremony. Moreover, it is not absolutely necessary for salvation. However, there are clear references to it in writings left us by Fathers, both from the East and from the West.

Men like Origen, St. Chrysostom, St. Innocent I, St. Augustine, St. Cyril of Alexandria refer to it as a sacrament. And the most ancient liturgies show that it was administered from the beginning of the Church.

Here, for instance, is a quotation from the "Sacerdotal Law" of Egbert, Archbishop of York, written more than 1200 years ago: "According to the LAWS laid down by the holy FATHERS, if anyone is sick, let him be carefully anointed by the priest with consecrated oil, along with prayer." Notice that he speaks of the obligation to administer this sacrament as a LAW laid down by the FATHERS of the early Church.

What counts most for us, however, is the fact that the Council of Trent has defined infallibly that Extreme Unction is one of the seven sacraments left us by Christ. That settles the matter forever. It seals with God's approval our spontaneous conviction that Our Divine Saviour who so thoughtfully provided a sacrament for every other great need in life, must also have given one for the dying, since they need His help so sorely at the dread moment of death on which depends the eternal welfare of their souls.

3. Matter and Form.

(a). Matter.

The REMOTE matter is OLIVE OIL, specially blessed. The PROXIMATE matter is the ANOINTING. This is clear from St. James.

Oil has a natural power of soothing pain and of restoring strength and vigour to the body. In Extreme Unction God elevates this power and thus enables it to have corresponding supernatural effects on the soul. The oil used is blessed by the Bishop on Holy Thursday; and it is different from that used in baptism and in confirmation.

Eye-lids, ears, nostrils, lips, hands and feet are normally anointed, though the anointing of the feet may be omitted for a sufficient reason. In case of necessity, one anointing is given on the forehead; and the short form is used.

(b). The Form.¹

As the priest anoints the eyes, he says: "Through this holy anointing and His most tender mercy may God forgive you whatever wrong you have done through sight. Amen." In the other anointings he says the same thing, except, of course, that he changes the last word to suit the part of the body he is dealing with: "hearing," "smell," "taste and speech," "touch" and "walking." If he has to use the short form, he says: "Through this holy anointing, may God forgive thee whatever wrong thou hast done. Amen."

The body of a Christian is holy, because it is a temple of the Trinity. But our sense faculties often lead us to commit sin. The anointing given in Extreme Unction is a kind of re-consecration of the body and our sense faculties to God, to prepare us to appear before Him in judgement.

4. Effects.

Here are the main effects produced by this sacrament: -

¹ The Form as prescribed by Paul VI in the Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick (30th November 1972) is, while anointing the forehead: "*Through this Holy Anointing may the Lord in His love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit,*" and while anointing the hands: "*May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.*" Where there is case of an emergency the Apostolic Constitution notes: "*In case of necessity, however, it is sufficient that a single anointing be given on the forehead or, because of the particular condition of the sick person, on another suitable part of the body, while the whole sacramental form is said.*"

(a). It gives SANCTIFYING grace to the soul.

By giving or increasing sanctifying grace in the soul, Extreme Unction beautifies it supernaturally, and thus makes it more dear to God. At the same time it gives it a right to a greater reward in heaven.

(b). It FORGIVES SIN.

Extreme Unction is a sacrament of the living. In other words, one who receives it should normally be in a state of grace, as he should be, for example, when he goes to Holy Communion. Hence, a person in mortal sin should ordinarily go to confession before he receives the last anointing.

If, however a sick person is incapable of going to confession – as he is when unconscious, for instance – the sacrament will forgive even mortal sins, provided he has made at least an act of imperfect contrition for them. This is one of the things that make Extreme Unction such a precious gift. It shows that it is indeed the sacrament of God's infinite mercy, since it can forgive sin in one who is no longer capable of manifesting his sorrow in any way, or even of performing a human act. What more could God do to save a soul that turns to Him at the end?

(c). It removes from the Soul the REMNANTS OF SIN.

By the remnants of sin we mean the evil effects left in us by sin, original or personal.

These are of three kinds: WEAKNESSES in the SOUL itself and in its FACULTIES, as when our will is weakened, our intellect darkened, and our other faculties are bent in a disorderly manner towards worldly things; BAD HABITS in our body; and TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT due to sin.

Extreme Unction can remove all these evil consequences of sin entirely from the soul, if it is received with sufficiently good dispositions, especially if the one who receives it makes a very intense act of charity.

(d). It brings STRENGTH and COURAGE to the Soul.

This is one of the primary effects of Extreme Unction. It counteracts the weakness, the sense of helplessness, the loneliness, and the fear that normally accompany death. It brings to the soul a supernatural peace and resignation, and with these great strength to meet death bravely, and overcome all the attacks of the devil. Non-Catholic doctors and nurses in hospitals often express their amazement at the atmosphere of peace and holiness which surrounds a Catholic death-bed. They recognise that it is something quite beyond the sphere of their natural art, since it is produced, not by drugs, but by a simple anointing and a prayer that have behind them the limitless power and mercy of God.

(e). It may restore Health of Body.

God himself assures us that this sacrament has a special power of restoring physical health, if He sees fit to grant this.

The restoration of health, however, is not normally a MIRACULOUS one. It depends partly on the strength, courage and peace given to the soul, and partly on the increased efficacy God can give to the natural agencies which are working for the recovery of the sick person. Even when complete recovery does not take place, a partial one may be granted by God, to enable the person to make a better preparation for death.

However, here as in everything else, God acts most wisely. He does not grant this secondary effect of the sacrament, if it would be in any way against its primary effect which is the supernatural welfare of the soul. Nor can He grant it always, obviously; for if He did, no one able to receive Extreme Unction would ever die.

So the restoring of physical health is necessarily conditional. It depends, first of all, as we have just said, on whether God wills it. Secondly, it depends on whether the sacrament is administered in good time, not left till only a miracle can save the sick person from death. Lastly, it depends on whether the recipient really wills to be cured, and has faith in this particular power of the sacrament. Sacraments do not act against the intention of the one who receives them; nor are they fruitfully received by unbelievers.

5. A Warning.

From what has been said, you can see that Catholics need to be warned against an unreasonable delay in calling a priest to administer Extreme Unction. Even good Catholics fail in this matter. They think that the coming of the priest will frighten the patient. This is foolish, uncharitable and unchristian. Why?

In the first place, Extreme Unction is a sacrament for the SICK, not just for the DYING. It should be given whenever there is a serious DANGER of death, even though it may be much more probable that the sick person will recover. The true Catholic attitude therefore, is: "How soon may I receive this precious sacrament?" not "How long may I safely delay in receiving it?" The graces it gives are extremely valuable; and it keeps giving them as long as the same danger remain.

Secondly, if it is to restore physical health, as it so often does, it must be given in good time. It is foolish to wait till the sick person has become so ill that only a miracle can save him. To delay as long as this is to place an obstacle to the sacrament's power of restoring health in a regular way. The sacrament is not of itself ordained to miraculous effects.

Lastly, the amount of grace it gives depends on the good dispositions in the one who receives it. Hence, it should be given while he has still full use of his faculties, especially his intellect and will, so that he can prepare well for it, and receive it with proper attention and devotion. It is very uncharitable to delay it till he is no longer capable of performing a human act.

6. The Subject.²

To whom should this sacrament be given? To ADULTS, who have been BAPTISED, and who are in DANGER OF DEATH from disease or old age.

Baptism is, of course, necessary, since none of the other sacraments can be valid without it.

² Those who can receive this sacrament as prescribed by Paul VI in the Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick (30th November 1972): "*The sacrament may be repeated if the sick person recovers after being anointed and then again falls ill or if during the same illness the person's condition becomes more serious.*"

Then, the person must be an adult, because only an adult can have the remnants of sin, and only an adult can need to be strengthened against the attacks of the devil. Children who have not come to the use of reason in moral matters cannot receive Extreme Unction. Nor can a person who has been insane since birth. What about an adult who is dying and who has just received baptism? He can and ought to be given Extreme Unction because he needs its help to fight against the devil.

Finally, the person must be in danger of death. This danger must come from some INTRINSIC cause, not from an EXTRINSIC one. Thus, a healthy man who is about to be hanged is in imminent danger of death, if ever anyone was, but this danger comes from OUTSIDE, not from INSIDE himself. Hence, he cannot receive Extreme Unction just before he goes to the gallows. A person about to undergo a serious operation, however, can and should receive this sacrament, since the danger here arises from within. So can one who has been seriously injured in an accident, or wounded in a battle. Even if death is not likely to occur for several months, Extreme Unction can be given to a person afflicted with a disease which normally causes death.

If a person is certainly dead, Extreme Unction cannot be given, but do not confuse APPARENT death with REAL death. A person is APPARENTLY dead when his heart has ceased to beat, and he has ceased to breathe. He is REALLY dead only when his soul is separated from his body, in the sense that it ceases to give it life.

During the interval that occurs between REAL death and APPARENT death, Extreme Unction may be administered. It seems very probable that a space of at least half an hour occurs between apparent death and real death when it is a question of an ordinary malady. When death comes suddenly, as in an accident, the interval may be longer. In cases of drowning, it may run into several hours. In general, it may be said that Extreme Unction may be given conditionally as long as the body has not become rigid, or even as long as it shows no signs of putrefaction.

This sacrament can be REPEATED in a new dangerous sickness, or in a new danger of the same sickness.

7. Value of Extreme Unction.

Of itself, Extreme Unction is not necessary for salvation. However, in the case of a person who is in mortal sin and who has lost consciousness, it becomes a necessary means of saving his soul, since he cannot get his sin forgiven in any other way. Even when not necessary for salvation, it should never be neglected, since it is meant to prepare the soul for immediate entry into heaven. It can do this if the person receiving it, is sufficiently well disposed.

To have the proper dispositions, a dying person should offer his life as a SACRIFICE to God, in union with the offering of Christ in the Mass. Dying in union with Our Lord on the Cross and with dispositions like those that filled His Soul on Calvary – especially those of obedience, resignation, complete subjection and love – a person may so purify his soul by Extreme Unction, that he will have no meritless sufferings to undergo in purgatory, but will go straight to heaven.

Extreme Unction is thus the great sacrament of final victory over death and over Satan. Just as baptism opens to us the gate that leads into the supernatural life of grace in this world, Extreme Unction can open to us the gate that leads to the beatific vision in the next.

Let us therefore prize it as it deserves; and, by a very fervent reception of the other sacraments during life, let us make ourselves worthy to receive it at the end, so that death may be for us, not something forbidding or terrifying, but a joyful home-going, a stepping from the exile of this earth to our Father's home of many mansions in eternity.

SUMMARY

1. What Extreme Unction Is.

- (a). Need for a special Sacrament at death.
- (b). Extreme Unction fulfils this. Anointing – Prayer – health of soul – health of body.

2. Sacrament.

- (a). Scripture.
- (b). Tradition.
- (c). Definition of Trent.

3. Matter and Form.

EXTREME UNCTION

(a). Matter: Remote: olive oil specially blessed.

Proximate: The anointing of the senses.

(b). Form: Long, Short.

4. Effects.

(a). Gives sanctifying grace.

(b). Forgives sins.

(c). Removes remnants of sin: weaknesses in the soul.

weaknesses in the body.

temporal punishment.

(d). Gives strength and courage.

(e). May restore bodily health – If God's will.

If given in time.

If patient wills it and has faith in its

power.

5. Warning.

(a). Not to delay unreasonably.

(b). Why.

6. Subject.

(a). Baptised.

(b). Adult.

(c). Danger of death from some intrinsic cause.

7. Value.

(a). For immediate entry to heaven.

(b). Need to make ourselves worthy to receive it.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: –

1. At death we feel utterly alone, for each of us is a (.....). 2. The priest can help the dying by the graces given in the sacrament of (.....). 3. St. James says: "Is any man (.....) among you? Let him bring in the (.....), and let them (.....) over him, (.....) him in the name of (.....). And the prayer of (.....) shall save the sick man; and (.....) shall raise him up; and, if he be in (.....), they shall be (.....) him." 4. He is here speaking of a sign, since he mentions an (.....)

and (.....). 5. It is a sign of grace because it gives supernatural help to the sick, and forgives (.....). 6. It is an efficacious sign, since this promise is fulfilled (.....). 7. It is instituted by Christ since it is administered in His (.....) and with His (.....). 8. Hence, it is a (.....). 9. Anglicans can see what the Catholic Church in England taught concerning Extreme Unction, before the Reformation, by reading the Sacerdotal Law of (.....), Archbishop of (.....), written more than (.....) years ago. 10. The remote matter of Extreme Unction is (.....). 11. Its proximate matter is (.....). 12. The parts of the body that are anointed are the (.....). 13. The long form is (.....). 14. The short form is (.....). 15. This sacrament (does) (does not) give sanctifying grace. 16. It forgives sin, provided the recipient has (.....) for his sins. 17. It removes from the soul the remnants of sin, which are (.....), (.....) and (.....). 18. It brings supernatural (.....) and (.....) to the sick. 19. It (can) (cannot) make the soul so pure that it can go straight to heaven. 20. It (does) (does not) regularly restore bodily health by a miracle. 21. It is foolish to delay too long in having Extreme Unction administered because it restores bodily health if (.....), if (.....) and if (.....). 22. It is because (.....), because (.....) and because (.....). 23. A child that has not yet come to the use of reason (may) (may not) receive Extreme Unction. 24. A soldier about to attack the enemy (may) (may not) receive Extreme Unction. 25. A man who has swallowed poison and is in danger of death (may) (may not) receive Extreme Unction. 26. Extreme Unction may be given as long as (apparent) (real) death has not occurred. 27. In normal cases, real death does not occur for at least (.....) after apparent death. 28. Extreme Unction can be repeated in (.....) and in (.....). 29. The reception of this sacrament can (sometimes) (never) be necessary for salvation. 30. At death, a person should offer it as a (.....) to God in union with the (.....) of Christ, in the (.....).

(B). Answer as fully as you can each of the following: -

1. Why do we expect Our Lord to have left a sacrament for the dying?
2. What does Scripture tell us about Extreme Unction.
3. Explain the matter and the form of this sacrament.
4. What are its main effects?
5. Why is it wrong to delay unreasonably in summoning a priest?
6. Who may receive Extreme Unction?
7. What is the difference between real death and apparent death?
8. Point out the special value of Extreme Unction.

Chapter 50

ORDERS

1. Two Social Sacraments.

The five sacraments studied so far are for the sanctification of the INDIVIDUAL. But Our Lord also left us two others for the welfare of SOCIETY. They are ORDERS and MATRIMONY. We shall speak first of Orders.

2. Orders Is a Sacrament.

At the Last Supper Our Lord consecrated bread into His Body, and wine into his blood. Then He said to His Apostles: "Do THIS in commemoration of Me." Now, He could not thus command them to do what He had done, unless He gave them the POWER. In other words, He could not command them to offer the sacrifice of the Mass, unless he ORDAINED them PRIESTS. By these words, therefore, Christ established the PRIESTHOOD. Later, He gave them the power to forgive sins, when He said: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven. Whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (John 20:22). He thus made it certain that Mass would be offered, and sins forgiven by His priests, right to the end of the world.

Thus, the New Testament shows that the Apostles, in their turn, ordained other PRIESTS by an external ceremony which consisted in the imposition of hands and the saying of a special prayer which signified precisely the nature of the power conferred. (Acts 6:6; 13:3; 14:22; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 2:6; etc.).

Many of the priests were later made BISHOPS, for the priestly character finds its ultimate complement in the Episcopate. Bishops and priests were clearly distinguished from the ordinary faithful, by reason of their exalted office. To the bishops belonged the office of ruling the Church (Acts 20:28), as well as that of performing the ordinary priestly duties of "dispensing the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 4:1) and of offering the Mass. (Heb. 5:1).

Scripture makes it quite clear that ordination to the priesthood gives grace. Thus St. Paul says to Timothy: "Neglect not the GRACE which was given thee with IMPOSITION OF HANDS OF THE PRIESTHOOD." (1 Tim. 4:14). And again: "I admonish thee that thou stir up the GRACE of God which is in thee by the imposition of my hands." (2 Tim. 1:6). He also warns Timothy not to confer the priesthood on others without great caution, on account of the grave responsibilities attached to this office. "Impose not hands lightly on any man," he says. (1 Tim. 5:22).

It is obvious, then, that the priesthood is a sacrament, instituted by Christ at the Last Supper. But it is one with several PARTS. Just as it finds its ultimate complement in the Episcopate, so, too, it has below it certain orders which lead step by step to it.

There is first of all the Diaconate, which is mentioned in Scripture. (Acts 6:17; 1 Tim. 3:8-13). Later, came the SUB-DEACONATE,¹ and what are called the MINOR ORDERS. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, these are simply parts or sub-divisions of the Diaconate. Hence they are of divine institution, since they are potential parts of the one sacrament of Orders.

The Council of Trent mentions seven different grades in Orders. Let us look briefly at each.

3. Minor and Major Orders.

The priesthood must be conferred, as St. Paul says, with caution. A bishop who calls a candidate to receive ordination must judge that he has the knowledge, health and virtue required. Moreover, a candidate has to learn a great deal of philosophy, theology, Scripture, Canon Law, liturgy and history in order to be able to do his work well as a priest. For these reasons, then, he has to spend many years in a seminary, where he can practise the virtue and acquire the knowledge necessary for his vocation. During this time,

¹ [Editor's note]. Cf. *Ministeria Quaedam*; The Second Vatican Council changed the structure of Minor Orders: "Among the special offices which are to be retained and adapted to present-day needs there are some which are essentially connected with the ministries of the word and of the altar. In the Latin Church they are the office of lector, the office of acolyte and the subdiaconate. THESE OFFICES WILL NOW BE REDUCED TO TWO, THAT OF LECTOR AND THAT OF ACOLYTE, AND THE FUNCTIONS OF THE SUBDIACONATE WILL BE DIVIDED BETWEEN THEM..... It is in keeping with the nature of the case and with contemporary attitudes that such ministries should no longer be called 'minor orders.' Their conferring will no longer be called 'ORDINATION' but 'INSTALLATION'."

he gradually approaches the priesthood. He first receives the MINOR orders. Then, the MAJOR.

(A). Minor Orders.

There are FOUR of these. The lowest, hence the first to be received, is that of DOOR-KEEPER. It reminds us of the early persecutions when intruders had to be kept out of the place where Mass was said. The guarding of the door was entrusted to an official who accordingly received an order to enable him to carry out the duties of his office.

The next is that of READER. His duty is that of reading correctly and distinctly the various announcements that need to be made at religious services especially at the Mass. This office reminds us of the times when comparatively few people could read.

Then comes that of EXORCIST. This, too, recalls the early days when the powers of darkness were particularly violent in their attacks upon the infant Church. It gives the power of casting out devils.

Finally, there is that of ACOLYTE. This empowers a man to tend to the lights in church, and to hand up the wine and water used at Mass.

DOOR-KEEPER, READER, EXORCIST and ACOLYTE - these are the four Minor Orders. Notice how they lead a candidate step by step nearer the altar, hence nearer the priesthood and the Mass.

(B). Major Orders.

The first of these to be received is the SUB-DEACONATE. By it a man becomes a SUB-DEACON, and takes on the obligation of remaining celibate, and of reciting the Divine Office.

Since this two-fold obligation is a serious one, and since it binds for life, the Church solemnly warns candidates to consider carefully the step they are about to take in becoming sub-deacons. She says to them: "Dearly beloved children who are about to be promoted to the holy order of sub-deaconate, you ought to consider attentively again and again to what a burden you, of your own accord, this day aspire. For, as yet you are free; and it is lawful for you at will to

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pass over to worldly pursuits. But, if you receive this order, you will no longer be at liberty to recede from your resolution.”

The chief duty of the sub-deacon is to assist the deacon at a High Mass. His ordination gives him grace to carry out his duties in a worthy manner, and to be a man of prayer by the reciting of the Divine Office every day.

The second Major Order is that of the DEACONATE. Before ordaining deacons, the Church asks most solemnly whether the candidates are considered worthy of the dignity that is about to be bestowed on them. This shows how anxious She is to prevent unworthy persons from entering the sanctuary as ministers at the altar of God.

The main duty of the deacon is that of assisting the priest at High Mass. He may also baptize, and preach.

The next order is that of the PRIESTHOOD. It is one of the most exalted of all the offices that man can aspire to on earth. It makes him in a very true sense “another Christ,” since it enables him to co-operate most intimately with Our Divine Saviour in the greatest of all works – the sanctification and salvation of souls.

The two main powers given by ordination to the priesthood are those of consecrating bread and wine at Mass, and of forgiving sins in the confessional. To ensure the VALIDITY of these two mighty powers, the sacrament imprints a CHARACTER on the soul of the one ordained – a spiritual mark or seal which endures right through life and even in eternity.

What about the Episcopate? Is it an order or a sacrament DISTINCT from the priesthood? Some Catholic writers say yes. Great writers, however, such as St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Albert the Great and St. Bonaventure say no. Father Garrigou-Lagrange, one of the greatest of twentieth century theologians follows the latter view. He supports it by the following three arguments: –

- (a). The Council of Trent, when mentioning Orders, does not include the Episcopate. It mentions only seven – the four Minor Orders and the three Major Orders which are those of the Sub-deaconate, the Deaconate and the Priesthood. If

the Episcopate were a distinct order from that of the Priesthood, there would be eight orders, not seven.

- (b). The Episcopate, as St. Thomas insists, does not give a special power over the Eucharist. But it would have to do this if it were a special order, because orders are distinguished in regard to this power.
- (c). The power of consecrating the Eucharist is far superior to the power of ordaining priests or consecrating chalices and other things connected with sacred ceremonies. And the power over the NATURAL BODY of Christ conferred by the priesthood is far more excellent than the power over the MYSTICAL BODY given by the Episcopate.

True, episcopal consecration gives a bishop power to ordain priests. But no new character is required for this; hence, no new sacrament either, but only an EXTENSION of the character given by the priesthood, like that given it by Christ when He gave His Apostles power to forgive sins, after He had ordained them priests at the Last Supper. This enabled the Episcopate to give grace in somewhat the same way as sacramental satisfaction gives grace after absolution has been received. From this it follows that the Episcopate is not strictly speaking an order or a sacrament distinct from the priesthood. It is simply its extension and complement.

In addition to the power which he has as a priest over the NATURAL Body of Christ in the Eucharist, a bishop has power over Christ's MYSTICAL Body inasmuch as he can ordain other priests. But it is especially by the power of JURISDICTION that the Episcopate is superior to the priesthood. For it is the principal prerogative of a bishop to RULE the faithful; and he has this power by DIVINE RIGHT.

It is also of DIVINE RIGHT that the Church be ruled by MANY bishops. This is why the Pope appoints as many bishops as he can throughout the world, each a true ruler in his own diocese. This, too, is why the Pope desires in every country a NATIVE CLERGY, so that each may have its own priests and bishops.

Finally, it is of DIVINE RIGHT that the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, be over all the other bishops, not just by a primacy of honour like that enjoyed by the oldest priest sitting at the head of the table at a

clerical dinner, but by a primacy of rule or JURISDICTION. He has to feed the sheep as well as the lambs.

A priest, then, represents Christ inasmuch as He is our REDEEMER. A bishop represents Him also inasmuch as He is our KING, hence as RULER of the Church of God.

4. Matter and Form.

(a). Deaconate.

The MATTER here is the IMPOSITION OF HANDS made by the bishop. The FORM is seen in the words: "Send down on him, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the Holy Ghost, so that by the seven-fold gift of Thy grace, he may be strengthened to carry out faithfully the work of Thy ministry."

(b). Priesthood.

Here the MATTER is the first IMPOSITION OF HANDS made by the bishop in silence, but not its continuation in the outstretching of the right hand. The FORM is given in the words: "Bestow, we beseech Thee, Father Almighty, on these Thy servants, the dignity of the priesthood. Renew in their hearts the Spirit of holiness, that they may receive from Thee, O God, and hold the office of second rank, and command by the example of their own lives a strict standard of morals."

(c). Episcopate.

Again, the MATTER is the IMPOSITION OF HANDS made by the consecrating bishop. The FORM is in the words: "Complete in Thy priest the fullness of Thy ministry; and, having clothed him with all splendour, sanctify him by the dew of heavenly anointing."

5. The Dignity of the Priesthood.

A priest is above all else a MEDIATOR between God and men. He offers the homage of all the faithful to God; and, in return, brings down to them from God His choicest graces and blessings.

From this it follows that a priesthood is excellent to the extent to which the priest is united to GOD, to the VICTIM offered, and to the PEOPLE whom he represents.

Now, judged on these points, the priesthood of Christ is obviously the most perfect possible. In the first place, He is a Priest by reason of the HYPOSTATIC UNION; and what union with God could be greater than this? Secondly, He could not be more united to the VICTIM of His sacrifice, since He IS this Victim. Moreover, it is a Victim whose acts and sufferings are of INFINITE worth, since they are those of the Son of God. Lastly, He is most intimately united to the PEOPLE whom He represents, since He is the Head of the Mystical Body, and on Calvary He offers His Sacrifice for ALL. His priesthood, then is raised immeasurably above that, say, of Aaron or that of Melchisedech. It is the most noble, the most exalted, the most excellent possible to God.

From this we can get a glimpse of the dignity of the Catholic priesthood, since it is an immediate and very full SHARING in the priesthood of Christ.

Its supreme dignity is seen, secondly, in the words uttered by the priest when he CONSECRATES the bread and the wine at MASS. Over the bread, he says: "This is MY Body," and over the wine: "This is MY Blood." And these are changed, not into HIS body and blood, but into the Body and the Blood of CHRIST, in whose name and Person he acts.

The Priest celebrating Mass is so united to Christ, INSTRUMENTALLY, that the same effect of consecration is produced by BOTH, just as writer and pen produce the same effect in the poem or essay that is written. The effect comes WHOLLY from each. In the Mass, it comes WHOLLY from Christ, as PRINCIPAL Offerer, and at the same time WHOLLY from the priest who is His INSTRUMENT. The effect of the consecration i.e. the transubstantiation is produced by GOD as Principal Agent; by the HUMANITY OF CHRIST as an instrument JOINED to the Divinity; and by the celebrant at the altar, as a SEPARATED instrument, but one which, unlike the pen in the hands of the writer, is an intellectual agent, conscious and voluntary.

The great dignity of the priesthood is manifested, thirdly, in the CONFSSIONAL. There, secrets of the heart, unknown even to the

angels, are made known to the priest. And, in giving absolution, he dares to say to the penitent: "EGO te absolvo a peccatis tuis," "I absolve thee from thy sins," because he speaks again in the name and in the very Person of Christ. "Who can forgive sins but God?" the Scribes murmured of old when Our Saviour forgave the sins of the palsied man. And the answer is, as it was then: only God can forgive sins as PRINCIPAL Cause; but a Catholic priest who is in a very real sense "Another Christ" by reason of the character given him in ordination, can be His unworthy INSTRUMENT in annihilating sin from the souls of men.

Fourthly, the dignity of the priesthood is brought home to us when we think that a bishop, or even the Pope himself, has no greater power over the NATURAL BODY of Christ in the EUCHARIST than has the simple priest. The transubstantiation they effect is not more complete, not more perfect, than that effected by him. Their Mass is not intrinsically of greater value in the sight of God. Like theirs, his Mass gives infinite homage to God.

Lastly, the greatness of the dignity of the priesthood is seen in the SACRAMENTAL GRACES conferred by ordination.

SACRAMENTAL grace is a special MODE of SANCTIFYING GRACE. It adds a particular power or vigour, hence a special help, like that, for example, which Our Lady had to act as MOTHER of Christ, in the graces of love, tenderness, sweetness, loyalty, and the like given her by God. Each sacrament thus gives its own sacramental graces, to meet some special need in life.

Thus baptism gives us grace to help us to practise the virtues proper to Christ as a Child - humility, docility, obedience, piety and so on. Confirmation gives a grace which enables us to make a firm, prudent confession of the faith of Christ, and to imitate the virtues He displayed in His public life, when He had to fight against His enemies. The special grace given by the Eucharist is one which increases the intensity of our charity, which is a supernatural friendship with God. That given by penance has the special power of helping us to avoid sin; while that given by matrimony enables the husband and wife to live together in a truly Christian manner, and to give their children a truly Christian education.

Now, while the CHARACTER in ordination ensures the VALIDITY of the two main acts of the priest - that of consecrating bread and

wine at Mass and that of absolving from sin in the confessional – the SACRAMENTAL grace given enables him to carry out these duties and all his other duties as well, in a manner worthy of a representative of Christ, considered as our Divine REDEEMER.

Thus it gives the priest a special habit of LOVE, which makes him love to work for the salvation of souls; a special habit of the APOSTOLATE, which urges him unceasingly to display zeal for them; and a special habit of SACRIFICE, by which he is ever willing to sacrifice himself for the supernatural benefit of others, as Our Lord did on the Cross. In a word, it enables the priest to live and act and suffer as “Another Christ;” and thus be for all with whom he comes in contact “the good Shepherd,” “the Light of the world,” “the salt of the earth,” “the way, truth and life” that lead to heaven.

6. Conditions For Receiving the Priesthood.

Some of these are required in order that an ordination may be VALID. If one or more of them is missing, there is no ordination at all. The candidate is not a priest. Others are required in order that the ordination may be LICIT – that is to say, LAWFULLY received. If any one of these is missing, the candidate commits a serious sin by receiving ordination, but the ordination itself is quite valid.

Here, now, are the conditions a candidate must fulfil in order that his ordination to the priesthood may be VALID: –

- (a). He must be BAPTISED.
- (b). He must be a MALE.
- (c). He must have the INTENTION of receiving the priesthood.

How simple they are! and how clear! They leave no room whatever for the least doubt concerning the validity of an ordination as far as conditions in the recipient are concerned.

The conditions demanded for the LICIT reception of the sacrament are more numerous. Here, for example, are some of them: –

- (a). A state of GRACE.
- (b). CONFIRMATION.

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- (c). AGE – at least twenty-five.²
- (d). Sufficient KNOWLEDGE.
- (e). Sufficient VIRTUE.
- (f). ORDERS inferior to the priesthood.

There are many others as well, but most of them concern exceptional cases; so there is no need to go into them here.

7. Vocation to the Priesthood.

Doubt can torment mind. It can ruin health and happiness. It can cripple one's best efforts. It can turn earth into a sort of hell. Certitude, on the contrary, gives a wonderful peace of mind. It promotes health and happiness. It enables us to throw ourselves completely into our work. It makes earth a sort of foretaste of heaven.

This is why God gives us absolute certitude in matters religious. Think of His INFALLIBLY taught truths, or of the EFFICACY of the SACRAMENTS and of the MASS. If the validity of the consecration depended on a certain degree of sanctity in a priest, how he would worry about it! The saintlier he was, the more he would worry. Similarly, if the validity of the sacraments depended on his personal holiness, he would be a prey to doubt, and even to despair. But God has mercifully removed all these things from the realms of human weakness. They depend for the efficacy on His omnipotence, and the fact that every creature must obey Him since it is wholly dependent on him. The bread and the wine at Mass can no more resist the infinite power that lies behind the words at consecration uttered by the priest than the dead body of Lazarus could resist Christ's command to return to life. The effect depends ultimately, not on man, but on God. From this comes the soul-satisfying certitude we enjoy concerning the efficacy of the Mass and the sacraments. It is the same, too, for the infallible teaching of the Church.

Now just as it is ultimately GOD who changes the bread and the wine at Mass, and who forgives sin in the sacrament of penance, so, too, it is ultimately GOD who gives a man a VOCATION to the priesthood. Scripture makes this quite clear. St. Paul, for example, speaking of the priesthood, says: "Nor doth anyone take the honour

² [Editor's note]. Cf. Canon 1031.

to himself but he that is CALLED BY GOD, as Aaron was." (Heb. 5:4). Or, recall Our Lord's words to His Apostles: "YOU HAVE NOT CHOSEN ME, BUT I HAVE CHOSEN YOU; and have appointed you that you should go and should bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." (John. 15:16).

How consoling this is! Once a priest realises that it is GOD who has chosen him and given him a certain office, he knows for certain that God will always be with him in his work, and will always give him the means to carry it out successfully. His task is never a hopeless or an impossible one. God will see that it bears fruit in the way He wills. And, as Our Lord assures the priest, this fruit "will remain" to be his crown and glory in eternity.

A vocation, then, is from GOD. But vocation means "a call," "an invitation." To WHAT, then, does God call or invite a man when He gives him a vocation? He invites him to RECEIVE ORDINATION as a priest since it is a question of a vocation to the priesthood. That is obvious. But, HOW does God make this invitation known to the candidate? Before answering this question, let us ask and answer a few others. How does God baptise an infant? By using as His instrument another HUMAN BEING - a priest, a nurse, a doctor, in fact, anyone. How does He forgive a sinner in the confessional? Again, by using as His instrument another HUMAN BEING - a priest. It is the same for all the other sacraments. It is the same, too, for the consecration at Mass. God acts in all these cases through the MEDIUM of another. Now it is the same for a vocation. He makes this invitation known to the candidate through the BISHOP who offers to ordain him.

True, God will have given to the candidate a liking for the priesthood long before the bishop calls him to be ordained. This desire to be a priest can exist even in young children, years before they are old enough to enter a seminary. It is sometimes called a vocation. And there is no harm in using the term in this wide sense, provided we realise that a vocation in the proper technical sense is not something interior or hidden as is a desire to be a priest, but something perfectly EXTERNAL and OBJECTIVE - a clear invitation made in WORDS to the candidate himself, by the bishop who is ready to ordain him. This, and this alone, gives him a right to be ordained. By it, and it alone does God make known FINALLY and INDUBITABLY His call.

Again, how consoling this is! How horrible it would be for a priest if he could say, years after his ordination: "Perhaps I did not have a vocation after all." He could indeed say this, if his vocation consisted formally in INTERIOR likings, desires or inclinations that he had before ordination. But God kindly makes all such doubts impossible, by manifesting His Call EXTERNALLY, in the purely OBJECTIVE invitation made on His behalf by the bishop. If someone says to you: "Will you come to dinner with me tonight?" you are absolutely certain that he is inviting you. The external senses are infallible. Similarly, when a bishop gives a candidate a verbal invitation to accept the priesthood, he makes further doubt impossible regarding the genuineness of this call from God.

8. Conditions a Young Man Should Have Before Entering a Seminary.

Certain qualifications are required in a young man before he can prudently enter a seminary. There are four of them.

(a). A Right Intention.

He must seek ordination with a right intention – to carry on the work of Christ on earth. Unworthy motives must be excluded – ambition, for example, or a life of ease and comfort, or social status, or submission to the undue influence of parents. Parents sin gravely who try to force their son to be a priest against his will. They do a grave injury both to him and to the Church.

(b). Physical Fitness.

A priest needs to be physically healthy. His life is a strenuous one. He has to give himself at all hours to the service of others; no forty-hour week for him! He must be constantly about his Father's business. It is obvious, then, that he needs to be healthy to do the work expected of him.

(c). Intellectual Fitness.

Does this mean that a youth must be particularly clever? No. Cleverness is indeed a gift; and one cannot turn it to better purpose than to devote it to God in the priesthood. But AVERAGE ability is enough. A priest must be able to explain the truths of faith to others, to answer objections, to solve cases of conscience in the

confessional, and to guide souls to perfection. But he gets years of training to enable him to do these things; and he can always keep on improving his knowledge after he is ordained. In a particular case, like that of St. John Vianney, a bishop may be satisfied with less than average ability, on account of the exceptional sanctity of a candidate. But such cases do not alter the general rule.

The best type of mind is one which combines cleverness with common sense, a sound practical judgment, tact and prudence. It implies a certain reverence for reality, an ability to see into the depths of things, and to distinguish what is fundamental from what is not, a true humility coupled with an absolute sincerity – the sort of mind developed by true philosophy, not the superficial type of mind fostered by a too restricted study of the physical sciences, and by countless other worldly influences that mar our education so dreadfully today.

(d). Moral Fitness.

A genuine sanctity founded on deeply rooted virtues is most necessary in a priest. St. Thomas says: “By sacred orders a man is chosen for the highest offices in which Christ Himself is served in the sacrament of the altar. For this state, therefore, GREATER interior holiness is demanded than even the STATE OF RELIGION requires.” In other words, a priest as priest should have greater sanctity than a religious, such as a nun who has taken the three vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience.

Before entering a seminary, a student need not already be a saint. But he should have the well-founded hope that, with the special helps given him there, he will be able to gain the moral fitness required for ordination. In the seminary, he will be expected to practise ALL the virtues, and to root them ever more and more deeply in his soul. However, there are some that belong in a particular way to the priesthood – TEMPERANCE, for example, with its kindred virtues of PURITY, HUMILITY and OBEDIENCE. But above all comes CHARITY – a great love for CHRIST, the Priest-Redeemer, in whose priesthood the candidate hopes some day to share; and a great love for His MYSTICAL BODY, with which He identifies Himself on earth. A manly, intense devotion to Our Lord, and a resolute will to be an apostle of souls for His sake, ensure a right intention in seeking orders. Hence they give a meaning and purpose to a student's life by lifting it to a plane far beyond that of

any merely natural career or profession, however noble and exalted it may be.

9. The Religious Life.

A man becomes a priest to sanctify OTHERS.

A person becomes a religious for his or her OWN sanctification. A RELIGIOUS VOCATION is a call or invitation given by God, just as a vocation to the priesthood is. But it is given, not through a bishop, but through the SUPERIOR GENERAL of the religious order or congregation concerned. Finally, it is a call, not to be ordained, but to take the three VOWS. These remove the chief obstacles to perfection: a sinful attachment to riches, pleasure, and one's own will. POVERTY removes the first; CHASTITY, the second; and OBEDIENCE, the third. They thus enable a religious to give himself or herself wholly to God.

At times candidates for the priesthood wonder whether they should become religious priests or secular priests. They should seek advice from prudent, competent persons. But above all, they should pray humbly, fervently and confidently for light from God.

10. Home-life And Vocations.

In his magnificent Encyclical on the Priesthood, Pope Pius XI speaks of the great influence of home life on vocations. He writes:

"The first and most natural place where the flowers of the sanctuary should almost spontaneously grow and blossom remains always the truly and deeply Christian family. Most of the saintliest bishops and priests owe the beginning of their vocation and their holiness to the example and teaching of a father strong in faith and manly virtues, of a pure and devoted mother, and of a family in which the love of God and neighbour, joined with simplicity of life, has reigned supreme.

"In an ideal home, the parents, like Tobias and Sara, beg of God a numerous posterity; and they receive it as a gift from heaven and a precious trust. They strive to instil into their children from their early years a holy fear of God, and true Christian piety. They foster a tender devotion to Jesus, the

Blessed Sacrament, and the Immaculate Virgin. They teach respect and veneration for holy places and persons.

"In such a home, the children see in their parents a model of an upright, industrious and pious life. They see their parents loving each other in Our Lord, see them approach the holy sacraments frequently, and not only obey the laws of the Church concerning abstinence and fasting, but also observe the spirit of voluntary Christian mortification. They see them pray at home, gathering around them all the family, that common prayer may rise more acceptably to heaven. They find them compassionate towards the sufferings of others, and see them divide with the poor the much or the little they possess."

His Holiness goes on to say that it is hardly possible that a vocation will not be given to one or more of the children in such a home. Then, he continues: -

"Blessed are those Christian parents who are able to accept without fear the vocations of their sons, and see in them a signal honour for their family, and a mark of special love and providence on the part of Our Lord. Still more blessed if, as was oftener the case in ages of greater faith, they make such divine visitations the object of their earnest prayer."

Home-life is obviously of tremendous importance in preparing children for vocations both to the priesthood and to the religious life. Parents, therefore, should take the greatest care to see that it is thoroughly and deeply Christian, so that it may supply to Our Lord priests and religious who are willing and worthy to carry on His work on earth.

Youths interested in the priesthood should make a point of reading the Encyclical mentioned above. It gives a far fuller appreciation of the greatness and the dignity of this sublime office than it has been possible to give in the few pages of a short chapter such as this. And it has behind it the supreme authority of the Vicar of Christ.

SUMMARY

1. Two Social Sacraments.

(a). Orders.

- (b). Matrimony.

2. Orders is a Sacrament.

- (a). Institution of the Priesthood at the Last Supper.
- (b). Practice of the Apostles concerning ordination.
- (c). Teaching of the Council of Trent.

3. Minor and Major Orders.

- (a). Minor: Door-keeper; Reader; Exorcist; Acolyte.
- (b). Major: Sub-deaconate, Deaconate; Priesthood; Episcopate.

4. Matter and Form.

- (a). Matter: Imposition of hands for the Major Orders.
- (b). Form: Certain words found in the Preface.

5. Dignity of the Priesthood.

- (a). Christ's Priesthood: the most excellent possible – Union with God, Victim, people.
- (b). Dignity of Catholic Priesthood:
 - i. Sharing in Christ's.
 - ii. Consecration at Mass.
 - iii. Absolution.
 - iv. Power over the Eucharist.
 - v. Sacramental Graces.

6. Conditions for Receiving the Priesthood.

- (a). Validity: Baptised. A Male. Intention.
- (b). Licity: Grace; confirmation; age; knowledge; virtue; reception of inferior orders, etc.

7. Vocation to the Priesthood.

- (a). Invitation to receive ordination – made by God – through a bishop.
- (b). Certitude regarding it.

8. Conditions for Entering a Seminary.

- (a). Right Intention.

- (c). Physical Fitness.
- (b). Intellectual Fitness.
- (d). Moral Fitness.

9. The Religious Life.

- (a). Vows of poverty, Chastity and Obedience.
- (b). Remove obstacles to perfection.

10. Home-Life and Vocations.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. The two social sacraments are those of (.....) and (.....). 2. Christ instituted the priesthood at the (.....). 3. The priestly character finds its complement in the (.....). 4. The Apostles not only ordained priests but also consecrated many of them (.....). 5. Scripture speak of (.....) as well as of priests and bishops. 6. The four minor orders are (.....), (.....), (.....), (.....). 7. The three major orders are (.....), (.....), (.....). 8. A sub-deacon has to remain a (.....) for life and say the (.....) daily. 9. A priest represents Christ inasmuch as He is our (.....); a bishop, inasmuch as He is (.....). 10. It is a (priest's) (bishop's) duty to rule a diocese. 11. The matter in the major orders is (.....). 12. A priest is a (.....) between God and men. 13. Christ's priesthood is the most excellent possible, on account of His union with (.....), with (.....) and with (.....). 14. The Catholic priesthood is a sharing in that of (.....). 15. Its dignity is also seen in the (.....) at Mass, in the (.....) in the Confessional, and in the (.....) graces given by ordination. 16. The three conditions required for validity in an ordination to the priesthood are (.....), (.....), (.....). 17. Five conditions required for licity are (.....), (.....), (.....), (.....), (.....). 18. A priestly vocation is an invitation to receive (.....). It comes

ORDERS

from (.....) through a (.....). 19. Apart from a bishop's call to receive ordination, (any) (no) seminary student has a right to be ordained. 20. Christ says to His priests: "You have not chosen Me, but I (.....)." 21. St. Paul says: "Nor doth anyone take the honour to himself, but he that is (.....) as Aaron was." 22. To go to a seminary, a student should have these four qualifications: (.....) (.....) (.....) (.....). 23. A religious vocation is an invitation to take the three (.....). It is given by (.....) through a (.....). 24. The vows remove the chief obstacles to (.....). 25. Vocations are best fostered by a truly Christian (.....).

(B). Answer each of the following as fully as you can: -

1. Why is orders a social sacrament?
2. Explain: Minor Orders; Major Orders.
3. In what ways is the Episcopate superior to the priesthood?
4. Explain fully the dignity of the priesthood.
5. Give the conditions required for a valid ordination; and a licit one.
6. What is meant by a vocation to the priesthood?
7. What qualifications should one have on entering a seminary?
8. What influence has home-life on vocations?

Chapter 51

MATRIMONY

1. What It Is.

Like Orders, MATRIMONY is a SOCIAL sacrament. It is for the benefit of the race. The word comes from the Latin "Matris Munium," "the office of Mother." Now, a mother's office is to bear and educate children and to foster a good home life without which the proper education of children is impossible.

Sex has two main functions in human life. In the first place, it is an expression of FRIENDSHIP, which is a mutual, unselfish love existing between two persons. This noble love is the force behind all our self-surrender, dedication, devotion and sacrifice. Even in the natural order it is a very beautiful thing. But a supernatural friendship in which husband and wife love each other in God and for God has about it something of the moral beauty of the love that exists between Christ and His Church.

The second purpose of sex is equally noble. It gives human beings a share in the creation of a soul purchased by the Blood of God's Incarnate Son, and destined for everlasting fellowship with Him in heaven.

Now, marriage was instituted by God from the beginning to bring right order into the use of sex, and to keep always before us its noble purposes and its special dignity.

For, what is marriage? It is a CONTRACT - an AGREEMENT freely entered concerning the giving and the accepting of a RIGHT. It is made by one man and one woman. And what right does each give and each accept? The right to perform acts necessary for the GENERATION and the EDUCATION of CHILDREN, and for the COMMON LIFE of the home. As a contract, of course, it binds in justice.

Never forget, however, that marriage is a very special contract. Why?

First, it is concerned with PERSONS, not with mere THINGS, as is for example a contract of buying or selling.

Secondly, even as a NATURAL contract, it contains something DIVINE. It was instituted by GOD. And the BOND in it is caused, not just by the consent of the parties as in an ordinary contract, but by GOD HIMSELF, so that it establishes between husband and wife a REAL relation of union which depends on Him alone. This is why it is INDISSOLUBLE by any merely HUMAN authority, even in the natural order.

Thirdly, marriage between BAPTISED persons is always a SACRAMENT. Here the real bond of the natural contract is raised by Our Lord to be the THING and SIGN of a sacrament. Hence, it is sacred in a very special way. It binds husband and wife to each other in a real relation of union comparable to that which unites Christ and His Church.

St. Paul makes this clear when he writes: "Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the LORD. Because the husband is head of the wife AS CHRIST IS HEAD OF THE CHURCH." Again "Husbands, love your wives AS CHRIST ALSO LOVED THE CHURCH, and delivered Himself up for it." (Ephes. 5:22-25).

Marriage, then, is a unique contract - especially Christian marriage, since it establishes between husband and wife a life-long, grace-giving union not unlike that which exists between Our Divine Saviour and the Church. From this you can see how perverted modern writers are who speak slightly of marriage. They may pose before worldlings as champions of liberty, indeed; but in God's eyes they are disgusting vandals, desecrators of a most sacred thing, enemies of the human race. They make sex a means of death, whereas in God's all-wise providence it is means of eternal life.

2. Its Causes.

The EFFICIENT cause of matrimony is the inner CONSENT freely given by each party, and its external EXPRESSION in words or some equivalent sign.

The FORMAL cause is the BOND or life-long union set up between husband and wife.

The MATERIAL cause is seen in the two PERSONS concerned.

The FINAL cause is the GENERATION and the EDUCATION of children and the benefits of HOME LIFE.

The PRIMARY END of marriage is thus the GENERATION and the EDUCATION of CHILDREN, who are to be raised by grace to the supernatural order, and made heirs, with Christ, to heaven. By DIVINE ORDINATION, then, marriage is for the sake of the CHILDREN: their existence, their fellowship with Our Saviour as members of His Mystical Body in this world, and their share in the beatific vision in eternity.

The SECONDARY end of marriage is the HOME LIFE. The family is a SOCIETY. Hence, it must have a head. Its head is the husband. The wife must be subject to him. Her subjection, however, does not take from her the liberty that belongs to her as a person. Nor does it oblige her to obey requests not in harmony with the natural or the supernatural law, or with her dignity as a human being made in the image of God. She must obey her husband, indeed, but as a COMPANION, not as a servant or a slave. If the husband is the divinely-appointed head of the family, the wife is its heart. He occupies the chief place in ruling; she, the chief place in love.

3. Christ Made Marriage a Sacrament.

In the text mentioned above, St. Paul assures us that the union in a Christian marriage is like that which exists between Christ and the Church. Now this is obviously an INDISSOLUBLE, GRACE-GIVING union, established by CHRIST Himself. But only a SACRAMENT could bring about such a union between husband and wife. Hence, we can infer from Scripture that Christian marriage is a sacrament.

TRADITION, too, has always held it so. From the beginning, Christians have regarded marriage as something specially sacred, productive of grace, and subject, like the other sacraments, to the authority of the Church.

When, therefore, the Protestant Reformers denied this doctrine, the Church infallibly declared that marriage is a sacrament. As the divinely-appointed guardian of Christ's revealed truths, she could not do otherwise.

The MATTER and FORM of this sacrament is the CONSENT, inasmuch as it implies the giving and accepting of a right. The SIGN

ONLY is also this CONSENT. The THING and SIGN is the BOND, considered as sacred, and as giving a right to actual graces all through life. It is not a CHARACTER, as it is in Baptism, Confirmation and Orders; but it is something like it. It is an IMAGE imprinted on the soul. It likens the husband's soul to Christ in His dealings with the Church; and the wife's soul to the Church in her dealings with Christ. It thus urges the husband all through life to act towards his wife as Christ acts towards the Church; and the wife to act towards the husband as the Church acts towards her Divine Head. Hence, it guarantees for each a happy union of light and peace and love, which can triumph over all disruptive forces, and endure till death. The THING ONLY is the SANCTIFYING GRACE given at the moment of marriage, and the life-long title to ACTUAL GRACES that will enable husband and wife to model their union ever more and more closely on that found between the Redeemer and His Church.

This is why an ever-growing supernatural CHARITY should always reign in a Catholic family, binding husband and wife and children to one another and to God, so that their home life may resemble that of the Holy Family at Nazareth, and be a sort of heaven lived and relished on earth.

Marriage, as we have said, is necessarily a sacrament, provided BOTH parties have been baptised. If ONLY ONE of them has been baptised, there is no sacrament.

Who, now, are its MINISTERS? The HUSBAND and the WIFE. Each administers the sacrament to the other. The PRIEST must normally be present, of course; but he is there to see that all regulations are duly carried out, to offer Mass for the bride and bridegroom, and to bless their life-long union. He is not the minister of the sacrament.

As a sacrament, marriage comes under the authority of the CHURCH. However, the STATE has a right to make regulations concerning the CIVIL effects of Christian marriage, such as wills and the distribution of property. It can also legislate concerning the marriages of UNBAPTISED persons; but it must respect the natural law which is a participation in the Eternal Law of God.

Few ceremonies are more beautiful than a Catholic marriage. From the beginning, the Church has treasured this text from Scripture: "There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee. And the Mother of Jesus was there. And Jesus also was invited." (John 2:1-2). As Our Lady was welcome at Cana, the Church which is also our mother wants to

be welcome at every Catholic marriage. And she wants her Divine Son to be present also. This is why she links this sacrament with the Mass, which she interrupts at a most solemn moment, when Christ is present on the altar, to bless the newly-plighted couple.

Her desire to see marriage solemnised by Holy Mass, and the lovers pledge themselves to each other in the reception of the Eucharist dates back to very ancient times. Thus, St. Evaristus, a Pope of the second century, writes: "It is a tradition coming down to us from the APOSTLES themselves that marriage should be celebrated at the time of the Holy Sacrifice." And Tertullian confesses that he is "unable to find words to express the beauty of a marriage that has been performed by the Church, strengthened by the Holy Sacrifice, sealed by the nuptial blessing, proclaimed by heaven's angels, and ratified by God Himself, the Father of us all." It is not surprising, then, that the Church has never ceased to assert the sacredness of Christian marriage. How could She do otherwise, since it is a sacrament, and a symbol of the indissoluble union that exists between Christ and Herself?

4. Its Properties.

Marriage has two main properties: UNITY and INDISSOLUBILITY.

(A). UNITY.

By the UNITY of marriage we mean that ONE man is allowed only ONE wife at a time; and ONE woman, only ONE husband. It is opposed to POLYGAMY and to POLYANDRY respectively.

POLYANDRY. Here, one WOMAN has more than one HUSBAND at a time. This is absolutely against the NATURAL LAW, because it makes the primary end of marriage impossible. It does this because it leads to sterility in the wife. Moreover, it causes the children to be woefully neglected, since no man is likely to care for a child that may not be his own. Finally, it is necessarily a source of bitter jealousy and strife which make the proper education of children quite impossible. This is why God has never tolerated polyandry; and why history shows that it has been practised only by the most degraded of people. It is completely unnatural.

POLYGAMY. Here, one MAN has more than one WIFE at a time. This is not so unnatural as polyandry, since it does not make the primary end of marriage absolutely impossible. However, it does make it DIFFICULT to attain. Why? Think a little, and you will see.

Polygamy destroys the friendship upon which marriage is founded, because friendship can exist only between equals. Moreover, it abolishes the equity required, because though each wife is expected to give herself EXCLUSIVELY to the husband, he cannot give himself EXCLUSIVELY to her. From this arises necessarily a certain amount of strife and dissension in the home; and this lack of peace and harmony makes the proper education of the children very difficult. For this reason, the NATURAL LAW forbids any merely HUMAN authority to allow polygamy. God may allow it in certain circumstances, since He can counteract its evil effects; but man cannot.

One man, one wife is thus a ruling of nature. And nothing shows it more plainly than the fact that the birth-rate of males and females is everywhere almost the same. This is nature's answer to those who champion polygamy.

(B). INDISSOLUBILITY.

By this we mean that marriage is intended to last till the death of one of the parties. It forbids any merely HUMAN power to allow DIVORCE.

It is quite clear from Scripture that Our Divine Lord insisted not only on the UNITY of marriage, but also on its INDISSOLUBILITY.

When, for example, the Pharisees asked Him if it was lawful, for a man to put away his wife for any cause, and then marry another, He reminded them that God made marriage indissoluble from the beginning. He then gave His own perfectly clear command which settles the matter forever. "What GOD hath joined together," He said, "let NO MAN put asunder." (Mark 10:9). He thus forbids man, acting on merely human authority, ever to legalise divorce.

Speaking to His Apostles, He was just as clear. He told them that anyone who puts away his wife and marries another is guilty of a heinous sin; and that any woman who puts away her husband and marries another is guilty of the same sin. (Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:8; Mat. 19:9). St. Paul gives the same teaching. (1 Cor. 7:10; Ephes. 5:31).

TRADITION is equally explicit from the beginning. In the first three centuries we have the testimony of authorities such as Pastor Hermas, St. Athanasioras, St. Justin, St. Theophilus, St. Clement,

Tertullian and St. Cyprian, all upholding most vigorously the indissolubility of marriage.

Even when Catholicism became the religion of the Empire under Constantine in the fourth century, the Church had still to fight against divorce, because the state laws continued to allow it. Writers such as St. Ambrose, St. Augustine and St. Chrysostom had to remind Catholics that there were divine laws as well as state laws, and that they had to obey God rather than men.

Then came the Dark Ages, when hordes of barbarians swept over Europe. Many of them were Christians, indeed, but they had learnt their Christianity from Arian teachers who were lax in regard to divorce. So the Church had still to fight against this menace.

In the centuries that followed, She continued the struggle, never giving way for a moment even to the demands of Emperors and kings. Thus Pope Nicholas refused divorce to King Lothair in the ninth century; Pope Gregory, to King Robert in the tenth; Pope Urban, to King Philip in the eleventh; Pope Clement, to King Henry in the sixteenth, and Pope Pius to Napoleon in the nineteenth. Fierce battles, all of these, waged by the Popes against the most influential men of their times. They are most striking witnesses to the Church's uncompromising attitude in the matter of divorce.

Since then, Pope after Pope has had to defend the Christian idea of marriage against so-called rationalists and modernists who have tried to degrade man to the level of the beast. Not long ago, Pope Pius XI defended the sacredness of marriage in his great Encyclical, *Casti Connubii*, to preserve for us the truths entrusted him by Christ. Pope John Paul II has done similarly in our own day.⁸

In thus defending marriage, the Church is not intolerant. Nor is she narrow-minded. She is merely enforcing the divine law laid down by Our Saviour. At the same time, she is applying the natural law which binds all men inasmuch as they are rational beings. For the NATURAL LAW forbids divorce as well as polygamy. Here are some reasons that show this.

(i). Divorce is opposed to the Good of the Children.

The proper education of children demands the example and guidance of BOTH parents. The mother's education tempers what

⁸ Editor's note: Eg. *Familiaris Consortio* (1981)

may be hard in that given by the father. The Father's supplies the virility that may be lacking in that given by the mother. Each complements the other by giving what is lacking in it. And, since marriage is for the sake of the children and their complete education, it is a serious evil to have this education one-sided or defective. Only a permanent home-life secured by the indissolubility of marriage can enable children to receive a complete education from their earliest years. And much depends on this early education. Nothing can make up for it in later life.

Moreover, a child of divorced parents cannot have an equal love for them both. Yet, reverence and filial affection are the very foundation of a child's character. Hence, such a child is woefully handicapped in life.

Finally, divorce leads to the avoidance of children, because the presence of a young family makes future unions more difficult. This can be a most serious evil. It can quickly lead to the suicide of a nation. It shows more than anything else that divorce granted on merely human authority can never be for the good of the children, and must therefore be forbidden by the natural law, as well as by the revealed law of God.

(ii). Divorce is opposed to the Good of the Husband and Wife.

When marriage is acknowledged to be indissoluble, husband and wife have a guarantee of the stability required by a generous yielding of their persons, and the intimate fellowship of their hearts. Moreover, indissolubility fosters love and loyalty, self-control, patience, forbearance and a spirit of forgiveness, because people who know that they cannot obtain a divorce will make a special effort to make their marriage a success by practising these admirable virtues. At the same time, it makes married life secure from suspicion and anxiety. It shuts the door against discords arising between families and relatives. It does away with fear that one of the parties may be unfaithful in later life. Finally, it protects the dignity of womanhood, it gives every opportunity for an enduring happy union, and fidelity unto death.

Divorce, on the other hand, tends to destroy complete union of mind and heart, through fear of a future rift. It fosters selfishness, by removing a powerful motive for the practice of the virtues we have just mentioned. It is likely also to destroy that prudent care in the selection of a partner which marriage demands. It may even incite

to crime, when this is the only way in which a divorce can be obtained. It is thus clearly opposed to the welfare of the parties.

(iii). Divorce is opposed to the Good of the State.

The family is the fundamental unit of the state. Just as a human body is as healthy as its members are, so, too, a state is as healthy as its families are. Once the health of family life is undermined, a state must totter to its ruin. History affords numerous examples. When Soviet Russia first relaxed the laws concerning marriage, physical, moral and intellectual degradation followed. She has since applied these laws most vigorously, for she has been forced to admit that to flout them is to head for destruction.

Because divorce, as we have seen, promotes discord in families, ends to restrict the birth-rate, prevents the proper training of future citizens, belittles the practice of many virtues which are absolutely necessary to men, and even incites to crime, it is obviously opposed to the welfare of the family. Hence also to that of the state.

We reject divorce, then, because God rejects it. So does the natural law. So does right reason. This is our answer to those who say that the Church is intolerant and narrow-minded in this all-important matter.

In exceptional cases where, for instance, the wife's health is made intolerable by drunkenness, neglect, or cruelty on the part of the husband, God allows SEPARATION, but not divorce. Human authority cannot allow divorce here, because human authority cannot in practice limit divorce to these rare and exceptional cases. If one exception is allowed, others will quickly follow, as is the case in so many states today. The result is chaos.

It is easy for writers to make a strong plea for divorce by appealing to sentiment. But laws are rulings of REASON, not of sentiment. And they are made for the COMMON GOOD. Marriage has for its object the welfare of the race. This determines its indissolubility, which cannot be altered because of hardships to individuals. The common good demands that they bear these hardships rather than let loose on society the race-destroying evils that follow divorce. Men must obey the natural law and the divine law, or they must perish.

5. Exceptions Made By God.

MATRIMONY

While restoring marriage to its primitive unity and indissolubility, Christ made certain exceptions. Let us consider them.

(A). MARRIAGE BETWEEN TWO BAPTISED PERSONS.

- (i).When VALID and CONSUMMATED, such a marriage is absolutely INDISSOLUBLE.

A marriage is said to be consummated when husband and wife have exercised their marriage rights by proper sexual intercourse. This gives their marriage its full significance as a symbol of the indissoluble union between Christ and the Church. At the same time, it places a proximate cause of the generation of a child, for whose sake the indissolubility of marriage was principally instituted. Once two baptised persons have consummated their marriage, therefore, it is NEVER dissolved. It must last till the death of one of the parties.

- (ii). When VALID, but NOT CONSUMMATED.

In this case marriage CAN be dissolved, either by SOLEMN RELIGIOUS PROFESSION, or by PAPAL DISPENSATION

(B). MARRIAGE BETWEEN TWO UNBAPTISED PERSONS.

- (i).If NEITHER becomes baptised after the marriage, it is INDISSOLUBLE.
- (ii). If ONE of them is baptised after marriage, it CAN be dissolved either by PAPAL DISPENSATION, or by the PAULINE PRIVILEGE.

This privilege gets its name from St. Paul, who first granted it. (1 Cor. 7:12-15). Here is the case. Two unbaptised are validly married. Later, one of them receives baptism. Then, if the other runs away or refuses to live peacefully with the baptised, and insults God, the baptised person can contract a new marriage, and this dissolves the previous one. This is reasonable, because the gaining of heaven through the exercise of Christian faith in this life is superior as an END to the natural end of matrimony. Heaven, after all, is man's LAST END. It is the supreme purpose of his existence.

- (iii).If BOTH parties are baptised after the marriage.

If the marriage is consummated AFTER baptism, it is INDISSOLUBLE. If not consummated either before or after baptism, it CAN be dissolved either by SOLEMN RELIGIOUS PROFESSION or by PAPAL DISPENSATION. If consummated BEFORE, but NOT AFTER baptism, it CAN be dissolved by PAPAL DISPENSATION.

(C). MARRIAGE BETWEEN A BAPTISED PERSON AND AN UNBAPTISED.

Such a marriage cannot be dissolved by the Pauline Privilege. However, if NOT CONSUMMATED, it can be dissolved either by SOLEMN RELIGIOUS PROFESSION, or by PAPAL DISPENSATION. If CONSUMMATED, it can be dissolved by PAPAL DISPENSATION.

It is obvious that the Pope will not grant such a dispensation without a very serious reason. In granting it, he acts, not as principal cause as when he dispenses from Church laws, but as instrumental or ministerial cause, as when he dispenses from an oath or a vow. He does this in virtue of Our Lord's words. "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven." (Matt. 16:19).

6. Impediments.

These are things which impede or hinder a person from entering marriage rightly. Some do this to such an extent that they make the marriage not only ILLICIT, but also INVALID. Unless a dispensation is obtained, there is NO marriage at all. Others leave the marriage VALID, but make it ILLICIT. In other words, they make it a MORTAL SIN, unless the necessary dispensation has been obtained. The former are called DIRIMENT impediments; the latter, PROHIBITIVE impediments.

There are many DIRIMENT impediments. We cannot deal with all of them; but here are some examples: -

- (a). AGE. Males must be at least 16 years of age; females, at least 14.⁹
- (b). A BOND arising from a previous marriage. Cf. The Pauline Privilege.¹⁰

⁹ (Cf. Canon 1083).

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- (c). DIVERSITY OF RELIGION. One of the parties is not baptised.¹¹
- (d). HOLY ORDERS.¹²
- (e). SOLEMN RELIGIOUS PROFESSION.¹³
- (f). CONSANGUINITY or relationship by blood. This invalidates marriage between ALL ascendants and descendants in the DIRECT line. In the COLLATERAL line, it extends to the FOURTH degree inclusively.¹⁴
- (g). AFFINITY or relationship by marriage. This invalidates marriage in ALL degrees of the DIRECT line; and to the SECOND degree inclusively in the COLLATERAL line.
- (h). SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP arising from baptism. Eg. Godfather to goddaughter.
- (i). ABDUCTION. This invalidates marriage between a man and a woman whom he has carried off or detained against her will, as long as she is in his power.¹⁵
- (j). LEGAL ADOPTION, in countries where the civil law makes this an invalidating impediment.

Here are some examples of PROHIBITIVE impediments: -

- (a). SIMPLE VOWS such as a vow of virginity, of perfect chastity, of not marrying, of receiving Holy Orders, or of embracing the religious state.¹⁶
- (b). A MIXED MARRIAGE. This is one between a Catholic and a baptised Non-Catholic - an Anglican, for example.

¹⁰ Canon 1085; "A person who is held to the bond of a prior marriage, even if it has not been consummated, invalidly attempts marriage. Even if the prior marriage is invalid or dissolved for any reason whatsoever, it is not on that account permitted to contract another before the nullity or the dissolution of the prior marriage has been legitimately and certainly established."

¹¹ Canon 1086.

¹² Canon 1087.

¹³ Canon 1088.

¹⁴ Canon 1091;2.

¹⁵ Canon 1089; also Canon 1090.

¹⁶ Canons 1087-1088.

The existence of any impediment should be sufficient reason for abandoning a proposed marriage. If, however, a person with an impediment insists on being married he or she must obtain a DISPENSATION. The Church will grant it, if She can, and if there is a sufficiently grave reason. It is in order to discover impediments that She orders the publication of BANNS. These give people a chance to make known impediments that might not otherwise be known. They also prevent secret unions, and enable the parents to intervene when necessary.

7. Conditions For Marriage.

(A). For LICITY.

- (a). The parties must be in a state of grace.
- (b). They must be free from any impediments.
- (c). They must be sufficiently instructed in their religion.
- (d). They must observe the precepts laid down by the Church for the due celebration of marriage.

(B). For VALIDITY.

- (a). The parties must be free from diriment impediments.
- (b). They must freely consent to the marriage.
- (c). If Catholics, they must normally be married before the Parish Priest, or the Bishop, or a priest delegated by either of these; and two witnesses.

8. Why The Church Forbids Mixed Marriages.

Concerning Mixed Marriages, Pope Pius XI says: "One may find the Church's attitude to Mixed Marriages stated in more than a few of Her documents. These are summarised as follows in Her Code of Canon Law: EVERYWHERE and with the GREATEST STRICTNESS does the Church FORBID marriages between baptised persons one of whom is a Catholic and the other a member of a schismatical or heretical sect. If it should also happen that there is DANGER that the Catholic party will LOSE THE FAITH, or that the children will

be PERVERTED, then, as well as being forbidden by Canon Law, the marriage is banned by the DIVINE law.

"Circumstances are sometimes such," he continues, "that the Church does not refuse to dispense in this strict prohibition. It does so only where the marriage is not also forbidden by the Divine Law, and only where the dangers inherent in ALL mixed marriages are provided against by suitable safeguards. But even when it does dispense, IT IS UNLIKELY that the marriage will not be in some way DETRIMENTAL to the Catholic party."

Grave words, these, coming as they do from the Vicar of Christ.

All Catholic young men and women should ponder them with the attention they deserve.

Here, now, are some facts which may help us to realise the gravity of the Pope's words, and to see why the Church is so opposed to Mixed Marriages.

(a). THERE IS A FUNDAMENTAL DIVISION BETWEEN
HUSBAND AND WIFE.

Marriage should be based on complete understanding and sympathy. Husband and wife should be one heart and one soul in all that is DEEPEST in life. But this is impossible in a Mixed Marriage, because here there is necessarily a most serious disagreement in regard to something which is absolutely FUNDAMENTAL, namely, RELIGION.

The Non-Catholic may be INDIFFERENT towards religion. Then, things which the Catholic considers of the utmost importance, such as the existence of God, the Divinity of Christ, the Mass and the Sacraments, the Non-Catholic will consider to be of no importance whatever. Or, the Non-Catholic may be very KEEN on his or her religion. Then this party is sure to think that the Catholic is a prey to religious errors. To the Non-Catholic, the Eucharist will be blasphemy; confession, a delusion; the Mass, a slur on Calvary; the veneration of Our Lady, idolatry; and so on.

In either case, it is impossible for a Catholic to be DEEPLY and COMPLETELY happy with such a person; for it is impossible to be

ONE with him or her in all that really matters in life. There is a dreadful cleavage here; and it is as fundamental as it is inescapable. And just because it reaches to what is most profound in human nature, it can stir up feelings and emotions of scorn, hatred and bitterness which can quickly wreck the harmony of even the best-intentioned lives. It is like an atomic bomb which needs only to be released to effect its work of desolation and destruction.

(b). THERE IS CONSTANT DANGER OF SEPARATION OR DIVORCE.

To a Catholic, marriage is a sacrament, uniting the parties as Christ is united to the Church. It is something most sacred, and as enduring as life itself. To a Non-Catholic, however, it is usually nothing more than a civil ceremony, or a religious rite that has nothing sacramental about it, dissolvable at the mere wish of one of the parties. When, therefore, dissensions arise, as they inevitably will, the Non-Catholic is likely to seek a civil divorce, so that he or she may be able to marry another person. The Catholic, however, cannot marry again. He or she must battle on through life, alone. How unfair it is! And how heart-rending! Yet it is what happens only too often in practice. Catholics should think of this when they are tempted to enter a Mixed Marriage.

(c). THERE IS GRAVE DANGER OF PERVERSION.

As regards the CHILDREN, Pope Pius XI does not hesitate to say: "Experience shows that Mixed Marriages frequently lead to deplorable defection from religion among the offsprings, or at least to a headlong descent into that indifference which is intimately allied to impiety."

But even ADULTS are not exempt from this danger, especially when the Catholic party is the wife. This is particularly so, when the husband has the habit of sneering at Catholicism. "I see that the Pope has made a fool of himself again." "A bit of bread is the Body of Christ - tell us another." "Rosary beads - bit like a Buddhist's prayer wheel, aren't they?" "What did the priest charge you for your last confession?" Remarks such as these can torment a Catholic. And, when they are kept up for a long time, the Catholic can easily give in through sheer mental strain and worry. The result is loss of faith. Can such a marriage be called a happy one?

(d). IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR CHILDREN TO BE RIGHTLY EDUCATED.

Young children are educated almost solely by EXAMPLE. They imitate their parents. Each child naturally thinks that his father and mother are the best people in the world; and that they can do no wrong. If, then, his father or his mother does not go to church, or if one of them goes to one church and the other to another, a child is forced to think that religion cannot be important, or that one religion is as good as another. The seeds of religious indifference are thus sown. And they will develop at least subconsciously, and do untold harm later on in life.

Again, when it is time to send children to school, the Non-Catholic party may easily object to pay the extra money required for a Catholic education. "Can't the children learn enough about their religion from you, and from the priest on Sundays?" he will say. This, obviously, can be a source of great worry to the Catholic. It can banish true peace and happiness from the home. It can deprive the children of the religious atmosphere which is absolutely necessary for their proper development in the most critical period in their life.

(e). IT OFTEN CAUSES DISSENSION CONCERNING VOCATIONS.

Experience proves that when children of Mixed Marriages want to go to a convent or a seminary to become religious or priests, the Non-Catholic party will object most vehemently. "I don't want any of my children to waste their lives," the Non-Catholic will say. The result is much bitter suffering for the children and for the Catholic parent - often, a frustration which is life-long.

(f). IT OFTEN CAUSES DISSENSION CONCERNING MORAL MATTERS.

It may easily happen that the Non-Catholic will disregard both the divine and the natural law concerning the right use of marriage. The Catholic cannot in conscience agree with this. Hence untold misery arises for the Catholic, to whom no suffering can be worse than that which effects his or her peace of mind before God. This is clearly one of the worst dangers of Mixed Marriages. It can turn home-life into a sort of hell.

These are, of course, only some of the reasons why the Church is so vigorously opposed to Mixed Marriages. You can easily think of as many more. Any one of them should be sufficient to deter a Catholic from entering such a marriage.

They also show us why dispensations are not given for Mixed Marriages except for a just and grave reason, and only when the Non-Catholic party gives a guarantee in writing to remove all occasions of perversion from the Catholic party, and both the parties agree that all the children shall be baptised and brought up as Catholics; and there is a moral certainty that these guarantees will be executed. Moreover, the Catholic party is obliged in conscience to strive for the conversion of the Non-Catholic. Finally, it must be understood that no religious marriage ceremony will take place except in the Catholic Church. These conditions apply also, of course, to the case where a Catholic receives a dispensation to marry a person who is not baptised.

Non-Catholics think that we are intolerant in this matter. But, is a lawyer intolerant when he refuses to take into partnership a shoe-black or a big game hunter? Is a doctor intolerant when he will not take into partnership a sailor or a wrestler? Obviously not. Nor is it intolerant for a Catholic to refuse to marry a Non-Catholic, since marriage is a life-long indissoluble partnership, and a most intimate one, upon which the happiness and the success of the home depends completely. While a Catholic may have excellent and most loyal friends amongst Non-Catholics, he should realise that he cannot marry a Non-Catholic without going against the will of the Church, and without running the grave risk of marrying the success and happiness of his own life and that of his children.

Since the Church forbids Mixed Marriages, a Catholic is not allowed to keep company with a Non-Catholic with a view to matrimony. If he finds that he has been doing this, he should break off the company-keeping immediately. It is never too soon, and hardly ever too late for him to do so. He should part from his Non-Catholic companion both physically and mentally, by refusing to have meetings with her and by refusing to think about her. And he should interest himself in other persons and things so that he may not give way to useless broodings and self-pity. In no case will he ever regret the change.

Catholics should never forget that for them marriage can be completely happy and successful only if they marry one of their own faith. Only then will husband and wife have for each other the REVERENCE due to a person made in God's image, redeemed by the death of His Son, and destined for the intimate sharing of His life by grace in this world and by the vision of heaven in eternity. Only then can they LOVE each other in the way each should be loved, in God and for God. Only then can they GIVE themselves

body and soul each to the other, so as to become one in mind and heart. Only then can they bear with each other's faults and failings in a truly Christian spirit, and so remain loyal to each other unto death.

9. Duties of Parents Towards Their Children.

Children belong primarily to the PARENTS, not to the state. Hence, it is the parents' duty and right to EDUCATE their children in accordance with the demands of the natural and divine law. This education begins in the home. It is carried on by the school. And, since teachers merely take the place of parents, it is for the parents to choose what school their children shall attend.

To educate means to train. Now, it is impossible for anyone to train anything until he first knows the NATURE of the thing, and the END to be achieved by the training he will give it. But man's end is a SUPERNATURAL one - the gaining of heaven. From this it follows that a complete education can be given only by a Catholic school, since the Catholic Church alone has preserved all God's revealed truths and all the means of grace He has given us. This is why Catholics are obliged to send their children to Catholic schools when they can.

Education must be PROGRESSIVE and COMPLETE. Progressive, in the sense that it keeps pace with the development of the child. Complete, inasmuch as all the powers of the child, PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, MORAL, EMOTIONAL and SOCIAL are developed as far as possible; and this not merely in the natural but also in the supernatural order, so that the child may grow up to be an excellent citizen not only of this world but of the next.

Parents should realise that no school, however good, can make up completely for lack of home training. They should realise, too, that normally a big family gives a far better education than a small one. Why? Because to provide for a large family, parents must usually exercise a great deal of virtue. They must be foreseeing, industrious, thrifty, self-sacrificing and, above all devoted to their home. These virtues will then be reflected in their children. These will grow up in an atmosphere of sacrifice. They will learn to wait their turn, and to subordinate their whims to the good of all. They will not be pampered. The rough edges of their character will be gradually worn off by the daily influence of their brothers and sisters. They will educate one another in a way that an only child

can never be educated. Their education will be progressive, and it will be complete.

10. Duties of Children Towards Their Parents.

These duties are chiefly three: LOVE, RESPECT and OBEDIENCE.

The obligation on children to love and reverence their parents is part of the general obligation on all human beings to love and reverence one another. However, it is especially sacred here, because of the intimate bonds that bind children to their parents. This love and reverence must be internal, of course; but it must be shown externally also by good manners, cheerful conversation, a willingness to help about the house, and a ready fulfilling of their parents' wishes.

Obedience is but the counterpart of the parents' duty and right to educate their children, and regulate the home. Refusal to obey is a sin; but, to be mortal, it must result in serious loss, material or spiritual, to parent or child. Moreover, this obligation has limits.

Children are never obliged to do anything sinful. And, in the choice of a state of life, though children do well to consult their parents and to weigh the advice given by them, the final choice remains with themselves. Children who find obedience difficult should think of Nazareth where the Son of God did not think it beneath His dignity to submit to His mother and St. Joseph. Moreover, they should remember that commands given by parents are intended to save them from injury, disease, or sin; and to train their characters. It would be cruel for parents to let their children do just what they liked. Such children would grow up soft, selfish and lazy. They would be disliked by their companions. They would be a failure in life. True character training can be accomplished only at the cost of constant self-denial and self-control. There is no easy road to success in this world or in the next.

Let us end this Chapter with another quotation from Pope Pius XI. He writes: "Marriage has a sacredness that is intimately bound up with religion, and with everything that is holy. It is SACRED in its ORIGIN, since it has God for its Author, and has been from the beginning a foreshadowing of the Incarnation. It is sacred in its PURPOSE, which is the begetting and the education of children for God, and the binding of man and wife to God through Christian love and mutual support. It is sacred in its very NATURE, for wedlock finds its explanation in the farseeing providence of God that made it

the means of transmitting human life, and that constituted the parents the ministers, as it were, of the Divine Omnipotence. Add to this the further element of nobleness that the SACRAMENT confers on Christian marriage, dignifying and elevating it to such a degree that it appeared to St. Paul as a great sacrament, honourable in every way."

These words contain an admirable summary of the dignity and importance of Catholic marriage. They should make all Catholics approach this sacrament with a holy reverence; and spare no pains to make their union all through life resemble as nearly as possible its perfect model – the indissoluble, grace giving union between Christ and the Church.

SUMMARY

1. What Matrimony Is.

(a). Sex: Expression of reverence and friendship.

A sharing in God's creative act.

(b). Regulated by marriage.

(c). A contract: Right given and accepted.

Why special: Concerns persons. Established by God.

A sacrament, if both parties are baptised.

2. Causes.

(a) .Efficient: Consent expressed externally.

(b). Formal: Life-long bond.

(c). Material: Man and woman.

(d). Final: Generation and education of children.

Benefits of the home life.

3. A Sacrament.

(a). Scripture. St. Paul. Union like that of Christ and the Church.

(b). Tradition. Early Fathers.

(c). Definition by Council of Trent.

(d). Matter and Form: the consent.

(e). Sign only: the consent. Thing and Sign: the bond as sacred.

- (f). Thing only: grace given all through life.
- (g). Ministers: the man and the woman.
- (h). When a sacrament.
- (i). Why administered during Mass.

4. Properties.

(A) UNITY.

- (a). Polyandry forbidden by the natural law. Why.
- (b). Polygamy forbidden by the natural law. Why.

(B) INDISSOLUBILITY.

- (a). Christ's teaching forbidding divorce.
- (b). The Church's life-long fight against divorce.
- (c). The Natural Law forbids any merely human power to grant divorce, because: –
 - i. It is opposed to the good of the children.
 - ii. It is opposed to the good of the husband and wife.
 - iii. It is opposed to the good of the state.
- (d). Separation allowed at times.

5. Exceptions Made By God.

- (A). Marriage between two baptised.
- (B). Marriage between two unbaptised.
- (C). Marriage between a baptised and a non-baptised.

6. Impediments.

- (a). DIRIMENT. Examples.
- (b). PROHIBITIVE. Examples.
- (c). Dispensations.
- (d). Banns.

7. Conditions of Marriage.

- (a). For Licity.
- (b). For Validity.

8. Why The Church Forbids Mixed Marriages.

- (a). Fundamental division between husband and wife.
- (b). Danger of separation or divorce.
- (c). Danger of perversion.
- (d). Impossibility of rightly educating the children.
- (e). Dissension concerning vocations.
- (f). Dissension concerning moral matters.

9. Duties of Parents Towards Children.

- (a). Children belong to them, not to the state.
- (b). Duty and right to educate them.
- (c). Why Catholic schools are necessary.
- (d). Need of home training. Value of a large family.

10. Duties of Children Towards Parents.

- (a). Love, respect, obedience.
- (b). Foundations of these.
- (c). Example of Christ at Nazareth.
- (d). Need of self-denial and self-control.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. Like Orders, Matrimony is a (....) sacrament. 2. Sex has two main functions: it is an expression of (.....); and it enables husband and wife to co-operate with God in the creation of (.....). 3. Marriage is a (....) since it involves the giving and accepting of a right. 4. It is a special contract, because it (.....), it (.....), and it (.....). 5. Its efficient cause is (.....); its formal cause is (.....); its material cause is (.....); and its final cause is (.....). 6. Its primary end is (.....); its secondary end is (.....). 7. The matter and form in the sacrament is found in (.....) 8. The ministers are (.....). 9. As a sacrament, marriage comes under the authority of the (Church) (State). 10. The two properties of marriage are its (.....) and (.....). 11. Its unity forbids (.....) and (.....). 12. Its indissolubility forbids (.....). 13. Divorce given on merely human authority is

against the natural law, because it is opposed to the good of (.....), (.....) and (.....). 14. The only exceptions to the indissolubility of marriage are those granted by (.....) and taught by (.....). 15. Marriage between two baptised, when consummated (may still) (may never) be dissolved. 16. If not consummated, such a marriage may be dissolved either by (.....) or by (.....). 17. Two unbaptised marry. Later, one is baptised. This marriage may be dissolved either by (.....) or by (.....). 18. To marry validly, a male must be at least (.....) years old; a female, at least (.....). 19. Diversity of religion is a (diriment) (prohibitive) impediment. 20. Mixed marriage is a (diriment) (prohibitive) impediment. 21. Relationship by blood is called (.....); relationship by marriage is called (.....). 22. Four conditions required that marriage be licit are (.....), (.....), (.....) and (.....). 23. Five reasons why the Church forbids Mixed Marriages are as follows: (.....), (.....), (.....), (.....), (.....). 24. Catholics (are) (are not) allowed to go with Non-Catholics with a view to marriage. 25. Notices of intended marriages are called (.....). 26. Children belong primarily to the (parents) (state). 27. Parents (are) (are not) obliged to educate their children in Catholic schools. 28. A school (can) (cannot) make up completely for lack of home training. 29. Children are obliged to (.....), (.....) and (.....) their parents.

(B) Answer each of these as fully as you can: -

1. Show that marriage is a contract, and why it is a very special one.
2. Show that marriage between two baptised is always a sacrament. Explain its matter and form; its ministers; the grace it gives.
3. Why are polyandry and polygamy against the natural law?
4. Explain why the Church forbids divorce.
5. When may the following marriages be dissolved:
 - (i). Marriage between two baptised.
 - (ii). Marriage between two unbaptised.
 - (iii). Marriage between a baptised and an unbaptised.
6. Explain the following impediments: age; consanguinity; affinity; mixed marriage; diversity of religion.
7. Give the conditions for licity and for validity in marriage.

MATRIMONY

8. Explain why the Church forbids Mixed Marriage.
9. What are the duties of parents towards their children?
10. What are the duties of children towards their parents?

Chapter 52

DEATH AND JUDGEMENT

1. God's Warning.

"Dust thou are, and unto dust thou shalt return." (Gen. 3:19).

"Man shall go into the house of his eternity... The dust shall return to its earth whence it was; and the spirit return to God who gave it." (Eccles. 12:5-7).

"Thou fool! This night do they require thy soul of thee; and whose shall these things be which thou hast provided?" (Luke 12:20).

"At what hour you think not, the Son of Man will come." (Luke 12:40). "Watch ye, therefore because you know not the day nor the hour." (Mat. 25:13).

"What I say to you, I say to all: Watch!" (Mark 13:37).

"It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgement." (Heb. 9:27).

In these texts God tells us that death is inevitable; and He warns us most solemnly to be always ready to die.

Man is a COMPOSITE being. He is made of a BODY which is material, and a SOUL which is spiritual. These are united as MATTER and FORM to constitute one being, one person, one man. The matter in the body is indestructible inasmuch as it cannot be annihilated. The soul, too, is indestructible, since it is spiritual. But the UNION that exists between our body and soul can be destroyed. And its destruction is what we call death. Death is the dissolution of the human composite.

True, Adam was given the gift of IMMORTALITY. But he lost this for himself and for us, when he sinned. Bereft of this gift, we are destined to die; for death is natural to man inasmuch as he is an animal.

Scientists have dreamed of finding a means of prolonging life indefinitely. But those who did the dreaming died. No sane man today thinks that he can avoid death forever. Doctors may indeed prolong life for a time, but only for a time. God has made death a decree of His providence. "It is APPOINTED (i.e. decreed) unto men once to die." And His ruling is final. We cannot escape from it.

Hence, it is sheer madness for me to live as if I were never to die. And, since death may come to me at any minute, I should be ready for it always. Every day I should say to myself: "If I were to die now, would I be in a fit state to undergo God's judgment?" It is supremely wise to be always prepared. For we die but once, and death settles forever our lot in eternity.

2. Kinds of Death.

All who have come to the use of reason in moral matter must die either in a state of grace or in a state of personal mortal sin.

Death in a state of grace is called FINAL PERSEVERANCE. It is a happy death. Death in a state of personal mortal sin is called FINAL IMPENITENCE. It is a bad death.

Final perseverance is, in a sense, the greatest of all graces, since it makes heaven certain for us. It cannot be MERITED. But it can be secured by fervent, humble, confident, persevering prayer, by the intercession of Our Lady, and by having Masses said for it.

Final impenitence, on the contrary, is the greatest evil that can come to man, since it carries with it the everlasting miseries of hell. It is one thing for which we ought to have a reasonable and wholesome dread. And we should never forget that a person prepares the way for it by putting off his conversion from a life of sin. It is a terrifyingly stupid thing for a person to live habitually in mortal sin, because this constant refusal to make use of God's grace blinds the soul ever more and more to the necessity of returning to grace. Hence, it removes from the sinner the very means of repentance, and makes his conversion constantly more difficult. Sacred Scripture has many dreadful texts concerning those who are obstinate in sin.

However, deathbed conversions do take place, even with those who, as far as we can judge, have been great sinners. Here are a few instances taken from history.

St. John Vianney once gave unutterable consolation to a woman worrying about the salvation of her husband, who had committed suicide. "Your husband is saved," the saint said to her, though she had not as much as mentioned the cause of her sorrow. "When he threw himself into the Rhone, the Blessed Virgin obtained for him the grace of conversion just before he died. Recall how, a month ago in your garden, he picked a most beautiful rose and said to you: 'Take this to the altar of the Blessed Virgin.' She did not forget."

St. Catherine of Sienna once saw two criminals being taken to execution. Both were blaspheming God. She offered a fervent prayer for their salvation. They immediately ceased to blaspheme. Instead, they asked for a priest, and in a very fervent confession each made his peace with God. In a similar way, St. Theresa of Lisieux gained the salvation of a hardened criminal who repented at death.

A few years ago a chaplain to a prison in Nancy had a reputation for converting all whom he accompanied to the guillotine. On one occasion, however, he seemed to be failing. The man he was with defied all his pleading. On the way to the place of execution, they passed before the church of Our Lady of Refuge. This reminded the priest of that lovely prayer, the Memorare. So he said to Our Lady: "Remember, O most gracious Virgin, that it was never known that anyone who sought thy intercession was left unaided. Convert this criminal. Otherwise, I will say that it has been known that you have not heard." She did hear. The man repented most fervently a few minutes before death sent him to judgment.

St. John Bosco once attended the deathbed of a Catholic who had become a Mason. The dying man had a revolver under his pillow, so that he might commit suicide if his pain became intolerable. He told Bosco about this, and then threatened to shoot the saint first and then himself, if the former talked about religion. So the conversation was about other things. Finally, however, it drifted on to Voltaire. "Some say that Voltaire never repented, and had a bad death," said Bosco, "but I do not say that, because I do not know."

"You mean," said the dying man, "that even Voltaire could repent?"

"Of course."

"Then I, too, can repent." And this man who had despaired of salvation met death, not by adding a final sin of suicide to his already long list of sins, but by receiving the last sacraments which changed his eternal destiny from hell to heaven.

Examples such as these could be multiplied. They show how sincerely God wills the salvation of all. "I desire not the death of the wicked," he says, "but that the wicked turn from his way, and live." (Ezech. 33:11). All the same, it remains true to say that it is extreme folly for a sinner to keep putting off his conversion. By doing this, he is preparing himself for a bad death, and thus taking a frightful risk in regard to the one thing that really matters - the eternal welfare of his soul.

3. Effects of Death.

(a). It strips from us all worldly goods forever.

Since death takes from us all worldly goods, it is very foolish for us to set our hearts on these in such a way as to separate ourselves from God who gives them to us. It is a horrible distortion to will them in preference to Him, since He is infinitely better than they. To seek complete happiness in creatures is to seek something which they can never give. Only the Infinite can satisfy fully and for ever the limitless craving of our intellect for truth, and the limitless craving of our will for goodness. In God alone can we find perfect happiness.

Never should we forget that temporal goods are not our LAST END, but only MEANS to unite us ever more and more closely to God. We should use them, therefore, in such a way that they increase daily our union with Him. Thus treasured and respected as His good gifts to us, they will remind us constantly of Him, and bring us ever nearer to Him, till death makes our union with Him eternally permanent in the peace and bliss of heaven.

(b). It ends for ever our chance of merit.

In a previous Chapter we saw that the main conditions for merit are these: an act must be free, un sinful, done in a state of grace, and done during this life.

Why in this life? Because it is a MAN that merits, not a soul separated from its body. And death thus separates our body and soul. At death, then, we cease to be human beings; for a soul is not a man, neither is a body. Our life on earth is meant to be a time of trial and probation, in which we are given a chance to prove our loyalty to God, and thus merit His reward in eternity. Death ends life; and with it the opportunity of gaining further merits. It is in this sense that Catholics interpret the words of Scripture: If the tree fall to the south or to the north, in whatsoever place it shall fall, there shall it be." (Eccles. 2:3).

Since death will end forever our time of meriting, we should do our best to gain as much merit as we can from every act we perform, and every suffering we have to endure. And, since the amount of merit we gain from an act depends almost entirely on the intensity of the supernatural CHARITY that is behind it, we ought to try to increase our love of God every day, so that our least acts may be worthy of a great reward, as Our Lady's were at Nazareth.

Let us therefore keep always in a state of grace. Let us do all things with a pure motive of love for God. Let us live in an ever-increasing union with Him, and store up for ourselves priceless treasures of merit which we shall be able to take with us at death, to be a crown of glory to us in eternity.

(c). It brings before us the dread alternative of heaven or hell forever.

We who have come to the use of reason in moral matters cannot go to Limbo. We must spend eternity either in heaven or in hell. Which shall it be? That will depend on the state of our soul at death.

It is this that makes death so dreadfully important. Think of the happiness of heaven, which is a sharing in the infinite happiness of God. Think of the misery of hell, its unutterable loneliness, its gnawing remorse, its black despair, its fire made for the devil and his angels. Try to realise that each of these is everlasting. Then you will realise the importance of death.

Surely it is most reasonable for us to think often of death, and of the eternity which waits for us beyond the grave. Let us often think of it, and let us ask God to give us light to live always as we shall wish

to have lived when death comes to put an end to our dreaming, and awaken us to the awesome realities of eternity.

4. The First Judgement.

"It is appointed unto men once to die; and after this, the judgement." (Heb. 9:27).

Why is there a PARTICULAR judgement for each of us at the moment of death, as well as GENERAL judgement for all at the end of the world? It is because each of us can be considered as an INDIVIDUAL, and as a member of the human RACE. As an individual each will have his own private judgement at death. As a member of the race, he will be judged with all the others, publicly, on the Last Day, when God will justify His way to men.

Like any other judgement, the first judgement implies three things: an examination of the case, the pronouncing of the sentence, and its execution.

The examination is conducted by God. He is Knowledge and Truth Itself, so He has no need for witnesses. Nor does He Himself have to appear to the soul. He has merely to give it a special LIGHT by which all its past thoughts, words, deeds and omissions are brought before it with perfect clarity, so that it sees itself exactly as God sees it, and knows itself to be worthy of His love or punishment forever.

This perfect realisation of its condition is the sentence passed upon it. It is instantaneous. It is infallible.

The execution of the sentence is equally instantaneous. And it is definitive. There can be no appeal. It is absolutely final and irrevocable. It can never be changed, even in eternity.

Where does this take place? Since it occurs at the instant of death, it takes place wherever one happens to die. The soul is not taken to heaven to be judged. Nor is it borne into the presence of Christ. It does not receive a vision of its Judge. Yet it is judged by God inasmuch as the infused light which causes the judgement comes from Him. It is He who examines the case, utters the sentence, and executes it.

Oh! If there is one momentous instant in existence it is this, in which the soul, waking up from the vanities of the world, gathers in one act of knowledge all that it has done, all that it has failed to do, all its merits and demerits, all that remains to it in the abode of its eternity.

It is in the unerring light of this one dreadful instant that we should measure the enticements of the world, of passion, of selfishness, and of sin. It will show us the nothingness, the meanness, the treachery of the world, and the cruel blindness it can exercise on those who live for it.

Often when a person dies, worldlings ask: "What did he leave?" In that same dread instant God is asking: "What is he taking with him?" And on that and that alone depends his eternity.

5. The Worldling's View of Death.

To those who live only for this world, death is the greatest of evils. Poverty, sickness, worry – these mar happiness indeed, but death goes further. It ends everything. It takes all.

Hence, worldlings usually try to distract themselves from the thought of death. "Why think of it?" they say. "Why poison our happiness by breathing prematurely the odious stench of the tomb? Why let death's hateful shadow cast a gloom over even our brightest days? It will get us in the end; but in the meantime let us forget it."

Such persons often hope that death will come to them unexpectedly, striking them down without the slightest warning. For them a happy death is a very quick one in which the victim does not have time to see death coming, or to see himself die, as when an apparently healthy man dies during sleep.

Loathing death, worldlings fear it. This fear they foolishly thrust into the subconscious, where it becomes a source of deep misery to them, poisoning their peace and happiness. Thus they pay the penalty here on earth by refusing to face up to death as men. Living only for this life, they make it impossible for it to give them the true happiness it is meant by God to give. They frustrate their own efforts to be happy. They expect the impossible. They are doomed to misery in this world as well as in the next.

6. The Catholic's View of Death.

A Catholic who lives his faith in all its glorious fullness does not see in death the supreme evil. For him, sin is the supreme evil. Death is simply the ending of an exile. It is a going home to his Father's home of many mansions in heaven. With St. Paul, he can truthfully say: "For me, to die is gain." (Phil. 1:21). What gain? Nothing less than the beatific vision with its perfect happiness possessed in an unlosable manner forever.

In Her martyrology, the Church speaks of the day of death of each saint as his "birthday," for it is the beginning of a new life in union with God in heaven. Such, too, is every good Catholic's view of death. For him death has nothing sinister, gloomy or terrifying about it. Instead, it is something luminous, consoling, peace-giving. It is not just the final catastrophe, the return of the body to the dust whence it came. It is above all the return of the soul to God. It is His last act of love to us on earth, the last act in long series of acts that stretch back into eternity. It is at the same time a pledge of further love, a love that will never end. It is God's call to each of us to come from the shadows and sufferings of this world, to share His light and love and happiness in eternity.

How infinitely kind God is to us at death. Think of the means He has left us by which we can purify ourselves not only from the guilt of every sin, but also from the temporal punishment that would keep us for a time from heaven.

There is our last CONFESSION. If we ever make a very fervent and sincere confession, it will surely be at death. Our dispositions will then be the best possible. And a confession made with perfect dispositions can purify a soul to such an extent that it can go straight to heaven.

Then, our last COMMUNION. How fervent it will be! How full of adoration, gratitude, contrition and love!! When other friends will kneel helplessly about our bed, Our Divine Friend will come into the depths of our soul, more near to us than we are to ourselves, to be a source of infinite consolation and strength by imparting to us the noble sentiments of complete subjection to God that filled His own soul when He summoned death to Himself on the Cross. And again, one Holy Communion made with perfect dispositions can turn a sinner into a saint!

After this, there is the LAST ANOINTING. The purpose of this great sacrament of God's mercy is, as we saw in a previous Chapter, to purify the soul completely so that it may be ready to enter heaven immediately without having to undergo any meritless sufferings in purgatory.

Finally, there is the LAST BLESSING which carries with it a Plenary Indulgence. To gain this, we must have no attachment to venial sin; but surely this will be easy at death, when we realise that we are about to leave the things of this world forever.

With all these means at our disposal, we can so purify our souls that death will be what God means it to be, a stepping stone to heaven. Can we wonder, then, that the Church in Her litany makes us pray against a sudden and unprovided death?

When Cardinal Wiseman was at the point of death, one of his friends asked him how he felt. "I feel like a school boy going home for the holidays," he said. And this is how good Catholics should feel at death. This is how you and I will feel, if we often think of death during life, and act now as we shall wish to have acted when death comes to summon us to judgement.

7. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should do now what I shall wish to have done at death.
2. I should often pray for the dying.
3. I should love the Hail Mary, since in it I ask for Our Lady to obtain for me the grace of a happy death.
4. I should also have Masses said for this great grace.
5. I should hate sin with all my heart, since it alone can make me miserable at death.

SUMMARY

1. God's Warning.

- (a). He tells me that death is inevitable.
- (b). He warns me to be always ready to die.
- (c). He tells me what death is: the dissolution of the human composite.

2. Kinds of Death.

- (a). Final perseverance – death in a state of grace – a happy death.
- (b). Final impenitence – death in personal mortal sin – a bad death.
- (c). The folly of putting off conversion.
- (d). Examples of death-bed repentance.

3. Effects of Death.

- (a). It strips from us all worldly goods forever.
- (b). It ends forever our chance of merit.
- (c). It brings before us the dread alternative: heaven or hell forever.

4. The First Judgment.

- (a). The Particular Judgement. The General Judgement. Need for each.
- (b). It implies: examination, sentence, execution.
- (c). How each is carried out; and where.

5. The Worldling's View of Death.

- (a). The greatest evil.
- (b). Refusal to think about it.
- (c). Fear of it poisons happiness.

6. The Catholic's View of Death.

- (a). A going home.
- (b). A birthday into heaven.
- (c). God's last grace to us on earth.
- (d). Means He has left us to die well: Last Confession. Last Communion. Extreme Unction. Last Blessing.

7. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Cross out wrong alternatives and fill in the blanks in the following: –

1. Scripture says: "The (....) shall return to its earth whence it was; and the (....) return to God who gave it." 2. This shows that man is a (....) being, made up of a material (....) and a spiritual (....). 3. The dissolution of this composite is called (....). 4. Our Lord says: "What I say to you, I say to all: ('...')." 5. Speaking of one who lived just for this world, Our Lord said: "Thou (....)! This night do they require thy (....) of thee; and whose shall these things be which thou hast

provided?" 6. Death in a state of grace is called (....). 7. Death in a state of personal mortal sin is called (....). 8. We (can) (cannot) merit to die in a state of grace. 9. The grace of a happy death can be gained by (....), by (....), and by (....). 10. A person who dies without showing outwardly any signs of contrition (does) (does not) necessarily lose his soul. 11. Death has three main effects: it (....), it (....), and it (....). 12. The amount of merit we gain from an act depends almost entirely on the intensity of the (....) with which it is done. 13. All who have come to the use of reason in moral matters will spend eternity either in (....) or in (....). 14. At the particular judgement the soul (sees) (does not see) God. 15. This judgement takes place at the moment of (....). 16. It implies three things, namely (....), (....) and (....). 17. This judgement (is) (is not) absolutely final. 18. The Church provides four means by which we can purify our soul completely at death, namely (....), (....), (....) and (....). 19. St. Paul says: "For me, to die is (....)." 20. I should always act now as I shall wish to have acted at the moment of (....).

(B). Answer each of the following as fully as you can: -

1. Explain what death is, and show that it is natural to man.
2. How do final perseverance and final impenitence differ? How does a person prepare for each?
3. Give some examples from history of death-bed conversions.
4. What are the three main effects of death?
5. Explain what is meant by the Particular Judgement. When does it take place? Where? And how? How does it differ from the General Judgement?
6. Contrast a worldling's view of death with that of a good Catholic.
7. What four great helps does the Church give us to enable us to enter heaven immediately at death?
8. Give five practical conclusions you can rightly make from a meditation on death.

Chapter 53

PURGATORY

1. What It Is.

Guilt, a debt of punishment, evil inclinations, bad habits - these are the evil effects of formal sin. How do we get rid of them?

Guilt is forgiven by an act of PERFECT CONTRITION, or by a SACRAMENT received with imperfect contrition, or by MARTYRDOM. It is either wholly removed, or it is not removed at all. No half measures here. It is all or nothing.

The other evil effects of sin, however, may be abolished either wholly or only in part. Martyrdom does away with all of them. So does baptism. But an act of perfect contrition, or the reception of a sacrament other than baptism can do this only if our dispositions are sufficiently perfect. And, as far as we can judge, they are rarely like that.

At death, therefore, a person may have NO GUILT OF MORTAL SIN in his soul; but he may have some TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT to pay, and also certain EVIL INCLINATIONS and HABITS due to sin. He may have the GUILT OF VENIAL SIN, too, of course. What happens in his case?

It seems certain that at death the supernatural light given by God to such a soul makes its charity become so intense that it forgives the venial sins, and abolishes the evil tendencies and habits caused by sin. However, it does not abolish the TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT.

Why not? Because temporal punishment is a matter of JUSTICE, not of charity. And justice demands that it remain until the debt has been paid in full. Otherwise, God would treat in the same way the fervent and the lukewarm, the hero and the slacker, the coward and the saint. This would not be fair. Moreover, it would leave us no incentive to avoid venial sins, and to do penance during life. It would thus lead to laxity; hence, to mortal sin; hence, to hell. It is a sign of God's goodness, then, as well as of His justice, that temporal

punishment should remain after death, though the guilt of venial sin and the other effects of sin are then abolished.

Now, a soul which is in grace but which has temporal punishment to pay cannot go straight to the beatific vision; for Scripture tells us that nothing defiled can enter heaven. Nor can such a soul go to hell, since it is in a state of grace. There must, therefore, be another place to which it can go, until its debt has been paid either by itself or by another.

This place is called PURGATORY. The term is not a very apt one, since it comes from a Latin word meaning "to purify." Purgatory is not primarily a place for purifying souls. That is done at the instant of death. In purgatory, it is a question of PAYING A DEBT to GOD. It is a matter of CHASTISEMENT. Hence, of EXPIATION and REPARATION rather than of purification. Up to the eleventh century it was known as "the place of groans and tears," "the gloomy way," "the transitory fire," and the like. These terms left out the happiness of the souls in purgatory; but they did stress its main purpose - that of reparation, the paying of a debt to God. We can therefore define PURGATORY as a PLACE and a STATE in which the souls of persons who die in GRACE suffer for a time on account of TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT due to sins committed after BAPTISM, before they are admitted to HEAVEN.

2. How We know That It Exists.

We are quite certain that purgatory exists, because GOD has told us that it does. We accept its existence on His AUTHORITY, by an act of divine FAITH. And we are equally certain that He has revealed its existence to us, because the CHURCH assures us infallibly that He has. In doing this, She interprets both SCRIPTURE and TRADITION for us, unerringly.

As for Scripture, the doctrine of purgatory is contained in the Old Testament. There, we read how Judas Macchabeus sent gold and silver to Jerusalem to have sacrifice offered for the souls of his soldiers who had died in battle. Now he, and all who gave these gifts, and the priests who offered the sacrifice knew that it was no use for them to pray for souls in heaven, nor for souls in hell. Hence, they must have believed in another place in which the dead could be helped by us on earth. And the point that matters here is this: Scripture APPROVES of their conduct, since it immediately adds: "IT IS A HOLY AND WHOLESOME THOUGHT TO PRAY FOR THE DEAD, THAT THEY MAY BE LOOSED FROM THEIR SINS."(2

Macch. 12:39-46). A soul is wholly loosed from sin when it is freed even from the debt of temporal punishment due to sin, and allowed to enter heaven. By thus APPROVING of this action, the principal Author of Scripture, who is GOD, approves of belief in purgatory. In other words, He reveals its existence.

In the New Testament also there are texts which the Church has always interpreted of purgatory. St. Paul, for instance, warns some of his priests that their preaching, though substantially correct, is marred by vainglory and other unworthy motives. Instead of building on Christ a structure of "gold, silver and precious stones" as do those whose preaching is faultless, they are building one in "wood, hay and stubble." These inferior materials which symbolise the preachers' faults, will, St. Paul asserts, be destroyed by fire after their death. This fire cannot be that in hell, since he admits that these men will save their souls. Their sins are only venial. It must, therefore, be the fire in purgatory from which they will suffer till they have fully paid their debt to God. (1 Cor.3:10-15).

Early writers such as Origen, Basil, Cyril of Jerusalem, Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine and Gregory the Great gave this interpretation of this text. So did most of the writers of the Middle Ages, including St. Thomas Aquinas. So do most Catholic Biblical experts today. Other texts from the New Testament could also be given, did space permit.

Tradition is likewise clear. Many pages could be filled with extracts from the early fathers concerning purgatory. You have merely to recall St. Monica's request to her son, St. Augustine, to say Mass for her soul after her death. Moreover, in the catacombs there are numerous inscriptions begging Masses and prayers for the faithful departed. The most ancient liturgies also testify to a universal belief in purgatory. Even if there were no references to it in Scripture, therefore, we would still be sure of its existence. What matters is the infallible teaching of the Church; for She is the divinely-appointed guardian of Christ's truths and their divinely-protected interpreter on earth. "He that heareth you, heareth Me," He says of Her. And She has infallibly defined the dogma of purgatory as an article of faith. That settles the matter forever.

3. The Fittingness of Purgatory.

Protestants are opposed to purgatory because of their teaching that good works are of no value for salvation; and that some persons are taken to heaven while others are sent to hell, apart from any good

or evil they may have done during life. Unless a man's judgement is warped by some gross error such as this, it is hard to see how he can be opposed to purgatory. As a doctrine, it has much to recommend it. Think a little, and you will see.

About 100 persons die every minute. About 6,000, every hour. About 140,000 every day. How many are so perfect that their souls can go straight to heaven? Comparatively few, as far as we can judge. Deny purgatory, then, and what happens? You must consign the vast majority to hell. The thought is monstrous. Most people are not good enough to enter heaven at death, nor bad enough to deserve hell. So there must be another place beyond the grave where they can suffer and thus pay any debt still owing to God. Even PLATO, who knew nothing about God's revelation, was firmly convinced of the existence of such a place.

Moreover, the doctrine of purgatory manifests in a splendid way the attributes of God. It manifests His SANCTITY, since it shows hows perfectly free from blemish a soul must be to enter heaven. It proclaims His JUSTICE also, because it tells us that no souls are sent to hell unless they deliberately refuse to repent even at the last moment; while those who go to purgatory are kept there till the debt they owe has been paid in full. It shows forth, above all, God's MERCY, since it enables even the greatest sinners to repent on their death-bed, with the assurance of still being able to make everything right with God, and enter heaven honourably in the end.

At the same time, this doctrine is a most consoling one for us all. As we have just said, it shows even the greatest sinner that he need never despair. "If I had still some years to live," such a one may say on his death-bed, "I would turn to God, for I could then make reparation to Him; but it is too late. To turn to Him now would be to ask for heaven without having in the least deserved it. It would be a dishonourable thing." When such a person realises that, thanks to purgatory, he will be able to make full reparation to God after he has truly merited the beatific vision by the grace given on his repentance, he is almost always ready to make his peace with God. To great sinners, then, purgatory is a most consoling doctrine. But it is also consoling even to the saintliest men; for it enables them to hope for the salvation even of those who seem to have died a bad death. Recall the case of suicide mentioned in the last Chapter.

It is consoling also in another way. "I never realised how good he was till now," an unbeliever may exclaim at the grave-side of a friend. "I wish I had been more thoughtful to him; but it is too late

now.” For us, it is never too late. Our belief in purgatory enables our love to pass beyond the barriers of death. It enables us to turn wishes into prayers, daily deeds into sacrifices, sufferings into satisfactions, all of which we can offer to God to speed the souls of our beloved towards eternal life. Death does not cut off our gratitude. Nor does the grave stop short our love. Instead, it merely sharpens our sense of obligation towards the dead.

Besides urging us to fulfil our duties towards the dead by practising charity in their regard, the doctrine of purgatory is beneficial to us in many other ways. For instance, by bringing home to us the infinite sanctity and justice of God, it incites us to avoid even the least sins, to practise all the virtues, and to do penance. It thus moves us to avoid laxity, and to strive for perfection, even the heroic perfection of the saints.

Finally, it is most beneficial and consoling to the dead. Unable to do anything to help themselves, they are delighted to know that we can help them, and that they cannot ever be completely forgotten as long as Mass is offered on the earth. Truly, then, the doctrine of purgatory has a great deal to recommend it. However, it is not for these reasons of fittingness that we believe in it; but simply and solely because God, who is Knowledge and Truth Itself, has made its existence known to us.

4. Its Sufferings.

The main suffering in purgatory is the PAIN OF LOSS, caused by the delay of the BEATIFIC VISION.

There is a pain of loss also in hell; but the condition of a soul in purgatory is very different from that of a soul in hell. In the first place a soul in purgatory is filled with the love of God. It is also wholly submissive to His will. Hence, it accepts with intense joy and gratitude the punishment it has merited. A soul in hell, on the contrary, hates God, and it is in perpetual rebellion against Divine Justice punishing it. Moreover, a soul in purgatory has the joyful hope of being admitted some day to heaven. It is quite sure of its salvation and its happiness in eternity. But a soul in hell knows no hope. It is a prey instead to a despair that can never end. Purgatory, remember, is a sort of vestibule to heaven. Hell is simply hell.

The pain of loss in purgatory is a sort of spiritual hunger for God. Through the supernatural light given it, a soul there realises most clearly that He is the Sovereign Good, and that it is made for union

with Him forever. It is also given a revelation of the infinite love with which He has always loved it. It yearns to love Him in return. It feels drawn irresistibly to Him. But it realises that it cannot go to Him as yet. It has still a debt to pay Him. Hence, it longs to pay this debt. It welcomes its sufferings. Its pain is thus an agony of longing, a hunger for the Infinite. But, like the paralytic at the side of the healing pool at Bethsaida, it can do nothing to help itself. It can only suffer, and wait.

Intense regrets at not having used the means of avoiding purgatory during life; anxiety due to the uncertainty of the hour of its delivery; sorrow caused by the neglect of friends on earth – these and similar sufferings are also found in purgatory. But they all flow from the pain of loss, the torment of love caused by the postponement of the beatific vision.

Is there material fire in purgatory? The Church so far has not defined that there is. However, since its presence is taught by most theologians, it is prudent for us to accept their teaching. St. Thomas tells us that it torments the soul by imprisoning it, paralysing, as it were, its spiritual activities, thus causing it the most profound humiliation. This is a very ingenious explanation. Think of a paralysed man. His limbs refuse to obey his will. This domination of matter over the soul can cause great suffering even in this life. It can be far worse in purgatory; for there a soul should normally enjoy the glorious liberty of a separated spirit.

Will purgatory continue to exist after the Last Day? The sentence to be uttered then will concern only hell and heaven: "Come, you blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels." (Mat. 25: 34, 42). No mention of purgatory.

How long will purgatory last for any individual soul? That depends on its debt, the help given it by others, and especially on the will of God, acting according to His infinite wisdom. A soul in purgatory is in time, not in eternity. But it is different from our time. Ours is the measure of continuous movement; hence it is itself continuous. In purgatory, time is the measure of the successive thoughts and affections of the souls imprisoned there. So it is discontinuous. One thought lasts for one spiritual instant. It may be equal to a thousand years of our time. The next thought has its own instant. This shows how the souls of those who die on the last day can suffer their purgatory in an instant. It also brings home to us how concentrated

these sufferings can be. It should fill us with sympathy for the holy souls, and make us eager to help them. They can indeed make their own Job's touching plea: "Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you, my friends, for the hand of the Lord hath touched me." (Job 19:21).

The sufferings endured by the holy souls are almost certainly greater than any we can experience on earth. Yet they cannot merit any reward in heaven. The time for meriting ends at death. This should make us anxious to fulfil our purgatory on earth. We should ask God for this grace.

5. Its Joys.

Just as there are no morose saints on earth, there are no gloomy souls in purgatory. They are all intensely happy. Their profound love of God is the main source of their joy. Another is the certainty of their salvation. Another, the perfection of their knowledge. Another, the excellent company they enjoy, and their relations with other souls in heaven and on earth.

Purgatory is like a very happy railway station or airport. Its population is an ever-shifting one. Some souls are constantly arriving from earth; others, departing for heaven. A hearty welcome is given to the former; a rousing send-off, to the latter. Envy, jealousy, hatred, quarrelling - these and similar evils that mar our happiness on earth are unknown in purgatory. There, right order reigns, and with it peace and joy, even in the midst of their sufferings, as was the case also of Our Divine Saviour on the Cross.

6. Who Can Help The Holy Souls?

No soul can help itself to get out of purgatory; but each can help the others. Its intense charity urges it to do this.

Can souls in heaven be of any help? Yes. They cannot suffer for them, of course, for suffering is impossible in heaven. But they can help them by their petitions, just as they can intercede for us on earth.

We can help the holy souls most of all, because we can suffer and thus make satisfaction for them. Moreover, we can offer Mass for

them, and thus give them some of the satisfactions won by Christ. We can also win indulgences for them. We can help them in many other ways as well. All this follows from the Communion of Saints, from the fact that the Church Militant on earth, the Church Suffering in purgatory, and the Church Triumphant in heaven form but one Mystical Body, sharing in common the good things that its Head has given it. Just as one member of a family on earth can pay the debt of another member, we can pay the debt of temporal punishment which a soul in purgatory owes to God, and thus secure its entry into heaven.

7. How We Can Help Them.

(a). Prayer.

In itself, prayer is not a MERIT – a right to an increase in sanctity on earth, and in glory in heaven. Nor is it a SATISFACTION – a suffering borne to pay our debt of punishment due to sin. It is a REQUEST – the act of a beggar holding out his hand. It appeals to the goodness and mercy of the one to whom it is addressed. From this flows its mighty power, proportionate as this is to the infinite goodness and mercy of God.

In addition to its power as a petition, our prayer has also a power of SATISFACTION, since it always involves some self-denial on our part, hence some suffering. This is why our prayers can be far more profitable to the holy souls than can the prayers of souls in heaven.

We should, therefore, often pray for the dead. It is so easy. Anyone can do it, any time, any place. We may say prayers specially framed for them, such as those found in a Requiem Mass, a funeral service, or the Office for the dead. But we can offer any prayers at all for their benefit – the Rosary, for instance, or grace said before and after meals. It is good to offer them through Our Lady and the other saints so that these may present them to God enriched by their own glory and the power of their intercession.

(b). Good Works.

Of the many good works that we can do, Scripture lays special stress on ALMSGIVING. It has a particular value, perhaps, on account of the self-denial it entails because of our natural attachment to money. We should remember this whenever we give a poor man a dollar, or put something into the plate on Sundays, or make a donation to an orphanage, say, or to the foreign missions.

Its value as satisfaction will depend on the purity of our intention, the amount of charity behind our act, and our financial position. Remember the widow's mite, and Our Saviour's comment on her alms: "Verily, I say to you, this poor woman hath cast in more than they all." (Luke 21:4). On another occasion He told us that if we give but a cup of cold water to another in His name, we shall not lose our reward. (Mat. 10:42). And on the Last Day He will say: "As often as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it unto ME." (Mat. 25:40) .

Scripture also stresses the value of FASTING. It also entails real self-denial. But in addition to these two works, there are innumerable others that we can offer for the benefit of the holy souls - our daily work, for example, carried out with care, with purity of intention, and a great love for God and for our neighbour with whom Our Saviour has in some way identified Himself.

(c). Sufferings.

We should never love suffering for its own sake. We should do our best to lessen it in others. But suffering entailed in avoiding sin and living wholly for God, we should never shirk. Then there will be other sufferings over which we have no control - those caused by bereavement, sickness, accidents, and the like. To these we can add a reasonable amount of freely imposed penances to bring our self-denial to the lofty level of the golden mean of the supernatural virtue of temperance. Finally, when forming an intention for all these sufferings, we should not neglect the holy souls.

(d). The Mass.

The Mass is the best means we have for helping souls in purgatory. One Mass can free any soul, provided that all the satisfaction it proffers is given it by God. He will give all, or only some, according to His wisdom which takes into account the soul's right to receive help. Thus, a poor man who has one Mass said for a deceased friend may benefit him more than a rich man who has many Masses offered, without any great sacrifice to himself. How foolish it is, then, for a rich man to think that he will be able to buy his way out of purgatory! He has a poor idea of the infinite justice of God.

What about Holy Communion? We cannot directly benefit the holy souls by our Communion, since, like baptism, it is for the sanctification of the person who receives it. However, we can associate them with it by praying for them during thanksgiving. Our

prayers then have a special value. Of course, Communion is important when its reception is one of the conditions required for gaining an indulgence for the dead.

(e). Indulgences.

By His death, Christ won an inexhaustible supply of merits and satisfactions, which He intended to be given to individual souls, on to the end of the world. Hence, he committed them, as He did His sacraments and truths, to the safe keeping of His Church. He established what is called the TREASURY of the Church. Into it, too, have gone the satisfactions gained by His Immaculate Mother, and the surplus satisfactions of His other saints. Its riches, as we have said, are inexhaustible.

This is why the Church, by drawing on this treasury, can attach to any good act a power of abolishing TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT greater than that which it has by its own nature. In other words, attach an INDULGENCE to it.

In doing this she is merely putting into practice the power given by Christ when He said: "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed also in heaven." (Mat. 18:18). These words empower her not only to forgive the guilt of sin, but also to abolish from contrite souls all other evil effects of sin that can keep us out of heaven. And temporal punishment is one of these.

An INDULGENCE, then, is a remission of TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT due to sin after the GUILT itself has been forgiven, granted by the CHURCH from the TREASURY established by Christ. It concerns, of course, sins committed after baptism. And the Church here acts, as does any other society in distributing goods to its members, through Her visible head, the Pope, Christ's vicar on earth.

Note that an indulgence is in no sense a permission to sin. On the contrary, it presupposes that the recipient is sorry for his sin, and has had it forgiven. This is why a person who is attached to venial sins cannot gain a plenary indulgence. Temporal punishment due to these sins cannot be remitted, since the guilt has not yet been forgiven. It is sheer nonsense, therefore, for Protestants to say that an indulgence is a permit to sin.

Indulgences are either PLENARY or PARTIAL. A PLENARY indulgence is one which can free a soul of ALL temporal

punishment so far due to it. If you gain one and apply it to a soul in purgatory, are you sure that this soul will go straight to heaven? No. God may refuse to allow it to profit fully by the indulgence offered.

A PARTIAL indulgence is one which does not necessarily abolish ALL temporal punishment, even when applied in full to a particular soul. If a soul is granted this, does it shorten its stay in purgatory by forty days? No. There are no days in purgatory. However it does get remitted an amount of temporal punishment equal to that which it would have abolished by performing one of the early CANONICAL PENANCES for forty days. These were often very severe – fasting on bread and water, for instance, or making a long pilgrimage on foot, or kissing the feet of those who went into a Church on Sundays. Since these penances varied greatly from place to place, and since their value as satisfaction depended largely on the dispositions of those who performed them, no accurate estimation can be given of their value to a soul in purgatory. The amount of temporal punishment remitted by a particular indulgence thus remains uncertain. It depends greatly on the fervour of the one who acquires it.

To gain an indulgence, we must be baptised, be not excommunicated, and be in a state of grace. We must also have the intention of gaining it – at least an habitual one, one made and not revoked. Finally, we must do exactly what the Church prescribes, as when She bids us go to confession and Communion, visit a church, pray for the Pope's intention, and so on. To gain a plenary indulgence, as we have already said, we must have no attachment to venial sins. Hence it is wise for us to make a very sincere act of perfect contrition when attempting to gain such an indulgence. It is worth noting here that all indulgences granted by the Pope are applicable to the holy souls, unless declared to be otherwise.

It is very foolish for us to neglect indulgences. They are precious benefits offered by the mercy of God. By them we can greatly lessen and even completely abolish our own purgatory. We can also help the holy souls to enter heaven. Their practice, moreover, keeps before our minds great truths such as the justice and mercy of God, the necessity of penance, the Communion of the Saints, the existence of purgatory, and the power of the Church to administer the good things left to Her by Christ. Indulgences also move us to perform good works such as going to confession, receiving Communion, visiting the church, making the Stations, performing acts of devotion to the Sacred Heart, Our Lady, the Blessed

Eucharist, and the like. However, they should never cause us to neglect works of penance. These are still necessary if we are to imitate our Crucified Saviour as true Christians, heal the ugly wounds left in us by original sin, and raise our daily life to the level of the beatific vision which we hope to enjoy in eternity.

(f). The Heroic Act.

This consists in giving up all the SATISFACTIONS we may gain by future good works; also all the INDULGENCES, except the plenary indulgence we may gain at death; also the SUFFRAGES or helps that will be offered for us after we are dead. These are renounced for the benefit of the holy souls – either ones chosen by us or by Our Lady. This act is sometimes called a vow. But it is not a vow. It is a mere promise. In making it, one should intend to keep it for life. However, it can be revoked at any time and without any sin. No set words are required in making it. The mere intention is enough.

In making it, we do not renounce the MERIT attached to it – the increase it brings in grace on earth and in glory in heaven. It is a question of SATISFACTION, not of merit. Nor do we give up the satisfaction made by this act ITSELF. That remains to us. But all satisfactions made AFTER it – these are renounced.

The heroic act has been recommended by several Popes. Many privileges are attached to it. Before making it, however, one should consult one's spiritual adviser. It is not meant for lax Catholics. After all, it is an HEROIC act; and the heroism is one in CHARITY.

8. Why We Should Help Them.

(a). Charity.

The holy souls have a claim in charity to our help. The law of fraternal charity the fulfilment of which is the one genuine sign of our love of God extends to them as well as to all our fellow-men on earth. We cannot truly love God, if we exclude them from our love.

Relatives, friends and benefactors have, of course, a special claim to our help, based on love, gratitude and honour. It is inexcusable for us to neglect them.

(b). Justice.

Some souls may even have a claim in justice, either because we have been in some way responsible for their sins, or because of the way in which they sacrificed themselves for the common good when they were on earth.

(c). Self-interest.

In helping the souls in purgatory we are practising charity; hence, heaping up for ourselves imperishable riches in heaven. Moreover, if we go to purgatory ourselves, we shall profit by help offered us to the extent that we have been devoted to the holy souls during life. Lastly, they can help us by their prayers - to pass an examination, for example.

9. How We Can Avoid Purgatory.

"Avoid it!" a Catholic may say, "I'll be lucky if I get there!" Such a person forgets that the attaining of purgatory is not the ideal for a Christian. In God's plan, the immediate entry into heaven at death is the **RULE**; purgatory, the **EXCEPTION**. So there is no presumption and no lack of humility in a Catholic's determination to avoid purgatory. If we go there instead of straight to heaven, the fault will be our own. We shall have failed to use the means Christ has left us for avoiding meritless sufferings after death. Here are the main ones.

(a). Martyrdom.

A martyr's soul goes straight to heaven, because martyrdom configures it to Christ's soul at the moment of His death on the Cross. We cannot all be martyrs in the strict sense of those who are put to death through hatred of the Christian religion. This is a splendid death in which men pay Christ back in kind. It is for the chosen few. However, we can all be martyrs in the wide sense, martyrs to our **DUTIES OF STATE**, by fulfilling them as perfectly as we can, with purity of intention and intense charity. We can all be heroes and heroines to duty.

(b). Baptism.

Baptism received at death admits a soul immediately to heaven. Those who receive this sacrament after they have come to the use of reason should realise that it abolishes all temporal punishment due so far to sin. By avoiding future sins as far as they can, and by

doing penance for the few they may commit, they can reasonably hope to avoid purgatory at death.

(c). Indulgences.

By gaining these often during life, and especially by winning a plenary indulgence at death, we can make sure of going straight to heaven, provided our dispositions allow God to apply it fully to our soul.

(d). The Mass.

It is far wiser to have Masses said for final perseverance than to have them said for us after death. During life, we are under the jurisdiction of the Church, and therefore INFALLIBLY receive the fruit of a Mass, just as we do also of a sacrament, unless we place an obstacle. After death, we are no longer under Her jurisdiction. She can then only ask God to apply a Mass to our soul. He may, or He may not. That depends on His wisdom. A rich person who has many Masses said for himself while alive can get enough grace from them to become a saint, and so have no purgatory at death. Said after his death, they might benefit him but little. This shows how prudent it is to have Masses offered for the living, as well as for the dead.

(e). The Sacraments.

These can all help us to avoid purgatory by the graces they give us to avoid sin. No sin, no temporal punishment, no purgatory. Among the sacraments, however, Extreme Unction is especially valuable, since its purpose is to fit the soul for immediate entry into heaven.

(f). The Religious Life.

The fulfilment of the three vows of chastity, poverty and obedience entails so much self-denial that religious who are true to the duties of their state can reasonably hope to avoid purgatory. Pope Benedict XIV once said: "Give me a religious who has always faithfully observed his rule, and I will canonise him immediately."

Though living in the world, lay persons can do the same if they live with the spirit of the vows, by being wholly detached from riches, by obeying God's laws and those of His Church, and by being true to their obligations in the married state. Like religious, they will receive the promised hundredfold in this life, and the beatific vision immediately at death.

(g). A Spirit of Penance.

This consists in hating sin, making reparation for it, and resolving to avoid it in future. It shows itself in an eagerness to avoid unnecessary occasions of sin, to fulfil the fasts and abstinences imposed by the Church, to make voluntary acts of self-denial, to forgive others from the heart, and to judge them with mercy. It is a great means for abolishing purgatory.

(h). Suffering.

We have all many sufferings to endure, physical, mental and moral. By accepting these with loving resignation to God's all-holy Providence, we can do a great deal to make sure of immediate entry into heaven at death. No need for us, then, to have to bear meritless sufferings after death. We can so easily get them over in this life, with merit for eternity.

10. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should pray for the holy souls every time I pass a cemetery or see a funeral.
2. I should remember them whenever I give an alms.
3. I should make a daily intention to gain all indulgences I can.
4. I should take all the means I have of avoiding purgatory.
5. I should be truly devoted to the holy souls, since suffrages offered for me will benefit me in purgatory to the extent that I have helped them during my life.

SUMMARY

1. Purgatory.

- (a). Effects of sin: guilt, punishment, evil inclinations and habits.
- (b). How these are abolished.
- (c). Need of purgatory.
- (d). Definition of purgatory.

2. How We Know It Exists.

- (a). Our act of divine faith.
- (b). Role of the Church.
- (c). Scripture and Tradition.

3. Fittingness of Purgatory.

- (a). Many not good enough for heaven, or bad enough for hell.
- (b). Manifests God's sanctity, justice, and mercy.
- (c). Most consoling and beneficial both to the living and the dead.

4. Its Sufferings.

- (a). Pain of loss. (b). Other sufferings.
- (c). Material fire.
- (d). Duration.

5. Its Joys.

- (a). Their source. (b). Their nature.

6. Who Can Help The Holy Souls.

- (a). Other souls in purgatory.
- (b). Souls in heaven.
- (c). Persons on earth.

7. How We Can Help Them.

- (a). Prayer.
- (b). Good works, Alms-giving. Fasting.
- (c). Our sufferings.
- (d). The Mass.
- (e). Indulgences.
- (f). The Heroic Act.

8. Why We Ought to Help Them.

- (a). Charity. (b). Justice. (c). Self-interest.

9. How We Can Avoid Purgatory.

- (a). Martyrdom.
- (b). Baptism.
- (c). Indulgences.
- (d). The Mass.
- (e). The Sacraments.
- (f). The Religious Life.
- (g). A spirit of penance.
- (h). Sufferings.

10. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Cross out wrong alternatives and fill in blanks in the following :

1. Four effects of formal sin are (....), (....), (....), (....). 2. Guilt is abolished by (....), and (....). 3. It is abolished (partially) (wholly). 4. The forgiving of sin (does) (does not) necessarily abolish also all temporal punishment due to sin. 5. The guilt of venial sin and all evil inclinations and habits due to sin are abolished at death by the fervour of the soul's (....). 6. Any (....) due to sin, however, remains, 7. This (can) (cannot) keep a soul from entering heaven immediately. 8. Purgatory is a (....) and a (....) in which the souls of persons who have died in (....) suffer on account of the (....) due to sins committed after (....), before they can be admitted into (....). 9. We know that purgatory exists because (....) has told us that it does. 10. We know that He has done this because (....) assures us infallibly that He has. 11. It was (....) who sent gold and silver to Jerusalem to have sacrifice offered for the dead. 12. Scriptures approved of his action when it said: "It is a (....) and (....) thought to pray for the (....) that they may be (....)." 13. It was St. (....) who begged her son, Augustine, to have Mass said for her soul after her death. 14. At death most people are not good enough to go straight to (....), nor bad enough to go to (....). This shows how reasonable it is to believe in the existence of (....). 15. The doctrine of purgatory brings home to us God's (....), His (....), and His (....). 16. The main suffering in purgatory is (....). 17. It consists in the delay of the (....). 18. It is an intense spiritual hunger for (....). 19. The Church (has) (has not) defined that there is material fire in purgatory. 20. There will be no purgatory after the (....). 21. Souls in purgatory (do) (do not) experience great joy. 22. They (can) (cannot) help themselves; they (can) (cannot) help other souls there. 23. They (can) (cannot) be helped by souls in heaven. 24. We can help them most, because our good deeds entail (....); hence, win (merit) (satisfaction) for them. 25. We can help them by (....), (....), (....), (....), (....), (....). 26. It (is) (is not) contrary to humility to wish to avoid purgatory. 27. We can avoid it by (....), (....) (....) (....) (....), (....), (....), (....). 28. The Church on earth is called the Church (....); the Church in purgatory is called the Church (....); the Church in heaven is called the Church (....); all form one organism called the (....) Body of Christ. 29. The Heroic Act (is) (is not) a vow. 30. If I go to purgatory I shall benefit by the suffrages offered for me to the extent that I have been devoted to (....) while on earth.

PURGATORY

(B). Answer each of the following as fully as you can:-

1. Explain what purgatory is; and show that belief in it is supported by Scripture and by Tradition.
2. Give reasons to show the fittingness of this doctrine.
3. Explain the sufferings in purgatory.
4. Explain the source and nature of its joys.
5. Give six ways in which we can help the holy souls.
6. Show why we ought help them.
7. Explain the doctrine of indulgences. What is meant by a plenary indulgence, and by a partial indulgence?
8. Explain why we should try to avoid purgatory; and give all the means Christ has left us for doing this.

Chapter 54

HEAVEN AND HELL

Introduction: MAN'S LAST END.

Since God is infinite Wisdom, He has to make us for a PURPOSE. He must give us a LAST END. This can be nothing else than the promoting of His GLORY in eternity, since all the reality in us comes unceasingly from Him and therefore witnesses to His perfections, just as a great painting shows forth the genius of its author. And, since God can never do anything in VAIN, the end for which He created us must be fulfilled.

However, God respects our NATURE as rational beings endowed with freedom. Hence, once we have come to the use of reason, He gives us a CHOICE as to the WAY in which we shall promote His glory in eternity. We can do this either by freely co-operating with His grace, and winning HEAVEN for ourselves, or by deliberately refusing to co-operate with it, and putting ourselves in HELL. Heaven or hell - one or other will be our abode in eternity according to the choice we make.

A. HEAVEN

1. Man's Greatest Needs.

(a). Knowledge.

Man is man because of his spiritual soul with its two spiritual faculties, intellect and will. His first need as man, then, is to KNOW. The human soul thirsts for knowledge. The child with his endless questions, the scientist absorbed in a problem, people poring over the evening paper or listening to the radio news - these are all seeking knowledge. They are all in quest of truth.

But all the knowledge that men may gather from generations of study and research is only a partial, a veiled glimpse of God's knowledge reflected in the creatures He has made. He IS Knowledge. He IS Truth Itself.

In heaven, therefore, man's thirst for knowledge will be perfectly satisfied; for there the blessed SEE God, not with the eyes of the body indeed, since He is a Spirit, but with their intellect which is made for truth. They SEE His ESSENCE, His ATTRIBUTES, the PERSONS in the TRINITY. They SEE Him AS HE IS.

Our Divine Lord assures us of this when He says: "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall SEE God." (Mat. 5:8). The context shows that He is referring not only to the splendid knowledge that the pure have of God in this world through the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, but especially to the VISION that they will have of His ESSENCE in the next.

How do the blessed SEE God? Do they know Him by means of created ideas in the way we know Him on earth? No. Created ideas are necessarily limited. Hence, they can never adequately express the infinite. Not by means of them do the blessed know God. How then? By means of HIMSELF. For them, His ESSENCE is at once THAT WHICH is known, and THAT BY WHICH it is known. They see God IMMEDIATELY, without the help of any created medium whatever. This is why they SEE Him AS HE IS.

Scripture again assures us of this. Listen to St. Paul. "We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then, FACE TO FACE; now, I know in part; but then I shall know EVEN AS I AM KNOWN." (1 Cor. 13:12). A glorious text, this. It contrasts the knowledge we have of God in this life with that which we shall have of Him in heaven. On earth, we know Him only in a glass, a mirror, the creatures He has made. They reflect His perfections, indeed; but how inadequately! They do enable us to know Him, but only "in part," as St. Paul says. And this is true even for the knowledge we have of God through the truths He has revealed to us; for these are all necessarily expressed in ideas taken from creatures. Immeasurably superior will our knowledge in heaven be; for there we shall see Him "face to face"; and we shall know Him in the same WAY as we "are known" by Him. But He knows us without the help of any created medium whatever, for He knows us IN and BY Himself. So the vision given of the divine essence in heaven must be an IMMEDIATE one. We must there SEE Him AS HE IS.

Listen, too, to St. John. "Dearly beloved," he says, "we are now the sons of God; and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that when He shall APPEAR, we shall be LIKE TO HIM; for we

shall SEE HIM AS HE IS." (1 John 3:2). Another sublime text! It tells us that, because we are God's adopted children on earth, and heirs to His own riches in eternity, we shall be made "like to Him" in heaven, in the MANNER in which we shall know Him there, for we shall see Him "as He is." No created medium, however perfect, could enable us to do that. It demands an IMMEDIATE insight into His essence. Such must be, therefore, the vision in heaven.

In heaven, then, we shall know God IN THE WAY He knows Himself. Does this mean that we shall know Him INFINITELY? No. Only an intellect which is itself infinite can do that. And ours will not cease to be a human intellect. It will not know God to the same EXTENT that He knows Himself; but it will know Him in the same MANNER. Hence, it will still know Him AS HE IS.

No created intellect could, by its own power, stand the immediate vision of God. It would be darkened by the excessive light immeasurably more than our eyes are darkened when we look directly at the sun. Hence, the human intellect needs to be elevated and strengthened to bear the beatific vision. This is done by what is called the LIGHT OF GLORY, which is a sharing in God's own intellectual light, and the consummation of sanctifying grace, and the charity that accompanies it on earth. Of all God's wondrous works, it is the greatest after the Incarnation; for it makes a greater demand on His omnipotence than any of the rest. It is the supreme witness to His love.

By it God opens to the blessed the whole storehouse of His infinite knowledge to be shared by them according to the capacity of each. Hence, no words can express the perfection of their knowledge. It is immeasurably superior to that proper to the highest angel God could create. It gives them, for instance, intrinsic evidence of the great mysteries that we accept on earth by faith: the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption, and all the rest. It enables them to see how all God's attributes including those that seem to clash with one another, such as His justice and mercy, are harmonised and reconciled in His essence, just as the different colours of the spectrum are blended into one in the white light that comes to us from the sun. At the same time, of course, they have an incomparable knowledge of created things, all the sciences, all the events in which they are interested, the condition of their friends wherever these may be – all things, in fact, that they can ever wish to know.

In thus opening up to us God's infinite knowledge of Himself and of His creatures, heaven satisfies perfectly and forever our greatest need as man, and so contributes one of the things necessary for our complete HAPPINESS in eternity.

(b). Love.

Man has a will as well as an intellect. Hence, his second great need is to LOVE and to BE LOVED.

This, too, is perfectly satisfied in heaven; for there the blessed not only KNOW God in the way He knows Himself, but they also LOVE Him in the way He loves Himself; for love always vibrates in harmony with knowledge. And He, of course, returns their love; for the love in heaven is a true CHARITY, a mutual unselfish love, a love of FRIENDSHIP existing between God and the soul. There, faith gives place to vision; hope, to possession; but charity remains.

Even on earth it urges us to love God above all else for His own infinitely lovable sake, to will that He be known and loved by others, that His rights be recognised, and His will be done by all. In heaven, it will do the same; but there, on account of the perfection of our knowledge, our love will be far more fervent than it can ever be on earth. Moreover, since we shall then love God in the way He loves Himself, our love will be above freedom, as His is, a love that can never be lost nor even diminished in the slightest, for sin will be impossible.

True, we shall not love God to the EXTENT that He loves us, nor to the extent that He is lovable. Only an infinite will can do that. But we shall love Him to the fullest extent of our capacity; hence with a love worthy of His infinite goodness.

It will include, of course, all creatures worthy of love. The loving companionship of our dear ones, our intimate fellowship with angels and saints, with Mary our Mother and her Divine Son - all this will be ours forever. Nor will any grief or misunderstanding or separation mar the love of the blessed. Husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, companions and friends who once parted in tears will meet again in joy to part no more. For, as St. John says, "God will wipe away all tears from their eyes; and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow;

for the former things are passed away.” (Apoc. 21:4). Purgatory is suffering, with love. But heaven is love alone.

By thus satisfying perfectly and forever man's profound desire to love and to be loved, heaven will give us the second thing necessary for our perfect HAPPINESS in eternity.

(c). Pleasure.

Since man has a body as well as a soul, his third great need is that of SENSIBLE DELIGHT, the pleasure he derives through his sense faculties.

After the resurrection, our sense KNOWLEDGE will be perfected and refined so that we shall be able to appreciate to the full the grandeur and beauty of the glorious new universe into which our present one will be transformed on the Last Day. Our LOVE, too, of all that is beautiful in nature, in form and sound and colour, will be enhanced a thousandfold, and become a source of exquisite sensible delight that can never pass away.

Heaven will thus satisfy to the full every desire for pleasure compatible with the condition of a glorified body; and so assure us of the last thing necessary for perfect HAPPINESS forever.

2. What Heaven Is.

Now you can see why heaven is called the BEATIFIC VISION. It is a vision, indeed, one even into the very essence of God. And just because it is that, it is one that brings with it BEATITUDE or perfect happiness. We are happy, remember, when we have NO DESIRE UNSATISFIED; and we are perfectly happy when we have none unsatisfied FOREVER. By satisfying all our desires in eternity, therefore, heaven must give us complete happiness. Moreover, it is not a happiness proportionate to MAN as is that enjoyed in Limbo, but a SUPERNATURAL happiness proportionate to the INFINITE; for it is a real sharing in the happiness proper to GOD.

Heaven, then, is a PLACE and a STATE in which the good angels and human beings who have died in GRACE, KNOW GOD in the way He knows Himself, LOVE Him in the way He loves Himself, and so share His measureless HAPPINESS in eternity.

3. Its Properties.

(a). It is Unlosable.

On earth we can commit sin, because God seems to us good from some aspects, evil from others, on account of the self-denial required to keep His commandments. In heaven, He is seen to be infinitely good, good from every aspect. Knowing Him in the way He knows Himself, and loving Him as thus known, the blessed can never find the least pretext for leaving Him by sin. For them, sin is absolutely impossible, as it is for God Himself. Hence, the vision they enjoy can never be lost.

This is why St. Paul can speak of it as "an INCORRUPTIBLE crown." (1 Cor. 9:5). And why St. Peter can say that it is "an inheritance, INCORRUPTIBLE, and UNDEFILED, THAT CAN NEVER FADE." (1 Pet. 1:4). If it could, the blessed could not be perfectly happy, since their happiness would be always marred by the fear of losing it. Heaven could not be heaven if it could ever end.

(b). It Is Eternal.

On earth, there is continuous time. In purgatory, discontinuous time. In heaven, no time at all. Instead, there is eternity. Unlike God's eternity, that of the blessed has a beginning; but, like His, it can have no end. It is a sharing in His, a sharing in the one unchanging moment into which the infinite life of God is concentrated, without past or future, forever.

Thus Scripture assures us that once the Last Judgment has been pronounced, the wicked "shall go into EVERLASTING punishment; but the just, into EVERLASTING life." (Mat. 25:46). St. Paul, too, reminds us that "what is at present momentary and light of our tribulation worketh for us above measure an ETERNAL weight of glory" in heaven. (2 Cor. 4:17).

The sharing that the blessed have in God's eternity contributes greatly to their happiness, since it dispels completely the fear that every intellectual creature can have of ceasing to exist. It is thus the very opposite of the ghastly sense of annihilation that torments the souls in hell.

(c). It is Ever New.

Some think that heaven must grow monotonous after a few million years. This is because they think of eternity as a long time. But eternity is wholly different from time. It is an ever-present instant, a "now" that never passes but concentrates in itself the fullness of unending life. Heavenly joy has therefore a newness that can never fade, since the first moment of it lasts forever. It is like a glorious morning that can never end.

(d). It Varies For different Persons.

All in heaven have the same object of vision; but all do not know God to the same extent. Hence their love also varies, and their happiness. Thus Scripture says that when Christ will come to judge us at the end of time, He will "render to every man according to his WORKS." (Mat. 16:27). As these will vary with different persons, so will the reward. St. Paul says the same thing: "Every man shall receive his OWN reward, according to his OWN labour." (1 Cor. 3:8). He also warns us that "He that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly; he that soweth in blessings shall also reap in blessings." (2 Cor. 9:6).

How could it be otherwise? Our reward in heaven will be proportionate to the light of glory. This, to the merits we have stored up, and the grace and charity in our soul immediately after death. Thus Our Lady will enjoy an unrivalled insight into God's essence in the beatific vision on account of her incomparable charity. She will be in very truth the Queen of heaven, Queen of all angels and of all men.

(e). Yet Each Will Be Perfectly Happy.

Since everyone in heaven will know, love and enjoy God to the FULL extent of his CAPACITY, each will be perfectly happy. None will have a single desire unsatisfied in eternity. However, we must not forget that the desires of the blessed will be wholly regulated by God's will. They can never have any wish contrary to His. This is why, impossible though it may seem to us on earth, their joy will not be marred by the fact that some whom they have loved on earth may have deliberately spurned God's mercy even at the moment of death, and buried themselves forever in hell. Happiness can exist only with right order. And right order demands that those who

deliberately hate and despise God to the end should be excluded from His presence in eternity.

4. Conclusion.

Such, then, is heaven. "Eternal life" it is often called in Scripture. No better name could be given it, for it is a real sharing in the life of Him who is Life itself. It is the greatest proof of God's love for us; for in giving us heaven, He gives us HIMSELF, to be known, loved and enjoyed in eternity. After this, though He is infinite, He has nothing left to give.

It is the one reward we must never lose, since to lose it is to lose all, forever.

Finally, it is our HOME. And in it, Our Lord assures us, there are "MANY MANSIONS", (John 14:2) from the highest to the lowest. How consoling! Each of us can say: "Who knows? Given God's infinite mercy, there may be one even low enough for me." And, low though it is, it will enable me to "enter into the joy of the Lord," (Mat. 25:21) where "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for those that love Him." (1 Cor. 2:9).

B. HELL.

1. Origin.

Angels are created spirits not destined to be united substantially to a body. Infinitely inferior to God who alone is self-existing, they are yet vastly superior to man. Their number? Billions. Unlike man, each is a species on his own. They are divided according to their dignity into nine choirs: the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones; the Dominations, Virtues and Powers; the Principalities, Archangels and Angels.

At the instant of their creation they were given a trial by God to test their loyalty. Some were true to Him, and were admitted immediately to the beatific vision. Your guardian angel was one of these. Do you ever think of congratulating him? Others rebelled against God. They sinned mortally and were instantly cast into hell. That is how it came into existence. It was made for the devil and his angels.

2. Scripture and Tradition Concerning Hell.

(a). CHRIST'S TEACHING.

Our Divine Lord is dreadfully emphatic and clear in all His statements concerning the reality of hell.

For instance, He demands that we accept His teaching under pain of ETERNAL DAMNATION. After bidding His Apostles to make known His truths to the whole world, He says: "He that believeth shall be SAVED; but he that believeth not shall be CONDEMNED." (Mark 16:16). Just as "saved" here means saved in heaven, "condemned" must mean condemned to hell.

Again, listen to His warning against occasions of sin. He says: "If thy hand scandalise thee, cut it off. It is better for thee to enter LIFE maimed, than having two hands to go into HELL, into UNQUENCHABLE FIRE:

"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished.

"And if thy foot scandalise thee, cut it off. It is better for thee to enter lame into LIFE EVERLASTING than having two feet to be cast into the HELL OF UNQUENCHABLE FIRE:

"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished.

"And if thy eye scandalise thee, pluck it out. It is better for thee with one eye to enter the KINGDOM OF GOD, than having two eyes to be cast into the HELL OF FIRE:

"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished." (Mark 9:42-47).

How explicit He is! How insistent! And what a striking contrast He draws between EVERLASTING LIFE and the HELL OF UNQUENCHABLE FIRE!

In a similar way. He warns us against final impenitence (Mat.12:32); He urges the duty of charity (John 15:6); and He

demands that we practise chastity (Mat. 5:28), all under pain of ETERNAL PUNISHMENT. He tells us, too, that heaven is for those who "do His Father's will," and that hell is for those "that work iniquity." (Mat. 7:21-23). And how often does He tell the Pharisees that they will be damned if they persist in their hypocrisy "You serpents," He says to them, "generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgement of hell?" (Mat. 23:33).

Several of His parables, again, end with the condemnation of the wicked to HELL - that of the cockle, for instance; that of the royal marriage, that of the wise and the foolish virgins, and that of the talents. Even in His Sermon on the Mount, He refers to hell no fewer than six times.

But the dread reality of hell is brought home to us most, perhaps, by the graphic description He gives of the Last Judgement. There, as Supreme JUDGE, He will say to the blessed: "Come you blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"; and to the wicked: "Depart from Me, you cursed, into EVERLASTING FIRE, which was prepared for the devil and his angels." And Scripture adds: "These shall go into EVERLASTING punishment; but the just into EVERLASTING life." (Mat. 25:32). Judges never use figurative language when passing a sentence. Coming as it does from the lips of Him who is Truth Itself, acting as JUDGE, this text should strike fear even into the heart of a saint. Think of it! Everlasting banishment from God, the Supreme Good, to a never-ending prison of fire, made to punish the devil and his angels!

(b). THE TEACHING OF THE APOSTLES.

The APOSTLES are equally explicit and emphatic in their teaching. ST. PETER, for example, tells us that false prophets and lying teachers shall be punished in hell, as are the rebel angels. (2 Pet. 2:1-22). ST. JUDE speaks in similar terms of the ungodly who denied Christ. He likens them to

"Clouds without water, which are carried about by winds;
trees of the autumn, unfruitful, twice deaf, plucked up by
the roots;

“Raging waves of the sea foaming out their own confusion, wandering stars to whom the storm of darkness is reserved FOREVER.” (Jude 1:12-13).

How dreadfully insane their life is! How utterly worthless! And their lot in eternity? It is, as he says in verse seven, “the punishment of ETERNAL FIRE,” and a tormenting darkness that can never end.

ST. PAUL has also a great deal to say about hell. Speaking of the persecutors of the Church, for instance, he says that they “shall suffer ETERNAL PUNISHMENT in destruction from the face of the Lord, and from the glory of His power, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints and to be made wonderful in all of them who have believed.” (2 Thess. 1:9-10). This text is especially important, because it is St. Paul's INSPIRED interpretation of Christ's sentence on the Last Day. And it expresses most clearly and explicitly the reality of an everlasting hell. In several other texts that could be quoted he does the same.

Faced with these and similar texts from Scripture, we cannot escape the conclusion that hell exists. No artifice of speech or reasonable method of interpreting the New Testament can get away from the perfectly clear meaning of these unmistakable words, especially those uttered by Christ.

(c). TRADITION.

TRADITION is just as clear, from the beginning. For the first three centuries, no Christian dared deny the existence of hell. In the fourth century a few heretics called in question its eternity.¹ Their error was instantly condemned by the Church. Thus, in the ATHANASIAN Creed drawn up about this time, we read: “They that have done good shall go into LIFE EVERLASTING; and they that have done evil, into EVERLASTING FIRE. This is the Catholic faith which, unless a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.” Later, in the fourteenth century, the teaching that those who die in mortal sin do not go to hell till the last day was condemned by Pope Benedict XII, who declared that such persons go to hell immediately after death. Like Scripture, therefore, Tradition leaves no loop-hole whatever for the denial of hell and its eternity.

¹ Editor's note: Origen died during the 3rd Century and Didymus the Blind is in the 4th Century.

We accept its existence, then, as an article of divine faith, on the AUTHORITY OF GOD revealing it. And we are certain that He has revealed it, because the CHURCH assures us INFALLIBLY that He has.

3. Its Sufferings.

(a). THE PAIN OF LOSS.

This is the irreparable loss of the BEATIFIC VISION. It is by far the worst punishment of the damned. Without it, hell would not be hell. It is its very essence.

On earth we are without the beatific vision. Yet its lack does not cause us suffering. Why should it do so after death? To understand this, we must distinguish between the mere ABSENCE of a good, and the DEPRIVATION of a good. In the former case, the good is not DUE to us. In the latter it is DUE. We OUGHT have it. The former does not cause suffering. The latter does. Thus no man is saddened by the fact that he has not wings, or scores of legs. These are in no way DUE to him. He is not a bird or a centipede. But every man is saddened by the loss of his sight or hearing. These are DUE to him. As man, he OUGHT have them. Apply this now to the beatific vision. On earth, its lack is a mere ABSENCE. No one OUGHT have it here, since it is reserved for eternity. After death, however, a soul OUGHT have it, given our elevation to the supernatural order. Its lack is no longer a mere absence. It is the DEPRIVATION of a good infinitely more precious than sight or hearing, since it is the SUPREME GOOD, the Good beyond compare.

Now, consider this. The more we appreciate the greatness of the good we have lost, and the more our nature yearns for it, the more suffering its deprivation will bring to us. But the souls in hell realise most clearly that the good of which they are deprived through their own fault is the INFINITE GOOD, and their last end. Nor can they forget their loss even for a moment by turning to lesser goods, as we can on earth; for there are no lesser goods in hell to which they can turn. At the same time they yearn for God with their whole being, because the natural desire of the human will to love God more than self remains. Yet they are compelled to loathe and hate Him forever, because of the perversity of their will which has been made permanent by death.

The pain of loss, therefore, is made up of several torments. In it there is an immense SADNESS, proportionate to the infinite good of which they are deprived. Coupled with this is a ghastly LONELINESS felt by a spiritual being cast forth forever from companionship with God, without a single created good to which it can turn for consolation. Then, there is an unbearable CONTRADICTION or war within the soul itself, due to its natural inclination to love God above all else, and its self-imposed hatred of Him forever. Finally, there is an appalling sense of ANNIHILATION, due to the soul's banishment by God. Just as Our Saviour's words, "Come ye blessed," attract the soul to Himself with an immeasurable attraction, so, too, His words, "Depart from Me, you cursed," thrust the damned soul from Him on whom it depends every instant for its existence. It thus fills the soul with a horrifying sense of annihilation, a sort of constant sinking into nothingness. Our Saviour seems to have felt something of this at the moment He was redeeming us; and it wrung from His anguished soul the unforgettable cry: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" It is the worst suffering in the pain of loss, because it is directly opposed to the very nature of the soul itself as a spiritual being, made for eternity.

(b). DESPAIR.

Even on earth despair can be a ghastly thing. It can completely wreck our happiness. It can unhinge the mind. It can drive a man to suicide. But the despair of the damned is immeasurably worse, since it is concerned with an infinite good, lost eternally. They know that for them there is no hope of any happiness, but only suffering and misery forever.

(c). REMORSE.

This is an intense regret caused by the thought that they could so easily have saved their souls, had they taken the means given by Christ. It is the "worm that dieth not" so often mentioned in Scripture. In the Old Testament it is graphically described by the Book of Wisdom in which the author portrays the damned comparing their lot with that of the saved.

"Saying within themselves, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit: These are they whom we had some time in derision, and for a parable of reproach.

"We fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honour.

"Behold how they are numbered amongst the children of God, and their lot is amongst the saints.

"Therefore, we have erred from the way of truth, and the light of justice hath not shined unto us, and the sun of understanding hath not risen upon us.

"We wearied ourselves in the way of iniquity and destruction, and have walked through the hard way; but the way of the Lord we have not known.

"What hath pride profited us? Or what advantage hath the boasting of riches brought us?

"All these things are passed away like a shadow...

"Such things as these the sinners said in hell." (Wisd. 5:3-14).

How vividly this passage brings home to us the remorse of the damned; the fleetingness of life; the horror of realising at death that we have nothing to take with us into eternity; the complete absence of any good to solace the lost; the madness of a life of sin.

Notice that the souls in hell are said to REPENT. This does not mean that they have true CONTRITION for their sins. They are sorry for sin, indeed, but not precisely as SIN, as an offence against GOD, but solely as a CAUSE OF THEIR MISERY. It is the PUNISHMENT they regret, not the sin, as sin. There is no resolution of amendment here. On the contrary, through their own fault, their will is fixed in evil forever. Hence, this is not contrition, but only a galling REMORSE, as unavailing as it is bitter and everlasting.

(d) FIRE.

Recall Christ's words: "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels." Here the word "fire" cannot be taken as a metaphor for anguish of soul. It must mean material fire. Why? In the first place, it is the SENTENCE OF A JUDGE, the most momentous that can ever be passed on man. But no judge delivers a sentence in figurative language. What would you think of a judge delivering a death sentence: "You shall be hanged by the neck till you are dead," and

then adding: "But, of course, I mean this only metaphorically"? Secondly, Christ here BANISHES the lost souls to a PLACE. "Depart from Me," He says. But a place is a MATERIAL thing. Hence quite distinct from a spiritual thing such as anguish of soul. Thirdly, the fire here is that which was created to punish the devil and his angels, centuries before any human souls can have been sent to it. It must therefore be something DISTINCT from them, not just a spiritual experience that starts at the moment of damnation. Moreover, it is always given as a CAUSE of their sufferings, never as these sufferings themselves. Lastly, this fire will torment the bodies as well as the souls of the damned, after the resurrection; for Christ says: "Fear not them that kill the body and are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him that can destroy BOTH SOUL AND BODY in hell." (Mat. 10:28). It must, therefore, be true, material fire, and not just a figurative way of expressing the mental sufferings of the souls in hell. And the same interpretation must be given this word in the numerous other texts in which it occurs. This is why we accept the existence of material fire in hell.

Though real fire, it differs in many ways from the fire we know on earth. Ours is fed by what it burns; it, by God's justice. Ours can be extinguished; it is eternal. Ours is given as a benefit; it, as an instrument of suffering. Ours consumes its victim; it does not. Ours gives light; it is compatible with an intolerable darkness. And so on.

How can it torment something spiritual? As a material thing, fire can certainly enable a spirit to be in a PLACE, just as a room does if an angel starts to act in it. Used as an INSTRUMENT by GOD, it can do far more. It can BIND, DETAIN, IMPRISON a spirit in a place, preventing it from going elsewhere, thus PARALYSING, as it were, its spiritual activities, hindering it unceasingly from doing its own will. And this must obviously be a source of great suffering to a spirit, a sort of crucifixion of soul; and at the same time a most bitter and galling HUMILIATION, since a spirit should by its very nature dominate matter, and not be dominated by it. If God can use water to cause grace, as in baptism, or to cure a cancer, as at Lourdes, surely He can use fire to torment souls. After the resurrection, of course, this fire will torment also the bodies of the damned, without ever consuming them, just as the fire seen by Moses in the burning bush really burnt there without destroying it. Anyway, our task in life is not to understand how fire can cause suffering to a spiritual thing, but to live in such a way that we shall avoid its torments in eternity.

4. The Eternity of Hell.

Today some Protestants deny the eternity of hell by saying that the souls there will ultimately be admitted to heaven. In doing this, they are really changing hell to PURGATORY, though they profess to abhor the very name of such a place. Moreover, they are going against the perfectly clear and very insistent testimony of Scripture, though they claim to base their religion on the Bible and on it alone. For us, however, there can be no uncertainty. The Church has infallibly defined that hell is eternal. Its eternity, therefore, as well as its existence we accept on the authority of God. This belief does not terrify us, any more than a law-abiding citizen is terrified by knowing that there are jails in Australia. But it does help us to keep from sin. Hell has saved countless souls.

In this matter, we must never forget that every human being will be happy in eternity, unless he deliberately chooses to be otherwise. An unbaptised child dying before coming to the use of reason, will enjoy the happiness proper to man, forever in Limbo. All who come to the use of reason, must freely CHOOSE their lot beyond the grave. God gives them sufficient grace to save their souls. If they go to hell, it is solely through their own fault. They deliberately reject the grace that would otherwise save them.

During our life, God exercises His mercy towards us in a wonderfully generous way. How infinitely merciful Christ was even to the worst sinners, who showed the least signs of repentance. Think of Mary Magdalen, and the repentant thief! However, if a sinner INSISTS on spurning God's mercy, even at the moment of death, God cannot save him. Any attempt to do so would rob the man of his free will; hence, frustrate itself.

Realise now what happens at death, and you will see why hell is eternal. The LAST choice made by a human being BEFORE the moment of death DETERMINES what his lot will be: HEAVEN or HELL. It chooses one or the other. Then, the FIRST act of the will AFTER death makes this choice EVERLASTING. Why? Because a separated soul acts in the way an angel does. In making a choice, it makes it forever, since it makes it with all the intellectual light it can ever have to influence its judgement.

This is why death is such a momentous event for each of us. The first instant after it ETERNALISES the choice made freely by the

will in the instant that preceded it. Hence, it makes it impossible for God ever to exercise His mercy towards the damned. Their will is fixed in sin. It must reject forever any mercy that God might otherwise see fit to extend to it. It is immutably fixed in its own self-chosen perversity. It can never learn wisdom from its sufferings. It can never repent with true contrition. It is a prey to an unavailing remorse, and to a despair that can know no end. It has deliberately committed itself to hate God as its Punisher, forever.

Even during our life, a formal mortal sin is an **IRREVOCABLE** choice. In it we choose ourselves instead of God, as our **LAST END**. If we happen to change our will after such a sin, the change is due, not to the natural power of our will alone, but to God's **GRACE**, which first inspires fear, then regret, then hope, then a desire of forgiveness, and finally true contrition and love. Every act of perfect contrition made after mortal sin, and every fruitful absolution given in confession is therefore a striking witness to the goodness and mercy of God. In this life, then, the choice of our will in sinning is not **ABSOLUTELY** irrevocable, thanks to God's grace. But death makes it so. Hence there can be no further exercises of His mercy after death, any more than there could be for the rebel angels who, at the very instant of their sin, were cast into hell for ever.

5. Lessons.

God's revelation of heaven and hell ought to bring home to us the dignity and the depth of the human soul, by showing its limitless capacity as a spiritual being for happiness and for misery in eternity. It should also move us to tears of gratitude to His Divine Son who became man, in order to save us from hell, and enable us again to go to heaven. It should fill us with a loathing for mortal sin, since by it alone can we rob ourselves of the beatific vision, and put ourselves in hell. It should make us realise the value of the present moment, since in it we can turn from sin, or, if we are in grace already, store up further merit for eternity. It should cause us to shun wordliness and superficiality, since these can blind us to the dread realities that wait for us beyond the grave. It should fill us with zeal for the salvation of others. In a word, it should inspire us to live our Christian life as fully as we possibly can, in imitation of Our Lord and His Immaculate Mother. Time is short; yet, on it depends our eternity.

6. Practical Conclusions.

1. I should hate mortal sin above every other evil; and avoid as far as I can all occasions of sin.
2. I should make an act of perfect contrition immediately, and go to confession as soon as I can if I ever fall into mortal sin.
3. I should do my best to increase good habits daily, by practising all the virtues.
4. I should be deeply devoted to Our Lady, since this is a guarantee of salvation.
5. I should never forget Our Lord's words: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul?"

SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION.

OUR LAST END:

- (a). To promote God's glory in eternity.
- (b). Our choice of heaven or hell.

(A) HEAVEN.

1. Man's Greatest Needs.

- (a). Knowledge. How the blessed know God in heaven.
- (b). Love. How they love Him in heaven.
- (c). Pleasure. Sensible delights, after the resurrection.

2. What Heaven Is.

- (a). Why called the beatific vision.
- (b). Its definition.

3. Its Properties.

- (a). It is unlosable.
- (b). It is eternal.
- (c). It is ever new.
- (d). It varies for different persons.
- (e). Yet each is perfectly happy.

4. Conclusion.

- (a). Eternal life.

(b). The one thing we must never lose.

(c). Our home in eternity.

(B) HELL.

1. Its Origin.

(a). The angels.

(b). Their fall.

(b). Why hell is eternal.

(c). Importance of death.

2. Scripture And Tradition.

(a). Christ's Teaching.

(b). The Teaching of the Apostles.

(c). Tradition.

5. Lessons.

(a). Dignity and depth of the soul.

(b). Gratitude for the Incarnation.

(c). Hatred of sin.

3. Its Sufferings.

(a). The pain of loss.

(b). Despair.

(c). Remorse.

(d). Fire.

(d). Value of the present moment.

(e). Danger of worldliness and superficiality.

(f). Zeal for souls.

4. Its Eternity.

(a). Definition of the Church.

(g). Imitation of Christ and Our Lady.

6. Practical Conclusions.

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following : -

1. Our Last end is to promote (....) in eternity. 2. We shall do this either in (....) or in (....) according to our choice. 3. Man's first great need is (....). 4. In heaven God's essence is known by the blessed (mediately) (immediately). 5. St. Paul says: "But then I shall know even as (....)." 6. St. John says that in heaven we shall see God "even as (....)." 7. Only by the help of the (....) will our intellect be able to stand the beatific vision. 8. Man's second great need is (....). 9. The blessed know and love God to the full extent to which He is knowable and lovable. (True) (False). 10. They know Him in the way He knows Himself, and they love Him in the way He loves Himself. (True) (False). 11. They know and love Him infinitely. (True) (False). 12. Sharing His knowledge and love, they must share also His (....).

13. A being is perfectly happy when it has no desires (....) forever. 14. All our desires for sensible delights will be fully satisfied in heaven after (....). 15. The beatific vision (can) (cannot) be lost by those in heaven. 16. Heaven (is) (is not) eternal. 17. Some souls will be happier than others in heaven. (True) (False). 18. The degree of happiness will depend on (....). 19. Christ will invite even the least of the blessed to "enter the joy of (....)." 20. Heaven is often called "eternal (....)." 21. Hell was first made to punish (....). 22. Christ threatened with (....) those who refused to accept His truths. 23. On the Last Day, He will say to the lost: "(....)." 24. This is the sentence of a (....); hence its words must be taken in a (proper) (figurative) sense. 25. The main suffering in hell is the (....). 26. It is made up of four different sufferings, namely (....), (....), (....), (....). 27. Instead of hope, there is (....) in hell. 28. The regret of the lost concerning sin is called (....), it (is) (is not) true contrition. 29. We (do) (do not) admit the presence of material fire in hell. 30. Every material thing can enable a spirit to be in a (....). 31. It can imprison it there, if used as God's (....). 32. The Church (has) (has not) defined that hell is eternal. 33. A soul in hell (would) (would not) come out if it were allowed to do so. 34. In every mortal sin we choose ourselves instead of God as our (....). 35. As far as our natural power goes, this choice is (....). 36. If we repent, it is due to (....). 37. God (can) (cannot) give the grace of repentance to a soul in hell. 38. Every human being must be happy in eternity unless he deliberately chooses to be otherwise. (True) (False). 39. No one can go to hell except through his own fault. (True) (False). 40. Christ says: "What doth it profit a man if he gain (....), and suffer the loss (....)."

(B) Answer each of the following as fully as you can: -

1. What is our Last End? How does God respect our freedom in its regard?
2. What are man's three great needs? How is each satisfied in heaven?
3. Give five properties of the beatific vision.
4. Why is heaven called: (a) the beatific vision; (b) Eternal life?
5. How did hell originate? How do you define it? Why do we believe in it?
6. Explain (a) the pain of loss; (b) the despair; (c) the remorse; (d) the fire in hell.
7. Show why hell must be eternal.

8. What lessons can be drawn from God's revelation of heaven and of hell?

Chapter 55

THE END OF THE WORLD

(A) ITS DESTRUCTION

1. The Fact.

God assures us that the world will end. When? On the Last Day, when Christ will come again as Judge of all mankind. And when will this be? When the Church, His Mystical Body, has completed Her work of saving souls. The year? We do not know. Not even the century.

HOW will it end? Scripture speaks of a mighty catastrophe, in which fire will play a big part, St. Peter, for instance says:

"The Day of the Lord shall come as a thief, in which the heavens shall pass away with great violence, and the elements shall be melted with heat, and the earth and the works that are in it shall be burnt up." (2 Pet. 3:10). St. John was given a pre-view of the end. Here is something of what he saw: "Behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood.

"The stars from heaven fell upon the earth, as the figtree casteth its green figs, when it is shaken by a great wind.

"And the heavens departed as a book folded up; and every mountain and the islands were moved out of their places." (Apoc. 6:12-15).

Scripture has, of course, many other things to say about the end of the world, with its dreadful happenings on the earth, at sea, and in the sky.

It speaks of it, too, as "a cruel day, full of indignation, of wrath and fury," a day of "great tribulation such as hath not been from the beginning of the world," a day especially of terror in which men will "wither away with fear," and call on the "rocks and the mountains

to fall upon them and hide them" from the face of the Lord, whom they fear more than death itself.

Will the world be annihilated? No. Several times Scripture assures us that from its ruins there will be fashioned "a new heavens and a new earth," one in keeping with the glorified condition of the bodies of the saved, after the general resurrection from the dead.

2. Signs of The End.

(a). THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO ALL.

St. Matthew says that the Gospel "shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to ALL nations; and then shall the CONSUMMATION come." (Mat. 24:14).

(b). THE COMING OF ANTI-CHRIST.

Opposition to Our Lord will be greatly increased towards the end. It will reach its climax in ANTI-CHRIST, whom Scripture depicts, not as a movement such as Communism, but as a PERSON. It says that he will have many precursors, and many associates. St. Paul speaks of him as the wicked one "whose coming is according to the working of Satan, in all power and signs and lying wonders, and in all seduction of iniquity to them that perish, because they RECEIVE NOT THE LOVE OF THE TRUTH, that they might be saved." (Thess. 2:9-10). Many will fall away from the faith as a result.

(c). THE RETURN OF ELIAS.

Malachias foretells the return of Elias "before the coming of the great and dreadful Day of the Lord." (Mal. 4:5). St. Matthew also mentions his coming. (Mat. 17:10). His mission? To convert the Jews. It seems, too, that Henoch will assist him in this. (Eccli. 44:16).

(d). THE CONVERSION OF THE JEWS.

St. Paul mentions this. (Rom. 11:25). How many will have to be converted before their turning to Christ is a sign of the end? We do not know.

Since we do not know how long the end will take to come after any of these signs, Our Lord's words remain true: "Of that day and hour no man knoweth, no, not the angels of heaven, but the Father alone." (Mat. 24:36). However, for each of us, it is true to say that the end of the world comes at the moment of DEATH, since we can neither merit nor demerit after that.

(B) THE RESURRECTION

1. What It Is.

At death, the SUBSTANTIAL union of body and soul is broken. They are separated. The soul goes on living, but the body returns to dust. Now, the RESURRECTION is the opposite. In it, soul and body are united SUBSTANTIALLY again, to form the same human being as existed previously. And this time the union is indissoluble. It will last forever.

The Fourth LATERAN Council, held in 1215, tells us that Christ will come at the end of time to judge the good and the bad, "ALL of whom will rise with their OWN PROPER bodies, WHICH THEY NOW BEAR, so that they may receive according to their deeds." Notice the words emphasised.

Why "our own proper bodies" which we "now bear"? Why not just a body? In the first place, the word "resurrection" itself demands that the matter in our risen body be that which at some time or other formed part of our body on earth. Surely only that can be said to "rise again" which once fell.

Moreover, the body is restored in order that it may enjoy the reward or suffer the punishment due to ITS co-operation with the soul. So it must be the SAME body as the one we have had during life.

Lastly, the soul is made THIS soul through the relation it has to THIS matter to which it is united. After death, it retains this

relation. Hence in the resurrection, it must be united again to THIS matter rather than to another to which it will have no relation whatever. Each of us must be the SAME person, the SAME human being, as he or she was when on earth.

It is obviously not necessary that the soul be united to ALL the matter that will have been in our body during our life time, since it changes unceasingly. But it does seem that it must be united to SOME of it, if we are to rise, as the Council puts it, with our own proper bodies, the ones we now bear.

The body given us on the Last Day will have no defects whatever. St. Thomas thinks that all will be in the full vigour of life – about the age of thirty. But each will have the characteristics which he or she had during life, so that each will be easily recognised by the others.

2. Christ's Resurrection.

(a). CHRIST RAISED THE DEAD TO LIFE.

To make it easier for us to believe in His and in our own resurrection, Christ raised the dead to life. Scripture mentions three cases: that of Jairus's little daughter, who had just died; that of the widow's son, whose body was being carried to burial; and that of Lazarus whose body had already been buried several days. Recall Martha's warning to Christ: "Lord, by this time he stinketh." (John. 11:39). No doubt possible concerning the reality of this death!

(b). CHRIST FORETOLD HIS OWN RESURRECTION.

"Destroy this temple," He said, referring to His Body, "and in three days I will raise it up." (John 2:10). And when He spoke of His coming Passion in which He would be "mocked and scourged and crucified," he said that He would "rise again on the third day." (Mat. 20:19).

(c). CHRIST ROSE FROM THE DEAD.

All the Evangelists attest this at great length. ST. MARK devotes almost all of his last chapter to it. His account is brief, yet so complete that the Church uses it as the Gospel for Easter Sunday. Read it, and see for yourself the wealth of detail it crams into so small a space. ST. MATTHEW has all that St. Mark has; but he adds other details such as Christ's commission to His Apostles "to raise the dead." (Mat. 10:8).

As a doctor, ST. LUKE was especially interested in Christ's resurrection. He not merely testifies to its truth, but also gives a sort of medical diagnosis of Our Saviour's risen Body. He notes, for instance, Christ's invitation to the Apostles: "See My hands and feet, that it is I Myself; handle and see. For a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see Me to have." (Luke 24:29). St. Luke also thinks it worthy of mention that the risen Christ ate the fish and the honey which His Apostles offered to Him. (Luke 24:22).

In addition to the main account of Christ's resurrection, ST. JOHN supplies us with some details not mentioned by the others. Having reclined on Our Saviour's bosom at the Last Supper, he could not forget to record the wound made in that Heart after death. Nor could he omit to mention that the worthy reception of the Eucharist gives us a title to special glory in our own resurrection from the dead.

The APOSTLES laid special stress on the resurrection of Christ. ST. PETER, for example, in his first defence of the Church before the Jewish people said: "But the Author of Life you killed, whom God raised from the dead." (Acts 3:15). He repeated the same doctrine before the Jewish priests. (Acts 4:10). Addressing the Gentiles, he mentions Christ, "whom they (the Jews) killed, hanging Him upon a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and gave Him to be manifest... to witnesses pre-ordained by God, even to us who did eat and drink with Him after He rose again from the dead." (Acts 10:39-43).

Preaching at Antioch, St. Paul follows the same line as St. Peter. He gives Christ's resurrection as a reason for accepting Christianity. (Acts 13:31). He does the same when speaking to the philosophers at Athens, some of whom "mocked," but others more polite said, "We shall hear thee again concerning this matter." (Acts 17:25). It was the dispute between the Pharisees and the Sadducees about the resurrection that finally sent him as a prisoner to Rome. There

his conviction that Christ's resurrection is the cause of our own found its expression in the Epistles he wrote from his prison, while he was waiting for trial and perhaps death.

Christ's resurrection is thus attested so clearly and forcibly in the New Testament that no one can have even a semblance of a reason for doubting or denying it. And TRADITION is just as strong. So we accept it on the authority of God who makes it known to us. He did this through an angel whom He sent specially from heaven for the purpose. Recall the angel's words to Mary Magdalen: "You seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here. He is RISEN, as He said. Come and see the place where the Lord was laid." And he showed her the empty sepulchre. (Mat. 28:6).

3. The General Resurrection.

CHRIST clearly taught this. The fifth Chapter of St. John's Gospel is nothing more than His sermon on the General Resurrection. In it He says: "Amen, amen I say to you... the hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves will hear the voice of the Son of God. And they that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgement." (John 5:29).

The APOSTLES, too, mention the resurrection repeatedly. St. Paul, for instance, devotes to it the whole of Chapter 15 in his Epistle to the Corinthians, where he gives five reasons why we must all rise at the end of the world. In his Epistle to the Romans, he adds another. (Roms. 8:11).

TRADITION is equally emphatic. The Didache, the writings of men such as Clement of Rome, Polycarp, Aristides, Tatian, Athanagoras, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Ephrem, Ambrose and Augustine, and early Creeds such as the Apostles', the Nicene and the Athanasian - all give the general resurrection as a truth of the Catholic faith. So we must accept it as such on the authority of God who has revealed it.

4. Features of a Glorified Body.

Scripture states that ALL the dead will rise, the bad as well as the good, and all together at the same instant, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet," as St. Paul puts it. It also tells us that the bodies of the saved will be supernaturally GLORIFIED, whereas those of the lost will not.

In heaven the bodies of the just will not cease to be MATERIAL. But they will be SPIRITUALISED, made more like a SPIRIT, refined in a wondrous manner, so that they may be a help rather than a hindrance to the full activity and enjoyment of the soul. God will endow them with these four qualities:-

(a). SUBTLETY.

At present our bodies are very dependent on SPACE. This dependence enables them to do three things: to be in a PLACE, to RESIST other bodies and to BE RESISTED by them. The first two cannot be taken from them. But the third can. It was, in Our Lord, whose risen Body was able to pass instantly through a closed door, as when He became present to His Apostles in this amazing way, though they could at the same time see His Body and touch it with their hands. It will be the same for our own bodies in heaven. This power of being able to penetrate material things with the utmost ease, in somewhat the same way as radio waves can pass through a wall at present, will obviously be a great help to the perfect liberty of our soul in eternity. It is called the gift of SUBTLETY, and it is meant to remedy the CRASSNESS or GROSSNESS which is a feature of our bodies here on earth.

(b). IMPASSIBILITY.

In our present life our bodies are PASSIBLE. They can be wounded, crushed, afflicted with many diseases, decomposed. In heaven all these will be impossible, thanks to the gift of IMPASSIBILITY which will make them as immune from physical harm as the soul is by its very nature. Never will they be a source of suffering to it, as they now are on earth.

(c). AGILITY.

On earth our bodies greatly hinder the movement of our soul. It can be present in its substance only where our body also is. Nor can we shift our body speedily from place to place, unless we put it into

something else that shifts – a jet fighter, for example. In heaven, however, our bodies will no longer hinder our soul in its movement. They will be able to go from one place to another with the speed of thought, on account of the gift of AGILITY which will do away with the galling INERTNESS that we experience in the present life. What a happy freedom will ours be in heaven!

(d). CLARITY.

This is the supernatural LIGHT that will shine forth with wondrous splendour from a glorified body, so that it may be a fit companion for its glorified soul. Just as the soul will be made resplendent with the LIGHT OF GLORY which is a real sharing in God's own light; so, too, the body will be beautified by its own proper supernatural light, like that which shone from Our Saviour's Body during the transfiguration on the mount.

St. Paul has in mind these gifts when he writes of our bodies:

“It is sown (i.e. buried) in corruption; it shall rise in incorruption.

It is sown in dishonour; it shall rise in glory.

It is sown in weakness; it shall rise in power.

It is a natural body; it shall rise a spiritual body.” (1 Cor. 15:42-44).

They manifest the absolute triumph of Christ over death. No wonder, then, that St. Paul, contemplating their ineffable splendour, is forced to cry out exultingly:

“Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?” (1 Cor. 15:54-55).

Needless to say, the bodies of the lost will have none of them. Instead of being filled with a supernatural light which is a sharing in God's very own, they will be always in darkness, “salted with fire,” as Scripture so dreadfully expresses it. Instead of enjoying the wondrous liberty of the children of God, they will know only a degrading slavery, a complete shackling of liberty, an imprisonment that can never end.

(C) THE LAST JUDGEMENT

I. Its Nature And Purpose.

The Last Judgement is necessary for us, not inasmuch as we are individuals, but inasmuch as we are members of the human race. It is necessary also in order that God may justify His ways to men. On earth we cannot hope to understand the wisdom of His Providence: why He gives such favours to some, and so few to others; why He permits this or that evil; sends this or that trial, and so on. At the Last Judgement He will make His wisdom, mercy, goodness and justice clear to all. That is why it is so often referred to in Scriptures as "The Day of the Lord." It will put an end to all reasonable grumbling about Providence, for ever.

Instantly after the resurrection, all human beings will be gathered together for the Judgement. Christ, as Man, will be the Judge. All, even the lost and children destined for Limbo, will see Him in His majesty; but only the saved will have an insight into His Divinity.

By a supernatural light, like that given in the first judgement at the moment of death, every person present will see most clearly the helps and graces God has given to each of the others; and how each has co-operated or failed to co-operate with them. Every thought, word, deed and omission will be made public to all: "But I say to you," Our Lord warned us, "that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account of it in the day of judgement." (Mat. 12:36). And again: "For there is NOTHING covered that shall not be revealed; nor hidden that shall not be known." (Luke 12:2). Even sins that have been forgiven? Yes. But these will be a source of glory rather than of confusion to the just, because of their repentance.

Scripture has, of course, a great deal to say about the Last Judgement. Read, for instance, the graphic description given by Our Lord Himself (Mat. 25:31-46), in which He mentions the momentous sentence that He will utter; and in which He brings home to us the value of true charity exercised towards the poor. "As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me." (Mat. 25:40). Scores of other texts stress especially the dreadful aspect of the Day of Judgement. They should make us realise that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," as the psalmist says (Ps. 110:10), and that "It is a fearful thing, (for an unrepentant sinner) to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. 10:31).

2. The Need To Be Ever Ready For It.

Time and again in Scripture God warns us as a loving Father to be always ready for the Judgement.

"Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are to come, and stand before the Son of Man. (Luke 21:36).

"Be prudent, therefore, and watch in prayers." (1 Cor. 4:7).

"Dearly beloved, be diligent that you may be found before Him unspotted and blameless in peace." (2 Pet. 3:14).

"Now, little children, abide in Him, that when He shall appear, we may have confidence and not be confounded by Him at His Coming." (1 John 2:28).

"Abide in Him." All wisdom is summed up in these few words. If we abide in God by keeping ourselves always in a state of grace, the Last Judgement need have no terrors for us. For we shall then most certainly hear from the lips of our beloved Saviour the best of all invitations: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Mat. 25:34).

Let us end this Chapter, therefore, with St. John's injunction, packed as it is with divine wisdom:

ABIDE IN HIM.

SUMMARY

(A) DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD.

1. The Fact.

(a). When. (b). How. (c).
Features.

(a). Gospel preached to all.

(b). Coming of Anti-Christ.

(c). Return of Elias.

2. Signs.

(d). Conversion of the Jews.

(B) RESURRECTION.

1. What.

(a). Substantial reunion of
body and soul.

(b). Supernatural.

(c). Indissoluble.

2. Christ's Resurrection.

(a). He raised the dead to life.

(b). He foretold His own resurrection.

(c). He rose from the dead.

(d). Why we believe it.

3. General Resurrection.

(a). Teaching of Christ.

(b). Teaching of the Apostles.

(c). Tradition.

4. Features of a Glorified Body.

(a). Subtlety.

(c). Agility.

(b). Incorruptibility.

(d). Clarity.

(C) LAST JUDGEMENT.

1. Its Nature and Purpose.

(a). Man as a member of the race.

(b). Vindication of Providence.

(c). The last Sentence given by the Judge.

(d). The value of fraternal charity.

2. The Need To Be Ever Ready For It.

“ABIDE IN HIM.”

EXERCISES

(A). Fill in the blanks and cross out wrong alternatives in the following: -

1. On the Last Day the world (will) (will not) be annihilated. 2. Scripture says that it will be changed into “a (....) heavens and a (....) earth.” 3. Four signs of the end of the world are: (....), (....), (....) and (....) 4. The union between our body and soul is (a substantial) (an accidental) one. 5. It is broken at the moment of (....). 6. Its restoration is called the (....). 7. At the resurrection, each will receive (a body) (his own body). 8. Christ raised three human beings from the dead, namely (....), (....) and (....). 9. He also foretold His own (....); and actually raised Himself from the dead. 10. He said: “Destroy this (....), and in three days I will raise it up.” 11. It was through means of (....) that God told Mary Madgalen that Christ had risen. 12. A glorified body has four amazing powers, namely, (....), (....), (....) and (....). 13. St. Paul says of the body of the saved:

"It is sown in (....) it shall rise in (....). It is sown in (....); it shall rise in (....). It is sown in (....); it shall rise in (....). It is sown a (....) body; it shall rise a (....) body." 14. "O death, where is thy (....)? O death, where is thy (....)" 15. Scripture says that the bodies of the lost shall be "salted with (....)." 16. The Last Judgement is necessary for us as (individuals) (members of the race). 17. Christ will be Judge as (God) (Man). 18. He says that even "every idle (....)" will be made known to all at the Judgement. The sentence at the Last Judgement will be (revocable) (irrevocable). 19. Children destined for Limbo (will) (will not) be present at the Last Judgement. 20. To be ready for the judgement, St. John tells us to "(....) in Him."

(B) Answer each of the following as fully as you can:

1. In what way will the world be destroyed at the end of time?
2. What signs does Scripture give of this event? Why are they uncertain?
3. Explain what the resurrection is. Why will each have his own body?
4. Whom did Christ raise from the dead? Why do we believe in His own resurrection?
5. Give the four qualities that are proper to a glorified body. Why are they given?
6. In what way will the bodies of the lost be similar to those of the saved? In what way will they be different?
7. Describe what will happen at the Last Judgement.
8. How can we be always ready for it?